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PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE
SPECIAL LECTURE.

Friday, December 15th, 1876.

GENERAL SIR RICHARD DACRES, G.C.B., R.A., in the Chair.

"A SKETCH OF THE RUSSO-TURKISH CAMPAIGNS OF 1828-29 IN EUROPE AND IN ASIA."

By Lieutenant-General Sir Richard Wilbraham, K.C.B., &c., &c., &c.

I have found it a more difficult task than I had anticipated to bring so large a subject as the Russo-Turkish war of 1828 and 1829 within the compass of a single lecture.

My lecture professes, indeed, to be merely a sketch, but I fear that in some parts it will be little more than a bare outline.

It has been my endeavour, at all events, to bring before you in a clear and connected form the most important operations of a war, which is of peculiar interest at the present moment. I need scarcely say that I have treated the subject exclusively from a military point of view.

The chief interest and value of a study of the war of 1828-29 lies in this:—that it is the most recent of the many wars that Turkey has waged single-handed against her powerful neighbour. It therefore gives us the most reliable data that we can command for forming an estimate of the comparative military strength of the two powers.

We must, of course, bear in mind, in making such comparisons, that Russia was carrying on an offensive war at a great distance from her resources, while Turkey was acting on the defensive within her own borders.

War between Russia and Turkey was already imminent at the close of the year 1827, and indeed it had been evident long before that time that it was inevitable.

The Russian Army collected during the early part of 1828 on her southern frontier consisted of three corps, the 3rd, the 6th, and the 7th, and was placed under the command of Field-Marshall Count Wittgenstein, a name well known in the Russian wars against Napoleon. Later in the year it was augmented by another corps, the 2nd, and a division of the Imperial Guard. Moltke estimates the effective strength of the whole force employed against Turkey in the
first year's campaign at about a hundred thousand men and three hundred guns. This number includes four thousand Cossacks.

On the 23rd of April, war was formally declared by Russia, and on the 7th of May, two corps, the 6th and 7th, crossed the Pruth and occupied the Principalities.

This declaration of war, so closely followed by the invasion of her territory, did not of course take Turkey by surprise, but it found her but ill-prepared for defence. The destruction of her fleet at Navarino in the preceding autumn had given to Russia the undisputed command of the Black Sea, without which, as we shall clearly see, the passage of the Balkan would have been impossible. Her regular Army—or Nizam—was so recent a creation that it had not yet acquired the consistency of disciplined troops. It was also composed mainly of mere lads, it having been thought that it would be easier at that early age to break them in to a system so novel, and so violently opposed to all their national and religious prejudices; and in the third place, the necessity of opposing a large force to the Russian troops collected on her Asiatic frontier prevented her from drawing reinforcements from the northern provinces of Asia Minor, which had always furnished the hardest and most faithful portion of her Army.

Before entering upon a sketch of the military operations, it may be well to make a few general observations on the theatre of war in European Turkey. They shall be very short, for with an audience composed mostly of military men, I feel as if they were scarcely needed.

The defences of the northern frontier of Turkey are strong—and clearly defined. They consist of two almost parallel lines—about sixty miles apart—the course of the Lower Danube and the range of the Balkan.

In modern warfare a river is no longer the formidable barrier that it used to be. But the Danube presents more than ordinary obstacles to the passage of an army advancing from the north. Throughout its whole course from Widdin to the sea—and we do not need to extend our observations beyond Widdin—the right bank dominates the left. It rises, for the most part, abruptly from the water's edge, to a height in many places of two or three hundred feet, while on the opposite bank, the country is low and marshy, intersected with watercourses and flooded during the rainy season. The river varies in breadth from half a mile to a mile. In some parts it is sixty or seventy feet deep, but generally much less; the ordinary current runs between two and three miles an hour.

The line of the Danube is strengthened by numerous fortresses. The chief of these—all of which played an important part in the war—are Widdin, Rustchuk, Silistria, and Brailow. With the exception of the last-named they all stand on the right bank. Widdin and Rustchuk have têtes-de-pont on the left bank at Kalafat and Giurgovo, which gave them free access into Wallachia and obliged the Russians to detach a considerable force to keep their marauding parties in check.

Below Rustchuk there are only two points at which the left bank of the river can at all seasons be approached. The first is Oltenita and
the second is opposite to Silistria. The passage at Oltenitza is defended by an entrenched position at Turtukai on the right bank, which, though of no great strength, sufficed to deter the Russians from attempting to cross, and caused them, as we shall see, the most serious inconvenience.

For several reasons Oltenitza would be the most favourable spot for an invading army to pass the Danube. It is the most direct, or at least the most practicable, line from the Russian frontier to both Shumla and Varna. It avoids the harassing march through the barren and waterless Dobrudsha, and it stands at a considerable distance from any of the great fortresses, which might threaten the line of communication, being twenty-four miles from Silistria, and more than forty from Rustchuk. The breadth of the river at this point is just short of a thousand paces.

Of Brailow we shall have to speak presently.

The country lying between the Danube and the Balkan is an undulating plain more or less well cultivated, and practicable for troops till you reach the wooded spurs projecting from the great mountain range. In the rainy season, however, the Bulgarian roads are well-nigh impassable, while in summer the heat is intense, and the water scanty and bad. Near the southern edge of the great plain stands the fortress, or rather the entrenched camp, of Shumla, which Turkey has always considered her main bulwark against Russian invasion. We shall, however, find that the possession of Shumla, which she retained during the whole war, was no security against the passage of the Balkan, or even the advance upon Adrianople. Shumla is connected with Varna by the fortified post of Pravadi.

The Balkan consists of a chain—or rather mass—of thickly wooded mountains from four to five thousand feet in height and from fifteen to twenty miles in breadth. It is only with the eastern part of this chain that we shall have to do. The passes are of no very great height, but the country is so rugged, and the roads—or rather tracks—so bad that they would have been very difficult for troops to cross even unopposed. There are six passes considered more or less practicable, but as, owing to the incapacity and inertness of the Grand Vizier, no attempt was made to defend them, it would only be a waste of time to describe them, more especially as they have since that time, I understand, been strongly fortified.

I will now endeavour to give as clear and concise account as I can of the movements of the contending armies, beginning with the Russians, who were ready to take the field long before the Turks had begun to bestir themselves.

We have seen that the 6th and 7th corps had crossed the Pruth on the 7th of May. The former, under General Roth, was to occupy Moldavia and Wallachia, which it did without opposition. The troops that had been stationed in these provinces had been withdrawn to garrison the Danube fortresses, and all the resources of the Principalities in grain, and cattle, and forage, had been abandoned to the enemy. The 7th corps, commanded by the Grand Duke Michael, and which was provided with a battering train, was directed against
Brailow, and commenced siege operations on the 21st May. The besieging force amounted to about 18,000 men. We shall find that this was the only siege throughout the war which was undertaken with anything like adequate means. Though it must have been foreseen from the number of fortresses, and from the well-known tenacity of Turkish troops behind stone walls, that several sieges would have to be carried on at the same time, only one battering train had been provided; and to this unaccountable neglect we shall find that most of the hardships, and dangers, and losses of the campaign are to be attributed.

Brailow is the strongest of all the fortresses on the Lower Danube. As a rule, the Turkish fortresses are of a very defective construction; they are seldom protected by efficient outworks, and the suburbs are allowed to extend up to the very walls, thus affording shelter to a besieging army.

Brailow was rather more scientifically constructed than most. It was amply provided with stores of all kinds, and defended by a numerous and determined garrison. The walls were armed with 278 guns and mortars.

Moltke gives a curious picture of the manner in which the guns of Brailow—like those of all Turkish fortresses, I suppose—were mounted and served. Guns and mortars of all calibres were placed side by side indiscriminately, and served from a common heap of shot and shells of every size and shape—for he tells us that very few shells were round. When the balls were too small, the Turkish gunners wrapped them in a sheepskin to make them fit. The powder was stored partly in private houses and partly in wooden sheds. There were no cartridges, and all the pieces had to be loaded with a scoop. Yet in spite of all this, the guns were well served, and did great execution at short ranges, which a Turk prefers.

After a stubborn defence of twenty-seven days of open trenches, during which several ineffectual attempts were made to carry the place by storm, Brailow capitulated on the 18th June. The garrison was allowed to march out with bag and baggage, and to proceed to Silistra, where they formed the nucleus of the garrison which defied all the attempts of the Russians throughout the whole of the campaign of 1828 and great part of that of 1829.

Meanwhile, the 3rd corps, after a month's delay, had effected the passage of the Danube on the 8th June. It was a daring and hazardous undertaking, and owed its success partly to an unexpected piece of good fortune, and partly to the misconduct of the Turkish troops opposed to them. The spot selected for the passage was Satunovo, nearly opposite to the Turkish fortress of Isaktchi. The left bank of the river is here so low and marshy that the point at which the bridge was to be thrown across could only be reached by laying down a causeway of fascines and planks several miles long, while the landing place opposite was even more difficult, being boggy and overgrown with brushwood.

The Turks had entrenched themselves on the heights facing Satunovo, their left protected by the fortress of Isaktchi. A battery of
fifteen heavy guns commanded both the proposed site of the bridge, and the causeway. Two divisions of infantry were told off to force the passage. The Emperor Nicholas was present to witness the attack. But fortunately for the Russians, before the bridge had even begun to be constructed, the Turkish position was carried by a coup de main. A battalion of chasseurs had been brought up as a reinforcement by the flotilla. A tribe of Zaporogne Cossacks who had migrated from Russia into Turkey in the reign of the Empress Catherine, and had done good service to the Porte in former wars against Russia, now suddenly returned to their former allegiance; they had settled on the banks of the Danube, where they plied the trade of fishermen; they now did excellent service to Russia, for under cover of the flotilla, they carried over the Chasseurs in their light fishing boats, unperceived by the enemy, and landed them a little below the Turkish entrenchments. With great boldness, this small body stormed the nearest redoubt, and the Turks—numbering more than 10,000, mostly cavalry—were seized with a panic, and fled precipitately, part to Isaktchi and part to Bazardjik.

The 3rd corps now crossed into the Dobrudcha, and Isaktchi surrendered at the first summons. The main body, which the Emperor accompanied, commenced its march to the south on the 11th June. It did not exceed 16,000 of all arms, for it had detached four columns of from two to three thousand strong, with a few field pieces, to summon the smaller forts of Isaktchi, Matchin, Hirsova, and Kustendje, which threatened both its flanks. This was done in the hope that these places would offer no resistance—a hope, which the result fully justified, for by the time the Russians appeared before them Brailow had fallen, and one after another they surrendered without firing a shot.

We have seen that the 3rd corps did not cross the frontier till a month after the 6th and 7th corps. Yet in spite of this delay, and of the slowness of its subsequent march (it took fourteen days to reach the line of Trajan's Wall, a distance of only seventy-five miles) it was still too soon, if its further operations were to be conducted in combination with the other corps. Silistria, far from being taken, as had been calculated upon, was not yet even invested. The 6th corps, to which the siege operations had been assigned, had failed to cross the Danube at Oltenitza. The 7th corps was still detained at Brailow, for though the place had capitulated on the 18th of June, ten days had been agreed upon for its evacuation. The 3rd corps was therefore unsupported, and with Shumla and Silistria on its flank and rear, an advance upon Varna would have been most hazardous.

Moltke is of opinion that if the 3rd corps had moved boldly upon Silistria, before the garrison had been reinforced by the brave defenders of Brailow, the place might have been taken by a coup de main, for the works were both faulty in construction, and much out of repair. Had they succeeded in their attempt, they might then have taken the works of Turtukai in reverse, and opened the passage of the Danube to the 6th corps.

As it was, the 3rd corps remained inactive at Karsu for eight days,
and then continued its march leisurely towards Varna by way of Bazardjik. It was on this march that the Russians first came into collision with the Turks in the open field. The Seraskier had sent forward a reconnoitring force of nearly 8,000 men—mostly cavalry. And the Russian advanced guard somewhat rashly attacked them without waiting for their supports. The Turkish horsemen charged with their usual impetuosity; the Russian cavalry were repeatedly driven back, and it was only the steadiness of their infantry that saved them from defeat. It was not till the artillery came up that the Turks were finally repulsed.

On the 11th July the 7th corps from Brailow joined the main Army at Bazardjik. Towards the end of the month it was further reinforced by the troops which had been observing Silistria, and which were relieved by 10,000 men of the 6th corps from Wallachia. This force had been obliged to make a long detour in order to cross the Danube at Hirsova, having, as we have seen, been unable to force a passage at Oltenitza.

The insufficiency of the forces detailed for the war was becoming every day more apparent. The main Army collected at Bazardjik did not exceed 25,000 men, of whom only 2,500 were cavalry; the investment of Silistria was incomplete. The two divisions of the 6th corps left in Wallachia barely sufficed to keep in check the garrisons of Widdin and Rustchuk, while the force detached against Varna, which consisted of only 5,000 men, was utterly inadequate to invest a fortress with a garrison of double its numbers.

More especially was the want of light cavalry felt throughout the war. Most of the cavalry that the Russians had brought—with the exception of a few regiments of Cossacks—was heavy cavalry. Even that which was called light was not really so, for Moltke states that the Russian Hussar was more heavily equipped than the Prussian Cuirassier. With their large heavy horses they were quite unequal to cope with the active and well mounted irregular Turkish horse even at the beginning of the campaign; much more so, as we shall see, when scarcity of forage, and overwork had begun to tell upon them.

The small number of Cossacks employed in this war is said to have been caused by the fear of lack of forage, but it was in fact the want of light cavalry that made them unable to collect forage. The Turkish cavalry always move in large bodies, which made it hazardous to send out patrols or weak advanced guards. The saying that where you see one turban you may be sure there are a thousand more, is a very true saying.

It was here decided to change the line of operations; and the column quitting the direct road to Varna advanced in the direction of Shumla.

It will now be necessary to look back, and see what measures the Turks had adopted to meet the enemy's advance. It is evident that the Porte had contemplated the possibility—if not the probability—of a Russian army landing near Constantinople. Their undisputed command of the Black Sea, where they had a fleet of 16 line-of-battle ships, 6 frigates, and 7 corvettes, made such an undertaking quite feasible.
Besides this, the Sultan's reforms were very unpopular with the greater part of the Mahomedan population, and an outbreak in the capital was at any time to be dreaded. The bulk of the Army was therefore detained in and around Constantinople, until the advance of the Russians made it absolutely necessary to send forward an army to check their progress.

We have already seen that the Principalities were entirely denuded of troops, while the numerous fortresses on the Danube and in the Dobrudcha were but inadequately garrisoned. It must, however, be borne in mind that the inhabitants of a Turkish fortress instead of being a source of weakness are really a source of strength, every Turk being in possession of arms and well practised in the use of them.

When the Russians crossed the Pruth the passes of the Balkan were still unoccupied. It was not until the 31st May, when Brailow had already been besieged for fourteen days, that the Seraskier—or Commander-in-Chief—left Constantinople for Schumla. On the 3rd of July the Capudan Pacha or High Admiral—whose occupation afloat was gone—marched with a large force to Varna. Lastly the Grand Vizier only quitted the capital at the beginning of August, for Adrianople. But for the unaccountable deficiencies and consequent delays of the Russians both the Turkish lines of defence might have been broken before any effectual measures had been taken to hold them.

But by the time the Russian Army had directed its march upon Shumla, this neglect had been in a great measure remedied. The Seraskier had succeeded in assembling at that point a force of about 32,000 infantry—including 10,000 Arnaouts or Albanians, undisciplined but fierce and dauntless soldiers—and 13,000 cavalry. Whatever may have been his military capacity—or incapacity—the Seraskier was a man of great energy, and he set to work at once to improve and to extend the fortifications of the place.

For more than a century Shumla, as I have already remarked, has been looked upon by the Turks as the main bulwark of the Empire, and in all their wars with Russia it has been occupied as an entrenched camp. In 1774, and again in 1810, it successfully resisted the attacks of the Russians, and we shall see that throughout the whole of the campaigns of 1828 and 1829 it again defied all their attempts to make themselves masters of it. Whether its defence on this occasion was not too dearly purchased by the neglect of still more important points is another question.

The position of Shumla is a very striking one as you approach it from the north or from the east. It stands on a plateau some eight or nine hundred feet above the great plain of Bulgaria forming a spur from the Balkan, but separated from the main range by the valley of the Kamestchik. The town itself is not fortified. It is, however, effectually protected on three sides by a chain of wooded hills which form as it were an amphitheatre round it, while the fourth is defended by a continuous line of works carried along the outer ridge of the plateau and abutting at either end on precipitous heights. This line consists of earthworks with a deep but narrow ditch, and its length is about 8,000 paces. To the north of the town lies the en-
trenched camp occupied by the barracks of the infantry. The cavalry were picketed in a sheltered and well watered valley a little in rear of the camp. 500 yards in advance of the fortified front a chain of redoubts was extended across the plain. Several roads converging upon Shumla afforded means of obtaining supplies from districts not occupied by the enemy.

An assault upon a place so strong, and held by so large a garrison, was of course not to be thought of, nor indeed would the possession of Shumla have been an unmixed advantage to an invading army. It would, it is true, have made its flank more secure, but it would not have opened the passes of the Balkan, from which it is too far distant. On the other hand the large force which was shut up in the entrenched camp would have been set free to occupy those passes and bar the further progress of the Army.

A complete investment of the place was equally out of the question, not only on account of the extent of country that would have to be guarded, but because of the danger to the investing force from the frequent and vigorous sorties of a garrison so strong in cavalry. Had Varna by this time been hardly pressed, as it might well have been, the Russian Army might have taken up a strong position at some distance from the place in the hope of drawing the Seraskier out of his entrenchments for the relief of that fortress, but the siege of Varna was still unaccountably delayed for want both of guns and of men.

Under these circumstances it was decided to make at least a partial investment of the place, and the Russians proceeded to throw up a chain of redoubts in front of the Turkish lines. They had, however, the great disadvantage of being within range of the enemy’s heavy guns, to whose fire their own field-pieces were unable effectually to reply. At the same time they had the mortification of seeing long strings of camels laden with provisions and ammunition entering the camp daily from the hills behind the town. This led to an attempt to close the approaches from that side, but it was found too hazardous on account of the vigorous sorties made by the garrison, and it was soon abandoned.

Things continued thus for many weeks, the sorties of the Turks becoming every day more daring. Colonel Chesney relates that the most daring of these sorties were led by Hemin Pasha, whom he states to have been the Mameluke who alone escaped from the massacre of his comrades at Cairo in 1811, by leaping his horse over the ramparts of the citadel. His ambition was to capture the Emperor, who was present with the Army at that time, and to exact as his ransom the restitution of the Crimea to Turkey.

On the 27th August, the Seraskier made a night attack—a phenomenon, Moltke remarks, in Turkish military history—on two of the principal Russian forts. One of them was successfully stormed, and the guns carried off in triumph. On the 10th September he made a still more vigorous attack before daylight with a force of 8,000 men, but fortunately the Russians had been warned by their Bulgarian spies, and were prepared to meet it.

At length the Russian General perceived the uselessness of persever-
ing in the investment. The army had lain for more than six weeks before Shumla, exposed to the fearful heat of a Bulgarian summer; Insufficient food, and bad water, had filled the field-hospitals to overflowing, and there was no place of security to which their sick could be removed. Scarcity of forage and over-work were carrying off their horses at the rate of more than a hundred a-day, and their reduced and enfeebled cavalry was no longer able to protect their convoys from the flying columns of Spahis which hung about their communications.

Moltke points out that during these months—August and September—the position of the Russians was everywhere critical. The blockade of Silistria was altogether ineffectual; the siege of Varna had only just begun—and not under promising auspices, while Wallachia was seriously threatened by the enterprising garrisons of Widdin and Rustchuk. Had the Turkish commanders shown half as much capacity as they did energy, the result of the campaign could not but have proved disastrous to the Russians.

The siege of Varna had been formally opened by the Emperor on 3rd of August. The Russian fleet, under Admiral Greig, had arrived a few days before bringing reinforcements, and had anchored a mile and a half from the town prepared to take part in the siege. The besieging army, under Prince Menschikoff, did not at this time exceed 9,000 men, but early in September it was reinforced by the 2nd corps and a division of the Guards, which raised its numbers to 18,000 or 20,000, and enabled Menschikoff to complete the blockade. But still there was no battering train, though Brailow had fallen on the 18th of June. “The fate of this battering train,” says Moltke, “is involved in mystery. After the fall of Brailow it was absent everywhere.” They were obliged to make shift at last with ship guns.

On the other hand, the Capudan Pasha, whose departure from Constantinople we have already mentioned, had arrived at Varna on the 17th July with 5,000 men, mostly artillery, and had entered the place under the very eyes of the Russians. The garrison now numbered 15,000 men, of whom nearly half were Albanians. The walls were armed with 162 guns.

I must refer my hearers for all details of this memorable siege to the two chapters that Moltke has devoted to this subject. It would be impossible to abridge them without their losing all their interest. It was of vital importance to the Russians to make themselves masters of the place without delay, for their situation was becoming critical; their daily losses were heavy; disease was rife in their camp—it was said even the plague. The position of the main Army before Shumla was precarious; and a large army, under the command of the Grand Vizier himself, was advancing to the relief of the place. The siege operations were therefore pressed with all the vigour possible. Nothing could exceed the energy and perseverance of the assailants, unless it were the determined courage of the defenders. The latter, long after the siege had commenced, maintained their positions outside the walls, and surrounded themselves with a labyrinth of lodgments which sometimes interfered with the Russian approaches. The
siege was carried on more by means of mines and galleries than by batteries, and though several practicable breaches were made by the explosion of the mines, and even a lodgment effected on one of the bastions, the ardour of the defence never slackened. Colonel Chesney relates that the Capudan Pacha worked with his own hands to close the breach, and adds, that "he encouraged his men with a stick!" The fierce obstinacy with which the Arnaouts defended the ditch to the last, neither giving nor receiving quarter, is almost incredible. Moltke's remark is indeed true,—that defence only begins with a Turk where it ends with any other troops.

Meanwhile the Grand Vizier's zeal had cooled, and halting his army on the Kamstchik, he sent Omar Pacha with 15,000 men to attempt the relief of Varna. Omar advanced within a few miles of the fortress, and then, in Turkish fashion, he entrenched himself strongly at the village of Kurtepe.

Prince Eugene of Wurtemburg was sent to dislodge him, and was making arrangements to do so when he received peremptory orders from the Emperor to attack the position in front. The Emperor had been led to believe that the Turkish force was much weaker than it was, nor was he acquainted with the rugged and wooded nature of the ground which made their position almost unsaissable. So thick was the wood that the Russian guns could not be brought into action, and the battle was a succession of hand-to-hand encounters. The result was undecided, but the gallantry of the Russian troops had a great effect upon the Turks; and though Prince Eugene had to fall back, and the road to Varna was open to him, Omar Pasha did not avail himself of the opportunity. He remained inactive in his entrenchments, though the explosion of mine after mine must have warned him that the fall of Varna was imminent. And when, after a few days; he saw the Russian flag floating over the ruins of the fortress, he made a precipitate retreat beyond the Kamstchik. For fourteen days this relieving force had been within five miles of Varna without rendering any assistance to the hard-pressed garrison.

The fall of Varna was, after all, the work of treachery. It seems strange that the Commander who had conducted so heroic a defence should turn traitor at the last. There is, however, no doubt that the intelligence of some intrigue that was being carried on against him at Constantinople led Yussuf Pacha to betray his trust. Accompanied by a large body of followers he sought the Russian camp, and threw himself on the mercy of the Czar. The gallant Capudan Pasha refused to surrender, and retired into the citadel with several hundred men. The siege had lasted eighty-nine days, twenty-seven of which by practicable breaches. Two-thirds of the garrison had fallen, and Varna was a heap of ruins.

There may perhaps be some few here present besides myself who remember the deep interest with which the progress of the siege of Varna was watched in England. A war between Turkey and Russia was not, however, supposed at that time to be fraught with such serious consequences to the balance of power in Europe as it has been of late years, nor were our sympathies with the defenders height-
ened as in the case of Kars and Silistria in 1854 by the gallant part that our countrymen took in the defence.

I have only time to notice briefly the siege of Silistria. It commenced on the 21st of July, at the same time that the main Army arrived before Shumla, and the investment of Varna began.

Silistria has played an important part in every war between Turkey and Russia. It commands one of the most practicable passages of the Danube, and threatens the flank of an army advancing upon either Shumla or Varna. It was taken by the Russians in 1810, and razed to the ground; but it was soon rebuilt. In 1828—and indeed so late as 1854—the fortifications of Silistria were very imperfect. It had no regular outworks—only a few lodgements, as Moltke calls them, in front of the gates, which would otherwise open on the plain. It is surrounded by a low rampart and a dry ditch, which one of the English defenders of the place contemptuously described to me as being what a good hunter would take in his stride.

The place is commanded from the adjacent heights, and is also within range of the opposite bank of the Danube, which at this point is only a thousand paces in breadth.

The garrison had been reinforced by a part of those of Brailow and the small forts of the Dobrudseha, and the town contained about 6,000 inhabitants capable of bearing arms. A Russian flotilla of thirty-six vessels reached Silistria on the 10th August, but it was of little use. It did not even capture or destroy a very inferior Turkish flotilla which was aiding in the defence, nor was any attempt made to throw a bridge across the river, which would have facilitated the arrival of supplies and secured a safe line of retreat. In the middle of October the besieging force was raised to 30,000 by the arrival of the 3rd corps.

Finding that the place could not—or rather, would not—be taken, it was decided to convert the siege into a blockade, but the weather had now broken up. Incessant rain flooded the trenches, followed by snow and piercing cold. Sickness increased to an alarming extent, and on the 10th November, after an ineffectual attempt to terrify the garrison into surrender by a bombardment of forty-eight hours, the siege was raised. The retreat, though unopposed, was disastrous; the roads were so deep that it required 200 men to drag a single gun; after undergoing severe hardships the besieging Army at length succeeded in recrossing the Danube at Hirsova.

The season was now too far advanced for further operations, and it was decided to place the army in winter quarters. The 6th and 7th corps were cantonned in and around Varna and Pravadi; the rest of the army in Wallachia and Moldavia, excepting the Guards who were moved back into Bessarabia. The line occupied by the Russians extended from Varna to Craiova, a distance of 250 miles, and it was cut in two by the Danube. Only in presence of such an enemy as the Turks could such winter-quarters have been taken up with impunity. But the Turkish Irregulars, who were the most likely to harass them, had disbanded themselves on the approach of winter and returned to
their homes in Asia. "They had," they said, "left their winter-stock-
ings behind."

In summing up the results of the campaign, we find that after the fall of Brailow, and the small forts of the Dobrudja, the only real success had been the capture of Varna—how hardly won we have already seen. Shumla and Silistria had defied all the efforts made to take them, and in the numerous engagements that had taken place in the open field, the results had been quite as often favourable to the Turks as to the Russians.

As Moltke remarks, "When we consider the enormous sacrifices that the war cost the Russians in 1828, it is difficult to say whether they or the Turks won or lost it. It remained for a second campaign to decide the value of the first."

We must now cast a glance at what had been going on during this time on the Asiatic frontier of Turkey; but it will not be necessary to enter into much detail, as the military operations in that quarter had only been important in so far as they had obliged the Turks to divide their forces.

Until the year 1801 the Caucasus had formed the southern boundary of Russia, and the Turkish frontier had been a very defensible one. Her actual frontier was far less well defined.

The war between Russia and Persia, which had begun in 1826, had just been brought to a successful close by a winter campaign, and General Paskevitch's army was now disposable for operations against Turkey. It consisted of about 30,000 men with 130 guns.

To this force the Turks were at first able to oppose only a small and disorganised army.

The campaign opened with the siege and capture of Anapa by a naval force, assisted by a detachment from the Army of the Caucasus. But before Anapa had fallen, the Russian army had begun its advance from Tiflis. It moved in three columns, the right towards the Black Sea, the left towards Armenia, and the main body towards Kars. On the 14th June, about 15,000 men crossed the Araxes near Goomri, an important Russian frontier-post, now strongly fortified, and continued its march unopposed to Kars, where it took up a position south of that fort, between it and the Army of the Seraskier.

It is unnecessary to describe a place so well known as Kars has since become. It had always been one of the bulwarks of Asiatic Turkey, and had successfully resisted Nadir Shah in 1735 and a former invasion of the Russians in 1807.

On the present occasion it did not uphold its former (or its future) fame. The weak walls of the suburbs were soon breached, and the suburbs themselves occupied after a short but sharp resistance. The fall of the town followed within a few days, and on the 23rd of June the Pasha surrendered the citadel. The relieving army was actually within sight when the place fell. 150 guns and large stores of ammuni-
tion fell into the hands of the Russians.

The plague now broke out in the Russian camp; this delayed fur-
ther operations and gave the Seraskier time to collect some 35,000 men, with whom he took up a position in front of Ardegan. This movement prevented Paskevitch from advancing upon Erzeroum, as he would have left this army in his rear, so he made a demonstration against Ardegan, which caused the Pasha to beat a hasty retreat across the Saganlugh mountains. He then doubled back and appeared unexpectedly before the strong fort of Akhalkalaki, which was taken by storm after a short bombardment. The garrison resolutely refused to surrender, and two-thirds of their number perished in the assault.

I may here mention that the inhabitants of this bleak mountainous part of Asia Minor are among the hardest and bravest of the subjects of the Porte, and, I may add, the most fanatical.

Paskevitch next moved against Akhaltsik, a still stronger place. Short as is the distance, it took him ten days to reach it, so difficult was it to carry troops and guns through that densely wooded and mountainous country. He arrived just in time to take up a strong position commanding the west front of the fortress, and to throw up some entrenchments, before the Seraskier appeared with a large force to relieve the place. The Pasha imprudently divided his force, and after an obstinate resistance the Russians succeeded in carrying his whole position. The Seraskier, after losing 10 guns and 1,700 men, threw himself into the fortress with several thousand men. The rest of his army dispersed.

The defence of Akhaltsik was as heroic as that of Brailow. After a lodgment had been made in one of the bastions, the Russians advanced to the assault. For thirteen hours the garrison maintained a desperate resistance; the Russians fought with equal obstinacy. At length they carried a howitzer by hand across the ditch and placed it on the flat roof of a church. A shell set fire to the town, which continued to burn throughout the night, lighting up the fierce conflict. At daybreak the fort surrendered, being no longer tenable.

After the fall of Akhaltsik nothing of any consequence was undertaken by the main army, but the left wing had made itself master of the important town and fortress of Bayazid. This secured to the Russians the possession of the whole country as far as the Saganlugh range, which furnished them with a good base for the operations of the next year's campaign.

We must now return to the more important theatre of war in Europe, and relate the events of the decisive campaign of 1829.

The command of the Russian Army had been transferred to General Diebitsch, who had served in the preceding campaign as Chief of the General Staff. He joined the army in Moldavia at the end of February, and applied himself diligently to the re-organisation of all departments of the service. The cavalry was remounted, and the front ranks of the Hussar regiments armed with lances as a better protection against the swords of the Spahis; the Cossacks were increased to 22 polks, or regiments, of about 250 each; the Commissariat was provided with 2,000 Asiatic camels, a mode of transport well suited to the plains of Bulgaria.

The constitution of the four corps d'armee remain unaltered, but
several changes were made in the commands. Count Pahlen commanded the 2nd corps, General Krassowski the 3rd, General Roth the 6th, and General Rudiger the 7th. Altogether the army amounted to 48,000 infantry, 16,000 cavalry, and 4,000 artillery with 300 guns. This force was not larger than that with which the previous campaign had opened, but it was stronger in artillery and light cavalry.

But before the army began its advance operations had already commenced by sea. The possession of a secure harbour south of the Balkan was of the utmost importance before attempting the passage of that range. It would save the difficult and laborious task of transporting military stores across the mountain passes, and would facilitate the provisioning of the Army.

Bourgas would have been the most suitable spot but for its proximity to Aidos, where the Turks had assembled a large force. Sizeboli was therefore selected, and so early as the middle of February it was occupied by a Russian squadron without serious resistance. It had the advantages of a strong position and a safe harbour, but was at a greater distance from the Russian line of operation than Bourgas.

The Seraskier was ordered to advance at once from Aidos and retake the place, but he delayed obeying the order for several weeks, and when at last he arrived before Sizeboli he found the Russians too firmly established to be dislodged.

Nor was a subsequent attempt by sea more successful. The Turkish Admiral on his way to Sizeboli fell in with a solitary Russian frigate, which he took; and then he thought it best to return to Constantinople with his prize.

No further attempt was made to retake the place, which remained in possession of the Russians throughout the war.

The advance of the Army did not commence till May. The weather and the floods were assigned as the cause of this delay, but in truth the preparations were not completed earlier.

Part of the 2nd and 3rd corps now crossed the Danube at Hirssova and joined the 6th and 7th corps, which had wintered around Varna. The other divisions of the 2nd and 3rd corps were detained in Wallachia, awaiting the construction of a bridge at Kalarasch a little below Silistra.

Diebitsch was forced to open the campaign with a siege, which ought not to have been left for the second year of the war. The capture of Silistra was an absolute necessity before the Army could advance. Its garrison was large, and it commanded every possible line of operation. Diebitsch arrived before it on the 17th May, and found it exactly in the condition in which it was left in the preceding autumn. The besieging army amounted to 15,000 men (shortly increased to 21,000) and 88 guns. The garrison, with the armed inhabitants, numbered some 20,000. Diebitsch proceeded with great caution. He would not even assault when there was a practicable breach. He had learnt to respect the Turk behind a stone wall, and preferred the surer though slower process of mining.

After a brave defence of forty-four days the place surrendered, and the garrison became prisoners of war.
Diebitsch had, before the conclusion of the siege, handed over the command to General Krassowski, and had joined the main Army at Shumla. Important events had already taken place in that quarter, and this time the Turks had taken the initiative. The new Grand Vizier, after re-organizing the motley force he had found at Shumla, had quitted his entrenchments on the 16th of May and advanced in the direction of Pravadi with some 20,000 men, hoping to overwhelm the force under General Roth. The 6th and 7th corps were very weak from the losses of the preceding campaign, and the sickliness of their winter quarters around Varna. They did not muster more than 14,000 effectives of all arms.

On the 17th the Vizier reached the village of Eski Arnautlar, where a force of Russians—3,000 strong—had taken up a well chosen position covered by five small redoubts. These the Vizier instantly attacked with his left wing, while with his right wing he assaulted the entrenched works of Pravadi. Both these attacks were repulsed after fifteen hours of hard fighting, and Russian reinforcements coming up during the night, the Vizier fell back upon Shumla. Such vigorous action was a great contrast to the supineness of the late Grand Vizier. Reschid Pacha had set his troops an example of personal bravery, and both he and his second in command had been wounded.

On the 28th May the Vizier again quitted Shumla at the head of 40,000 men, leaving only four regiments to guard the entrenched camp. He directed his march upon Kustendje.

It was the intelligence of this move which had decided Diebitsch to leave Silistria. It was his intention to march with as many men as could be spared from the besieging force upon Pravadi, to form a junction with the 6th and 7th corps, and then to throw himself across the road from Pravadi to Shumla, so as to intercept the Pasha's retreat and force him to fight in the open field. Should he succeed in doing so, he felt confident that discipline would prevail over numbers. This bold decision decided the fate of the campaign and of the war. The force with which it was undertaken numbered 21,000 infantry, 7,000 cavalry, and 146 guns.

Time will not allow me to relate the movements of the two armies which preceded the decisive battle. The Vizier seems to have remained in total ignorance of Diebitsch's plans, and was retracing his steps leisurely towards Shumla expecting to have to deal only with General Roth's weak force. But on the forenoon of the 11th June, 28,000 Russians barred his further passage. The battle so much desired by Diebitsch took place at Kulevtcha. The Turks resolutely attempted to cut their way through, and for some hours their efforts were successful. The Russians lost great numbers of men and several guns; but when at length they had succeeded in driving the Turks back to their original position, which was a very strong one, a sudden panic seemed to come over them. They broke their ranks and disappeared singly in the thick woods. Scarcely a prisoner was taken, but the whole of the artillery and baggage fell into the hands of the Russians. The Vizier with 600 horsemen succeeded in reaching Shumla in safety by a circuitous route. Within a fortnight the bulk
of the Army also found its way thither by twos and threes. "A "Turkish Army," as Moltke observes, "is not easily destroyed, it is only "dispersed."

The former campaign was lost by the inactivity of one Grand Vizier. The present was lost by the too enterprising spirit of another.

Diebitsch at length found himself in a position to attempt the passage of the Balkan. Shumla, indeed, was still in the hands of the enemy, but without an army, Shumla was of little importance. A corps of observation would suffice to keep its beaten and disheartened garrison in check. The fall of Silistria was hourly expected. With the Dobrudsha, and the sea for a basis an advance would no longer be hazardous. The season was favourable, for the great heats had not yet set in. The health of the Army made it desirable that it should quit its present unhealthy positions.

All these were arguments in favour of an immediate advance, but the Russian Army was too weak for such an undertaking. Diebitsch had but 25,000 men in all, and if he detached 10,000 to mask the entrenched camp of Shumla, there would remain but 15,000 available for active operations. It seems unaccountable that the experience of the last year's campaign should not have taught Russia the insufficiency of her preparations. Four precious weeks were lost while awaiting the fall of Silistria and the arrival of the besieging force.

On the 15th June, Diebitsch removed the head-quarters to the neighbourhood of Shumla. It gives an awful picture of the horrors of this war to read that while crossing the battle-field of Kulewetcha the escort of the Commander-in-Chief was regularly attacked by an enormous pack of dogs, which were devouring the corpses of the slain.

At length the force under General Krassowski arrived. It was left to watch Shumla. General Roth with the 6th corps was ordered to advance along the coast roads leading from Varna to Bourgas, while General Rudiger with the 7th corps was to cross the mountains by the road from Pravadi to Aidos. General Pahlen with the 2nd corps was to act as a reserve to both these columns. The head-quarters accompanied the reserve.

Meanwhile the Grand Vizier, alarmed for the safety of Shumla, chose this very moment, when the Russian Army was in full march for the Balkan, to order a force of nine regiments of regular infantry, and several thousand Albanians, which had been allotted for the defence of the passes, to join him in the entrenched camp.

Consequently the two Russian columns, which had advanced to the Kamstchik, effected the passage of that river at Kiuprikoi without any serious opposition. The head-quarters with the reserve followed closely, and on the tenth day after leaving Shumla, the whole Russian Army was assembled around Roumelikoi to the south of the Balkan-range, and in free communication with the fleet.

In this short time it had accomplished a march of above a hundred miles through an unknown and difficult mountainous country. The passage of the Balkan had, after all, been effected by one single route.
Aidos still lay before them on their line of march. It is a town of some 25,000 inhabitants lying at the foot of the Balkan, and, though unfortified, was very capable of defence. The Vizier, alarmed when too late by the Russian advance, had hastily sent a force of from ten to twelve thousand men across the mountains to occupy this important post; but they made but a weak defence, and the 7th corps quickly drove them out of the town and took possession of it. The filthy state of the Turkish camp at Aidos is said to have sown the seeds of the diseases which from this time forth raged among the Russian troops.

Diebitsch's Army was by this time reduced to less than 25,000 men of all arms; but it had a secure basis at Bourgas, and an ample supply of provisions. Intelligence had been received from Adrianople that there were only a few thousand men collected for the defence of the city, and that no serious resistance need be anticipated. Diebitsch, therefore, decided to advance, knowing the effect that the possession of Adrianople would produce at the capital, and sent on the 2nd corps as an advanced guard.

The rest of the army did not at once follow, for a report had reached the head-quarters that the Pacha of Rustchuk had effected a junction with the Vizier, and that the Russian line of communication was seriously threatened. This report induced Diebitsch to concentrate his forces, and to move along the foot of the Balkan to Slivno, about 70 miles west of Bourgas. Rumour had exaggerated the danger. He found only a small force at that place, which he quickly dispersed, and he then resumed his advance upon Adrianople, from which he was no farther than he had been at Aidos.

The Turkish Army was now thoroughly demoralized. Fortified positions were abandoned on the approach even of cavalry un-supported, and it was clear that any measure however bold might be ventured upon with impunity against such a foe.

Indeed the only enemy the Russians had to encounter on the march was the intolerable heat, aggravated by scarcity of water, for the Turks had destroyed the fountains along the road. Fever was increasing in the camp at a fearful rate, and it was with difficulty that the enfeebled troops could accomplish a daily march of ten miles.

At Buyuk-Derbend there is a formidable defile, but happily for the Russians it was undefended.

At length, on the 19th August, four weeks after crossing the Balkan, 20,000 men, enfeebled as we have seen by disease, encamped before the gates of Adrianople. Out of a force of 70,000 men, with which the campaign had opened in May, this was all that could be brought together for a further advance of more than a hundred and thirty miles upon the capital. It would scarcely be too much to say, looking at it from a military point of view, that the Russians were no nearer Constantinople at the end of the second campaign than they were at the beginning of the first.

Adrianople is an open town, and though its position is strong, it would have required a large force to hold it. The garrison, composed mainly of fugitives from Aidos and Slivno, had no heart for fighting,
and without waiting to be summoned they offered to capitulate. Diebitsch gladly accepted the offer with the conditions that they were to give up their arms, their standards, and their guns. These hard terms were accepted without hesitation, and the Russians marched into Adrianople, to use Moltke's words, "as into a friendly town, "where nothing but the garrison is changed."

Still Marshal Diebitsch's position was a critical one in spite of his success; and it caused so much anxiety at St. Petersburg, that a fresh levy of 90,000 men was ordered, lest the negotiations set on foot at Constantinople should fail. Rest, so far from restoring the health of the troops, seemed to aggravate the disease that had so long hung about them. Colonel Chesney, who was present at a grand review held at Adrianople some months later, states that there were less than 13,000 men of all arms on the ground.

But General Diebitsch put a bold face on the matter, and in order to strengthen the hands of the Ambassador at Constantinople, he advanced in three columns towards the capital. Report, fortunately for him, had magnified his force to 60,000 men, and as there was not even a show of opposition made to his advance, the weakness of his actual numbers escaped detection.

His boldness was rewarded, for the Porte, alarmed by the approach of the enemy, and still more perhaps by the fear of an outbreak in the capital, signed, on the 28th of August, the Treaty of Adrianople.

My time will not allow me to relate the events of the Campaign of 1829 on the Asiatic frontier. That campaign had no influence on the result of the war, nor was there anything remarkable in the operations on either side. The Turks displayed indeed somewhat more vigour and enterprise than they had done in Europe; not only did they take the initiative, but they did what is very foreign to their habits:—they undertook a winter campaign in the hope of recovering the ground they had lost in summer. On the 18th February, they made a bold but unsuccessful attempt to re-take Akhaltsikh by escalade, and when this failed, they commenced a regular siege. But a Russian force soon came to its relief and they were defeated with heavy loss.

The defection of the Pasha of Mush at this time deprived the Turks of some 12,000 Kurdish cavalry—a very serious loss. In every quarter success attended the operations of the Russians. In June, Paskevitch forced his way across the Saganlugh range, and after defeating the Army with which the Seraskier attempted to cover Erzeroum, he pursued him to the gates of that city and forced him to surrender.

He then advanced upon Trebizond, but finding the country almost inaccessible for artillery, and meeting with a more serious opposition than he had expected from the warlike Mahomedan tribes of that mountainous district, he abandoned the project and fell back upon Erzeroum.

Some desultory fighting took place after this at Baiburt and at Bayazid, but intelligence of the signing of the Treaty of Adrianople put an end to hostilities before any decisive blow was struck. The
most serious result of the war in Asia was the loss of Akhaltsikh; which this Treaty handed over to Russia.

It will be unnecessary for me to make more than a very few general observations on the conduct of this war. Those who wish for a critical résumé of the operations of both armies will find it in the concluding chapter of Moltke's History. Such a war as that between Russia and Turkey cannot be judged by the ordinary rules of European warfare. The best recognised principles of strategy were systematically ignored both by Turks and Russians; by the former from sheer incapacity or inertness, by the latter from a more or less well-founded contempt of her enemy.

If we are to judge of this war simply by its results, it is certainly one of the most successful wars on record. It had the effect of greatly strengthening the influence of Russia in the east of Europe, and of heightening her prestige in the west. But it is another question whether it has in anything like an equal degree increased her reputation or given fresh proof of her strength, as a great military power.

The energy and determination of her officers, and the courage and constancy of her soldiers, under difficulties and trials of no ordinary kind are indeed beyond all praise; but a careful study of this war not only reveals an unaccountable want of foresight in her military administration, but leads one to doubt whether the power of Russia, at least for offensive warfare, has not been greatly overrated.

The most interesting question for us, especially at the present moment, is whether the campaigns of '28 and '29 will throw light upon any future war that may be carried on between the same combatants, and on the same ground. One thing is clear: which is, that, should such a war unhappily arise, it will take place under greatly altered conditions. I am looking at the question solely from a military point of view.

On the one hand, a Turkish army of the present day would be very different from what it was now nearly fifty years ago. The Nizam would doubtless be more efficient soldiers than they were then; but, if I am not greatly mistaken, the irregular troops, both horse and foot, which did such good service at Varna and Shumla, would be found to have lost much of that daring courage which made them prefer death to surrender. The Bashi-Bazouk of 1876 is but a sorry representative of the Spahi or Arnaout of '28 or '29. Nor is it to be expected that after so severe a lesson, the frontier fortresses—still less the passes of the Balkan—will again be neglected.

On the other hand, the Russians are not likely a second time so greatly to miscalculate the forces required for a successful invasion of Turkey. They cannot expect again to have the undisputed command of the Black Sea, which alone enabled Marshal Diebitsch to add the proud title of "Za Balkanski"—or crosser of the Balkan—to his name; and in crossing the Pruth they will feel that they are embarking upon an undertaking which will task to the utmost the strength of the Russian Empire to bring to a successful issue.