

## RELATED THINGS

### CONTRIBUTIONS AND REPRINT

#### NOVA MATER.

A Ballad of Immigration.

For The Public.

Our Mothers were the old lands,  
Unto pain and toil they bore us;  
Ah, cruel were our Mothers,  
But we loved them, love them still.  
Our kinsblood dyed to crimson  
Their stained flags that darkened o'er us,  
But we loved them while we suffered,  
And we bowed us to their will.

Our Mothers were the old lands,  
And we labored for their glory;  
Our sweat and tears were mingled  
In libation to their might;  
Our young men and our maidens  
Died upon their altars gory,  
But we dared not stay our giving  
When our Mothers claimed their right.

O Mother, fair new Mother,  
From the West we heard you calling  
With a pregnant voice of promise,  
Like a trumpet o'er the sea;  
And we thought us of the old lands,  
But thy word was all enthralling,  
So we brake our ancient fetters  
And in hope we came to thee.

O Mother, rich new Mother,  
We have ventured all to gain thee—  
Mistress of uncounted treasure—  
Hath our striving been in vain?  
Tolling, shall we be requited,  
Sowing, shall we reap a measure  
Of thy boasted golden bounty  
As a guerdon for our pain?

O Mother, strong new Mother,  
We have bought thy love with sorrow;  
We have sought thy smile in mill-fires,  
And thy voice in crashing pines.  
For thy yesterday's desire  
Must we pay with death tomorrow,  
In thy caissons and thy quarries,  
In thy furnaces and mines?

O Mother, stern new Mother,  
Is thy heart still great and tender?  
Is thine arm still strong in justice?  
Is thy love unspooled and free?  
Wilt thou crush the meek and lowly  
'Neath thy chariots of splendor?  
Wilt thou mock thy far-called children  
When in faith they come to thee?

Art thou also cruel, Mother,  
Like the ancient lands that bore us,  
Where our hearts cried out for freedom,  
And our starving mouths for bread?

Was thy voice a siren's calling?  
Was thy torch that flamed before us  
But the blay witch-fire, drifting  
Round a temple of the dead?

Foster Mother, sibyl Mother,  
Hear thy later children crying  
For a guide among the mountains,  
For a beacon on the sea,  
For a love-sign in the battle  
Where our broken folk are dying,  
For a new-bent bow of promise,  
For a voice of prophecy!

GEORGE M. P. BAIRD.

## LIBERTY, NOT RELIGION, THE CAUSE OF THE BALKAN WAR.

Professor Michael I. Pupin in the New York Press  
of October 27, 1912.\*

The Turks of old waged war like the Normans. They fought for the land itself rather than mere political dominion. As the fruit of their conquests they took the land and everything that pertained to it which they distributed among Turkish warriors who thereby became the lords of the conquered lands. The original owners—the Christians—who survived, became serfs, slaves, tenant tillers of the soil for the benefit of their masters. Thus, in European Turkey especially, since the Moslem invasion some five centuries ago, there have been two great classes of people, the Begs and the Kmetts. The Begs are the lords and the Kmetts the peasant serfs.

The Kmet is a tiller of the soil. Always from one-third to one-half of the products of the land go to the Beg. Out of the remainder which the Kmet nominally has for himself one-tenth is the tithe that goes to the Sultan, the chief owner of the land which is occupied by his vassals, the Begs.

Now the Sultans, from the old days to the present, have realized that the value of the Begs to the Turkish Empire had its real foundation upon the peasant serfs, the Kmetts. Therefore the Sultans have made it very difficult for the Begs to get rid of such Kmetts as did not please them. On the other hand, the Begs own the courts of justice so that, although it was theoretically difficult to get rid of the Kmetts who were undesirable, the control of the courts made this easy.

Now, the Beg, the noble, despises manual labor

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of any and every sort. His entire intelligence and physical strength is devoted to the art of war. This he has to know. It was because of their warlike prowess that his ancestors received the land which he now rules. It is his martial skill, also, that makes him of value to the state.

The Kmet, on the other hand, never has had any rights whatever. It is true he has a claim upon that portion of the products of the land that the law prescribes to him, but the Beg was always the final judge as to what constituted one-third or one-half of the crop—and the Beg always takes the lion's share.

The Beg had another advantage. Being the owner of the land under the Sultan, he could mortgage his property and borrow whatever money he could on it. In no case, however, has the Beg ever been known to spend any money in the improvement of agricultural methods, through the use of modern farm machinery or in anything else. The Kmet, having no collateral, cannot borrow any money except under such peculiar circumstances as I will explain presently.

The relative position of the Beg and the Kmet—the noble and the serf—is the fundamental difficulty in the whole organization of the Ottoman Empire. The Moslem lord and the Christian serf and the glorified feudal system under which they have lived for centuries have brought about the most awful abuses.

When a Beg wants to get rid of an undesirable Kmet usually he murders him. When there are a large number of undesirable Kmets in any province or district there ensue such terrible massacres and atrocities as we have had now and again in Turkey.

When a Beg sells a portion or all of his land, the serfs are included in the sale. They are really chattels. Even in mediæval Europe the feudal system never reached such perfection as exists in the Turkey of today. The Kmet has been barred from every avenue of progress. Even should he, in the face of the most adverse circumstances, be in any degree successful, he risks being stripped of every shred of his possessions at any moment by the vilest means at the command of the Beg, aided by the trickery of the courts.



Now as to the Turkish Empire itself: Its finances have been growing worse and worse, and it has been more and more expensive each year to maintain the army. The serfs and their lords have made no progress, and the income of the state from the soil has stood still for many years. The national debt has grown until it has become an enormous burden, resting in the end heavier and heavier on the serfs.

That is the situation that has brought about the present war, and the same thing that caused the conflicts of the past, which resulted in one

territory after another throwing off the yoke of the Turk. This is not an ordinary war for political reasons or for conquest. Nothing of the sort. It is a rebellion of these oppressed races in a struggle to obtain their natural rights—the rights to own land. They do not think of freedom at all. They do not know what freedom is. It is far beyond them. What these millions want is a chance to own the land they live on and to carve out their own destinies and their own salvation. They are simply fighting for ordinary human inalienable rights—to seek happiness in their own way—the things that were set forth in the American Declaration of Independence. They are like children, in a way. They do not yet know the full meaning of the words freedom and liberty, as they are understood here in this great Republic. This they will be quick to learn, however, after they have thrown off the feudal yoke of the Turk.



The same state of things existed in the other provinces of the Turkish Empire that are now separate kingdoms. Take Serbia, for instance. The first rising of Serbia was in 1804, under Black George, the ancestor of the present King. The rising was started by the misery of the Kmets. They were oppressed to a point where they could endure it no longer. Death was preferable. It was no sentiment or religious fervor that brought about that war any more than the present one. The cause of the uprising was simply an economic one. The end of it was the Kmets drove the Begs out.

Although the struggle began in 1804, it did not end until 1815. It continued with slight interruptions for eleven years. The conclusion was the destruction of the Begs in that particular territory. Then the Servian Principality was formed and the land was distributed among the peasants. In 1878, when the Kingdom of Serbia received four vilayets from Turkey, it bought out the Begs and distributed the land among the Kmets, who became the owners, repaying the Government by installments. Within the last year or two these former Kmets have finished paying their entire indebtedness to the state. Austria did not succeed in doing so in Bosnia and Hercegovina; hence the dissatisfaction that has existed there; but it was done in Bulgaria and it was done in Greece, and the feudal system was abolished.



It will be seen, therefore, that there were only two ways of settling this difficulty that the feudal system has brought about in the Christian provinces of the Ottoman Empire: by a great financial operation—the buying of the land—or by the sharper and quicker adjustment of the sword. . . .

Thus it has come about that the peoples of Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Greece have taken up arms against Turkey in order to win for their

brethren in the Ottoman Empire the inalienable rights of man. In the Ottoman provinces there is a population of Serbs, the same as live in Montenegro and in the kingdom of Serbia, and of Greeks, the same as live in the kingdom of Greece. Now, speaking for the Serbs, there is a wonderful bond of union between all Serbs, not only in the kingdom of Serbia and of Montenegro, but also among those Serbs who live in Macedonia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia and the southern part of Hungary. This extraordinary vital bond of union has been kept alive for 500 years simply by their wonderful national songs.

When the Turks conquered the Balkan peninsula churches and schools and other educational institutions ceased to exist. The people were reduced to a condition of abject slavery. But the national bard, with his one-stringed musical instrument called the gusle, survived. He traveled from village to village, from home to home, and recited and sang the ancient glory of the Serbs, their heroism and of the great historical events in their annals. To this day every one who hears these ballads learns them by heart. It is well known that an illiterate, oppressed people have a more tenacious verbal memory than an educated free people. So it was that these ballads were sung everywhere, throughout the centuries, and have preserved the wonderful union among the Serb people.

Goethe loved these songs so much that he actually learned the language of the Serbs in order to study them. He said they were the greatest literary productions the world ever saw, with possibly the exception of Homer's Iliad and Odyssey. The Serb has a great deal of artistic temperament, and loves music and song. That was the only thing the Turk could not steal away from him.

From one end to the other of the countries where dwell the Serbs you will find blind men, beggars, wandering minstrels singing these songs and reciting them to the people. You encounter them everywhere, along the highways, sitting at the bridges, in the market places. These minstrels make a comfortable living from alms which they get from their recitations, and no one begrudges them. If it were not for them and their ancestors through five centuries this national spirit would not be flaming up as it is today and as it has in the past.

Now these Serbs feel strongly for their brethren in Macedonia and in old Serbia. The reports of massacres and of outrages so gross that they cannot be spoken of in print, or horrible sufferings that have been endured by Serbs who are Ottoman subjects, have appeared from time to time in the Servian and Montenegrin newspapers, and have stirred the people of Serbia and of Montenegro profoundly. Now the chance and the time has come for them to do something for their brethren in Turkey. The people of Serbia and Montenegro

became so insistent that their governments had to yield to their desires. A wave of warlike enthusiasm swept over these countries, as well as over Bulgaria and Greece. The cry everywhere is to "Smash the Turk" and to drive him from Europe, liberating the Serbs and Bulgars and Greeks from Turkish rule and oppression.



In other words, this war is not the result of some political scheme on the part of some great Power, like Russia, for instance. Russia has been accused of fomenting dissatisfaction and inciting these peoples to the struggle with the Turks for the purpose of carrying out some of her secret political designs. The state of affairs in Turkey furnished a good and sufficient reason for the war. There was no necessity for England or Russia or any other Power to egg on Serbia or Bulgaria or Greece or Montenegro to fight the Turk. The enslavement of the Serbs, the Bulgars and Greeks on Turkish soil is sufficient reason for their declaring war. . . .

Bosnia and Herzegovina rebelled in 1876. Every one knows about the modern exploits of Montenegro, Tennyson told about them in a beautiful ode. The Serbs in Serbia were the first to free themselves from the Turks and to establish their independence, the present kingdom of Serbia. Despite their oppression, the Serbs never have lost their warlike character. They are still fighting men, and have been for centuries, just as the Turks have been, too, although the latter have made a profession of arms and have studied practically nothing else.



### "THERE RESTETH TO SERBIA A GLORY."

From Owen Meredith's Free Translation of "The Battle of Kossovo,"\* a Famous National Heroic Poem of Serbia.

There resteth to Serbia a glory,  
A glory that shall not grow old;  
There remaineth to Serbia a story,  
A tale to be chanted and told!  
They are gone to their graves grim and gory,  
The beautiful, brave and bold;  
But out of the darkness and desolation,  
Of the mourning heart of a widow'd nation,  
Their memory waketh an exultation!  
Yea, so long as a babe shall be born.  
Or there resteth a man in the land—  
So long as a blade of corn  
Shall be reapt by a human hand—  
So long as the grass shall grow  
On the mighty plain of Kossovo—  
So long, so long, even so,  
Shall the glory of those remain  
Who this day in battle were slain.

\*The Battle of Kossovo—the Servian Hastings—fought June 15, 1389, lost that nation its independence for 400 years.