

A NEW ALBANIAN IN EUROPE.

Constantinople and its Palaces, Hovels and Dogs –
From the Black Sea by the Bosphorus.

Dervishes, Fine Horses, No Liquor but Plenty of Coffee – Our so-Called
Navy, Gen. Lew Wallace – Sultan's Harems and Palaces.

Odessa, Russia - Keiv, Moscow and its Palaces and Churches –
St. Petersburg and its Sights, Museums and Monster Mammoth.

Prussia from the Frontier to Berlin – The Capital and its Attractions –
Polite and Kind People – Hamburg, Kiel.

Through Denmark, Sweden and Norway to Amsterdam, Holland.

Correspondence of the Ledger

KIEL, PRUSSIA, April 20, 1884

My last closed on our arrival at Constantinople, Turkey. There is much to interest the traveler in and about Constantinople in its antiquity and its peculiar people, &c., &c. The population is said to be one million.

The view, on leaving the Black sea and entering the Bosphorus, about ten miles below the city, for the entire distance is one of the most beautiful and grand that I ever beheld. The towers, palaces and arsenals on both sides of the Bosphorus, and as one approaches nearer the city, the sixteen palaces of the Sultan, so situated that most of them can be seen at one view – the numerous arsenals, that in external beauty and grandeur nearly equal the palaces of the Sultan; the handsome residences – all situated in conspicuous positions, built by different nations for their ministers; some beautiful residences built by citizens, together with the shipping in the harbor, all combine to make the view grand beyond description. But, alas! The curtain drops when one enters the city. The narrow, dirty streets, the miserable hovels in which the people live, the wretched appearance of the inmates, the thousands of half-starved dogs, the poor little donkeys, with loads of brick, stone or sand upon their backs – for as you know, nearly everything is carried upon the backs of men or donkeys. You seldom see a wagon or cart on the streets. Your baggage, no matter how large the trunk, is strapped on a man's back and he will carry it to or from your hotel without resting. Full-sized pianos are carried in this way by one man. Most of the streets, or at least many of them, are so narrow that a wagon cannot go through them.

Although the Sultan has sixteen palaces, he is not happy. Our guide informed us that he never occupied but one, and never leaves that

one except on Friday – the Turk's Sunday – when he goes to a mosque to pray for about half an hour, and on these occasions is attended by thousands of infantry and cavalry. It is the general impression that his fear of assassination is the reason why he does not leave his palace except upon the occasions mentioned; his brother having been killed about seven years ago, while Sultan.

Our Minister, Gen. Lew. Wallace, furnished us his canvass at the time the Sultan visited the Mosque when we were in the city, consequently we had a conspicuous position and saw the Sultan on his entering and leaving the mosque. He does not appear to be more than forty years old. We also saw his four sons, the eldest about fifteen. They are nice, modest looking boys, considering that they are the sons of the sultan.

There are many mosques; the largest, St. Sophia, was built as a Christian church about eight hundred years ago, but when the Turks conquered that country they took possession of this church and obliterated the crosses and everything that served to characterize it as a Christian church. Some idea of its immense size may be had by the fact that there are twenty-eight thousand lamps in it.

The people are ground by very heavy taxation, and business of every kind, they tell me, is at a stand still.

You can not form any idea of the appearance of the Turkish women, as their faces are entirely covered, except the eyes. The little girls are generally very pretty. Their faces are not covered till they are about twelve years of age.

The dogs are an institution of Constantinople. There are tens of thousands of these that have no home; but certain dogs occupy certain districts, and if a dog from another district dares to enter, they immediately double team on him and handle him very roughly until they get him out of their limit; they then let him go. I am told that the Turks never hurt a dog, and if you hear one howl you may be sure it was either a Jew or a Christian that hurt him. They lie around on the cold stones in the middle of the pavement without any regard to safety, but people generally avoid tramping on them. They are said to conduce to the health of the city as scavengers, eating much that would become putrid and very disagreeable.

The howling Dervishes are a sect peculiar to themselves. They believe in Allah – not in Mahomet. Their services consist in about forty of them, all men, getting on the floor and throwing their bodies into every imaginable shape, howling and screeching in the most horrible manner for about three hours, with very little cessation; then at the close, children from the age of six months to three years are brought in to be cured of diseases. They are laid upon their backs on a sheep skin and the High Priest stands on them, apparently with his whole weight, yet the children make no outcry whatever. I saw him stand upon a number.

The services of the dancing Dervishes consists of ten to twenty men in long green gowns, waltzing for hours very rapidly with very little intermission.

One must pay to see all these shows. By paying for it I was admitted to the Sultan's stable, where he keeps about fifty of his favorite horses, mostly Arabian, and very many of them as beautiful as it is possible for horses to be. He has another stable containing about three hundred, but they are not so fine.

Our guide informed me that one scarcely ever sees a drunken Turk, their religion forbidding the use of strong drinks, but they drink a very large quantity of coffee.

The Turkish name for Constantinople is Stamboul.

I regret to say, that through the penny wise and proud foolish system practiced by our government in the very small pay of our Ministers and Representatives, that they are compelled to live in so plain a manner, compared with those of other countries; none of those more able, some of them not half so able, as we are to keep up an establishment to comport with our importance as a nation. I am told by those who know that we suffer by the comparison, particularly in the estimation of the Turks.

The manner in which we are compelled, for the want of a navy, to pocket the insult given us by Bismarck, is much spoken of in Europe, and I hope will open the eyes of those in power and impress upon them the necessity of building a navy that will be a credit to our country, in place of the disgrace we suffer from the miserable excuse for a navy we now have.

Gen. Wallace is very popular in Constantinople, but is very anxious to get back to Indiana. Mrs. Wallace says she is coming this summer, whether the General does or not.

I believe I forgot to say that we were permitted to visit one of the Sultan's handsomest palaces, by paying quite liberally for the privilege but it paid us well, as we got some idea of the inner working of such establishments. The superb and beautiful manner in which every part is finished and everything else connected with the carrying on of such establishments, was very gratifying. I do not wish it to be understood that this palace is occupied as a harem at this time, but it has been, and servants and everything are kept up just as it was when occupied as such. No mortal eye, male or female, except the Sultan and the Eunuchs, can ever see inside of a harem. The women of the different harems drive out frequently on Friday, but always heavily veiled. Mrs. Wallace who has been in Constantinople about three years tells us she has never seen the face of one of the women belonging to any of the Sultan's harems. The children of four particular wives of the Sultan are considered legitimate and inherit title and property.

I hope your readers will excuse me for dwelling so long on Constantinople, but judging others by myself I think but little is known of the Turks. I will merely add that Constantinople has extensive water privileges, as the Black Sea, the Golden Horn, the Sea of Marmora, and the Bosphorus all center there. The city extends on both sides of the Bosphorus, therefore is part in Asia and partly in Europe. Adieu to Turkey.

We left Constantinople Monday morning, April 7th, at 8 o'clock, by steamship Mendoza for Odessa, Russia, arrived Tuesday morning at 10 o'clock, distance near three hundred miles, and had a very pleasant voyage, as the Black Sea behaved nicely.

Odessa is situated on the Black Sea and is an important seaport town of Russia. Where the city now stands the Black Sea once occupied the entire space. The city is very handsomely improved, the streets are all very wide and well paved with smooth rock. Trees are planted on the streets in nearly every part of the city, and in the summer must add greatly to its beauty and comfort. Population about 250,000. I think the droskies and the drosky driver are the hardest looking set I ever saw; the rascal that drove me from the steamer to the hotel cut and slashed his horses and run them at a rate I have never seen approached before. He turned the corner under a full run, and we expected every moment to be turned over. Nothing saved us except that the wheels of the droskies are so very low.

Nothing of special interest to relate of Odessa, so we leave Tuesday evening at 7½ for Moscow, distance more than one thousand miles. We had a four-passenger compartment sleeper to ourselves the entire distance, and got along very nicely. The stations and eating houses in Russia are large and well kept, but every person talks Russian – and very few talk any thing else – yet we managed to make ourselves understood, and fared very well. We pass through Kiev – about four hundred miles northeast of Odessa – a very beautiful city of about four hundred thousand population, situated on the banks of the river Duleper, and very attractive in scenery, private and public buildings, handsome streets, &c., &c. Kiev is next to the oldest city in Russia. Much of the land between Odessa and Moscow has the appearance of prairie – rich, black soil, most of it well cultivated, but the country not thickly settled, nor is there the evidence of thrift and prosperity that we see in Austria, Hungary, and Roumania, although much of the land we passed through is very similar to that of those countries. The people do not appear happy; complain very much of hard times. Some of them said to me that things had all gone wrong since the assassination of the late Emperor; and some expressed themselves as having no doubt but the present Emperor would be killed. The taxes they tell me are very heavy and oppressive.

Moscow is the oldest city in Russia, and they claim a population of about eight hundred thousand. The city is not so handsomely built, nor of

as much interest to the traveler, as some other cities of less size. The Kremlin encloses the Emperor's palace – the government buildings – six Greek churches and 600 cannon captured from Napoleon on his retreat from Russia in 1812. I have seen many handsome palaces, but nothing that compares with this of the Emperor at Moscow, in which city the Emperors are always crowned.

St. Savior church, recently completed, which has been about fifty years building, is said to be the handsomest church in Russia. It is certainly a grand structure, and very large. The faith of the Greek church is that of Russia. They have not any seats in their churches, therefore the hearers must all stand. In St. Michael's church you are shown a drop of the blood of John the Baptist; also one of the veritable nails that was taken out of the cross.

We left Moscow for St. Petersburg Friday evening, April 11th, at 9½, and arrived Saturday morning at 11 – distance about four hundred miles. Much of the land between Moscow and St. Petersburg is poor and thinly settled; the timber scrub oak and pine – towns not numerous. Population claimed for St. Petersburg, one million, and the city a very handsome one. The Emperor's palace is said, if possible, to excel in grandeur and beauty the one in Moscow. As the Emperor occupies the palace most of the winter we could not see its internal arrangements. His stables are immense, occupying both sides of a square and containing over four hundred horses, most of them as beautiful and fine as money can purchase. We were shown his carriages. Most of them might properly be chariots of gold. We also saw the one in which the present Emperor's father was blown up about three years ago. The body of the carriage was torn in pieces and it is kept just as it was left by the explosion. The picture gallery is very extensive, containing two thousand paintings, mostly the work of celebrated artists. It also contains much beautiful statuary.

The National Museum contains a very large and interesting collection of ancient and modern jewels, plate, handsome mosaic and other tables, and also many other articles belonging to the Royal family near two hundred years ago. One portion of the Museum is appropriated exclusively to articles owned and used by Peter the Great, who is here represented by a life-size figure in wax, dressed in the clothes he wore in his life time. Many of the articles of wood and iron were made by his own hands, as he was a great genius. Among his collection is a large amount of gold plate, and considering that it is about two hundred years since his reign they must be acknowledged to be great works of art.

The cottage of Peter the Great, built under his own supervision and in which he resided whilst planning and building St. Petersburg, still remains in a good state of preservation. Another building has been built around and over it to preserve it. The very boat – large enough to hold twelve or fifteen persons – built by Peter the Great is there; also, several pieces of

furniture, such as tables, chairs, secretary, etc., all his handi-work. One of the rooms of the cottage is fitted up as a chapel and is crowded most of the time with visitors and worshipers. We attended the American and English Presbyterian church and had a very excellent and appropriate sermon for the occasion. It was their communion season.

I met Mr. Priest, who is one of the firm of Ropes & Co., of Boston and New York and Ropes & Priest, St. Petersburg. I had done business with the American house and I know it was very pleasant to us to meet an American in that far off land. We had traveled about 7,000 miles to get there; and I think he was gratified to meet persons who knew of his former home.

The museum of Natural History contains everything ever heard of in that line. In the collection is the skeleton of the mammoth found frozen in the arctic regions a few years ago, an account of which I have no doubt many of your readers read at the time. Some of the skin is at least five times the thickness of an ordinary beef hide. The Mammoth stands beside the skeleton of an immense elephant, but the elephant appears like the calf of the mammoth. Naturalists give it as their opinion that the mammoth had been buried at least 1,000 years when discovered. I do not know what they base their opinion on unless it is that history does not furnish for that length of time any account of such animals as living.

The School of Mines has probably one of the largest collections of minerals and things in connection with mining, to be found in any country. A geologist could certainly spend weeks there very pleasantly.

There are other things we could write of St. Petersburg, but as we only expect to give a birds-eye view of matters and things in general we will bid adieu to St. Petersburg, after a delightful visit.

We left St. Petersburg for Berlin, Prussia, Tuesday, April 15th, at noon, in a compartment car to ourselves – arrived at Weisbaden, which is on the Russian border, in twenty-four hours – distance about 650 miles. There is very little to interest the tourist between St. Petersburg and the frontier; much of the land is poor and very thinly settled, not any towns of importance, the people you see are mostly clad in dirty greasy sheep skin coats, and I assure you it is better to give them a wide berth.

When you cross the frontier into Prussia, the whole scene changes. You see large and well cultivated farms, immense barns and comfortable, good sized houses. The people present a different appearance – look bright and happy. The country is very thickly settled, many towns and some cities from fifty to one hundred and fifty thousand in population on the way to Berlin, which is 360 miles from the frontier; time 16 hours.

The religious belief of Prussia is almost entirely Lutheran. Notwithstanding Prussia is governed by an Emperor, the laws are very much more liberal than in Russia; the taxes are not oppressive; the country is prosperous, and the people appear to be very fond of their Emperor,

who is 87 years old and cannot be expected to remain much longer. His son, the Crown Prince, is popular, and if living will succeed to the throne at his father's death. The wife of the Crown prince is a daughter of Queen Victoria. The Emperor walks and rides without any guard. The palace in which he resides is a plain looking establishment. The palace which is occupied only on state occasions is quite handsome compared with other palaces we have seen, yet the Prussian government, financially, is equal to any in Europe.

Berlin is a very prosperous city – population said to be 1,500,000 – about as great as New York and Brooklyn combined – and increasing. A few days may be spent to advantage in seeing places and things of interest. The National Gallery contains some fine statuary, and a very large collection of paintings, most of them by such masters as Rubens, Vandyck, Rembrandt, Murillo and others equally celebrated. The Museum of Industry and Fine Art has a large variety of Ancient and Modern art in wood carving, China, Glass, Silver plate, ancient and modern Jewelry and many other things. The building was erected expressly for the purpose, and is large and very handsome. The Exchange is a fine building and for numbers and noise fully equals New York.

The palace formerly occupied by the Princess of Brunswick, wife of Frederick the Great, whom his father urged him to marry but with whom he always refused to live, has twenty or more large rooms filled with beautiful presents of every description given the Royal family for near two hundred years by different crowned heads of Europe. The robes and other clothes worn upon coronation and other occasions by the Royal family, plate, china, &c., owned by them; also a wax figure of Frederick the Great, life size. I was much surprised to discover that he was a small man – not more than five feet six inches and very slender – but he was a great man. The Opera House is a credit to any city. It is very large, and I think in finish fully equals the Grand Opera House of Paris, which is said to be the finest in the world. We saw the Opera of Mignon in Berlin and think it was well done; the music was first class. The Armory is a very large and handsome building, filled with battle flags, cannon, small arms and various other things captured in battle, with the names of the battles, and the date on which they were captured. The Museum of Antiquity is a large and beautiful building, erected expressly for the purpose, and is filled with marble and bronze statuary and various other articles, discovered in Pergamus and various other places, which had been hidden from mortal sight for many centuries.

There are numerous parks, some of them very large; one containing fifteen hundred acres, having beautiful walks, drives, lakes, &c. In the center is a magnificent monument of Victory erected in honor and memory of the great victory over the French some ten years ago. The

Zoological garden connected with this park is claimed to be the largest and finest in the world.

Potsdam, about ten miles from Berlin, has about a dozen palaces, which have been the summer residence for the Royal family for many years. Sanssouci was the favorite retreat of Frederick the Great.

The dogs of Berlin are used to good advantage by being worked in small wagons, and you would be surprised to see what a pair of dogs can haul.

Although we have received nothing but kindness and politeness at the hands of all with whom we have come in contact, yet we must say that we have received more marked attention and politeness shown us in Prussia than by any other people.

We now take leave of Berlin and proceed to Hamburg – a splendid city of 600,000 population about 150 miles northwest of Berlin, situated on the Elbe River, which empties into the North sea about fifty miles from Hamburg, and is navigable for the largest size steamers, and as regards the amount of shipping is the second port in the world, nearly equalling Liverpool. The city is beautifully built, many wide, handsome, clean streets, very fine hotels, good churches, many parks in and around the city – all make it a place at which the tourist can spend a week very pleasantly. Hamburg once belonged to Denmark, but in the war with Prussia and Austria in 1864 lost it, Prussia wanting it for a seaport.

As this is the northern border of Prussia, we now say adieu to Prussia, and visit Denmark, Sweden and Norway and take steamer at Christiania, Norway, and cross the North Sea to Amsterdam, Holland, where we are comfortably quartered at the elegant hotel, Brocks Dollen, where we shall spend a few days, and then proceed to the Hague, Rotterdam, &c., an account of which you may receive at some future day. I here repeat that notwithstanding we have seen much to admire, and enjoyed every moment of our travels, not having met with the slightest delay or accident, or anything to mar our pleasure, yet I shall be very glad to press the soil of our own loved America, and feel that every man and woman born in the United States – particularly in New Albany – should be thankful for it.

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