

# The National Tribune

A Monthly Journal devoted to the interests of the Soldiers and Sailors of the late war, and all Pensioners of the United States.

GEORGE E. LEMON & CO., } Vol. I, No. 8.  
Editors and Proprietors.

WASHINGTON, D. C., MAY, 1878.

TERMS, FIFTY CENTS PER YEAR.  
Single Copies, 5 Cents in Currency or Postage Stamps.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year of our Lord, 1878, by Geo. E. Lemon & Co., in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington, D. C.

## Living Constantinople.

### Panorama of the Stamboul Bridge.

[From "Constantinople," by Edmondo de Amicis.]

To see the population of Constantinople it is well to go upon the floating bridge, about one-quarter of a mile in length, which extends from the most advanced point of Galata to the opposite shore of the Golden Horn, facing the great mosque of the Sultana Valide. Both shores are European territory; but the bridge may be said to connect Asia to Europe, because in Stamboul there is nothing European save the ground, and even the Christian suburbs that crown it are of Asiatic character and color. The Golden Horn, which has the look of a river, separates two worlds, like the ocean. The news of events in Europe which circulates in Galata and Pera clearly and minutely, and much discussed, arrives on the other shore confused, and garbled, like a distant echo; the fame of great men and great things in the west is stopped by that narrow water as by an insuperable barrier, and over that bridge, where every day a hundred thousand people pass, not one idea passes in ten years.

Standing there one can see all Constantinople go by in an hour. Whatever can be imagined that is most extravagant in type, costume and social class may there be seen within the space of 20 paces and 10 minutes of time. Behind a throng of Turkish porters who pass running, and bending under enormous burdens, advances a sedan chair, inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl, and bearing an Armenian lady; and at either side of it a Bedouin wrapped in a white mantle, and a Turk in muslin turban and sky-blue caftan, beside whom canters a young Greek gentleman followed by his dragoman in embroidered vest, and a Dervise with his tall conical hat and tunic of camel's hair, who makes way for the carriage of a European ambassador, preceded by his running footman in gorgeous livery. All this is only seen in a glimpse, and the next moment you find yourself in the midst of a crowd of Persians, in pyramidal bonnets of Astrakan fur, who are followed by a Hebrew in a long yellow coat, open at the sides; a frowzy-headed Gypsy woman with her child in a bag at her back; a Catholic priest with breviary and staff; while in the midst of a confused throng of Greeks, Turks and Armenians, comes a big eunuch on horseback, crying out, "Larya!" (make way!) and preceding a Turkish carriage, painted with flowers and birds, and filled with the ladies of a harem, dressed in green and violet, and wrapped in large white veils; behind a sister of charity from the hospital at Pera, an African slave carrying a monkey, and a professional story-teller in a necromancer's habit, and what is quite natural, but appears strange to the new-comer, all these diverse people pass each other without a look, like a crowd in London; and not a single countenance wears a smile. The Albanian, in his white petticoat and with pistols in his sash, beside the Tartar, dressed in sheep-skins; the Turk, astride of his caparisoned ass, threads pompously two long strings of camels; behind an adjutant of an imperial prince, mounted upon his Arab steed, clatters a cart filled with all the odd domestic rubbish of a Turkish household; the Mohammedan woman afoot, the veiled slave woman, the Greek with her red cap and her hair on her shoulders, the Maltese hooded in her black faldetta, the Hebrew woman dressed in the antique costume of India, the negress wrapped in a many-colored shawl from Cairo, the Armenian from Trebizond, all veiled in black like a funeral apparition, are seen in single file, as if placed there on purpose to be contrasted with each other.

It is a changing mosaic of races and religions that is composed and scattered continually with a rapidity that the eye can scarcely follow. It is amusing to look only at the passing feet and see all the foot coverings in the world go by, from that of Adam up to the latest fashion in Parisian boot—yellow Turkish babouches, red Armenian, blue Greek and black Jewish shoes; sandals, low-cut slippers, leg pieces of many colors, belonging to horsemen from Asia Minor, gold embroidered shoes, Spanish alportagos, shoes of satin, of twine, of rags, of wood, so many that while you look at one you catch a glimpse of a hundred more. One must be on the alert not to be jostled and overthrown at every step. Now it is a water carrier with a colored jar upon his back; now a Russian lady on horseback; now a squad of imperial soldiers in zouave dress, and stepping as if to an assault; now a crew of Armenian porters, two and two, carrying on their shoulders immense bars, from which are suspended great bales of merchandise; and now a throng of Turks who dart from left to right of the bridge to embark in the steamers that lie there. There is a tread of many feet, a murmuring, a sound of voices, guttural notes, aspirations interjectional, incomprehensible and strange, among which a few French or Italian words that reach the ear seem like luminous points upon a black darkness. The figures that most attract the eye in all this crowd are the Circassians, who go in groups of three and five together, with slow steps, big-bearded men of a terrible countenance, wearing bearskin caps like the old Napoleonic guards, long, black caftans, daggers at their girdles and silver cartridge-boxes on their breasts; real figures of banditti, who look as they had come to Constantinople to sell a daughter or a sister—with their hands imbued with Russian blood. Then the Syrians, with robes in the form of Byzantine dolmatic, and their heads enveloped in gold-striped handkerchiefs; Bulgarians, dressed in coarse serge, and caps encircled with fir; Georgians in hats of varnished leather, their tunics bound round the waist with metal girdles; Greeks from

the Archipelago, covered from head to foot with embroidery, tassels and shining buttons.

From time to time the crowd slackens a little; but instantly other groups advance, waving with red caps and white turbans, amid which the cylindrical hats, umbrellas and pyramidal headdresses of Europeans, male and female, seem to float, borne onward with that Musselman torrent. It is amazing even, to note the variety of religions.

The shining bald head of the Capuchin friar, the towering janissary turban of an Ulema, alternate with the black veil of an Armenian priest, Imams with white tunics, veiled nuns, chaplains of the Turkish army, dressed in green, with sabres at their sides, Dominican friars, pilgrims returned from Mecca, with a talisman hanging at their necks, Jesuits, Dervises, and this is very strange. Dervises that tear their own flesh in expiation of their sins, and cross the bridge under a sun-umbrella, all pass by. If you are attentive, you may notice in the throng a thousand amusing incidents. Here is a eunuch, showing the white of his eye to a Christian exquisite, who has glanced too curiously into the carriage of his mistress; there is a French cocotte, dressed after the latest fashion plate, leading by the hand the beloved and bejeweled son of a pasha; or a lady of Stambul, feigning to adjust her veil that she may peer more easily at the train of a lady of Pera; or a sergeant of cavalry in full uniform stopping in the middle of the bridge to blow his nose with his fingers in a way to give one a cold chill; or a quack, taking his last sou from some poor devil, and making a cabalistic gesture over his face to cure him of sore eyes.

Sometimes there passes a mighty pasha with three tails, lounging in a splendid carriage, followed by his pipe-bearer, and one black slave and then all the Turks salute, touching the forehead and breast, and the mendicant women—horrible witches, with ruffled faces and naked breasts—run after the carriage crying for charity. Eunuchs not on service pass in twos and threes and fives together, cigarette in mouth, and are recognized by their corpulence, their long arms, and their black habits. Little Turkish girls, dressed in green, fall trousers and rose or yellow vests, run and jump with feline agility, making way for themselves with their henna-tinted hands. Bootblacks with gilded boxes, barbers with bench and basin in hand, sellers of water and sweetmeats, cleave the press in every direction, screaming in Greek and Turkish. At every step comes glittering a military division, officers in fez and scarlet trousers, their breasts constellated with medals; grooms from the seraglio, looking like generals of the army; gendarmes, with a whole arsenal at their belts; zeibeks, or free soldiers, with those enormous baggy trousers that make them resemble in profile the Hottentot Venus; imperial guards, with long white plumes upon their casques and gold-bedizened breasts; city guards of Constantinople—guards, as one might say, required to keep back the waves of the Atlantic Ocean. The contrasts between all this gold and all those rags, between people loaded down with garments, looking like walking bazaars, and people almost naked, are most extraordinary. The spectacle of so much nudity is alone a wonder. Here are to be seen all shades of skin color, from the milky whiteness of Albania to the crow-blackness of Central Africa and the bluish-blackness of Darfur; chests that, if you struck upon them, would resound like a huge bass or rattle like pottery; backs oily, stony, full of wrinkles, and hairy, like the back of a wild boar; arms embossed with red and blue, and decorated with designs of flowers and inscriptions from the Koran. But it is not possible to observe all this in one's first passage over the bridge. While you are examining a tattoo on an arm, your guide warns you that a Wallachian, a Servian, a Montenegrin, a Cossack of the Don, a Cossack of the Ukraine, an Egyptian, a native of Tunis, a prince of Inerezia is passing by. It seems that Constantinople is the same as it always was—the capital of three continents and the queen of twenty vice realms. But even this idea is insufficient to account for the spectacle, and one fancies a tide of emigration, produced by some enormous cataclysm, that has overturned the antique continent.

Seekers after the beautiful or the horrible will here find their most audacious desires fulfilled; Raphael would be in ecstasies, and Rembrandt would tear his hair. The purest types of Greek and Caucasian beauty are mingled with flat noses and woolly heads; queens and fairies pass beside you; lovely faces and faces deformed by disease and wounds; monstrous feet, and tiny Circassian feet no longer than your hand, gigantic porters, enormously corpulent Turks and black sticks of skeleton shadows of men that fill you with pity and disgust; every strangest in which can be presented the ascetic life, the abuse of pleasure, extreme fatigue, the excess of opulence and the misery that kills. Who loves colors may here have his fill. No two figures are dressed alike. Here are shawls twisted around the head, savage fillets, coronets of rags, skirts and under-vests in stripes and squares like harlequins, girdles stuck full of knives that reach to the armpits, Mameluke trousers, short drawers, skirts, togas, trailing sheets, coats trimmed with ermine, vests like golden cuirasses, sleeves puffed and slashed, habits monkish and habits covered with gold lace, men dressed like women, and women that look like men; beggars with the port of princes, a ragged elegance, a profusion of colors, of fringes, tags, and fluttering ends of childish and theatrical decorations, that remind one of a masquerade in a mad-house, for which all the old clothes dealers in the universe have emptied their stores.

The first amazement over, the festive colors fade; it is

no longer a grand carnival procession that is passing; it is humanity itself filing by with all its miseries and follies, with all the infinite discords of its belief and its laws; it is a pilgrimage of a debased people and a fallen race; an immensity of suffering to be helped, of shame to be washed out, of chains to be broken; an accumulation of tremendous problems written in characters of blood, which can only be solved by torrents of blood; and it is all horribly sad.

## A Happy Form of Insanity.

Prof. McDonald recently delivered an exceedingly interesting lecture at the New York University Medical College, on that form of insanity known as general paresis. The lecture was illustrated by eight inmates of Ward's Island Asylum, who sat quietly upon the platform until called upon to speak. The cases of general paresis generally comes from the better class of society. At first the patient suffers great mental depression, and that is followed by elation of the spirits to such a degree that the victim always imagines himself possessed of great wealth, power, or social influence. After occupying half an hour in lecturing, Prof. McDonald called upon the patients one by one to speak for themselves. They spoke freely in answer to questions, each claiming for himself enormous wealth, power, and influence. The professor said that a peculiarity about these patients was that they not only believed themselves to be sane, but never doubted the sanity of other patients similarly afflicted. They often formed copartnerships in the asylum for carrying on great enterprises. He knew a patient who imagined that he owned all the steamships in the world, and another who imagined he owned all the dried apples in the world. They formed a co-partnership, agreeing that the dried apples should be shipped on board the steamers and transported to all points of the world, calculating the profits at fabulous prices.

## The Science of Naval Warfare.

A correspondent writing of a recent reconnaissance of the Turkish fleet toward Sebastopol, says, "Before concluding I may say a few words respecting the admirable manner in which the concentration of the enemy's fire was managed. They had evidently adopted the 'Siemens and Halske's' stadiometer, an instrument by which the position of any vessel entering a harbor or the distance of any object in view can be ascertained at a moment's notice. Two observers are required at the end of a base line, and they have merely to follow the motions of the object, if moving, or bring it in the center of the field of their respective telescopes. The observer at the one end has his telescope affixed to a table on which is spread a chart of the harbor marked off in squares, each of which is numbered. The pedestal of his telescope carries a light pointer, either of glass or a light, open, narrow frame. At the other end of this table is a similar pointer, attached to machinery placed within a small box situated underneath, which is worked by currents of electricity sent from an electro-magnetic battery at the other station. The moving of the telescope, in fact, causes the rotary motion necessary for the reduction of the electricity, and everything is so adjusted that the movements of this telescope and of the pointer at the table shall always correspond. When both the telescopes are pointed at the same object the pointers cross, and the scale of the chart being in accordance with and in proportion to the base line, the point of intersection naturally shows the section of the harbor in which the object is to be found. Similar maps being placed in all the forts and batteries, it is very easy to communicate by flashing signals the number of the square in which the enemy's ship happens to be, and thus the range at each point can be at once ascertained, and the guns laid accordingly. During the day, when the sun is shining, mirrors answer this purpose admirably; and at night the flashing of a lantern will equally serve to telegraph the required information.

## Survival of the Fittest.

The Darwinian doctrine of the survival of the fittest in animal life, in its relation to the perfection of the species, says the Philadelphia Times, is quite as applicable to the vegetable world, as many careful cultivators are aware. The practice of saving the best for seed, if adopted by the farming community generally, would increase the average production to an extent little dreamed of. The usual practice is just the other way. Small potatoes are not only saved for seed, but there are many who assert that they see a profit in it—an erroneous idea which cannot too soon be corrected. In respect to grain there is less variety of opinion. The following, which comes to us in an exchange, confirms the principle:

"A farmer, well known for his care in the selection of his seed, made it a practice to set apart each year a certain portion of his fields for the raising of seed. Upon these seed-plats none but the most select seed was used, and of a given quality. The best cultivation was given, without regard to cost, and the product of these seed-plats was used for the general crops; the top or extra grain being carefully sorted each year, to be again sown for future seed. Thus he always had none but the best and most mature seed for sowing, and always obtained an extra price from others, for seed from his fields. But his own selected seed for these seed-plats could not be bought at any price."