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EUROPEAN RULERS AND THEIR ARMIES

Washington, D. C., Nov. 10, 1897.—General Miles is very indignant at the statements which have been published as to his extravagant quarters on his steamship across the Atlantic. This fact came out in a chat which I had with him last night. I asked him about his \$750 state room, putting the question as to whether that was not a high rate for Uncle Sam to pay for one man's passage. General Miles replied: "That story was made out of whole cloth. It was a lie from beginning to end, but it has seemed to me too silly to need contradiction. The truth is, when I was ordered to go to Europe I engaged an ordinary first-class state room. When I stepped on board the ship I found my room occupied. By some mistake it had been assigned to a lady. Her baggage was in the room, and I could not insist upon her leaving it. One of the managers of the steamship company happened to be on board, and he very generously gave me another room which happened to be vacant, without any additional charge."

"Then your state room did not cost \$750?"
"No; it did not," was the emphatic reply.

"Did it cost you \$500?"
"No," replied General Miles. "It did not, and nothing like it. The actual rate charged was that of the ordinary first-class passage, and no more."

"How about your trouble with Admiral Miller, general? It is said that you crowded him out of the Buckingham Palace Hotel in London."

"There is not a word of truth in that," replied General Miles. "I can't think how the story originated, but I see that it has gone the rounds of the press. The admiral and myself were both guests of the English government. Our accommodations were arranged for us at that hotel. We had nothing to do with making the arrangements, and our names were placed over the doors of our rooms before we went there. The other guests had their rooms assigned in the same way. Over one room was posted the name of the crown prince of Siam, another bore that of the duke of Wurtemberg, a third that of the grand duke of Russia, and so it was with all the guests. The rooms to which I was assigned were a small parlor at the front and a sleeping apartment in the rear, having windows opening out upon a court. Admiral Miller's name was over the door of his rooms and mine was over my rooms. I never saw the admiral's rooms, and I don't think he ever saw mine. The story was a misstatement from beginning to end."

The conversation here drifted to General Miles' experiences during his tour. He visited nearly every great army of Europe and saw more than 400,000 soldiers in the maneuvers and in the camps of the different countries. He inspected the military factories and investigated the newest things in arms and ammunition. He came into con-

tact with the chief generals of Europe, and I found his stories of his interviews with some of the great monarchs exceedingly interesting. During the conversation I asked him to tell me something about the sultan. He replied:

"My first view of the Turkish troops was the Friday after I arrived in Constantinople. I saw the sultan the same day, and at the same time. It was upon the occasion of the sultan's going to worship at his favorite mosque, near his palace. He does this every Friday. The mosque is a beautiful marble structure not far from the banks of the Bosphorus. Just opposite the mosque there is a small palace. I was given a place in this palace, and from its windows I could see the regiments as they massed themselves about the mosque. There were, I think, about 7,000 soldiers on duty. Each regiment of cavalry had horses of the same color and nearly every regiment was uniformed differently. There were troops of Circassians with black caps. They wore European uniforms, but their breasts were covered with cart-ridges. There were troops of Turks in turbans and there were other troops wearing caps and brilliant uniforms. There were long lines of infantry, some dressed in green, the favorite color of the prophet Mahomet, and others in uniforms of blue trimmed in red. The cavalry were all mounted. Their horses were not large, but they were well formed, and most of them had Arabian blood in them."

"Did the sultan ride on horseback?" I asked.

"No, his majesty rode to the mosque in a carriage, which was driven by a coachman in a red velvet suit embroidered in gold. He had a large escort with him, and the procession was a most impressive one. As he appeared the soldiers all faced directly and looked toward him, here was a great cheering from the crowd, and this continued until his majesty had entered the mosque."

"But, general, it was not at this time that your interview with the sultan took place?"

"No," replied General Miles. "My audience was shortly after this. The sultan received me in his palace, and I had some conversation with him about military and other matters. The conversation was carried on through an interpreter."

"How did his majesty impress you?"

"He seemed to me a man of considerable ability," said General Miles. "He is shrewd, cunning and adroit, and he has one of the most influential positions among the rulers of the world. He is, you know, not only the head of the Mohammedans of Europe and Asia, but of all the Mohammedans on earth. There are something like one hundred and sixty million Mohammedans, who look upon him as their spiritual head. He has been on the throne for twenty-six years, and it would seem to me that he must be pretty much of a man to be able to maintain himself for that length of time, surrounded, as

he is by the great powers of Europe, who are ready to take advantage of any mistake he may make."

"Did you hear anything of the brother whom he succeeded during your stay in Constantinople?"

"Only gossip," replied General Miles. "The sultan's brother, you know, was deposed on the ground of insanity. He was taken from the throne and imprisoned. He is now believed to be in one of the palaces on the Bosphorus, and there is a military guard of about four thousand soldiers about this palace. It is supposed to contain the ex-sultan, but the world does not know whether he is there or not, whether he is alive or dead, whether he is insane or sane."

"I have heard it said that the present sultan is afraid of his life and that he is a nervous wreck on this account. Did you see anything that might confirm this opinion?"

"No," replied General Miles. "As to his being afraid of his life, I doubt whether there is a monarch in Europe who has not a greater or less fear of assassination. You remember there have been recent attempts to kill the king of Italy, the emperor of Austria and the president of France. I don't believe the sultan is more afraid of his life than any of the other monarchs are of losing theirs."

"Does the sultan really understand military matters?" said I.

"Yes, indeed," said General Miles. "He knows all about his troops and their equipment. He spoke of his army having some American guns, and apparently had a good knowledge of the different kinds of firearms. He is very proud of his army, and when I remarked that he must have had good generals in order to be able to mobilize 600,000 men in forty-five days, he replied that he 'knew he had good generals, and that he had made them.' meaning, I suppose, that he had chosen the generals himself."

"Did he say anything about the war?"

"Not much," replied General Miles. "save when I referred to the success of the Turks, he replied, 'that God was on the side of the right; that the Greeks had made war upon him without cause, and that through God's displeasure they had been unsuccessful.'"

"Where did you go after leaving Turkey, general?"

"I went to see the Greek and Turkish armies in the field. I sailed down through the Dardanelles and saw the fortifications there, and thence I sailed to Athens and went to the field. The advance lines of the two armies were within 400 yards of each other. I went along the picket line of the Greek army under a flag of truce. As I did so I could see the Turks and could hear their bugles. The Turks were then living in the tents which they had captured from the Greeks, and the Greeks were without shelter in the rain."

"Were the Greeks at all ready for war, general?"

"No, they were not," was the reply.