



The Balkan Wars 1912-1913

Jacob Gould Schurman

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This covers the crucial wars in the Balkans in 1912-1913, which brought in a host of European nations and was a prelude of sorts to World War I. From the preface: "The interest in the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 has exceeded the expectations of the publishers of this volume. The first edition, which was published five months ago, is already exhausted and a second is now called for. Meanwhile there has broken out and is now in progress a war which is generally regarded as the greatest of all time—a war already involving five of the six Great Powers and three of the smaller nations of Europe as well as Japan and Turkey and likely at any time to embroil other countries in Europe, Asia, and Africa, which are already embraced in the area of military operations. This War of Many Nations had its origin in Balkan situation. It began on July 28 with the declaration of the Dual Monarchy to the effect that from that moment Austria-Hungary was in a state of war with Servia. And the fundamental reason for this declaration as given in the note or ultimatum to Servia was the charge that the Servian authorities had encouraged the Pan-Serb agitation which seriously menaced the integrity of Austria-Hungary and had already caused the assassination at Serajevo of the Heir to the Throne. No one could have observed at close range the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 without perceiving, always in the background and occasionally in the foreground, the colossal rival figures of Russia and Austria-Hungary. Attention was called to the phenomenon at various points in this volume and especially in the concluding pages. The issue of the Balkan struggles of 1912-1913 was undoubtedly favorable to Russia. By her constant diplomatic support she retained the friendship and earned the gratitude of Greece, Montenegro, and Servia; and through her championship, belated though it was, of the claims of Roumania to territorial compensation for benevolent neutrality during the war of the Allies against Turkey, she won the friendship of the predominant Balkan power which had hitherto been regarded as the immovable eastern outpost of the Triple Alliance. But while Russia was victorious she did not gain all that she had planned and hoped for. Her very triumph at Bukarest was a proof that she had lost her influence over Bulgaria. This Slav state after the war against Turkey came under the influence of Austria-Hungary, by whom she was undoubtedly incited to strife with Servia and her other partners in the late war against Turkey. Russia was unable to prevent the second Balkan war between the Allies. The Czar's summons to the Kings of Bulgaria and Servia on June 9, 1913, to submit, in the name of Pan-Slavism, their disputes to his decision failed to produce the desired effect, while this assumption of Russian hegemony in Balkan affairs greatly exacerbated Austro-Hungarian sentiment. That action of the Czar, however, was clear notification and proof to all the world that Russia regarded the Slav States in the Balkans as objects of her peculiar concern and protection."

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