

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

VOLUME TWO

EUROPE AND THE EAST

BY

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“If a man take no thought about what is distant,
he will find sorrow near.”

Confucian Analects, XV, XI.



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THIS WORK
IS AFFECTIONATELY AND RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
TO MY BROTHER
ALBERT WADSWORTH HARRIS

PREFACE

As originally planned, this work was to have been a study of the relations of Western powers with Eastern states and of Asiatic politics and development during a definite historical period, that is, from 1850 to 1910. The World War and its aftermath, including the awakening of the whole Orient and the beginning of new and important developments in Asia, has necessitated bringing the text up to date. In narrating events connected with the movements in the different sections of the great field covered here, an attempt has been made to tell, as far as possible, a complete story. But in some instances — particularly in the case of Persia and of China, where affairs are still in a state of transition — this could not be done. Nevertheless, in spite of drawbacks, it has been deemed worth while to relate the story of European expansion and intervention in Asia and the Pacific Ocean in one concise and readable volume, so that the entire movement may be seen in its proper perspective, and so that the main facts will be available to students of international politics and to intelligent readers who desire to understand present-day movements and conditions in the East.

The difficulties involved in handling the enormous mass of material relating to Asiatic political and commercial activities through a period of eighty years and in dealing properly with the multitudinous historical events of the present time and year have not been underestimated. The task of elimination has been greater than that of composition; and the liability to error in matters both of fact and of judgment has been higher than is usual in historical writing. Yet if the story has been accurately and justly told, if he who runs

may see and comprehend, and if some assistance has been given in enabling Occidentals to understand the East and in bringing the Occident and the Orient into closer association and coöperation in the noble labor of creating the great civilization of the future, this work will not have been in vain.

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EUROPE AND THE EAST



CHAPTER I

WORLD POLITICS IN THE EAST

THE relations of Europe and Asia, although more or less continuous for several centuries, have assumed the proportions of a real and intimate intercourse only in recent times. The actual transformation of Asia, with its isolation, its superstition, its inertia, and its indifference to the life, the trade, and the politics of the outside world, into a continent of modern communities, dates from that day in January, eighty years ago, when the British frigates bombarded the Bogue forts, and opened a door in China to international trade. Since then, Asiatic states have become members of the family of nations, exchanged ambassadors with all their sister communities, and participated in the great political, economic, commercial, educational, and even religious movements of the times; while the little stream of trade which was borne by caravans and sailing vessels to the distant East has swelled into a tremendous current flowing continuously over land and sea. And the locomotive, the ocean greyhound, the telegraph, the telephone, and the wireless have brought Europe and Asia into such close touch that they have to-day more than a speaking acquaintance.

Meanwhile, the best — and alas! the worst — elements of European Christian civilization were being carried to the Orient, and an ill-advised attempt to Europeanize Asiatic peoples and countries was inaugurated. This movement,

however, outside of the private enterprise of Christian individuals and institutions, was far from being philanthropic and disinterested, even in its inception. From the days when Marco Polo, Vasco da Gama, and their confrères crossed the deserts of Asia and ploughed the Indian and Pacific Oceans in search of adventure and profit, it had been largely a selfish and commercial affair. And, for upwards of three centuries, intercourse between the West and the East had been left to the uncontrolled initiative or caprice of the individual trader, or of commercial corporations such as the British and Dutch East India Companies. The traders were, in the main, well-intentioned; and the action and ambition of many an agent and leader were thoroughly honorable and disinterested. A few, such as Sir Stamford Raffles at Singapore, the Count of Lally-Tollendal in India, and Lord Napier at Canton, sacrificed their careers, ambitions, and even lives, to promote the interests of their home countries and to establish honorable relations with the natives of Eastern lands. But too often the trading companies and their representatives proved as soulless and as unscrupulous as some of our modern corporations; and the methods and means employed to promote their interests aroused the suspicion and enmity of Orientals. And the unthinking, brutal acts of half-drunk European sailors and soldiers, when ashore or on duty in Eastern lands, and the deceitful, illegal proceedings of European merchants, who showed frequently a haughty disdain of all things Oriental and an open disrespect for those things held sacred by the natives of the East, created a hostility to Westerners in many quarters which has survived to the present day.

Such a legacy was not a happy one for the European governments, when they began to take over the supervision

and control of foreign intercourse in the East, along toward the middle of the nineteenth century. Nor were the circumstances attending this movement auspicious in other particulars. The Peking Government and the Chinese provincial officials opposed strenuously all attempts of the British to open official trade relations with China; and the so-called "Opium War" resulted. In India, the administration of the British East India Company was nearly overthrown by the Sepoy Rebellion before the English Government took over the direction of affairs. And, in the Near East, when intervention by foreign powers in Turkish affairs was first proposed, a conflict of interests led Great Britain and France to take sides with the Ottoman Empire against Russia in that stupid conflict known as the Crimean War.

Even after the European governments had assumed direct control of their own colonial activities, and of the forward movement in Africa and the East, little improvement was noticeable for many years in the conduct of relations between European and Asiatic states. For, with the growth of Western states in wealth and power, national ambition and avarice soon eclipsed all sense of justice and honor. An unscrupulous competition for commercial privileges, trade monopolies, markets, and economic concessions ensued, in which diplomatic intrigues, intimidation, bribery, and force were universally employed, on the basis that the end justifies the means. And all the European powers of the first class, and some other states, joined in a movement to preëempt for themselves important strategic places and trade centers, to mark out certain districts as "spheres of influence," and to seize territory, with the purpose of providing for their future commercial and industrial needs, and of promoting their expansion into

world empires. Such activities marked the progress of Great Britain in India and its vicinity, of Russia in Turkestan and Manchuria, of Germany in Shantung, of France in Indo-China, and of Japan in Korea and Manchuria. And this stupendous race for world trade and national expansion gave rise to the infamous Imperialism, and later, to its saner and broader-minded relative — the New Internationalism; while, out of this whirlpool of international conflict and competition, there arose a world intercourse and a world politics, as we have them to-day.

The enlargement of intercourse between the West and the East took place in four great divisions of the East, although there has been of necessity some overlapping of activities here and there. These four regions may be concisely designated by the terms: Near East, Middle East, Far East, and Oceanica or the Pacific Islands. It is with the first three of these, in the main, that the present volume proposes to deal. By the Near East, we mean those portions of Europe and Asia which touch upon the five great waterways — the trunk-lines of traffic lying at the back door of Europe — namely: the eastern Mediterranean and the Dardanelles, the Black Sea and the Bosphorus, the Red Sea and the Suez Canal, and the Persian Gulf. In this region, the Ottoman Empire in Asia has been the storm center, with the outlying districts of the Balkans, the Caucasus, Arabia, and Egypt playing important side rôles and contributing considerably to the general trend of events. From the days of Napoleon, who wrote to the French Directory in 1797, "To destroy England, we must take possession of Egypt," to the age of William II with his "Drang nach Osten," there has been a constant struggle "to have and to hold" the route to the East and the trade of the Near East.

In the Middle East, India has held the center of the stage