

OUR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

CONSTANTINOPLE, Sept. 25, 1878.

Editor West Shore.—Every school-boy knows that Constantinople is descended from ancient Byzantium. We read that so early as 658 before Christ, Byzantium was a Greek colony; its name having been derived from *Byzas*, its founder. It is a curious fact that, although Byzantium is generally supposed to have been a Greek colony, the root of *Byzas* coincides with that of *Byzaces*, a people of Asia Minor, alluded to by Valerius Flaccus and Pliny; the latter, however, uses the Greek and calls them *Buzeri*. It must have been subject to Persia soon after this period, since Rollin tells us, book VI, chap. 11, sec. 14, that in the year 476 B. C., it was taken from the Persians by the Greeks under the command of Aristides. It remained thus one hundred and thirty-six years, when Philip, of Macedon, laid siege to the city, but was defeated, as the Byzantines say, by miraculous interposition and the wisdom of Phocion who commanded the Greek forces. On a certain night, during the siege, a flash of lightning is said to have lighted up the crescent-shaped city front and so clearly revealed the position of the ho-

podrome; *Serai Midan*, Palace square; *Taroot Bazaar*; *Serierker Midan*, old Forum Tauri; *Divani Midan*; *Et Midan*, where public executions take place, and *Vafa Midan*. The Sultan's present residence, is essentially, a miniature walled town of itself. *Serai Humajim*, the Seraglio, is about two miles in circumference, and comprises quite a number of Mosques, dwellings, baths, and gardens. The mint, arsenal, government offices, and treasury buildings, are also located here. The wonderful stories concerning the dazzling splendor of this Seraglio, its Harem, and the passing beauty of its female occupants, have melted into the thin air of fiction since the inclosure has been thrown open to the prying eyes of modern visitors. In fact, its principal apartments are quite inferior to many of the spacious saloons of other European palaces; while the poor, nonoffending women it affects to hide from the popular gaze are a strange compound of Turkish cosmetics, extreme Mohammedanism, and vanity.

from the debris of its shadowy past, and speak of it as it now stands; a great entrepot of the present time. Indeed, there is, perhaps, no other existing city which offers such a strange combination of the extreme ancient and modern phase. The present population of Constantinople, or, as a Turk would say, "Istamboul," may be put down at about 800,000. Of these, more than one half are Turks—while the remainder may be estimated as follows: Greeks, 150,000; Armenians, 230,000; Levantines, 20,000; Jews, 30,000; besides a motley array of Persians, Arabians, Circassians, Hindoos, and latterly, English, French, Germans and Americans. From the deck of an approaching ship, the city presents a beautiful appearance. Constantinople proper, or the old town, is about twelve miles in circumference and encompassed by a triple wall pierced by from thirty to forty gates. While this place is proverbial for its ramdom lanes and unkept streets, thanks to the good sense of Constantine, some vestiges of Roman enterprise and magnificence may yet be seen in contemplating the public squares which still remain intact. Of these there are accounted seven, and they may be designated as follows: *At Midan*, Horse square, or rather, a portion of the old Hip-

Eeski Serai, the old Seraglio, nearly four thousand feet in circumference, is in the heart of the city and contains the office of the Secretary of War, a few barracks, and a military academy. The outer gate of the new Seraglio is called the "Sublime (?) Porte," now a common expression for the power behind the throne. The number of *Mesjid*, Mosques or "prayer houses" in the city is over five hundred, the Mosque of St. Sophia being the grandest and most magnificent. Of other sects, there are twenty-one Greek churches, the English Memorial Church, erected in 1858, a branch house of the American Bible Society, and various other places of worship both Protestant and Roman Catholic. Among the benevolent and charitable appliances, there might be enumerated more than a hundred *Imarts*, or public soup houses where thirty thousand people are supplied with food every day. Two hundred hospitals are sustained with more or less attention to cleanliness and sanitary principles. Nominally, there are about four hundred primary schools, although but little more is taught in them than reading, writing and the prayers of the faithful. A few military academies are the only places where anything like a systematic course of study is pursued. Mo-



CONSTANTINOPLE, FROM TANAR.

sieging army that Phocion was enabled to immediately sally forth and utterly discomfit the Macedonians. Thus, the city was saved; and the Byzantines, in grateful acknowledgment, stamped the crescent upon their coins, and adopted the same device as the standard badge of their city. Hence, the Turkish flag of the present day and the crescent that surmounts the spires of mosques in all Mohammedan lands.

In the year of our Lord, 330, Constantine the Great, the first Roman emperor who embraced Christianity, removed the seat of government from the city of Rome to Byzantium, which had just fallen a prey to his victorious arms. Thenceforth it was called Constantinople, the "City of Constantine." In 1453, the Turks, under the leadership of Mohammed, besieged and took Constantinople, and they have ever since retained possession of the city.

Thus far we have been treating of Constantinople as an ancient city; we will now emerge

haramedan literature is fostered and kept in precarious existence by thirty or forty public, circulating libraries.

In regard to manufactures, the whole thing may be comprehended in a few words. Beautiful carpets, rich embroideries, gold and silver tapestry, morocco and the heavier kinds of leather, swords and fine cutlery, drugs and medicines, perfumes, and everything appertaining to opium and tobacco smoking. Within a few decades, Constantinople has become the center of an extensive banking business between the commercial points of Europe and Asia. Its trade with other parts of the world may be understood to some degree when it is stated that more than thirty thousand vessels, all told, arrive at and depart from the harbor each year.

For a Mohammedan city, the press is well represented and sustained. Our means for obtaining definite knowledge of the newspapers in the city are extremely limited, but the following list comprises, it is thought, nearly if not all the papers