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EDITORIAL

THE MODERN MACEDON.

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MANCHURIA; pro-Tsar Republican France; systematic Moscovite marriages of German Princesses; Danubian revolts; etc.; etc.; latest of all, Belgrade massacres, that wipe out one dynasty, smothering it in its own blood, and enthrone another. What does it all mean? Are these and numerous other events, that have been transpiring since Peter the Great lived, wrought and left his “testament”, isolated affairs? Are they disconnected happenings? To so consider is to misunderstand them, and, misunderstanding{,} to miss the point of one of the most remarkable historic dramas, illustrative of that recurrence in the affairs of nations that furnish the basis for “Philosophies of History” and “Philosophies of Civilization.”

Nearly three thousand years ago the small Grecian peninsula was the hive of about a dozen states that rivaled one another in the achievements of physical and intellectual Beauty. North of them lay a nation of barbarians. It was Macedonia. In point of size and population, Macedonia was as large as all the Grecian states put together; moreover, it had the still vaster tracts of land and still more barbarous populations that lay back of it to the North and East to draw from. While the Grecian states were lighting and carrying aloft the Torch of Civilization, Macedonia was steeped in barbarism,—and yet preparing herself to overwhelm, capture and lash the former to her chariot wheels of empire and foreign conquest. The unformulated, unconscious evolution gathered shape under Philip of Macedon. From the date of Philip’s advent on the stage, Macedon, with himself as the center, became the pivot around which the affairs of the Grecian states revolved, and from which radiated the operative causes of their actions. Macedonian spies and Macedonian money, Macedonian intrigues and Macedonian statecraft kept them in

turmoil, undermined and finally subverted them. Revolts broke out among them; rulers and dynasties were set up, slaughtered or overthrown; pro{-} and anti-Philip parties were formed in their very midst,—till finally his son Alexander, finding the situation ripe, struck the blow that, making of Thebes an example, quietly led all her sisters as submissive vassals to his conqueror's will.

He who would understand the history of modern Europe, of the world, for that matter, will find in the events of that time the historic indices to safe conclusions in the rough as to the present.

Russia has well been termed the modern Macedon. What Macedonia of old was to the many-sided, brilliant and numerous states of Greece, Russia is to-day to the equally many-sided, brilliant and numerous States of Europe to the west of her. Nor is it difficult to pursue the parallel. Attic France, with her pro-Tsar Millerand, pointedly points to Attic Athens and her pro-Philippian orators; military Germany bears striking resemblance to Sparta; Corinth and her colonies to England. And who would deny the identity of features of the smaller states of Greece with those of modern Europe along the Danube; of heavy-paced Boeotia with Austria; of idle Italy and Spain with Arcadia; of Switzerland or Holland with Phocis or sacred Delphi, and so forth; or, looking to the Far East fail to catch the lines of the unwieldy, over-ripe fruit of the old empire of Persia in the physiognomy of China? Facing all these, the world, an up-to-date Macedon of old, stands modern Russia—

The Hercules of nations, shaggy-browed,
Enormous-limbed, supreme on steppe and plain.

Yes, facing the world, that is to say, America included,—the Rome of to-day, before whose prototype the prototype of the modern Russia bit the dust;—the Rome of to-day, destined, in a much nobler mission than the Rome of old, to stem the tide of barbarian conquest for barbarism's sake, by civilized conquest for civilization's sake.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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