

Descendants of OTHMAN—Bonebreaker



THE AUTHOR'S WORK.

Gen. Zachary T. Sweeney, the author of the work, is a well-known military expert and a member of the United States Army. He has spent many years in the study of the history of the Ottoman Empire, and his work is a valuable contribution to the knowledge of this important power. The work is a comprehensive history of the Ottoman Empire, from its founding by Osman I in 1289 to the reign of Mehmed II in 1453. It covers the military, political, and cultural aspects of the empire, and is written in a clear and concise style. The work is a must-read for anyone interested in the history of the Ottoman Empire.



Gen. Sweeney.

By GEN ZACHARY T. SWEENEY
FORMER CONSUL-GENERAL AT
CONSTANTINOPLE

MONTESQUIEU says that the cause of the greatness of the Roman state lay in the fact that its early kings were all grand personages. "One finds nowhere in history an unbroken succession of such statesmen and such generals." All of which is true when applied to the first sultans of the Ottoman empire: from Osman to the kings of Rome.

The first sultans were men of pure minds, lofty impulses and great probity of life. Jeannin says of the early period of the Ottoman empire: "It was more prodigal in great men than in any other dynasty which has reigned on the face of the globe."

The first sultan was Othman, whose name, translated into English, would be "bonebreaker." He was celebrated for the length and strength of his arm. Like Artexoxes Longimanus, he could stand erect and touch his knees with his hands. He was, also, called Kara Othman, because of his great personal beauty. His personal costume was exceedingly simple. He wore a turban of white linen wound around a red center. He was largely a man of peace, and for many years his reign was one of peace, and much of his military career was defensive rather than offensive. He allowed the widest toleration in faith, and protection to person and property, alike to Christian and Mohammedan. In A. D. 1299 he coined money with his own effigy, and caused prayers to be said in his name, the official declaration of his sultanate. He was, nevertheless, a man of strong passions when deeply aroused. On one occasion he summoned his followers and announced the intention of attacking a Greek fortress, but his aged uncle, Dundar, who had marched with Othman's father, Ertogrul, from the Ephrates, counseled against the attack, and set forth the danger of provoking the neighboring princes by such an act. Enraged at these words of caution, Othman shot his aged uncle dead upon the spot. The fortress was attacked and taken, which led to many other offensive enterprises, which culminated in the surrender of the great city, Bursa, in 1326. Othman died at Saegud, and shortly before his death he called his two sons, Orchan and Alaeddin, to his bedside, and, addressing Orchan, said: "I am dying, and I die without regret, because I leave such a successor as you. Be just; love goodness, and show mercy." His sword is still preserved in the treasury of the empire, and the martial ceremony of girding on this sabre in the mosque of Eyoub, of which there were press accounts last week, corresponds to the coronation of a king or the inauguration of a president. His ashes repose at Bursa.

When Orchan ascended the throne he besought his brother, Alaeddin, to share with him the responsibilities and duties of sovereignty, but his brother firmly refused to do so, because their father gave the succession to Orchan. He, however, agreed to accept the office of vizier, which, in the Ottoman language, means "burden-bearer." This office corresponds to prime minister in England or secretary of state in our country. Alaeddin, by his military legislation, laid the foundation for Ottoman supremacy. He formed the first standing army known to modern history. It was under the reign of Orchan that the Janissaries, so long the scourge of Christendom, were organized. They were composed of children of Christians who were wrested from their families—a thousand of their finest boys each year for over 300 years. They were torn from their parents at a very early age, and were trained to renounce Christianity and preserve the creed of Islam. They were carefully prepared for a soldier's life by severe discipline, which taught them implicit obedience and enabled them to bear without complaint all the hardships of a soldier's life.

Orchan captured the city of Nicomedia in the first year of his reign, and four years later the great city of Nice, where the first Ecumenical council was held. Like his predecessor, he never left a captured province till it was thoroughly assuallated to the Ottoman power.

Orchan died in 1359 after a reign of 33 years, during which the Ottoman power was extended over a large part of Asia and firmly planted on the European continent, from which it has never been dislodged.

The third sultan was Amurath, or, as the Orientals said, "Murad." He was 40 years of age when he succeeded his father, and reigned 30 years in great prosperity and honor. His first enterprise was to extend the European conquest of his father, but he was checked by a rebellion in the Ottoman dominions, and was compelled to march his army toward the scene of insurrection, which he completely quelled. He then crossed the Hellespont and began a series of conquests in Europe, which were only consummated by his death on the field of Kossova in 1389.

He formed many valuable alliances through the marrying of his son, Bajazet, and his daughter, Nilfsay. He died upon the battlefield of Kossova. His oldest son, Bajazet, commanded the right, and Prince Yacoub, his second son, the left; Amurath commanded the center with the Janissaries. The Christians were led by King Lazarus, who commanded the center, and Vuk Brankovich led the right, and the king of Bosnia the left. Both armies advanced resolutely to the charge, and for a long time stood their ground firmly while the event of the day was in doubt. While the two armies thus strove to

gether a Serbian nobelman, Milosch Kablosch, rode to the Ottoman center and claimed to be a deserter and having important secrets to reveal to Amurath in person. On being led to the Turkish sovereign he knelt as if to pay him homage, and then stabbed Amurath with a sudden and mortal stroke of his dagger. Milosch sprang from his knees, and being gifted with great activity and strength, cleared himself of the enemies that thronged around him, and found his way to where his horse had been left, but before he could remount the Janissaries overpowered him and backed him to pieces. Amurath realized that his wound was mortal, but had sufficient presence of mind to give orders for a charge of his reserves, which decided the victory in favor of the Ottomans. He died pronouncing the death doom of King Lazarus, who was conquered. But that was not the saddest death of the day. When Prince Bajazet realized that the victory over the Christians was accomplished, and he was acknowledged by his father's generals as their sovereign, he immediately ordered his brother, Yacoub, who had fought so valiantly by his side, to be seized and put to death. He justified the act by saying that "Sedition is worse than murder," a saying that has caused so many Ottoman sultans to commit acts of cruelty since that time.

Bajazet commenced his reign upon a battlefield, and followed up the war against the Servians with such vigor and success that he was named Yilderim, or "Thunderbolt." After completing the Serbian war, Bajazet returned to Asia and increased the territory of the sultan by conquest of several adjoining states. Carmania, which had long held out as an independent state, acknowledged Bajazet as sovereign. Gladdened with victory and rapidly augmented power, Bajazet gave himself over to sensual excesses of the foulest kind. He was the first of the Ottoman princes who violated the prohibition of the koran against the use of wine. All Pasha, his favorite general, set his master the example of drunkenness, and the infamy of these two lives sully the pages of Oriental history. Bajazet was startled from his revels by a crusade of Christian chivalry of Frankistan. The Christian army marched against the Ottomans down through Transylvania, Wallachia and Servia. They captured Wildin, Oranica, and invested Nicopolis, but Bajazet marched against them and ingloriously dispersed them. After the conflict Bajazet pitched his tent in front of Nicopolis and rode over the field of battle. When he saw the number of his dead soldiers it enraged him so that he said: "I will have this slaughter well avenged on the prisoners." The next morning the Christian prisoners, to the number of ten thousand, were led out with their hands bound behind them and with halters around their necks. After allowing 24 Christian nobles from among the prisoners their liberty the sultan gave the signal for the slaughter to commence, and the unhappy captives fell in front of his tent.

The battle of Nicopolis was the high-water mark in the power of Bajazet. He soon made preparations to invest Constantinople. The Byzantine king searched all Europe for assistance, and even descended to the humiliation of asking aid from his old-time enemy, the pope of Rome, but all in vain. Just at the moment when it seemed that Bajazet was on the point of entering Constantinople a cloud arose in the eastern horizon in the shape of Tamerlane, the Tartar, who, though 70 years of age, had succeeded in uniting a number of conquered provinces into a strong empire, and had marched against the dominion of the Ottoman empire, captured the ancient city of Sivas, and put the inhabitants to the sword, killing among others Prince Ertogrul, the son of Bajazet, who, when he heard of the death of his son, hurried at the head of his veteran troops against Tamerlane. He seemed, however, to have lost his usual caution and capacity; with only 120,000 men he swept forward against an army of 600,000, and, to show his recklessness, engaged in a grand hunt in the neighborhood of Angora until they were entirely exhausted. Returning to his quarters, he found that the wily Tartar had taken possession of his camp and poisoned the stream, and his weary and thirsty troops had to spend the night without water. The next day he led the dispirited army to battle, and while many of them gave a good account of themselves, others were so exhausted that they gave themselves over to the enemy, and on the field of Angora, where his ancestor, Ertogrul, nearly two hundred years previous had laid the foundations of the Ottoman empire, he was overthrown, and his empire shattered to fragments. Bajazet, with one of his sons, was captured, and made a show in the triumphal pageant of his conqueror. He was carried in a latticed litter, and there arose a current story that he had been placed in an iron cage. Thus the empire of the Ottomans, that had swept over Asia and a large part of Europe, till it had earned the title, "Wrath of God," suddenly terminated, and the Ottoman power seemed gone forever.

Nothing so characterizes the rule of the Turk as its recuperative power. Often has it been seemingly overthrown and swept from the face of the earth, but immediately there arises again a mighty power having the same spirit as its predecessor. Mohammed I, the son of Bajazet, took the shattered fragments which his father had left and began the work of building up the Ottoman power. The Greeks said of him that he was "as persevering as a camel." He was the youngest son, and,

naturally, his elder brothers disputed his right to the crown. They raised opposition to a standard and set up opposition governments, but Mohammed was endowed with great statesmanlike qualities, and gradually he eliminated all opposition, and in 1413 became sultan over the entire Ottoman empire. His reign lasted eight years, but in that space he accomplished great things. He was not aggressive like his father, but he was very prompt to resent any encroachment upon his dominions. He was called Chelebi Mohammed, which means "Mohammed, the Gentle," and it was a very apt designation of his character. There are only one or two inhuman things recorded of him. He caused his only surviving brother, Kasim, to be blinded, and he killed the child of Suleyman. The only mitigation that can be pleaded for these acts of cruelty is that he had experienced so much discomfiture from the jealousies of his brothers that he decided to put out of the way all who might become opposers of him. It is characteristic of Turkish princes that they always aspire to and intrigue for the sultanate, and the reigning sultan is not safe while one is at liberty. Abdul Hamid, the late deposed sultan, imprisoned his brother, Murad, in the palace of the Cherragan until a few years ago, when he ended his imprisonment in death. The present sultan, Mehmet Reshad, was so closely confined in the Yildiz palace that it amounted to actual imprisonment. Mohammed I died in 1421, and was buried near the beautiful green mosque of that ancient capital of the Turks.

He was succeeded by Murad II, who was a man of equal prudence and clemency as his predecessor, but his ambition was much greater, and he lost little time in giving proof of it. The Greek emperor, forgetting his cordial relations with Mohammed, and looking upon Murad II, who was then a mere youth of 18 years, with contempt, released a pretended son of Bajazet—Mustafa by name—who had been for years in close custody at Constantinople. Mustafa subdued the European provinces, and seemed in a fair way for some time of displacing Murad, but he was at last overthrown and hanged, "to convince the world that he was an impostor."

Murad again proceeded to invest Constantinople. He had drawn his lines from the Golden to the Wooden gate, when a revolt in Asia Minor caused him to hastily cross the Bosphorus in order to put down an insurrection of one of his brothers. Murad's fighting qualities were soon put to a severe test. The Christian states were all inflamed, and Hunyady was their leader. He was supposed to be a son of King Sigismund and the beautiful Elizabeth Morisany, but whatever his parentage, he was a valiant, fortunate and famous.

For 29 years he was the terror of the Ottomans. At Hermannstadt he totally routed the Turkish army of 20,000 men and publicly backed their general to pieces. He was as cruel and bloodthirsty as any of the Turks, and his favorite music for dinner was the shriek of dying prisoners. He also defeated the Turks at Vassay and Nissas. He made the fearful passage of the Balkans in winter, following the Turks, who had skillfully barred the passes and formed an icy wall by wetting the roads in freezing weather. But, for some unknown reason, he suddenly abandoned the campaign, and returned to Budapest with a large amount of plunder and captives. Murad seized this opportunity to negotiate a treaty, which was solemnly sworn upon the Gospel and the koran to last for a period of ten years. The death of his oldest son so sorely afflicted Murad that he turned from the joys of empire to peace and retirement, and abdicated in favor of his son, Mohammed II, and retired to Magnesia to spend the remainder of his days. No sooner was this news conveyed to the Christians than they resolved to break the treaty of peace, and the pope and Greek emperor used their spiritual influence to induce Hunyady to break his oath, claiming that "oaths are not to be kept with infidels." Hunyady was finally influenced to break faith, and marched upon the unsuspecting Turks with 20,000 men. He took a number of strange places, and on reaching the Black sea marched as far as Varna, where he learned that Murad had been aroused by his advance and had collected an army of 40,000 men, which were then being conveyed across the Bosphorus by Genoese vessels. When the armies met a copy of the violated treaty was placed on the point of a lance and raised high above the Turkish standard as a visible appeal to the lord of truth, who punishes perjury. The Hungarians were ingloriously defeated, and Hunyady was compelled to retreat in disorder; after which Murad again retired to Magnesia; but a revolt of the Janissaries against his force recalled him to the responsibilities of leader, when he reigned six years longer, and died in 1451, with undiminished prestige and glory.

Five years after Murad's death, Mohammed II, invaded Europe and laid siege to Belgrade, the key to Hungary. Hunyady stirred himself to a valiant defense, and John Capistran came to his aid with a band of 60,000 crusaders, who had gathered together to fight for Christendom. The Turks were defeated. Mohammed was wounded, and 25,000 Turks lay dead upon the field of battle. In less than a month Hunyady died, and 60 days later was followed to the grave by John Capistran. The reign of Mohammed II was marked by violence and treachery. Again and again he broke faith with his enemies, and garrisons which surrendered under the solemn pledge of the honors of war, met with ruthless slaughter.

His first act was to murder his baby brother. Cruel and sensual, yet he was a cultivated man, fond of poetry and learning. He even acquired the surname, "Father of Good Works," as well as "Sire of Victory." He acquired, also, the title of "Conqueror," after he had captured Constantinople in 1453. The Turks had coveted Constantinople ever since the dream of Othman. Bajazet had besieged it, Musa came near capturing it, and Murad II had patiently planned its conquest. They had captured everything but the city, but their ambition could not be crowned while the cross waved over it. Paleologous, who had long dallied with and cringed before the Mohammedans, roused himself, and seemed to renew the immortal Greek spirit in his final defense of the fated city. With only a few followers, possibly less than three per cent. of the besiegers, he walked the walls, encouraging his enervated troops by deeds of splendor and valor. After a siege of 53 days the city of Byzas, that had lifted her proud head so long above the rushing waters of the Bosphorus, was at last stormed by the victorious Turks, and the Greeks fled in dismay, and Mohammed II, entered in triumph and rode his horse into the Santa Sophia. The cross fell from the churches of the city and the crescent rose in its place, and still flashes back the gleams of Asiatic sunlight to the Ottomans. The fall of Constantinople swept away the last obstacle in the path of Islam. It fixed forever the triumph of the east in its struggle against the west. It gave up the civilization of the Mediterranean to Oriental barbarism. It struck all Europe with consternation.

"MOON CAPTURED BY EARTH, NOT DETACHED"
By PROF. T. J. J. SEE.
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I have mathematically proved a discovery that the moon is a planet captured by the earth from space and not a detached portion of our globe. I reject entirely the long-accepted theories of Laplace and Sir George Darwin ascribing earthly origin to the moon. My discovery is supported by rigorous mathematical proof, based on the methods of Hill, Poincare and Darwin.

This announcement is a further development of my discovery promulgated last January, that all planets and satellites are captured bodies, which have since had their orbits reduced in size and rounded up under the secular action of the nebular resisting medium once pervading the solar system. I showed how these bodies, which once revolved around the sun like the asteroids now do, had made circuits close about the planets. In the neighborhood of a planet like Jupiter the sphere of the sun's control is shown to have an extension, or protuberance, on it, like the neck of a bottle, or hourglass with very unequal bulbs, and when the small bodies moving about the sun came into this neck they could revolve about Jupiter, and in many cases again return to their paths about the sun. In other cases after revolving about Jupiter they would be captured by the action of the nebulous resisting medium about the planet, and stay there forever as satellites.

By revolving about the planet for a long time their orbits would be rounded up into almost perfect circles, and made smaller and smaller, till they became just like the satellite orbits are now observed to be. Such has been the origin of the satellites generally, and the rings of Saturn have had a similar origin—by the capture of waste nebulousness once circulating around the sun. When this matter is once brought in near the planet it cannot again escape, but must stay there permanently, because in the space near the planet the planet's attraction is supreme.

In the case of the terrestrial moon, however, more than usual uncertainty existed as to how this large satellite originated, and a special investigation of the problem had to be made. The moon's mass is relatively very large, about one-eightieth of the earth's mass; and then Darwin's argument that the moon had once been a part of the earth, had to be overcome. I have proved mathematically that our moon, too, had been captured, and had come to us from the heavenly spaces.

It was originally a planet like Mercury, but not quite so large, and moved about the sun at nearly the same distance as the earth. Then it came between the sun and the earth in such a way as to enter the neck of the space resembling a bottle neck projecting from the sun's sphere of control and enclosing the earth. This neck was quite small and narrow, but the bulb of space enclosing the earth and constituting its sphere of attraction was of considerable size. When the moon had once left the sun's control and gone into the bulb about the earth, it met with some resistance, and the neck became closed, so that the moon was "bottled up" under the earth's control, and could not escape. Hence, it has remained with the earth ever since, and will always abide with us.

By revolving about the earth in the space controlled by our planet, the moon has met with considerable resistance, and its orbit has become smaller and smaller and also rounder and rounder. Thus it has come nearer and nearer the earth, but never has been closer than at present. Darwin's theory of the moon's detachment from the earth is overthrown, and an entirely new theory developed which has the support of all the highest mathematical science now known.

The famous outstanding inequality of six seconds in the secular acceleration of the moon's mean motion is thus explained. This perturbation in the moon's motion had been discovered by Halley in the time of Newton. It was partially explained by Laplace in 1787, but gravity alone would not account for the observed acceleration since the time of the Chaldeans, B. C. 720, and the outstanding difference had perplexed the greatest mathematicians for more than a century. Having discovered that the moon was originally captured, and was still slowly nearing the earth, I have removed the last difficulty, and the result will be a decided improvement in astronomy.