

Russia's Fixed Purpose.

(Popular Science Monthly.)

If anything has been made clear by what has been here set down, it is this, that Russia has an ancient, deep-rooted, invincible, unyielding purpose—a purpose unexampled in stubbornness and persistency, and which survives all resistance, all humiliation, all defeat; and that purpose is to get to the Golden Horn and beyond. It has also been made plain that it is the object, and has been the object, of the western and central powers of Europe to resist this purpose. Russia has sustained many severe checks; but the Eastern question has not been settled. It was not settled by the Crimean war. It was not settled by the Berlin treaty. On the contrary, it is the liveliest of all the European questions of to-day.

That Russia is not satisfied we have abundant proof. It was only in 1886 that, repudiating the franco portu protocol of the treaty of Berlin, she proceeded to reconquer and fortify Batoum, making it an exclusive port of her own. It is perfectly clear that she intends to make the Black Sea a fortified Russian lake. The recent experiments in the Dardanelles, followed as these were by Turkish concessions, reveal the old, undying, aggressive tendency. They were feelers. Russia will feel again; and the next experiment will be bolder than the last. What she wants, as I have said at the outset, is to get her ships of war into the Mediterranean. A little more liberty, and this will be accomplished. It remains to be seen whether the next tentative experiment in the Dardanelles will be followed by another Crimean war, or whether Europe is to be revolutionized by the presence of the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean. The European powers are not acting in self-defence in resisting Russian aggression. The question is, whether the fates are not on the side of aggressive power.

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