

TURKEY. No. 7 (1880).

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CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF TURKEY.

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*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.*  
1880.

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LONDON:

PRINTED BY HARRISON AND SONS.

[C.—2574.] *Price 2d.*





045B 117

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## Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Turkey.

No. 1.

*Earl Granville to Sir A. H. Layard.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, April 30, 1880.*

IN my interview with the Turkish Ambassador to-day, at the general reception of the Corps Diplomatique at this office, I expressed to him my pleasure at renewing personal relations with his Excellency.

I said that I remembered that, when last in office, his Excellency, with an enlightened desire for the amelioration of the Government of his country, supported me in impressing upon the Porte the absolute necessity of certain reforms.

On more than one occasion since I had been in opposition, he had expressed to me his conviction that if the Administration of Mr. Gladstone had remained in power, Turkey would have escaped the disasters to which she has been exposed.

I had understood his Excellency to mean by this that, if the Liberal Government had been in power, such a friendly influence would have been exercised as would have obviated what has taken place.

I went on to say that the policy of Her Majesty's present advisers was very clear. They had found the Berlin Treaty an accomplished fact. But many of its most important provisions were unexecuted. They hoped to receive the hearty co-operation of Turkey, together with that of the other Powers, to give effect to the provisions of that Treaty without delay.

I hoped to impress on his Excellency, and trusted that he would convey the same to the Porte, that while Her Majesty's Government wished to abstain from anything like menace, any intimation they gave would be adhered to, to the letter. But I trusted no such intimations would be required.

Musurus Pasha replied that he would report to his Government the observations which I had made, and would do what was in his power to forward the views I had expressed.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 2.

*Earl Granville to Lord Lyons.\**

My Lord,

*Foreign Office, May 4, 1880.*

HER Majesty's Government consider that it is an object of European interest that the delay which has occurred in the execution of certain of the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin should be put an end to, and that this can best be effected by the united efforts of the Powers.

Her Majesty's Government are anxious to invite the co-operation of the French Government and of the other Powers to obtain this result, and I have accordingly to request that your Excellency will propose to M. de Freycinet that the French Ambassador at Constantinople should be instructed, in concert with the Representatives of the other Powers, to address an identic and simultaneous note to the Porte, requiring the Turkish Government to fulfil forthwith its obligations under the Treaty in regard to Greece, Montenegro, and Armenia.

\* Similar despatches were addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Rome.

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The Porte has for some time had before it a proposal, made by the Marquis of Salisbury, and which had received the assent of the Powers, that an International Commission should proceed to the frontier provinces to determine the rectification of the Greek boundary. The Porte has pointed out the difficulties which might be encountered by such a Commission, but has not given any definitive reply. It appears to Her Majesty's Government that it should now be called upon to do so without delay.

The state of things on the Montenegrin frontier requires even more pressing attention. The Turkish authorities have failed to carry out the agreement entered into with Montenegro, and adhered to by the Representatives of the Powers in the Protocol of the 18th April, and have allowed the frontier positions to be occupied by the Albanians, and a collision might at any time occur between the latter and the Montenegrin troops. The Porte should be required to state specifically its intentions as to the Montenegrin frontier, and to bring the arrangement into which it has entered into immediate practical execution.

By the LXIst Article of the Treaty of Berlin the Sublime Porte undertook to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds, and to periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers who are to superintend their application.

So far as Her Majesty's Government are aware, nothing has been done by the Porte to make known any steps which it may have taken under this Article, nor have any measures been adopted for the superintendence to be exercised by the Powers. The Reports which Her Majesty's Government have received show that the state of Armenia is deplorable, and they cannot think that this Article should be permitted any longer to remain a dead letter. They believe that it is only by the exercise of united pressure that the Porte can be induced to fulfil its duty in this respect, and they consider that the due execution of the Article should be at once demanded, and the Porte be called upon to state explicitly what the steps are which it has taken in compliance with this provision of the Treaty.

You will read this despatch to M. de Freycinet, and leave a copy with him, requesting to be informed, at his early convenience, whether he is willing to give instructions in a similar sense to the French Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

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No. 3.

*Sir A. H. Layard to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.—*  
(Received May 4.)

(Extract.)

*Constantinople, April 27, 1880*

IT is my duty to submit to your Lordship the present state of our relations with the Porte, and the actual condition of Turkey.

As all the power in the State is now in the hands of the Sultan, who has the complete control over public affairs, it is very important that Her Majesty's Government should be made acquainted with His Majesty's political views. I have seen much of His Majesty, and have been invariably treated by him with marked favour and kindness. I believe him to be grateful to me for the services that I have been able on many occasions to render him. Nevertheless, I have not concealed my opinions from him, but have warned him, over and over again, of the dangers to which he is exposing himself and his Empire by the course which he has of late pursued in language which has rarely, if ever, been addressed to a Sovereign. He has received my advice and my warnings in good part. At one time he acted to a certain extent upon them. Of late he has been less inclined to do so. The persons about him have succeeded in inspiring him with a profound distrust and suspicion of England. They have induced him to believe that her occupation of Cyprus, the nomination of English military Consuls in Asia Minor, the interest she shows in the Armenian population, and her peremptory demands for the introduction of reforms into Asiatic Turkey, are so many proofs of a design of annexing his Asiatic territories.

The irritation against England now felt by the Sultan, and to some extent by his people, was first excited by her proposing at the Congress of Berlin the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was greatly increased by the orders given to the fleet in October last to proceed to Turkish waters. Public rumour attributed it

to a resolution, on their part, to compel the Porte, by a hostile demonstration, to put into execution the promised reforms in Asia Minor. The Sultan was greatly alarmed. Nevertheless, it is my conviction that, if the Sultan has a leaning to any European Power, it is towards England. He has a personal attachment to the Queen and the members of the Royal Family, to whom he expresses much gratitude for the kindness he experienced from them when in England with his uncle, Abdul Aziz. He is convinced that, in his own interests and in those of his Empire, he ought to conciliate England.

It is very difficult to judge of public opinion in this vast Empire, made up of divers races and creeds. In our sense of the word, it does not probably exist. Such as it is, it may, I think, be considered favourable to England. The Mussulman populations everywhere, and the Christian communities in Asiatic Turkey, with the exception perhaps of the Roman Catholics, turn to her for protection against misgovernment and oppression, and rely upon her influence and aid to obtain reforms which can alone bring them justice, rest, and prosperity. The Armenians, encouraged by the Cyprus Convention to look to her for the immediate introduction of those reforms, begin to be disappointed at not seeing them already put into execution. Judging from the reports of our Consular officers at Erzeroum, Van, and Diarbekir, Russia is taking advantage of this feeling to induce the Armenian populations of those districts to turn to her for help and protection, and to prepare the way for future interference in Asiatic Turkey, and further annexation of territory.

As the reports from our Consular officers fully describe the condition of the Turkish provinces in Europe and Asia, their misgovernment, the corruption and incompetency of the Turkish functionaries, the sufferings of the populations, Mussulmans and Christians alike, and the anarchy that, in many instances, prevails, it is scarcely necessary for me to enter upon that subject. Suffice it to say that never, perhaps, was this Empire in so disorganized and critical a state. This is admitted by every impartial and intelligent Turk. In any other country in the world the injustice, maladministration, and misery which at the present time prevail in Turkey would have produced a general uprising of the populations. That they should not have done so hitherto may be attributed to the extreme patience, long-suffering, and respect for the Head of the faith which distinguish Mussulmans, and to the difficulty of uniting the people against the Government, in consequence of the differences of race and of the religious hatreds that exist amongst them. But there are signs that the present state of things cannot long continue. In Syria detestation of Constantinople rule, and a determination to cast it off, appears to form a bond of union between the (Arab) Mussulmans and the Christians. In Asia Minor, for various reasons, there is less prospect for the present of a similar understanding between them. The state of Arabia, according to all accounts, is very critical, and a formidable insurrection against the Turkish Government may at any moment break out.

The difficulty of coming to a settlement with the Porte of the numerous questions pending between it and Her Majesty's Government and Embassy has been of late very great, almost, indeed, insurmountable. The time and thoughts of the Ministers have been exclusively taken up by the many important questions connected with the execution of the Treaty of Berlin. All other matters have been put aside during the prolonged negotiations arising out of them,—prolonged because no real desire has been shown to bring them to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion. The Ministers, afraid of taking upon themselves individual responsibility, refer everything to the Council of Ministers, which may give a decision, but cannot put it into execution without the approval of the Sultan. All matters of the slightest importance have consequently to be referred to the Palace, where they remain for an indefinite time, until they are examined by His Majesty and receive the Imperial sanction. The difficulty of transacting business under such conditions is indescribable. It is not only this Embassy that experiences it. All my colleagues make the same complaint. They can get nothing settled. British subjects who have claims on the Porte, and whose interests are at stake, not unnaturally accuse the Embassy of neglecting them.

It will be unnecessary, in this despatch, to bring to your Lordship's notice the various cases pending between this Embassy and the Porte, which, notwithstanding all my endeavours and incessant representations on my part, still remain unsettled. Some of them involve the interests of British subjects who have been most unjustly and illegally treated by the Turkish Government, and who are unquestionably entitled to compensation and redress. Others relate to claims which have long ago been established, and which have been even admitted by the Porte and recognized by the Turkish Tribunals, but the settlement of which I have failed to obtain. Then there

are matters affecting the interests of England as well as those of Turkey, the importance of which the Turkish Ministers admit, but which they cannot be brought to deal with in a loyal and straightforward manner, having recourse to every possible deceit, deception, and pretext for delay to avoid doing so.

But, above all, there are the unfulfilled promises of the Sultan and the violation of his formal and solemn pledges to England. I allude especially to his Treaty engagements to introduce reforms into his Asiatic territories for the just and impartial government of their populations, and for the protection of his Christian subjects. The most important and urgent of those reforms were specified in Lord Salisbury's despatch of the 8th August, 1878, and were accepted, with some modifications, by Safvet Pasha in his note of the 24th October, 1878. They include a gendarmerie organized by European officers, the appointment of Europeans as Financial and Judicial Inspectors in the provinces, and the nomination of the Valis, or Governors-General, for five years. Not one of them has been loyally put into execution, and the obligations entered into by the Sultan in the Convention of June have been systematically evaded. The English officers who were brought out here by the Turkish Government to organize the gendarmerie have been treated—chiefly, I believe, through the influence of Osman Pasha—with the most marked discourtesy and neglect. Only three have been employed, and every difficulty has been thrown in their way. Colonel Blunt has succeeded, through the loyal and effective support of Raouf Pasha, and in spite of the determined opposition of Osman Pasha, in organizing a small body of gendarmerie in the Vilayet of Adrianople. Colonel Allix, fortunately beyond the reach of the interference of the Porte and the Minister of War, has done the same in Crete. The third, Colonel Norton, was purposely ordered off in the depth of winter to Bitlis, where he will, in all probability, find nothing to do, and be thwarted by the local authorities in his endeavours to perform the duty assigned to him. Colonel Coope received the order at the same time to proceed to Erzeroum, but having been unable to obey it, in consequence of his pay being in arrears, and of the want of money for his travelling expenses, was summarily dismissed the service. The remaining officers, notwithstanding the repeated promises made to me by the Sultan and the Porte that they should be employed, have been allowed to remain in idleness. Their contracts will, I believe, expire in June or July next; there is every reason to believe that they will not be renewed, and all the officers who, at great expense, were engaged to organize a service essential to the tranquillity and prosperity of the country, will be allowed to return to England. A more striking instance of the folly and bad faith of the Turkish Government could scarcely be given.

No European Judicial Inspectors have, to my knowledge, been appointed. To satisfy me, Mr. Ede, an English lawyer practising in the Consular Court, was offered the appointment in the unimportant Vilayet of Trebizond. But he was unable to come to any arrangement with the Porte, and the matter fell through. Almost the same has occurred with respect to the Financial Inspectors. Mr. Calvert was named to the post, and Her Majesty's Government authorized his temporary acceptance of it, whilst retaining at the same time his Vice-Consulship at Rhodes. But Mr. Calvert found that, instead of being named First-class Inspector, as I had received a distinct assurance that he should be, he was placed under the orders of a Turkish functionary. As he could not, under these circumstances, perform his duties usefully and independently, he refused, on my recommendation, to accept the appointment.

As regards the nomination of the Valis for five years, no change whatever appears to have been made in the ancient system. They are still appointed and removed at the pleasure of the Sultan.

It will be thus seen that not one of the engagements entered into by the Porte with England for the introduction of reforms into the Turkish Asiatic provinces has been fulfilled. Commissions, including Christian members, have been sent, ostensibly with that object, to some of the provinces; but, according to the Consular Reports, they have effected little or nothing. They were only authorized to inquire and report, without being invested with any executive powers. In some instances their presence appears to have been productive of more harm than good, by encouraging the Christians to put forward complaints against powerful Mussulman Chiefs, to whose vengeance they have thus exposed themselves.

The Sultan promised me repeatedly that Baker Pasha should be named to a high command in Kurdistan and the Provinces of Erzeroum and Van, and had authorized me so to inform Her Majesty's Government. That promise was not kept. In consequence of my constant remonstrances, and to satisfy Her Majesty's Government, Baker



Pasha was appointed the head of a Commission named to visit Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and part of Syria, and to report upon their condition, especially with reference to the organization of the gendarmerie. But he has no power to put any reform into execution. Care has been taken that he should be accompanied by an officer in the Sultan's confidence, one Suleiman Bey, raised on the occasion to the rank of a Pasha, who is in direct communication with His Majesty. I am informed that he is exceedingly anti-English, and he appears to have done his best to thwart Baker Pasha on every occasion. Under these circumstances, it is not to be supposed that the mission of that officer will lead to any practical result.

The Règlements, or Organic Laws, which, according to the XXIIIrd Article of the Treaty of Berlin, were to be introduced into the European provinces of Turkey, after having been framed by local Commissions in which the local element was to be largely represented, and afterwards approved by the Eastern Roumelian International Commission, have not yet been promulgated. They have not, it would appear, been prepared according to the provisions of this Article, and have not yet been submitted to the Commission. No effective gendarmerie has been organized for these provinces, except in the Vilayet of Adrianople, notwithstanding the repeated assurances given to me that some of the English officers should be employed with that object. Osman Pasha has set his face against it. The result has been that there is little or no protection for life and property in Macedonia, Epirus, and Thessaly, that brigandage is rife, that the Christians are ill-treated and oppressed with impunity, and that the state of those provinces is bordering upon one of anarchy.

I have exhausted every diplomatic resource in endeavouring to bring the Sultan and his advisers to a sense of the danger to which the Empire is exposed, in consequence of the state of things I have described. I have used every representation and remonstrance—I may almost say menace—to induce them to put into execution, and to carry out loyally and fully, the promised reforms. I have made incessant personal appeals to the Sultan himself. I have placed before him, even in writing, without reserve, the condition of his Empire, and the consequent disaffection of his subjects. I have exposed to him the incapacity and corruption of his Ministers, and of high public functionaries. I have pointed out to him the inevitable consequences of his disregard of the warnings which he has received, the forfeiture of the sympathy and friendship of England, and the possible further dismemberment of his Empire, if the European Powers should find themselves compelled to interfere to put an end to the anarchy which exists, and to insure justice and good government to the suffering populations under his rule. But hitherto in vain. His Majesty is ever ready to give promises, which are unfortunately not fulfilled owing to the evil influences always ready to counteract the impression that may have been made upon him by myself, or by any other foreign Representative who may hold the same language to him. It is of no use making threats which are not to be put into execution. If we are in earnest in wishing to save this country, but at the same time to reform its Administration, so that its populations may be justly and impartially governed, we must be prepared to go further than mere menaces.

It may be asked why the Sultan and his advisers are showing such obstinacy in putting into execution the reforms that they have engaged themselves to introduce. I believe the truth to be that since the end of the war His Majesty has been persuaded by the fanatical and anti-European party that, as the experiment tried by his predecessors of introducing European institutions and reforms on the European model into the Empire has only ended in launching Turkey into bankruptcy and into a disastrous war, he should now do without Europe, and improve and reform his country upon Turkish and Mussulman lines. Some of the principal men in his present Ministry, and the "Palace party," hold this opinion, as proved by the endeavours they are now making to free themselves from the Capitulations, and to act, not only independently of the European Powers, but in contempt and violation of the Treaty and other engagements entered into with them. It is this attempt to ignore and defy Europe that has led of late to frequent remonstrances against the arbitrary proceedings of the Porte on the part of the foreign Representatives, who have acted cordially together in resisting them. The Sultan and his advisers do not appear to see the danger of thus raising questions which unite the European Powers against Turkey.

Before concluding this despatch, there are one or two matters which I desire to bring to your Lordship's serious consideration. The most urgent is, perhaps, the condition of Eastern Roumelia. I venture to think that Her Majesty's Government will have to decide, without delay, as to the course which they may consider it right to pursue with respect to that province. If the Treaty of Berlin is to be carried out with



regard to it, if it is to be maintained as an autonomous province under the authority granted to the Sultan by that Treaty, and if the Organic Statute is to be enforced in its spirit, and impartially carried out so as to secure the liberty and rights of all classes of the population, steps must be taken by the Signatory Powers to put a stop to the proceedings of Aleko Pasha and his Bulgarian advisers. The selection of Aleko Pasha as Governor-General of the province was, in every respect, a most unfortunate one, if it were intended that the Treaty of Berlin was to be executed. The Porte has been too much occupied with other matters to interfere with his proceedings. It has a vague notion that the Powers who signed the Treaty of Berlin will, in the end, insist upon its execution, and that the time will then come for it to remove Aleko Pasha and to occupy the Balkans with its troops.

Another pressing question which cannot be left unsettled is that of the Greek frontier. I have received no official communication on the subject since I presented, instructed by Lord Salisbury, a note to the Porte on the 10th March last, informing it of the proposed appointment of the technical Mixed Commission. Sawas Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, communicated to me an unofficial *pro-memorid*, for transmission to Lord Salisbury, and there the matter rests. I understand that the Sultan and his Ministers still believe that a line can be offered to Greece which would be considered acceptable by the Signatory Powers, and with which, probably with some modifications, she would be compelled to rest satisfied. The nature of this line has been the subject of frequent deliberations of late by the Sultan and his Ministers, but no decision has, as far as I know, been yet come to. It is absolutely necessary, in my opinion, that the Signatory Powers should themselves come to an understanding without further delay as to the concessions which they are prepared to enforce upon Turkey.

The state of Macedonia and Albania calls for serious attention. The addition of the district of Sophia to Bulgaria was fatal to the execution of the Treaty of Berlin as regards Eastern Roumelia and the remaining provinces of European Turkey, supposing there to have been any real intention of carrying it out. If Eastern Roumelia were intended to be a barrier against the aggrandisement of Bulgaria, and a real defence to the Turkish Empire in Europe, it ought to have been made conterminous with Servia. By giving Sophia to Bulgaria, a door was opened for that Principality into Macedonia, as if for the very purpose of defeating the ostensible objects of the Treaty. A mere glance at a coloured map will show that such is the case. The Bulgarians will not be slow to avail themselves of the advantage thus given to them. Incessant intrigues will be carried on amongst the Bulgarian population of Macedonia, and the entry into that province of armed bands, which, from the nature of the country, can scarcely be prevented, will prepare the way for a general rising, and for events which may again lead to foreign interference. It is, perhaps, more than doubtful whether any attempts of the Porte, even if they be loyally intended and successfully accomplished, to introduce good and just government into the province, and to satisfy its Christian inhabitants, will have the effect of reconciling them to Turkish rule. At any rate, the Porte must be summarily called upon to put into execution the XXIIIrd Article of the Treaty of Berlin, as regards the Organic Laws or Rèlements to be introduced into European Turkey.

As regards Albania, a spirit of opposition to Turkish rule and a demand for autonomy appear to be showing themselves amongst the populations, Mussulman and Christian, which, if the Porte does not take immediate steps to improve the administration of the province, and to enforce its authority in it, may lead to serious consequences. On this subject your Lordship will obtain valuable information from the despatches of Her Majesty's Consul at Prisrend.

The condition of the provinces of Eastern Asia Minor is one which must attract the immediate notice of Her Majesty's Government. The Porte has bound itself by the Treaty of Berlin to the Signatory Powers, and by the Convention of the 4th June to England, to introduce into those provinces such reforms as may be necessary to secure the just and impartial treatment of their Armenian inhabitants, and such measures as may protect them from oppression and outrages on the part of the Kurds and Circassians. By the LXIst Article of the former Treaty, the Porte engages itself to inform the Signatory Powers periodically of the measures taken by it with these objects. The Powers themselves are entitled to watch over their execution. Although two years have nearly elapsed since the conclusion of the Treaty, the terms of this Article have not been complied with. The condition of the Armenians has in no way improved. It is even stated to be worse than it was before the war. In addition to the outrages of the Kurds, and the maladministration of the Turkish functionaries, famine has appeared to increase their



sufferings. They naturally turn to the Signatory Powers, and especially to England, for help and protection. It is absolutely necessary that something be done for them, and that the Turkish Government be given to understand that the present state of things can no longer be permitted to exist. But the measures to be taken in this respect must be very maturely considered. The Armenians themselves, encouraged by the sympathy which they have received in England, and relying upon the change which they believe is about to take place in her policy as regards Turkey, are looking to the formation of an autonomous, if not to a semi-independent, Armenia. Schemes with this object proceed chiefly from Armenian Committees, from a part of the Armenian press, and from influential Armenians residing in Constantinople and in Europe. Any attempt at their realization, under present circumstances, might lead to very grave consequences, and to disasters to the Armenians themselves. It must not be forgotten that they form the minority, and in many districts the very small minority, of the population. It is foolish and dangerous to seek to disprove this fact by ignoring the Kurds. The Mussulmans of Asia Minor have learnt the fate of their brethren in the autonomous Christian provinces of European Turkey. They would not be disposed to submit to a similar fate without resistance. A demand for autonomy in Armenia might lead to massacres, which would bring about the immediate interference of Russia, and its inevitable consequences. Nor would it be likely, even if successful, to preserve the nationality of which the Armenians are so proud. Russia would probably never permit an Armenian autonomous or independent State, and any attempt to form one would only end in the absorption of the Armenians into the Russian Empire, and the ultimate extinction of this ancient nation, and its language and faith. What the Armenians are entitled to, and what we have the undoubted right to demand for them, is good government, and their just and fair share in the Local Administration, with the immediate and effective introduction of the promised reforms into the provinces which they inhabit. Hitherto little or nothing has been done by the Porte to fulfil its engagements in this respect. The appointment made by the Sultan, at my suggestion, of Rustem Pasha as Vali of Erzeroum, promised well; but, unfortunately, ill-health prevented him accepting the post. His Majesty has not since shown any inclination to name a Christian to it.

The financial embarrassments of the Porte, notwithstanding the plausible appearance of the new Budget, threaten to become so serious, and the claims of the foreign creditors of Turkey are so urgent, that the Signatory Powers will probably be compelled to insist upon the appointment of the International Financial Commission proposed by the Italian Plenipotentiary to the Congress of Berlin, as recorded in its 10th Protocol. It will be strenuously resisted by the Sultan.

In conclusion: the most enlightened and patriotic Turkish statesmen and functionaries, and the most intelligent Turks, are fully alive to the dangers which threaten the Empire, and are prepared for the adoption of decisive and radical measures to avert them. The most distinguished of them have been sent away from the capital into honourable exile as Governors-General, or to fill other posts, because they are known to advocate a change of system, Mahmud Nedim, Safvet, and Haireddin Pashas being the only men of note left in Constantinople. There is a general conviction that the only measures that can save Turkey from speedy collapse are the immediate dismissal of the present incompetent Ministry; the removal from the Palace, and from access to the Sultan, of those men who now exercise an evil influence over him; the effective control of the arbitrary power which His Majesty has succeeded in concentrating in his hands; the establishment of Ministerial responsibility; the extension of the powers of the Valis; and the meeting of the Chambers, as provided for by the Constitution, or of some representative body, at Constantinople, with local popular Assemblies in the provinces. They are further convinced that until these things are effected the reforms which the Powers have demanded, and the Porte has solemnly undertaken to carry out, will not be put into loyal execution.

I share these views to a great extent. A commencement might be made by calling upon the Porte to put into execution Midhat Pasha's Constitution, which was formally communicated to the Powers on its promulgation. The defects which it is admitted it contains might be remedied.

In the month of November 1878 a Circular was addressed by Safvet Pasha, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the Turkish Representatives abroad, and communicated by them to the Governments to which they were respectively accredited, declaring that the Ottoman Constitution granted by the Sultan still formed the fundamental law of the Turkish Empire, and that the convocation of the Chamber of Deputies and of the Senate had been delayed on account of the exceptional circumstances in which the

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country was then placed, but that it was only adjourned to the following year. Since that time no further communication has been made on the subject to the Powers, and last year was allowed to pass without the meeting of the Chambers. The form is, however, still maintained of officially making all new laws promulgated by Imperial "Iradé," or Decree, subject to their approval.

Under these circumstances it appears to me that the Powers have a right, if they think fit to exercise it, to demand that the National Assembly should be called together. If Her Majesty's Government were disposed to do so alone, or in conjunction with other Governments, they would, I believe, be supported by the most intelligent, enlightened, and liberal public opinion in the Empire. An adequate control might, in this case, be placed on the arbitrary power of the Sultan, the few experienced and enlightened men who are still to be found in Turkey might be called to His Majesty's counsels, and those reforms, which can alone save the country from a rapid and speedy downfall, might be put into execution under European supervision.

No. 4.

*Earl Granville to Sir A. H. Layard.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, May 6, 1880.*

HER Majesty's Government having granted you leave of absence from your post as Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, the Queen has been graciously pleased to appoint the Right Honourable G. J. Goschen, M.P., to proceed to Constantinople as Her Majesty's Special Ambassador to take charge of the Embassy.

I have to request that your Excellency will inform the Porte of this appointment, and express the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the choice of Mr. Goschen as Her Majesty's temporary Ambassador at Constantinople will be agreeable to the Sultan.

While appreciating the great ability and unwearied industry with which your Excellency has discharged your duties and carried out the instructions under which you have been acting as Her Majesty's Representative at the Porte, Her Majesty's Government consider that it will be of much advantage that the Sultan and the Porte should have the opportunity of learning from a Special Ambassador how grave Her Majesty's Government consider the present situation of affairs in the Ottoman Empire, and their determination to insist, in concert with the other Powers, upon the complete fulfilment by the Porte of its obligations under the Treaty of Berlin with respect to Greece, Montenegro, and Armenia.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 5.

*Earl Granville to the Right Hon. G. J. Goschen, M.P.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, May 18, 1880.*

THE Queen having been graciously pleased to appoint you to be Her Majesty's Special Ambassador to the Porte in order to relieve Sir Henry Layard, who is about to proceed on leave of absence, from his duties as Her Majesty's Representative at Constantinople, I transmit to you herewith the requisite full powers and credentials.

It has been considered desirable that a Special Ambassador should be named on this occasion, instead of leaving the affairs of the Embassy to be conducted in the ordinary course by a Chargé d'Affaires, in order to mark the sense which Her Majesty's Government entertain of the gravity of the situation, and to impress the Sultan, by personal communication with His Majesty through a Representative of your Excellency's Parliamentary and political standing, that the time has arrived when the Government of this country are determined to insist, in concert with the other Powers, upon the fulfilment of the engagements which the Porte has entered into with regard to Greece and Montenegro, and of the pledges for reformed administration which the Turkish Government has so often solemnly given and so repeatedly broken.

It is an object of European interest that the delay which has occurred in the execution of the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin respecting Greece, Montenegro, and Armenia should be brought to a close, and Her Majesty's Government have invited

the other Treaty Powers to instruct their Representatives at Constantinople to join with your Excellency in addressing an identic and simultaneous note to the Porte, requiring that effect should be given to the Articles of the Treaty which relate to the European frontiers in question, and to the reforms required for the improvement of the condition of the Armenian population.

It is essential that a definite conclusion should be arrived at for the rectification of the Greek frontier indicated by the Congress at Berlin, for it is evident that while this boundary remains undecided, the relations between the Governments of Turkey and Greece cannot be placed on a satisfactory footing, nor can any effectual measures be taken for repressing brigandage and establishing good order and improved administration in the frontier districts of Thessaly and Epirus.

The Porte has for some time had before it a proposal made by the Marquis of Salisbury, and which had received the assent of the Powers, that an International Commission should be appointed to settle on the spot the rectification of the boundary, and, although the Porte has pointed out the difficulties which might be encountered by such a Commission, it has not yet given a definite reply.

Her Majesty's Government have now suggested to the Powers that a Conference should be assembled at Berlin or Paris to consider and decide by a majority upon the proper line of rectification of frontier to be adopted, and that this Conference should be assembled for actual business before the end of June.

The continued retention of the frontier districts in question is, as Lord Salisbury pointed out, of no material advantage to the Porte, and, as the Turkish Government has already agreed in principle to a line of frontier which would give a considerable extension to Greece in Thessaly and in Epirus, Her Majesty's Government hope that the Porte will recognize the necessity of accepting without further demur the mediation of the Powers under the XXIVth Article of the Treaty of Berlin in the form proposed.

Her Majesty's Government wish it to be distinctly understood that while urging the completion of this rectification of frontier upon the Porte in the interests both of Turkey and Greece, they do not desire that there should be any forcible annexation to the latter country of an unwilling Mussulman population, in such numbers as to be a source of danger and insecurity. On the other hand, they consider that the line should be so drawn as to relieve the Christian Greek-speaking inhabitants, so far as they are collected in a sufficiently defined district, from a Government which does not satisfy their traditional sympathies and national aspirations.

The question of the Montenegrin frontier is even of a more pressing character, as, unless it is promptly dealt with, there may at any time be a collision between the Montenegrin troops and the Albanians, who have assembled to oppose the cession of territory agreed upon in the Protocol of the 18th April, and it is not unlikely that the spirit of resistance to authority which the Turkish authorities have allowed to grow up in regard to this matter may spread throughout Northern Albania, and that this province, which has for some time been in a state little short of anarchy, may soon be given over entirely to civil disorder and to disturbances, which the Porte will be powerless to repress, but upon which other Powers could not look with indifference.

It appears to Her Majesty's Government that the Porte should be collectively called upon by the Powers to state specifically its intentions as to the Montenegrin frontier, and to bring the arrangement into which it has entered into immediate practical execution.

By the LXIst Article of the Treaty of Berlin the Sublime Porte undertook to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds, and to periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers who are to superintend their application.

So far as Her Majesty's Government are aware, nothing has been done by the Porte to make known any steps which it may have taken under this Article, nor have any measures been adopted for the superintendence to be exercised by the Powers. The Reports which Her Majesty's Government have received show that the state of Armenia is deplorable, and they cannot think that this Article should be permitted any longer to remain a dead letter. They believe that it is only by the exercise of united pressure that the Porte can be induced to fulfil its duty in this respect, and they consider that the due execution of the Article should be at once demanded, and the Porte be called upon to state explicitly what the steps are which it has taken in compliance with this provision of the Treaty.

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Besides the obligations with regard to Armenia incumbent upon the Porte under this Article of the Treaty of Berlin, the Turkish Government has repeatedly undertaken to reform the abuses which disgrace the Turkish Administration throughout the whole Ottoman Empire.

Her Majesty's Government cannot suppose that the Sultan, in whom the whole authority of the Empire has become centralized, is himself unaware of the urgent necessity for some change in the system which has brought the Ottoman Empire to its present disastrous state.

Repeated warnings have been addressed to the Porte both by Her Majesty's Government and by Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople. In May 1876 Lord Derby informed Musurus Pasha that both the circumstances and the state of feeling in this country were very much changed since the Crimean War, and in a despatch to Sir H. Elliot in the following June on the accession of Sultan Murad, his Lordship remarked that it was undeniable that the liberal and enlightened projects of reforms promulgated at Constantinople had not been brought into practical operation in the provinces: the incapable men, who had been placed in positions of authority, should be at once removed: extortion and corruption should be promptly punished, and the reforms in the administration of justice, and the concession of full civil rights to all the religious communities, vigorously proceeded with: and, at the Constantinople Conference, Lord Salisbury, when appealing to the Porte not to reject the final proposals of the Plenipotentiaries, declared that it should be understood by the Porte that Great Britain was resolved not to sanction misgovernment and oppression, and that, if the Porte by obstinacy or apathy opposed the efforts which were then making to place the Ottoman Empire on a more secure basis, the responsibility of the consequences which might ensue would rest solely with the Sultan and his advisers.

Your Excellency is aware, from the correspondence with which you have been made acquainted, and from the Papers presented to Parliament, of the various recommendations for reforms which have, from time to time, been addressed to the Porte by my predecessors, and of the Reports which have been received from Her Majesty's Embassy and Consulates, showing the wretched state of the Turkish Empire in Europe and in Asia, and the measures which are needed for introducing better administration into the provinces.

The Porte in October 1878 promised, in reply to Lord Salisbury's representations, to place some foreign officers on the Central Council of the Gendarmerie, and also to employ them in that force when constituted, to appoint some foreign lawyers to superintend the Tribunals, and to introduce, with the assistance of foreign functionaries, a new system of tax-collection to supersede tithe-farming, first into one or two provinces, and then gradually into the whole Empire. They also agreed that the Governors of provinces, magistrates, and receivers of revenue should be irremovable except for misconduct, and should be appointed for terms of at least five years.

Little was done during the following year in execution of these promises. The Porte appointed certain foreign Inspectors of Finance, but they seem to have had no real authority or influence, and two Englishmen named were so dissatisfied with the position in which they found themselves that one refused to take up the appointment, and the other resigned. The Porte also appointed Judicial Inspectors for the provinces, but this measure seems to have aggravated rather than improved the judicial system; and Sir H. Layard, after his journey through Syria, stated to the Porte that he had learned that men of known incompetency and of bad reputation had been appointed through influence and favour; and added that already one Procureur-Général, the one sent to Diarbekir, had been found guilty of taking bribes, and that the class of men sent had, instead of inspiring confidence, led to the conviction that it would be more difficult than ever to obtain justice, and to make any real reform in the Tribunals.

It also appears from his reports that the rule as to retaining the Valis in their posts for a fixed period has been broken through, and no efficient steps taken for the proper organization of the gendarmerie.

Further promises of judicial and financial reforms and organization of the gendarmerie were made by the Porte in November last, when the Turkish Government had taken alarm at a rumour that the British fleet was coming into Turkish waters, and possibly to Besika Bay. Lord Salisbury then said that for the present the fleet should not move into Turkish waters, but that he could make no promises for the future; and that he could give no undertaking that England would abstain



from active measures if nothing were done to satisfy the promises which the Government of the Sultan had given.

The language held by Lord Salisbury and Sir H. Layard has produced no effect. On the contrary, according to the last despatches received from Constantinople, the English officers who had been engaged to proceed to Turkey to organize the greatly-needed gendarmerie, but whose employment has always been steadily opposed by Osman Pacha and the retrograde party at the Palace, and who have remained without position or pay, are about to be sent back to England.

The pretext for this is no doubt the want of funds, to which the failure of all attempts at reform is ascribed, but the financial embarrassments of the Porte are themselves owing to maladministration, and it may be a question whether the Powers should not call for the appointment of a Financial Commission, such as is indicated in the recommendation recorded in the 18th Protocol of the Berlin Congress, which should be charged to examine, not only into the complaints of the bondholders as then proposed, but primarily into the general financial situation of the Porte.

The Eastern Roumelian Commission, which is about to be reconstituted and reassembled at Constantinople, will have before it the projects of Organic laws for the European provinces so far as the special local Commissions have reported upon them, and it will be sufficient for the present to leave the administration of the European provinces to be examined into by that Commission. The only desire of Her Majesty's Government is that the new laws should be so drawn up as to render equal justice to all classes of the community, with as large a measure of self-government as the condition of the provinces will admit, and with adequate securities against neutralizing reform by influence exercised at Constantinople.

Her Majesty's Government do not underrate the difficulties of introducing reforms into Asia Minor where the necessities of the provinces vary materially. Reforms which might easily be executed among the populations of the more settled provinces where European civilization has exercised some influence, and the Christians are in considerable numbers, would be impracticable in mountain districts inhabited by wild and partly nomad Mussulman tribes.

The Porte has, however, before it ample materials for judging of the necessities of the Asiatic provinces from the representations of the Mussulman and Armenian Delegates of the local Councils summoned last year at Aleppo, Erzeroum, and Diarbekir, all of which point in the direction of local self-government and the abandonment of the excessive centralization by which the provincial authorities are made dependent upon the favour of the Palace, which it is notorious can only be secured by corrupt means.

Her Majesty's Government believe that if the faithful execution of the Treaty of Berlin in regard to the Armenian provinces is effectually brought about by the concert of the Powers, the reform of the administration of the other provinces of Asia Minor must necessarily follow. In the meanwhile, there are certain measures which are imperatively demanded for the restoration of order and the security of life and property among the Mussulman as well as the Christian population, and which could be carried at once into effect, such as the organization of gendarmerie, the relief of the people from irregular taxation, and, above all, reform in the system by which officials are appointed from Constantinople. Indeed, the source of the greater part of the evils of the provinces is to be found at Constantinople, where provincial office is openly sought for and conferred—although it is well known that it will be unpaid—as a means of acquiring wealth by oppression and corruption.

There are not wanting men of upright character who have shown themselves capable of a better system of government; but the Sultan has thought fit to reject their counsels and to allow himself to be guided by an ignorant and fanatical party, who are opposed to all real reforms, and who will complete the ruin of the Empire unless the Sultan frees himself in time from their unfortunate influence.

Although Her Majesty's Government have invited the concert of the other Treaty Powers in order to exercise united pressure upon the Porte, they would desire that your Excellency should clearly convey to the Sultan and to the Porte that the representations which you are instructed to make to them are essentially of a friendly character, that it is in the interest of Turkey itself that the pending questions with Greece and Montenegro should be settled, and that the only hope for the maintenance of the Turkish Empire lies in a thorough and searching reform of its administration both at the capital and in the provinces.

At the same time, your Excellency will not fail to make the Sultan and his Ministers understand that their present careful abstinence from menace does not imply



any want of earnestness or determination as to the course of policy which they desire to see pursued.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

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No. 6.

*Earl Granville to Mr. Goschen.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, May 20, 1880.*

HER Majesty's Government have been informed by Sir H. Layard that the Sultan contemplates reassembling the Turkish Parliament at Constantinople.

Although at the first meeting of the Turkish Parliament there may have been various matters which required alteration and improvement in its constitution, composition, and proceedings, Her Majesty's Government cannot help considering that the principle of a Parliament fairly representing all classes of the subjects of the Turkish Empire is a good one, and they would desire that your Excellency should use your influence to encourage the Sultan to summon the Parliament, should he hesitate to do so, and to allow freedom of debate.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

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No. 7.

*Earl Granville to Mr. Goschen.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, June 1, 1880.*

THE Powers who were parties to the Treaty of Berlin have signified their concurrence in the proposal of Her Majesty's Government that an identic and simultaneous note should be addressed by the Ambassadors of the Powers at Constantinople to the Porte, requiring the Turkish Government to fulfil forthwith its obligations under the Treaty in regard to Greece, Montenegro, and the provinces inhabited by the Armenians.

I have accordingly to request that your Excellency will concert with your colleagues for the preparation and presentation to the Porte of a note, following, as far as possible, the terms of my Circular despatch of the 4th May last, of which a copy is inclosed,\* respecting the Montenegrin frontier and the LXIst Article of the Treaty.

With regard to the question of the rectification of the Greek frontier, Her Majesty's Government have agreed with the other Powers that the delay of the Porte in replying to the proposal of the Marquis of Salisbury must be considered as a refusal, and that therefore as it is desirable, in the interests of both Turkey and Greece, to bring the matter speedily to an issue, the Ambassadors should announce to the Porte that the Powers propose that a Conference of the Representatives of the Mediating Powers, assisted by officers possessing technical knowledge, should be held at Berlin, to be assembled for actual business before the end of June, to consider and determine by a majority on the proper line of frontier to be adopted.

When a determination has been arrived at by the Conference, a Commission might proceed to the locality to settle the details.

I have informed your Excellency by telegraph of the substance of this despatch.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

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\* No. 2.



TURKEY. No. 7 (1880).

CORRESPONDENCE respecting the Affairs of  
Turkey.

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Com-  
mand of Her Majesty. 1880.*

LONDON:

PRINTED BY HARRISON AND SONS.

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