

CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

CONDITION OF THE POPULATIONS

IN

ASIATIC TURKEY:

1888-89.

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
August 1889.*

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Correspondence respecting the Condition of the Populations in
Asiatic Turkey: 1888-89.

No. 1.

The Committee of Armenian Residents in London to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 17.)

My Lord,

25, Chesilton Road, Fulham, London, March 15, 1888.

WE, the Committee of Armenian residents in London, having upon various occasions successfully approached Her Majesty's Government, both collectively and through our well-known Chairman, Mr. Garabet Hagopian, on the subject of the extremely unfavourable and unsatisfactory state of things produced in Armenia by the inexplicable neglect of the Sublime Porte to carry out the local and administrative reforms promised to the Armenian people by Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin, and confident of receiving your Lordship's considerate attention, again beg to memorialize as follows:—

Experience of the arbitrary and tyrannical proceedings of the Turkish authorities in Armenia during the past year and a-half or more, when no direct representations were made by the sufferers on their behalf either to Her Majesty's Government or to any of the other Signatory Powers, proves the great value and advantage to the people of Armenia of the communications and remonstrances which Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople was at various times instructed to address to the Sublime Porte on this important subject.

We had almost hoped that Sir Edward Thornton had remained at Constantinople to press to a satisfactory issue the note which your Lordship's Government, in response to our representations, caused him to address to the Sublime Porte on the subject of these long-deferred reforms, and endeavour to bring the Ottoman Government to a sense of its Treaty duties and responsibilities both towards Europe and towards a large and important section of its own subjects.

Sir W. White's recent step in addressing an inquiry to the Sublime Porte concerning the arrest of Armenians for alleged conspiracy and high treason and their indefinite detention in prison has given us lively satisfaction, not only for its immediate salutary effect, but for the evidence it furnished that Her Majesty's present Ambassador at Constantinople and the British Diplomatic Agents in Turkey had not grown indifferent to the unhappy condition of the Armenian people.

In common with the great majority of our countrymen, we believe that, so far as the Armenian people itself is concerned, every method of suasion and conciliatory action has been tried with the Turkish Government, but with very indifferent success. The present Patriarch, who has, since his arrival at Constantinople, made the study of Turkish susceptibilities his special concern, has lived to see the ecclesiastical and civil rights and privileges of the large community over which he presides ignored or contemned, and his own authority, even in administrative matters, passively opposed, and the Patriarchate reduced to a state of nullity.

While we are firmly of opinion that the highest interests of our country are best served by the continued loyalty and attachment of our nation to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, we fear that the persistent neglect of the Sublime Porte to introduce the reforms it engaged itself to introduce into Armenia "without delay" in 1878; the severe hardships and unjust punishments with which it visits all Armenians suspected of writing, speaking, or publishing anything on this supremely important subject; the raids made in ancient churches and monasteries for arms and ammunition; the ruthless demolition of even altars and sanctuaries by the Turkish military in the prosecution of such searches, and the sacrilegious handling of holy relics, crosses, Testaments, and other sacred objects held in the highest veneration by

the Armenian people; the sudden visits in search of so-called compromising or "injurious" books and documents, from which not even so eminent and patriotic a dignitary of the Church as the ex-Patriarch Mgr. Khrimian, one of the Delegates of the Armenian nation to the Berlin Congress, a personage well known to your Lordship, has escaped; and last, but not least of all, the attempts recently made by the Mohammedan theocratic power to put aside and override the principles and provisions of the Canonic Marriage Law of the Church of Armenia and to legalize bigamy in an eminently Christian community will, each and all, serve to put to a severe strain the dutiful and loyal feelings of a very large section of our people.

We are persuaded, and Her Majesty's Government, we believe, know that the contentment and well-being of the Christian people of Armenia is dependent upon the loyal introduction of the local and administrative reforms provided by the Berlin Treaty, and that their continued delay produces the very worst impression in Europe, and exposes Armenia and the rest of the Asiatic provinces of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan to permanent danger.

The Armenians are a naturally peaceful and law-abiding people, and anxious to remain loyal subjects of the Porte. Under great provocation they have exercised much restraint, relying upon the justice of their cause and the support of Great Britain, their most constant friend, and the other Powers that were parties to the Treaty of Berlin. So many years, however, have elapsed since the Treaty was signed, that it would not be surprising if the Armenian people were to yield to despair. Nevertheless, we believe that if the Porte were without delay to introduce the long-promised reforms, peace and contentment will be restored to a now distracted province.

Trusting that your Lordship, who is so well informed of all that pertains to the peace and welfare of Armenia, will take the requisite steps to urge upon the Sultan's Government these and other more urgent and weighty reasons, and be instrumental in bringing about a result which is alike necessary, beneficial, and salutary to Armenia and the Ottoman Empire, we have, &c.

(On behalf of the Committee),

(Signed)

G. HAGOPIAN, *Chairman of Committee.*

PETRUS AGANOOR, *Treasurer.*

M. SEVASLY ("Licencié en droit"), *Secretary.*

P.S.—Annexed we beg to inclose a brief summary of arrests, imprisonments, and banishments suffered by individual Armenians for political reasons between the years 1885 and 1888.

G. H.
P. A.
M. S.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Appendix to Memorial, being a brief Summary of Arrests, Imprisonments, and Banishments suffered by individual Armenians for political Reasons, between the years 1885 and 1888.

IN October 1885 Mueguerdich Sefilian was condemned to three years' imprisonment.

In November of the same year Baldoshian, Varjabedian, Thomas Géroian, and Hoochannes Shirvanian were imprisoned in Van.

The Prelate of Moush, the Very Reverend Bishop Krikorios, was brought to Constantinople under arrest for some alleged political crime, kept there several years without trial, and only allowed to return to his Bishopric in 1885.

In the spring of the same year, Sahag Kaljian, barrister, was brought to Constantinople under arrest, and imprisoned there without trial.

In January 1886 a number of young Armenians were imprisoned in Van.

In April of the same year Apear Kaghortian, teacher in Bashkalé, who had been some time before arrested and then discharged, was rearrested.

The Prelate of Arapker, the Very Reverend Bishop Yèznig Abahouni, who had been some years previously arrested and conveyed to Constantinople under some political accusation, was only allowed to return to his See in 1886. He was never tried.

It is worthy of notice that, during the forced absence of these prelates, in consequence of the unfounded and vexatious accusations brought against them by the local authorities, their flocks were deprived of their principal spokesmen and advocates.

About the same time, the Turkish Government obliged the ex-Patriarch, Mgr. Khrimian, to leave his archbishopric and proceed to Constantinople, his presence in Van being considered "injurious." In answer to this step, the Ecclesiastical Synod appointed his Beatitude Chairman of its Executive Council at the Armenian Patriarchate.

An Armenian named Onnig, who had come to Constantinople from Bulgaria, was arrested there for the alleged possession of revolutionary documents.

Mueguerlich Terlemezian was arrested in Van for tracing Maps of Armenia, and then discharged. After the encounters with the Turkish military in the churches of Van on the 20th and 22nd June, 1886, he was condemned without being defended, he being absent at the time. Being amnestied on the occasion of the anniversary of the Sultan's accession to the Throne, he came to Constantinople. There, however, he was rearrested and imprisoned, and is still in prison.

In consequence of the encounter or opposition offered to the military for unlawful entry into the Armenian churches in Van on the 20th and 22nd June during a Church election, the chief candidate being a favourite of the provincial authority, thirty-seven individuals were arrested, of whom twenty-six were subsequently discharged, but the rest were condemned to terms of imprisonment varying from three to five years. Ten Armenian fugitives were condemned to imprisonment for life. Avédik Terlemezian and Khachadour Aslonian were imprisoned by the authorities until their sons gave themselves up.

Garabed Natanian was summoned to Constantinople and there arrested. He was then exiled to Erzeroum, without trial. He could only obtain leave to return to Van after the lapse of a considerable period.

In October 1886 Avédik Bartévian was arrested in Van, and then discharged under bail. About the same time an Armenian, named Markar, was arrested. In November of the same year Karekin Paghèshian and Markar Pejeshgireian were arrested.

In December of the same year the secret police conducted a strict search in the official residence of the Armenian Prelate of Erzeroum.

In the same month the Inspector-General of the United (Educational) Societies in Armenia, Mueguerlich Sareyan, and the Sub-Inspector, Markar Natanian, as the suspected authors of certain documents criticizing the authorities, were arrested.

Also, in the same month, the Sunday-school pupils, Bedros Shadaghtzian, Boghos Kholdigian, Mueguerlich Melkonian, Aris Akhigian, Hooannes Koukanian, Krikor Beuzigian, Roupen Shadavorian, Neshan Odian, and Michael Natanian were arrested. K. Beuzigian and R. Shadavorian were declared to be innocent, and discharged; S. Akhigian was also set at large on account of his extreme youth; B. Shadaghtzian, B. Kholdigian, and Melkonian were condemned to three months' imprisonment as rebels; N. Odian, H. Koukanian, and M. Natanian were banished to Konia, in Asia Minor.

In 1887, Mueguerlich Sareyan, the Inspector-General of the Armenian schools, and the Sub-Inspector, Margos Natanian, who were arrested, in spite of the declaration of the Judge of Erzeroum that they were innocent, were in March of the same year exiled, the former secretly, in night-time to Konia, and the latter to Bagdad.

His Imperial Majesty the Sultan has recently made a donation, and signified his pleasure to take under his august patronage a hall given in aid of these schools, supported by the United Societies, but the principal officers of the Association have not been recalled from exile.

In the spring of 1887, Mardiros Dajigajémian, who had already been imprisoned in Van, was exiled to Adana.

In the spring of the same year the brothers Ganampokhian and Markhos Moudigian were imprisoned in Van.

Also, in the spring of the same year, Keork Pasbanian, his two nephews, and Stepan Haïgouni were imprisoned in Tokat, Asia Minor.

On the 23rd October of the same year, Father Dr. Arsen Tokhmakhian was arrested as a revolutionary preacher, conveyed to Van, and imprisoned there. His case has not yet been tried.

On the 8th December, as compromised in Frather Tokhmakhian's case, the following persons were arrested and conveyed to Constantinople:—

H. and K. Isakoulian, brothers, tea merchants; Tash Vartan (keeper of Yeldez Khan, at Constantinople); and an old man named Haroutioun Aghourian.

Some of the persons who were imprisoned were recently discharged, but other persons have been arrested in their stead; among the latter are well-known individuals and some village teachers.

Intelligence received from Moush states that the Military Commandant of the Vilayet of Paghesh and the Public Prosecutor, with thirty gendarmes, have recently effected an entry into the Monastery of the Holy Apostles of Moush, and, in the course of a minute search for arms and ammunition, laid irreverent hands and knocked about the relics of saints, the crosses, and the sacred volumes. The Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople has lodged a strong protest against this violation of the immunities of the Church.

A young Armenian at Ismid, who had in his possession a historical novel, has been arrested and imprisoned as a suspect.

Keork Pasbanian, formerly Professor at Tokat, who was recently arrested as a suspect and then discharged, and who proceeded to Constantinople to practise as a barrister, was suddenly arrested, and a search was made among his papers. Although no incriminatory documents were found, he is, however, kept in durance along with other prisoners.

His Imperial Majesty the Sultan has granted the high rank of Bala to the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Van, Halil Pasha. Halil Pasha has been instrumental in the imprisonment, for political reasons, of a large number of Armenians as suspects, whilst His Majesty declares to the Patriarch that he is assured of the loyalty of the Armenians. A private letter from Constantinople states that there are twelve Armenians imprisoned in the Sultan's own Palace of Yeldiz, with all their documents and letters; that His Majesty is in great fears of an Armenian revolution, and has several times invited his Cabinet to devise means to prevent such an uprising; that several Armenian functionaries have been summoned to the Palace, and invited to give their opinion on the situation. They counselled the removal of oppressions, and the granting of freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

No. 2.

Foreign Office to M. Hagopian.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 27, 1888.

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, signed on behalf of the Committee of Armenian residents in London, in which you call attention to the absence of efficient measures on the part of the Porte to introduce reforms into the provinces of the Turkish Empire inhabited by Armenians, as stipulated in Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin.

I am to state that a copy of the letter and its inclosures will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, who will be requested to report upon the statements of fact contained in them, in order that Her Majesty's Government may be enabled to judge whether any of them can properly and usefully be laid before the Turkish Ministers. But I am to point out that in a matter which affects the proper execution of the Treaty of Berlin it can scarcely be hoped that the advice and representations of Great Britain alone will be effective unless the other Governments parties to that Treaty are disposed to join.

I am to add that the Turkish Ambassador at this Court has requested to be furnished with a copy of the Memorial and its inclosure, of which his Excellency appears to have heard indirectly. Lord Salisbury would be glad to know whether the Committee have any objection to the papers being communicated to Rustem Pasha.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 3.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 29, 1888.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a copy of a Memorial which I have received from a Committee of Armenian residents in London,* calling attention to the grievances of the Armenian population of Turkey, and to the absence of efficient measures on the part of the Porte to introduce reforms into the provinces of the

* No. 1.



Turkish Empire inhabited by Armenians, as stipulated in Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin.

I annex a copy of the reply which I have returned to this communication.*

I have to request your Excellency to furnish me with a Report upon the statements contained in this Memorial and its inclosure, and to inform me whether any of them could, in your opinion, be made the subject of representations to the Porte with a prospect of benefit to those affected.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 4.

M. Hagopian to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 2.)

My Lord,

25, Chesilton Road, Fulham, London, March 29, 1888.

THE Committee of Armenian residents in London have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's reply of the 27th instant, in answer to their Memorial and inclosure of the 15th instant.

They are glad that the statements of fact contained in these documents will, as a preliminary step, be sent to Constantinople to be reported upon by Her Majesty's Ambassador in that city, and they have the honour to inclose, for similar communication, further and more recent statements of fact brought under their notice.

The infraction of the letter and spirit of the Article of the Treaty of Berlin concerning Armenia has, from the very day of the signature of that solemn Treaty by His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, been so notorious and persistent that, in the interests of our common humanity, the Committee entertain the most earnest and devout hope that the other Signatory Powers, on being invited to do so, will join in any steps that Great Britain might propose to take in so noble and so highly humanitarian a task. In the meantime, the Committee will communicate to their countrymen dwelling in the various parts of Europe the terms of your Lordship's letter, in order that they may take such action as may be in their power to induce the Governments of the countries in which they reside to co-operate with your Lordship in this generous work.

With reference to the request of the Turkish Ambassador, the Committee would be glad if the documents referred to, and which they have had the honour of sending to your Lordship, were formally communicated to him. They say this both on public and private grounds, because they cannot forget that his Excellency's experience as Governor-General of the Lebanon will enable him to use his enlightened judgment on the unhappy and painful circumstances which give its *raison d'être* to the Armenian question, and which can only be removed by a thoroughly honest and sincere effort on the part of the Sultan's Government in the direction desired by the Armenian people, and already advised by Her Majesty's Government.

In conclusion, the Committee gratefully recognize the cordial and sympathetic tone of your Lordship's reply, and express their sincere acknowledgments.

We have, &c.

(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN, *Chairman of Committee.*

(Signed) M. SEVASLY, *Secretary.*

Inclosure in No. 4.

Appendix to Memorial.

THE names of the Armenians known to be imprisoned at the Palace of Yildiz Kiosk are the brothers Hovhannes and Karekin Issagouljan, Vartan Tashjian, Muegueritch Terlemezian, M. Haroutioun Aghavjian and his son Krikoris—all six natives of Van; Kéork Pasbanian, of Tokat, and M. Sareian, the Inspector of Schools, in the service of the United (Educational) Societies.

As advised from Constantinople on the 8th March, the examination of these persons had already been completed twenty days before that date, and their innocence established;

* No. 2.



nevertheless, their discharge depended on the direct orders of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, and they were kept close prisoners.

Further advices from Van report that on the 17th December, 1887, the houses of Boghos Natanian, Manong Sosoian, and Mihran Husian were searched.

The Reverend Arsen Vartabed Tokhmakhian and Karekin Pagheshtzian were during forty-one hours cruelly kept without food or drink as dangerous revolutionists. Eventually the other imprisoned Armenians, discovering their condition, sent them bread and water through the Turkish keepers, and communicated the facts to the people. The Armenians, made very indignant, sent the Bishop to the Vali to ascertain the truth. The Vali denied having ordered the punishment of the two prisoners by starvation; nevertheless, his angry looks seemed to belie his words. The deputation in the end prevailed upon him to send a doctor to attend to the unfortunate clergyman and layman.

On the 27th December Garabed Natanian was imprisoned, his brother Khachadoor being also "wanted."

In a letter written in the early part of February this year, it is reported that a well-educated young man named Michael H. Natanian, who was condemned to be exiled on the 22nd December, 1886, to Konia (*vide* Appendix I), had just died there. He was declared to be a revolutionist. He was born in 1870.

On the 3rd January, 1888, Haroutioun Chetchipanoian, Dikran Beylerian, and Krikor Paghetzian were imprisoned. The last two are boys of twelve years of age, and their crime is the possession of song-books and tales.

On the 4th January Kevork Sherentz was rearrested.

About the same date Vartan Zeronian and Garabed Zeronian were imprisoned for having drunk the health of the ex-Patriarch Khrimian instead of that of the Sultan.

On the 7th January the houses of Panos Terlemezian, Roupèn Shadavorian, Akhigian, Barontjian, Movsès Maloian, and Hovhannes Amadouni were searched. Maloian, Amadouni, Barontjian, Maknos Shadavorian, Koulaksejian, Garabed, and Armenag Yégarian were imprisoned; Hovhannes Shadavorian was ordered to forbid his son from pursuing the occupation of a teacher.

The officers of the Government who conduct searches in Armenian houses often carry off a number of articles which might be of use to them: they simply rob the houses under guise of making searches.

On the occasion of the Christmas festival on the 18th January four Armenians who had been implicated in the disturbances which took place in June 1886 on the day of the election of the Bishop in Van were discharged. Among them was Movsès Maloian, who was imprisoned as being the correspondent of the "Arèvèlk" of Constantinople, and as the probable one of the "Arménia" and other papers.

The Reverend Father Dr. Daniel was still in prison on the 24th January. He is accused of having preached the purchase of arms for future use.

Eight Armenians belonging to the village of Alur, where the above prelate preached, were put in solitary confinement.

It is worthy of remark that the Mahommedans are not precluded from carrying arms.

No. 5.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 4, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 29th ultimo respecting the grievances of the Armenian population of Turkey, I transmit to your Excellency herewith a copy of a further letter which I have received from the Committee of Armenian Residents in London,* forwarding an Appendix to the Memorial inclosed in their previous communication. This paper contains some additional and more recent statements of fact which have been brought under the notice of the Committee.

I shall be glad if your Excellency will include these papers in the Report called for in my despatch above referred to.

I propose to communicate a copy of the Memorial and Appendix to the Turkish Ambassador at this Court.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.



M. Hagopian to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 23.)

My Lord Marquis,

25, Chesilton Road, Fulham, London, April 23, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship, by request of the Committee of the Armenian Patriotic Association, the inclosed appeal to the Government and people of Great Britain forwarded to me from Van in Armenia. The original document is written in Armenian, and dated the 31st January, 1888. It was received by me on the 7th instant. I know the party through whom it has been sent as an educated and honourable man, who assures me that it emanates from an unimpeachable source, and himself bears witness to the intolerable state of things in Armenia. The document is not signed through terror.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN,

Chairman of the Armenian Patriotic Association.

Inclosure in No. 6.

THE CRY OF ARMENIA.

To G. Hagopian, Esq., London.

IT is well known that by the LXIst Article of the Treaty drawn up and signed by the Berlin Congress there is a special obligation imposed upon the Turkish Government to ameliorate the condition of its Christian subjects, and to introduce in their country indispensable reforms.

Although the Turkish Government oppressed its subject nationalities before the signature of that Treaty, it occasionally exhibited humanity and pity towards them. After the signature of that Treaty it alleviated for a time its oppressions, doubtless out of deference to the Great Powers of Europe, who had undertaken the duty of supervising it. Its deference was much greater towards the mighty Empire of Great Britain, who had by her Cyprus Convention confirmed and marked the obligations which Turkey had undertaken, and guaranteed their execution before the world. But when years elapse, and not a single European Power, nor even Great Britain, interests itself in the amelioration of the condition of the unfortunate Christians of the East, not only does not the Turkish Government carry out a single one of its promises as regards the Christians, it not only deprives them of many religious immunities granted by Firmans issued by former Sultans of good memory, but with renewed boldness it intensifies its oppressions, without pity and without fear, deceiving all Europe and even Great Britain.

The Christians of the East put their trust on the humanity of the Christians of the West, but, alas! they always remain disappointed and abandoned. For instance, nobody asks what is the condition of the Armenian nation, that historic people who has a glorious past, and who has from the beginning stood up as a warm champion of civilization and Christianity, especially in the period of the Crusaders.

War, the fall of monetary values, famine, and commercial stagnation have already reduced the Armenian people to the last degree of poverty, so that it can scarcely obtain its daily sustenance. But the Turkish Government, instead of adopting measures to capitalize the inexhaustible treasures buried under its territories and improving the poverty-stricken condition of its subjects, loads the people with new taxes, and collects them by cruel means. Each Armenian village is obliged, notwithstanding its extreme poverty, to provide food almost daily for the numerous tax-gathering officials, who in return behave themselves towards the inhabitants with unheard-of inhumanity. The Armenian peasant is by degrees subjected to such land laws and such heavy taxes that, unable to withstand them any longer, is obliged either to sell his oxen and plough, his house and fields, and depart, or to go to distant provinces in quest of work and be never able to return, or to emigrate in a body, or taking hold of the hands of his young children go from door to door and beg. Thanks to this policy many of the southern and eastern districts of Vasbouragard (Province of Van) are nearly depopulated of the Christian element, and its place taken by Kurds, Turks, Yezidis, &c.

Even the educational expenses of the Turkish people are provided out of the taxes paid by the Armenians, because the Government, under the pretext of opening schools common for all its subjects, has made an addition to the existing heavy taxes, but the

grant is at present limited to Mahomedan schools. In this way the richest Turk gets a free education for his children, whilst the Armenian is already accustomed to make pecuniary sacrifices. Yet this was not enough, and instead of establishing schools and opening before us the path of progress, the Government raises stupendous obstacles, closes many of our schools, and exercises severe and unnecessary pressure.

Just as in the eyes of Turkey the Armenian is a slave and bond-servant, the Kurd is always regarded as its legitimate and beloved son. For the Kurd there is neither law nor taxes, nor constraint, nor even regular military service. Now, it is precisely for this reason that this predatory and barbarous people has become so emboldened that it devastates, robs, kills, and burns, and yet always remains unpunished; and when any opposition is offered, the Government wears out the life of the self-defending innocent people by confining them in prisons for years together as rebels and murderers.

Very often numberless robberies and terrible outrages take place, but the Government is wilfully blind and deaf, because these are for the most part perpetrated by its own officials. Forced marriages, forced conversions to Mahomedanism and other thousand and one irregularities, are always and everywhere common. But who is it that hears, and who is it that stretches forth the hand of mercy? In one word, civil rights, justice, order, and tranquillity have as it were bidden their last farewell and departed from the land of the Armenians subject to Turkey.

Corruption reigns supreme among the officials, without distinction, from the highest to the lowest, and has become a law. Every official, even the Governor himself, obtains his office from the Central Government only by large bribes. These consider it their duty not to devote their attention to make the country prosperous and orderly, but to rob and impoverish the people, and with the fruit of its labour to fill up their own purses; in fine, after shearing the sheep, they endeavour to suck its blood also. It is for this reason that all sorts of irregularities are freely perpetrated, but the Government always closes its eyes.

Litigations are prolonged in the various Courts, and for long spaces of time remain undecided, for the purpose of obtaining bribes from the litigants, and often an unjust judgment is given in favour of the party which has given the largest bribe. Woe to him who should dare to protest against the injustice done! That is considered a crime, and is punished by imprisonment for life, or by perpetual exile. It is absolutely forbidden to draw up public Memorials. The mouth of the press is gagged to such an extent that it can publish nothing except flatteries. Consequently, every irregularity remains hidden.

The following have been added to our intolerable griefs and sufferings:—

The Turkish Government seems to feel a special pleasure in discovering new methods of oppressing the people. The houses of numerous individuals are searched, owing to entirely unfounded suspicions, for finding the traces of revolt. Detractors and calumniators are rewarded with honours and offices. Many young men are exiled for indefinite periods, and their defenceless and helpless families fall into dreadful wretchedness. The prisons are filled by numberless Armenians (many of whom are clergymen), all of them arrested for groundless reasons. Whose heart can stand the hearing or seeing of the excruciating sufferings to which these unhappy people are causelessly subjected? Some of them have been kept more than forty hours without food and water; their hands, feet, and necks in chains, extended in cruciform on the wall, in a dark, cold, damp underground cell. What a barbarous inhumanity, what an unheard-of dishonour to the holy Christian religion! If they had been left a few hours longer crucified in that manner, those unhappy young men (one of whom was a clergyman) would have doubtless drawn their last breath, because they were already exhausted, paralyzed, and insensible when, under the supposition that they were dead, they were taken down. These, with many others, are even now being worn out in the prisons without protection, and in misery, deprived even of the means of religious consolation and comfort. Their families, in despair of receiving human pity and justice, have placed their hope in the goodness of the Almighty.

The duty of searching the houses is intrusted to a hair-brained and brutal Chief of the Police, who, harbouring a special vengeance and hatred against the Armenians, has found an excellent opportunity to wreak his entire personal rancour, and to relegate numerous innocent individuals to undeserved misery, and, in the course of his searches, to perpetrate various thefts and robberies.

Who can curb his rising indignation at seeing this official, without a conscience, on the occasion of his searches in our celebrated Monastery of Varaka, taking up with his impure hands and casting on the ground crosses, Gospels, and a number of sacred relics

centuries old, and even proceeding to demolish the altar in the sanctuary, in the hope of finding arms buried underneath.

The Armenian people, deprived of all its rights, seek in their holy religion their true consolation; but when they behold their religion treated with so much cruelty and contempt, it is impossible for them to stand it any longer. . . .

This is a brief sketch of our condition, which is becoming worse day by day.

What we have written scarcely forms a hundredth part of the miseries borne by the Armenian people.

Shall Great Britain keep silent any longer? Will she not restrain the hands of this arbitrary Government, who, following the example of the Northern Bear, surpasses it in its despotic and subtle policy?

The Christian people of Armenia, like an innocent and defenceless lamb delivered to the fury of a hungry wolf, having put its trust in the mercy of God, and in the assistance of its Christian brethren in the West, is waiting impatiently. What shall be our lot, and what shall our reins give birth to. . . . ?

O, ye children of Great Albion, what would you have done or felt had you been in the place of the unhappy people of Armenia? Would you not have stretched out your trembling hands towards the humane and ask for pity? Now it is unhappy Armenia, who, for the love of the man-loving Crucified, and in the name of Christian pity, cries for help at the feet of your glorious Empire.

The Armenian nation has the right of claiming great things from Great Britain, for it has seen that she has, in many parts of the world, stood forth as the powerful champion of the down-trodden Christians. Indeed, great is our hope that this our cry will not remain without an echo in your hearts, and that the humane Government of England will not delay in extending her helping hand and saving the unhappy people of Armenia from this miserable and intolerable state.

Van, January 19 (31), 1888.

No. 7.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 5.)

(Extract.)

Constantinople, April 26, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the accompanying copy of a Report laid before me ten days ago by Sir Alfred Sandison with reference to the Armenian Memorandum presented to your Lordship by M. Hagopian and his Committee in London, and the conversation Sir Alfred had on the subject with the Grand Vizier.

The subject, as your Lordship is well aware, is one of extreme delicacy, and had attracted my serious attention long before M. Hagopian addressed your Lordship publicly, and as far back as the month of January. I have endeavoured to impress both the Grand Vizier and the Minister of Foreign Affairs with its great importance, and the advisability of avoiding acts looking like arbitrary proceedings and irritating a population hitherto docile and laborious, and amongst whom revolutionary principles were not likely to find access unless they were driven to desperation.

Amongst the Armenians I find, what I have always found amongst oppressed nationalities, there are those who take a calmer view of things, who are satisfied with the removal of more crying evils and gradual reforms, endeavouring to keep on good terms with the ruling Power, whilst the others, *i.e.*, the younger generation of men, invariably belong to those who are impatient, and by their rash proceedings bring on, on their race, more evils, and more cruel ones, than those from which they are trying to escape.

The Armenian Patriarch, who is about to resign the Headship of the Gregorian Armenians, was a representative of the former class of persons amongst them; it remains to be seen what will be the result of the next election to that high office.

Inclosure in No. 7.

Extract from Memorandum by Sir A. Sandison.

ON my asking the Grand Vizier to-day, unofficially, to put your Excellency in a position to answer the facts enumerated in the Memorandum which I placed in his hands privately on Saturday last, his Highness began by saying that he was still waiting for

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some information on the subject, although he could supply you with proofs that the arrests of the Armenians mentioned in the Memorandum chiefly rested on substantiated charges.

The complaints contained in the Memorandum, added His Highness, had no reference to anything like administrative abuses or misrule, and far less to molestation on the part of Kurds or Circassians, but that they exclusively proceeded from arrests, for political offences for which the Government found a ready justification in view of preventing, by exile and imprisonment, the spread of seditious ideas and propensities which the Porte justly considers might lead to consequences of the most serious nature as regards the future tranquillity and perhaps even the preservation of its Asiatic provinces.

I could not help observing to the Grand Vizier that, even admitting the charges in question to be true, a good deal had certainly to be said as to the manner in which they had been brought forward, and more especially as to the manner in which the accused and suspected had been dealt with till now. Even the outward forms of justice, I observed, had in many instances been utterly disregarded, and various persons sent into exile without anybody knowing precisely how and for what reason.

Pera, April 17, 1888.

No. 8.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 5.)

(Extract.)

Constantinople, April 30, 1888.

THE Sultan sent me a message on Saturday evening to say that His Imperial Majesty would receive me in private audience on the following day at 12:30 P.M.

I repaired, therefore, to the Palace yesterday, Sunday, the 29th instant, and had the honour of being received by His Imperial Majesty, and my audience lasted upwards of an hour.

The conversation was for some time of a general and most gracious kind, without having any special political character, until the Sultan came to speak of the Armenian question, and alluded to the conversation with the Grand Vizier on the subject, to which your Lordship will find a reference in my despatch of the 26th instant.

The Sultan said that all that had happened was caused exclusively by the acts of certain wild and evil-disposed persons, who were now suffering punishment for it, whilst the Armenian nation was guiltless, and could neither be suspected nor incriminated of disloyalty.

His Majesty assured me that he only disliked persons without any religion, but respected all religious convictions alike, and as a proof of this named several Armenians of my acquaintance who enjoy his confidence and occupy high posts of trust.

As regards those who had been lately discovered as engaged in a conspiracy, the Sultan said that the evidence against them was so conclusive as to have assured their condemnation to far greater penalties in Great Britain or even in the United States of America, and this evidence had been properly sifted and inquired into by a Commission selected by himself, who possessed his confidence and sat at the Palace.

No. 9.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 15.)

My Lord Marquis,

Lambeth Palace, May 14, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a letter from M. Hagopian, which, as your Lordship will see, I am requested to lay before Her Majesty. All that it is proper for me to do is, of course, to send it to your Lordship.

M. Hagopian, as your Lordship is probably aware, is an Armenian of high character and position resident in London.

I cannot refrain from adding that if, as I suppose, the statements made in the Memorial can be substantiated, the matter seems to be one of real moment, calculated to awaken deep sympathy among Christian communities in England as well as abroad.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDW. CANTUAR.

Inclosure in No. 9.

The Armenian Patriotic Association to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

My Lord Archbishop,

25, Chesilton Road, Fulham, London, April 26, 1888.

WE are requested by the Committee of the Armenian Patriotic Association to forward to your Grace the inclosed appeal from Armenia to the Government and Christian people of Great Britain. The Committee would consider it as a great favour to themselves and to the people of Armenia if your Grace would, after reading the appeal, submit it, or a copy of the same, to Her Most Excellent Majesty the Queen.*

We have, &c.

(On behalf of the Committee),

(Signed)

G. HAGOPIAN, *Chairman.*M. SEVASLY, *Secretary, Licencié en Droit.*

No. 10.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 19.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, May 7, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the arrest of some Armenians.

Mr. Wratislaw, however, adds that so far no flagrant act of injustice has occurred which demanded the intervention of Her Majesty's Consulate.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 10.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, April 26, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the teacher of the Protestant School at Erzeroum was arrested on the 19th instant, and has since remained in prison. I have been pressed by the Messrs. Chambers to interfere with a view to obtaining his release, but the case does not as yet appear to me to be one in which the intervention of Her Majesty's Consulate is either necessary or justifiable. No flagrant act of injustice or oppression has been committed by the authorities, and the man has certainly done wrong from the Turkish point of view. The Messrs. Chambers are naturally anxious for his release, as the work of the school is at a standstill during the absence of its teacher.

An Armenian of Kharpoot, journeying from Trebizond, was arrested on his arrival at Erzeroum two days ago. It is asserted that he is a spy.

All travellers entering the town are examined by police agents specially stationed at each gate for that purpose.

To the best of my belief and information, the suspicions evidently entertained by the Turkish Government are entirely groundless, and its severity uncalled for. No movement of any kind is intended by the Armenians of this district, who have been effectually cowed by the ill-success of their abortive attempt at forming a Secret Society three years ago.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 11.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 19.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, May 9, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, reporting that, in view of the bad state of public security in the Sandjak of Mardin, the spiritual heads of the Christian community there have telegraphed to the Sublime Porte for protection, and that the Vali has sent two Commissioners to that district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 11.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, March 15, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the state of insecurity of the Sandjak of Mardin appears to become worse and worse. So bad is it, that the spiritual heads of the Christian community in that district lately forwarded a telegraphic Petition to the Porte, stating that their co-religionists have no longer any security for life and property, and appealing to the Imperial Government for protection.

A copy of this Petition was also sent to the Vali of Diarbekir, who, on receipt of it, at once dispatched the Alai Bey and a member of the Medjliss to Mardin, to investigate and report upon the case.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 12.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 19.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, May 11, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum on the subject of the arrest of an Armenian pupil-teacher at a Protestant school on a charge of having in his possession certain songs of a seditious nature.

In this despatch Mr. Wratislaw asks for instructions as to what action he should take in case the school in question be closed by the Turkish authorities.

I have instructed Mr. Wratislaw not to resist for the present the closing of the school should the Turkish authorities determine upon such a course, as, in view of the present state of things in Armenia, any official action taken by Her Majesty's Embassy would undoubtedly be misunderstood by the Turkish authorities.

I have informed Mr. Wratislaw that if the school be now closed it may be possible on some future occasion, when a favourable opportunity may present itself, to take steps towards obtaining the reopening of the school.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 12.

Mr. Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, April 19, 1888.

WITH reference to the arrest at Erzingian of a pupil of the Protestant school here, and two Kharpoote doctors, already reported to your Excellency, I have the honour to give the following further details on the subject.

The two doctors have already been released, as nothing of an incriminating nature

was found in their possession. It appears that they were only arrested on suspicion, as being strangers at Erzingian.

The case of the pupil-teacher, Simpat, is, however, serious, and seems likely to involve the Protestant school in grave difficulties. Not only was one of the songs found on him, his own composition, of a rather violent character (it contains, amongst other things, the words "pitiless" and "religionless" applied to the Turks), but it is also corrected in a handwriting which the Armenian teacher of the Protestant school has had to recognize as his own. The school is thus made directly responsible for what it might otherwise have disavowed as being merely the private effusion of a foolish boy. The teacher has been called up to the Government House and interrogated several times during the past week, but, much to the general astonishment, has not yet been arrested. He was informed yesterday that the papers connected with the case are to be sent to Constantinople by to-day's post.

Thus the authorities are evidently taking a serious view of the matter, and I am strongly of opinion that this last step is only the prelude to the closing of the school. The school building is American property, and I beg respectfully to request your Excellency to instruct me as to what course I should pursue in such an eventuality. As your Excellency is doubtless aware, "Protestant" and "English" are considered as almost synonymous terms in these parts.

The school is, besides, a most useful institution, and, in general, exceedingly well conducted, though there has certainly been a lack of care and proper supervision on the present occasion.

I should add that Simpat, though for several years a pupil of the Protestant school, is himself a Gregorian.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 13.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 19.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, May 15, 1888.

I HAVE nothing new to report with regard to the Armenian grievances brought before your Lordship by M. Hagopian and his friends residing in London. I have not received either from the Palace or from the Sublime Porte the information which had been promised me, so as to enable me to place before your Lordship the official version as to the facts alleged by M. Hagopian in his Memorandum.

The Patriarch of the Gregorian Armenians, who wanted to resign, has resumed his duties out of deference to the personal wishes of His Majesty the Sultan.

It is to be hoped that his Beatitude, who is the natural Representative and Ecclesiastical Chief of his nation, will be able to remove successfully the existing tension, and restore mutual confidence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 14.

The Marquis of Salisbury to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

My Lord Archbishop,

Foreign Office, May 21, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Grace's letter of the 14th instant, calling my attention to a communication which you had received from M. Hagopian respecting the condition of Armenia.

I have already received this document, together with other Memorials on the same subject, from the Committee of Armenian residents in London, and I have informed M. Hagopian that the papers will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople with instructions to report upon the statements of fact contained in them, in order that Her Majesty's Government may be enabled to judge whether any of them can properly and usefully be laid before the Turkish Ministers. But I pointed out to him at the same time that in a matter which affects the proper execution of the Treaty of Berlin, it can scarcely be hoped that the advice and representations of Great Britain



alone will be effective unless the other Governments parties to that Treaty are disposed to join.

Sir W. White has since reported that the statements forwarded to him go over so much ground, and that the means of testing their accuracy at his disposal are so limited, that he must ask for time before he can report upon them.

In view, however, of the existing situation in the East, it is not, in my opinion, desirable, in the interest of the Armenians themselves, that this question should be agitated at present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 15.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Foreign Office, May 24, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch of the 11th instant, inclosing copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum relative to the arrest of an Armenian pupil-teacher at a Protestant school at Erzingian, and the fears entertained that the school may be closed by order of the Turkish authorities.

The instructions sent by your Excellency to Mr. Wratislaw on the subject are approved.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 16.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 2.)

Constantinople, May 28, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 7th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from Mr. Acting Consul Wratislaw, reporting the arrest and subsequent release of three Protestants at Erzingian, and also commenting on some arrests at Kharpoot.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 16.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Erzeroum, May 14, 1888.

Sir,

SINCE the date of my last Report to your Excellency, three Protestant Armenians have been arrested on suspicion at Erzingian. None of them were, however, detained in custody more than twenty-four hours, and their speedy release has occasioned much comment at Erzinjan, where it is attributed to foreign protection.

Several pupils of the Protestant school here were arrested a few days ago at the gate of the town as they were going for a walk. They were searched for "seditious" documents, but, none being found on them, were at once released. The teacher of the school is still in prison, no decision having yet been arrived at in his case.

M. Boyajian reports that several persons have lately been arrested and imprisoned at Kharpoot on political charges, but were able to procure their release on bail within a few days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 2.)

(Extract.)

Constantinople, May 28, 1888.

I CANNOT say that my mind is by any means easy on the subject of the Asiatic Provinces of the Ottoman Empire inhabited by Armenians.

No new facts have come to my knowledge since I had last the honour of addressing your Lordship concerning the Armenians, and still I feel that this question may at any moment assume an unpleasant character.

The information promised me by the highest authority on the subject of the alleged Armenian conspiracy has not yet come to hand, possibly on account of the Ramazan fast; but I have felt compelled to make a respectful and delicate reminder through the Minister of Foreign Affairs—and this quite informally.

There has been, and there still exists, a secret agitation amongst Armenians, and there have been measures of repression such as domiciliary visits, arrests, and persons sent into exile. Whether this repression was the result of the agitation, or *vice versa*, the latter caused by the former, it is impossible to ascertain; but the publication issued by certain Armenians domiciled in London and Paris have not any tendency to allay either, quite the contrary; they evidently cause an increase of the existing irritation both with the Armenians and their Moslem rulers.

I am afraid that no advantage could be derived at present by any advice I could give the latter, and I cannot make out what purpose the former mean to attain by encouraging the present agitation.

No. 18.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 16.)

(Extract.)

Therapia, June 5, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 11th ultimo on the subject of the arrest of the Protestant teacher at Erzeroum, I have the honour to inclose a copy of a further despatch I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum.

Mr. Wratislaw further reports that an Armenian priest and three laymen at Erzingian have been condemned to exile for life.

Mr. Wratislaw, in conclusion, states that the proposed emigration of Armenians to Russia has been vetoed by the Porte, and no passports are now given for passing the Russian frontier.

Inclosure in No. 18.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

(Extract.)

Erzeroum, May 24, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 11th instant on the subject of the possible closing by the Turkish authorities of the Protestant school at Erzeroum.

The case of the teacher, Siklimian, and the pupil, Simpat, is still under consideration at Constantinople, but I hear that a telegram was this week received from the Porte inquiring the names of the officials engaged in investigating it, and intimating that their zeal will be suitably recognized by the Government.

An Armenian priest and three laymen, arrested some time ago at Erzingian on the charge of having seditious documents, *i.e.*, national songs, in their possession, have been condemned by the local Court to exile for life. The sentence has this week been laid before the Erzeroum Court of Appeal for ratification.

Evangelical Alliance to Foreign Office.—(Received June 30.)

Dear Sir,

7, Adam Street, Strand, London, June 29, 1888.

THE Council of the Evangelical Alliance instruct me to send the inclosed copies of letters recently received from our Constantinople branch, and from a missionary at Erzeroum in Turkey. Both these communications show that there is great need for watchfulness in regard to the action of the Turkish authorities in the matter of religious liberty.

Our Council are glad to know that Lord Salisbury has called the attention of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to the subject, and the accompanying documents are sent for your information.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed)

A. J. ARNOLD, Secretary.

Inclosure 1 in No. 19.

The Rev. ——— to Evangelical Alliance, London.

(Extract.)

Constantinople, April 27, 1888.

MEANWHILE, another matter has caused us some anxiety. The Protestant community, after long delays, was at last authorized by the Government, as you know, to proceed to the election of a Vekil, or Civil Chief of the community. The Council of the community, composed of representatives chosen by the Protestants in the different provinces of the Empire, obtained authorization from its constituencies to proceed to the election of a Vekil, and after the delay incident to this obtaining of formal powers, it held its election. Professor Hagopos Djedjizian was duly elected Vekil, receiving 11 votes out of the 17, or two-thirds of the 16 votes cast (one member of the Council being absent). The Turkish Government declined to recognize the election, putting forward the claim that the authorization to elect a Vekil merely contemplated the suggestion of several candidates to the Porte, from among whom the Government would make choice of the Vekil. This claim is subversive of the rights of the community, and has, I believe, been abandoned through the good offices of Her Majesty's Ambassador. But the Porte has found means to prevent, so far, any solution of the question by giving aid to a disappointed candidate for the office, even going to the length of authorizing him to call a meeting of his supporters in this city for the purpose of holding a new "election." The meeting so called, consisting of some thirty persons, of course gave their votes for their leader, and his name is under consideration of the Porte. The Porte is now pleased to call this meeting of men who have no representative character and no mandate from the community, evidence of a division in the community, and has intimated that the election of a Vekil cannot be legal unless the community is united. By this means the Council of the community has been set aside, its legal rights ignored, and the election deferred without day. We consider it to be essential to the maintenance of the rights of the Evangelical Christians of Turkey, that the Vekil be chosen by the legally constituted body of representatives of the community as a whole; and we believe that any interference with this right is, in fact, merely another form of the opposition of the Government to any choice of a Vekil.

Inclosure 2 in No. 19.

A Missionary in Armenia to Evangelical Alliance.

My dear Sir,

London, June 13, 1888.

I BEG to place before the Executive Committee of the Alliance a few facts bearing upon the condition of the Christian subjects of the Porte in Kurdistan. The Turkish Government has had suspicions with reference to the Armenians of the city and surrounding district of Van for years past. Since last fall there has been an excessive development of suspicious feeling on the part of the Government toward Kharpoot, Diarbekir, Egin, Erzingian, and Erzeroum, as well as Van. For about five months the officers of the Government have been active in arresting and keeping in confinement Christians of the various districts mentioned. Christian travellers entering by any of the

roads leading to the cities above named, or even wishing to go outside of the city, are seized and searched. In case of being found in possession of books or manuscript documents, they are imprisoned until the books and documents may be translated and examined. Often the examination consumes much time, and it frequently happens that a man against whom absolutely nothing is proved is detained indefinitely in prison. I know personally of several such cases in Erzeroum. Of course, it may be that there are individuals who seek for various ends to stir up the Christian populations against the Government, but I am intimately acquainted with the friends and associations and habits of thought of several of the political prisoners, and am sure that the suspicions of the Government in reference to them are entirely foundationless.

Some of the prisoners in Van have been tortured, though both the Government and the Armenian Patriarch (as I understand) deny the charge; others have been, and are being, abused by being cast into unclean cells containing scores of Kurdish and other Moslem ruffians, murderers, &c., who do not fail to vent their evil feelings upon Christians, especially priests and school teachers, who are charged with conspiracy against Mahomedan rule.

A pupil of the Erzeroum Missionary High School was imprisoned about the 1st April last, and on the 19th of that month the head teacher of the school was cast into prison. My brother, Rev. ———, a British subject and missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, is Principal of the school, and we are always very careful that no rule of the Government be contravened in the school. But it happened that the pupil referred to composed a song in which he referred in severe terms to the Turks. This composition he brought to the teacher for correction of grammatical mistakes. The teacher, while making corrections, warned the pupil against such compositions, and ordered him to destroy it. This the pupil failed to do, and the manuscript being found on his person he was imprisoned, and shortly afterwards the teacher was seized. They are both under very close confinement, not being permitted, according to my latest information, to speak even with their guards. The people of the country are in a state of panic.

Hoping that through your efforts British influence may be brought to bear for the amelioration of the condition of Christians in Turkey, I am, &c.

No. 20.

Foreign Office to Evangelical Alliance.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 3, 1888.

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge with thanks your letter of the 29th ultimo, with its inclosures, relative to the state of affairs in Kurdistan, and to the question of the appointment of a Vekil for the native Protestant community in Turkey; and I am to inform you that copies of these papers will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 21.

Mr. Fane to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 14.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 10, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the reappearance of the Russian brigand, Kerim, and outrages committed by Kurds near Erzeroum.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND FANE.

Inclosure in No. 21.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, June 25, 1888.

I REGRET to have to report to your Excellency the reappearance in this district of the notorious Russian brigand, Kerim. The authorities of this town were informed last week of his presence, with five followers, at a village in the Caza of Passim, about ten hours from Erzeroum, and fifty cavalymen were at once sent to capture him, under the command of a certain Captain Mirza Bey, who has been so often unsuccessfully employed on the same service as to be popularly supposed to have long ago arrived at a complete and friendly understanding with Kerim. This detachment succeeded in surrounding the brigands, who, however, appear to have subsequently made their escape with the greatest of ease.

Near the village of Tatos, nine hours from Erzeroum, some members of the Hassananli tribe of Kurds last week waylaid four Circassian cattle merchants returning to Moush after selling their beasts in the market here. Three of the Circassians were murdered, and the fourth severely wounded. None of the Kurds have been arrested.

Several minor outrages have been committed by Kurds during the present month, and although, till lately, the district has been unusually free from brigandage, this temporary immunity is probably only due to the prolonged wet weather and the consequent bad state of the roads.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 22.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 25, 1888.

MR. BRYCE, M.P., recently inquired in the House of Commons whether it was the fact, as stated in telegrams from Constantinople, which had appeared in the newspapers, that the Porte was arranging to bring into the country about Van, chiefly inhabited by Armenian Christians, large bodies of Circassians, and to settle them there.

He was informed, in reply, that Her Majesty's Government had received no information of such an intention.

Mr. Bryce has since intimated that he will repeat the same question, and I have to request your Excellency to make inquiries as to the truth of this report, and to telegraph to me the substance of the information you may obtain.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 23.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Substance received by telegraph, August 2.)

My Lord,

Therapia, August 2, 1888.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch of the 25th ultimo, and to my telegraphic reply of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I at once directed Sir A. Sandison to make inquiries at the Porte as to the alleged intention of the Turkish Government to settle large bodies of Circassians amongst the Christian population in the neighbourhood of Van.

I have now the honour to inclose a copy of a Memorandum by that gentleman, stating, on the authority of the Grand Vizier and the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Interior, that the Daghestanese referred to are Mahommedan Russian subjects, forced to quit their native country, and that the Porte finds itself reluctantly compelled to grant them hospitality in spite of the inconvenience it entails. It is proposed to assign them such waste lands and other State property as may be available in the



Vilayets of Sivas, Trebizond, and Erzeroum, these being the districts in which they can be settled with least expense. They are stated to consist of about 400 families.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 23.

Memorandum.

I HAVE the honour to report, on the authority of the Grand Vizier, as well as of Saïd Pasha, and Munir Pasha, the Minister of the Interior, that the Circassians mentioned in Lord Salisbury's despatch are Mahommedan Russian subjects whom the Ministers described as "Daghestanlis," forced to quit their native country and emigrate to Turkey, much to the regret of the Government in view of the expense and inconvenience which their immigration will entail upon the Imperial Treasury. As, however, the Porte finds it difficult to refuse them hospitality, it is now proposed, according to Munir Pasha's statement to me yesterday, to assign them such available waste lands and other State property as are to be found for their settlement in the Vilayets of Sivas, Trebizond, and Erzeroum, these being the nearest provinces to the Russian frontier and Black Sea ports which could afford the immigrants land and shelter without occasioning great expense to the Government in the shape of transport, &c.

According to what I was told by Saïd Pasha and Munir Pasha they consist of about 400 families, and, as stated above, will be settled in different parts of the three vilayets in question.

(Signed) A. SANDISON.

Therapia, August 5, 1888.

No. 24.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received August 27.)

My Lord,

Therapia, August 17, 1888.

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the subject of the alleged persecution of Armenian Protestants, I have the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a copy of a Memorandum which Mr. Wratislaw, late Acting Consul at Erzeroum, has drawn up at my request, of the cases which came under his notice during his residence at Erzeroum.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Memorandum.

WITH regard to the alleged persecutions of Protestant Armenians in the districts of Van, Erzeroum, Diarbekir, and Kharpoot, I beg to state that, so far as the three last-named vilayets are concerned, nothing of the nature of "persecution" came to my knowledge during the time I was in charge of Her Majesty's Consulate for Kurdistan (October 1887–July 1888). Members of the Protestant community have up to the present been treated with especial favour by the Turkish authorities, and if, in future, they meet with less consideration than before, the fault will undoubtedly lie at their own door. A most regrettable incident occurred at the end of March in connection with the school of the American Protestant Mission at Erzeroum, which resulted in the only case of rigorous treatment shown to a Protestant which came to my knowledge. A pupil-teacher of the above school, Simpat by name, while passing through Erzingian was found not to have his papers in order, and accordingly detained for inquiries to be made concerning him. A note-book was discovered amongst his baggage containing original school compositions in Armenian of a nature not only offensive to Mussulman susceptibilities, but even distinctly seditious. These compositions were corrected in the handwriting of

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Siklimian, the head teacher of the Erzeroum Protestant school, who, after recognizing the corrections as his own, was arrested and thrown into prison. I was unable to obtain a sight of these documents myself, but it seems certain that they contained the words "pitiless," "religionless," and "dogs," applied to the Turks, besides an invocation to the Armenians in general to rise and throw off the Turkish yoke, for which purpose Siklimian considered only 100,000 patriots to be necessary. The Procureur-Général further informed me that Simpat had also committed to writing his views on the desirability of foreign—and more particularly British—intervention.

Simpat died in prison of typhoid fever on the 25th July, a day or two before my departure, but it was not suggested by his friends that his death was caused or accelerated by ill-treatment or neglect. He was not himself a Protestant, though brought up at a Protestant school. Sikiimian is still in prison.

Two Protestant doctors of Kharpoot, fellow-travellers with Simpat, were arrested along with him at Erzingian, but were soon after allowed to continue their journey. As the result of the suspicion which had thus fallen on the Protestant school, several of the pupils were one day stopped at one of the gates of Erzeroum and searched, but nothing of a suspicious nature being found on them, were not detained more than a few minutes.

At the beginning of May three other Protestants were arrested at Erzingian. Their release within twenty-four hours was much commented on by the Gregorian inhabitants, and attributed by them to special favouritism and foreign, *i.e.*, British, protection. It certainly contrasted strongly with the invariably longer detention of equally innocent Gregorians.

Lastly, three Protestants were arrested at Kharpoot, and released on bail after forty days' imprisonment. Our Agent being at Diarbekir at the time, I could procure no details on the subject of their arrest.

The above are the only instances which came to my knowledge of interference with Protestants by the Turkish authorities. Of "persecutions" I have heard nothing. Of what occurred in the Vilayet of Van I have no information.

(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

August 10, 1888.

No. 25.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury,--(Received August 27.)

My Lord,

Therapia, August 18, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I have received telegraphic replies to the inquiries which I addressed to Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum and Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van relative to the alleged intention of the Ottoman Government to settle Circassian immigrants amongst the Christian population in the neighbourhood of the latter town.

Colonel Chermside informs me that the local authorities at Erzeroum are ignorant of the intention of the Porte to grant lands to Mahommedans from Russia, and that both they and the Russian Consul-General are unaware of any considerable Circassian immigration.

Mr. Russell reports that there are rumours current at Van that Circassians are to be settled in the vilayet, but in what part of it he has not been able to ascertain. He adds that thirty-five Circassians have recently been enrolled in the gendarmerie.

I have instructed Colonel Chermside as well as Mr. Russell to report to me by despatch on this subject, and I shall not fail to bring to your Lordship's knowledge any further information I may obtain from either of them, or from any other reliable source.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received September 8.)

My Lord,

Therapia, August 28, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 18th instant, I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Colonel Chermide relative to the proposed settlement in Asia Minor of Moslem immigrants.

Although Colonel Chermide has no knowledge of the proposal which gave rise to this correspondence, his despatch contains some interesting information respecting the emigration of Mahomedans from Russian territory, a movement which has been in progress for some years past.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 26.

Colonel Chermide to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, August 14, 1888.

I HAVE the honour, in compliance with your Excellency's telegraphic instructions of the 12th August, to forward the following. I am unaware of the grounds of the rumour as to proposed settlements of Circassians among the Armenian population near Van.

At the time of the first great emigration from the Caucasus (some twenty-three years ago), Circassians, Lezghians, and others were settled near Kars, in Alishgird, at and near Moosh, in Bulanik Caza, at Akhlát (Lake Van), Tcharbuhur, Khinis (Erzeroum Vilayet), and other places in these parts, besides in other distant Settlements.

A Convention was subsequently entered into by Russia and Turkey that no Circassians should be established in Asia Minor east of Sivas, and, in accordance with this, the great Circassian Settlement of Azizieh, to the south of Sivas, was instituted.

The Russian Agent at Erzeroum has presumably watched over the observance of these conditions, so that, although here and there a few families may possibly have joined the old Settlements, there has been nothing on a large scale, and no new ones have been made.

Some time after the last war the Russian Government notified a three years' term, during which inhabitants of the ceded districts must decide whether to accept Russian nationality or emigrate. This term subsequently received an extension of six months; it expired four or five years ago.

Since the last Russo-Turkish war, both during and prior to this term, a large number of other Moslems (non-Circassians) from the ceded districts have emigrated and been settled in various parts of Asia Minor. A considerable portion of these were settled in this portion of the country.

Since the expiration of the term for opting as to nationality considerable numbers of Moslems, Russian subjects, Caucasians and others, apply for and receive leave to emigrate; they usually embark at Batoum, and very few come across the land frontier.

The causes for this emigration are various: ordinary Moslems are usually glad enough, if a favourable occasion arises for disposing of their lands, to emigrate to Turkey.

The Circassians, though more clannish, are by no means content with Russian rule, and they also emigrate, usually in larger bodies; the Russians, I am assured on good authority, place no obstacle in their way, and are glad to get rid of them.

By recent enactments (up to November 1887) all the population of the Caucasus and the frontier district are liable to military service or a tax in lieu.

All the Christians have to furnish conscripts; the Moslems, with the exception of certain Circassian tribes, do not serve, but pay a tax very similar in amount to that paid by the Christians in Turkey.

Certain tribes last year requested to serve instead of paying the tax; in some cases this was recommended by Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff and approved at St. Petersburg; in the other cases permission was not accorded.

I am told that 60 per cent. of the Moslem population of the ceded districts has emigrated, and that a considerable proportion of the remainder would be glad to do



so; the Turkish authorities, however, whether for political or other reasons, do not encourage this idea, nor, I believe, do the Russians do so, the latter, by making much of the Headmen or exiling refractory ones, seem to keep the Moslem population well in hand.

For some months past, owing to the above causes, a considerable number of immigrants, including Circassians, has been constantly embarking at Batoum; none have been sent to Erzeroum or Van for settlement, and, I understand, none to Trebizond itself; but some have, I believe, been landed at Samsun, in the west of the Trebizond Vilayet.

The civil and military authorities here are unaware of the intention of the Porte mentioned in your Excellency's telegram.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

No. 27.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received September 22.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 4, 1888.

WITH reference to the telegrams addressed to your Lordship by Sir H. D. Wolff on the 28th and 30th ultimo, and repeated to me by him, I have the honour to state that neither the Grand Vizier nor the Minister for Foreign Affairs have so far admitted the possibility of any plot or intention on the part of the Kurds to cause a massacre of the Christians in the direction of Kochannes, Tehoma, &c.

On the receipt, however, of Sir H. D. Wolff's telegram of the 31st ultimo, stating that outrages on Christians had been committed, I instructed Sir A. Sandison to call the serious attention of the Grand Vizier to the fact.

His Highness, though still doubting the likelihood of such acts, undertook to telegraph on the subject to the Vali of Van on the 1st instant, enjoining on his Excellency to guard against the occurrence of anything of this nature, but concluded by observing that there is no such thing in existence as a "Kurdish army," which is mentioned in Sir H. D. Wolff's telegram of the 30th ultimo.

I am happy to see by Sir H. D. Wolff's telegram of the 1st instant that the statements of his Highness the Grand Vizier seem to be borne out by the information which has now reached Sir H. D. Wolff.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

W. A. WHITE.

No. 28.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received September 22.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 18, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to transmit a copy of a despatch from Mr. Russell, in which he states that no Circassians have up to the present been settled in the Vilayet of Van, and that the rumours to which he referred in his telegram of the 14th August, the substance of which I forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch of the 18th August, were caused by an article which appeared in an Armenian paper published at Constantinople, and edited by the young Armenian party in this capital.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 28.

Vice-Consul Russell to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Van, September 3, 1888.

WITH reference to my telegram dated the 14th August, in reply to your Excellency's telegram dated the 12th August, asking for information regarding the Porte's alleged intention to settle Circassians among the Armenian Christians near Van, I have now the honour to inform your Excellency that, after making every inquiry, I find that the rumours current here which I reported were caused by an article published



in the "Aravelk," an Armenian newspaper published at Constantinople. The article or paragraph alluded to appeared in the "Aravelk" of the 23rd July. No Circassians up to the present have been settled in this vilayet.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. F. RUSSELL.

No. 29.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, September 24, 1888, 1.15 P.M.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury has received alarming accounts from missionaries of attitude of Kurds towards Christian population.

You should urge the Porte to take effectual measures for their protection.

No. 30.

Consul-General Abbott to the Marquis of Salisbury. — (Received September 26.)

My Lord,

Tabreez, September 8, 1888.

RECENT events in Turkish Kurdistan, in the immediate vicinity of the Nestorian Patriarchate, causing the missionaries and Christians in that region to fear a massacre on the part of the Kurds, have been fully reported by me to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I have further the honour to inform your Lordship that, on the first receipt of this alarming intelligence, I immediately telegraphed to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran, and was subsequently in frequent telegraphic communication with his Excellency on the same subject.

I also imparted the information I had received to my Turkish colleague, Behdjet Effendi, who, at my request, telegraphed to the Pasha of Van to do everything in his power to pacify the Kurds and for the protection of the Christians; and he wired to the Porte and to the Turkish Ambassador at Tehran that he had taken that step.

I am happy to be able to report to your Lordship that prompt action has produced the desired result. Order has been restored in the disturbed districts; the fears of the Christians have been allayed; the Kurdish army which threatened their safety has dispersed.

Canon Maclean and his American colleagues have written to me, expressing their deep gratitude, and that of the Nestorian mountaineers, for the timely help thus afforded by Her Majesty's Government in consequence of the representations made to them by Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran on his learning from me the state of the case.

The scene of the trouble was Tehoma and Tiary, in Turkish territory, where some thirty years ago the terrible massacre of Nestorian Christians by the Kurds under Bedr Khan Beg took place. A graphic description of that occurrence was given at the time by the eloquent pen of Sir Henry Layard. Tehoma and Tiary, inhabited by these Christian mountaineers—a brave, hardy, and warlike race—are literally hemmed in by Kurdish tribes of a fierce and barbarous character. Kochannes, styled by the Turks Julamerik, is the residence of the Nestorian Patriarch within the Turkish border, and is two days' journey from Oroomiah or Urmi.

It will afford me great encouragement to know that the course I have pursued on the present occasion has met with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

P.S.—It is with great satisfaction that I am further enabled to inform your Lordship that the effervescence in Turkish territory did not spread to the Oroomiah frontiers on the Persian side. Peace prevails up to the present within the borders of Azerbaijan, and the value of the Shah's recent Proclamation is becoming every day more apparent in this province.

W. G. A.

No. 31.

Foreign Office to Consul-General Abbott.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 29, 1888.

YOUR despatch of the 8th September, respecting the recent troubles in Turkish Kurdistan, has been received, and I am directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to inform you that your action, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch, is approved.

I am, &c.

(Signed) P. CURRIE.

No. 32.

Sir H. Drummond Wolff to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 1.)

(Extract.)

Gulahek, September 4, 1888.

ON the 27th ultimo I repeated to your Lordship a telegram I had received from Consul-General Abbott, informing me of a massacre said to have been projected by Kurds on Nestorian Christians. I at once informed the Persian Government of the report, and orders were immediately telegraphed to Tabreez to take the necessary precautions as far as regarded Persian territory. I also informed the Turkish Ambassador, who, while treating the report as unfounded, telegraphed to the Governor of Van and to the Porte on the subject. At the same time, I communicated with the United States' Minister, who is much interested in these questions on account of the American missionaries at Oroomiah.

I now have the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch from Consul-General Abbott, inclosing the documents on which his telegrams were based. They are certainly alarming, but the scene of the outrages already committed appears to have been on Turkish territory. All that can be done has been done, as I have telegraphed to Sir W. White, and the Turkish Ambassador, as I have before mentioned, has done so both to the local authorities and to the Porte.

I have thought it right to approve Mr. Abbott's letter to Canon Maclean, as the facts related may develop into more serious proportions.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I learn from Consul-General Abbott, as well as from the Persian Government, that the Kurds have dispersed.

Inclosure 1 in No. 32.

Consul-General Abbott to Sir H. Drummond Wolff.

Sir,

Tabreez, August 22, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 26th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency extracts from letters from Canon Maclean and the Rev. H. Browne, English clergyman, and from Dr. Shedd, an American missionary, regarding the apprehended massacre of Nestorian Christians in Turkish Kurdistan.

I further inclose a letter from Mr. Coan, also an American missionary, who is at Kochannes, on the same subject.

Inclosure No. 3 is the copy of a letter which I have addressed to Canon Maclean. I trust that your Excellency will approve of what I have said about any expenses incurred by him.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. G. ABBOTT.

P.S.—Mr. Coan's letter of great importance.

W. G. A.

Inclosure 2 in No. 32.

The Rev. Canon Maclean to Consul-General Abbott.

(Extract.)

Oroomiah, August 25, 1888.

SINCE writing, we have had a more urgent letter from Browne, and Dr. Shedd has come here to consult with us what to do. We agreed that we should send a telegram to you, and that we should send you Browne's statement. When read, will you please put it in the inclosed envelope and register it? All telegraphs in Kurdistan are stopped.

Inclosure 3 in No. 32.

The Rev. Canon Maclean to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

(Extract.)

Oroomiah, August 25, 1888.

I INCLOSE some very alarming news from Mr. Browne. There appears imminent danger of another great massacre like that of Bedr Khan Bey. I don't know if your Grace will think it desirable to let Lord Salisbury know about this. The Turks have stopped all telegraphs in Kurdistan, and information can reach Europe only through Persia.

Inclosure 4 in No. 32.

Memorandum by the Rev. W. H. Browne.

IN the summer and autumn of 1887 Artuch (or Artuchnaïs: this is illegible) of Hadji Aga and other Kurds, continually plundered sheep of Christian Ryats of the Berner [? illegible] near Kochannes, and of Leevin, &c. There were also two affairs between Tairi and the Selai Kurds, in which the Kurds were the first offenders. In the late autumn, Hadji Agha's band was on its way towards Mosul, and Tiari stole a lot of their sheep in revenge for what they had stolen up here. It turned out that amongst these were sheep of a Sheikh, which, when the Tiari men knew, they sent (I think, 500 head of) sheep to the Sheikh, but he said they were not his, but every Kurd claimed this one or that. Therefore Tiari did not try any more to restore the rest of the Sheikh's sheep. About this Sheikh's sheep, the Kurd determined to wreck Tiari in the spring.

At the end of June, I forget on what provocation by the Kurds, some Tiari men went into the Berner [? illegible], which is near Amadia, and brought away more than 1,000 head of sheep. The Meera, or Chief of the Kurds, there is also Mudir, i.e., a Governor under the Kaïmakam, i.e., he is an officer of the Turkish Government. He entirely sacked a village of five or six houses, his own subjects under his Mudirship, who were of the Tiari race.

In June, the temporary Kaïmakam of Julamerk, Ahmed Beg, who is now superseded by the restoration of the former Kaïmakam, sent zaptiehs and plundered two villages, Coon and [? illegible], by way of collecting the taxes, whereas the taxes had always been demanded through a man of Mar Shimoon, or with the men of Baz (or Diz), in October, when they had money from their rice.

Tiari sent word to Julamerk that if they carried on this game they would sack Julamerk. Shortly after this, the newly-arrived Tabor Aghassi, Head of the Gendarmerie, went with thirty or forty zaptiehs into Tâl, on his way to Amadia. Mar Shimoon had sent a man with his companion to Tehoma, to tell Tehoma to let the zaptiehs pass. Without any provocation of any kind, the zaptiehs fired on a village, killed two men, and wounded a boy and two women, all of whom were at their work. One of the killed was scorched by the fire from the rifle. Tabor Aghassi was in the rear, and was told that the Tâl men had fired upon the zaptiehs. After, they said that Tehornaii were there, and fired on the zaptiehs, and he returned to Julamerk, and thence to Van to give his account to the Vali. The zaptiehs had been overheard to say that they would not go to Amadia to die of heat and to fight; they would make a row on the road, and say they had been fired upon. Tâlnaii are Ryats, and without guns. Mar Shimoon was commissioned to examine into the Tâl affair and report to the Vali; so that Mar Shimoon is now receiving some honour, thanks to me, I think, and to my letters to the Consul, which I am not to send any more of.

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I forgot to say that in June, on their way from Mosul, Tâlnai were robbed of their mules and everything on the mules by Kurds of Amadia. The Kaïmakam of Amadia and his Council refused redress. The Sheikh and his Council said it was revenge for the other Sheikh's sheep, but if they would turn Mussulmans they would restore the mules and give them a good village with water.

Tiari allowed Haji Agha's band to pass north again, on condition that they would not plunder the Christian Ryats; but four or five days ago, some of his men plundered a fold in Leevin, and wounded some guardians. The guardians seized two of the thieves but let them go again, because if they gave them up to justice, possibly no redress or punishment would be awarded, and certainly the Kurds would take severe revenge. Tiari and Haji Agha wanted to make a compact, offensive and defensive, but the Pasha heard of it and sent word to Mar Shimoon and Haji Agha not to do anything till he came.

About twenty days ago, sheep of 120 or 150 houses of Asheetha were in "zozanee" (pastures) in some Artuchnai county, or near it in security, because Asheetha had done no fighting nor plundering. The son of the above-mentioned Meera taught the Kurds (Gogai and Sindai) to steal these sheep. They killed two men and four women, one of whom fell on his son and killed him, and two women have recovered from their wounds. One of the women, wife of Yaklanes, the Reis of Asheetha, had received twenty-five blows from "hanjars" (daggers). One woman was ripped up, and the hand of her unborn child was found protruding from the wound. Yaklanes and Kasha Dukha are here now. Tiari wants revenge on the Meera, and gathered their army at Asheetha. But now they hear that all the Kurds are gathered against them and they fear invasion.

The new Mutessarif Pasha came here on Friday. He seems a nice man and disposed to be friendly to Mar Shimoon. It is now agreed that he send ten zaptiehs (with the Tiari men returning from here) to sit in Asheetha and overawe the Kurds. *The Vali is to come here from Van. Mar Shimoon has been just throughout all this complication.* But he ought to have told the Mutessarif to telegraph to the Kaïmakam of Amadia to send zaptiehs to the Kurds (or to Asheetha) so that zaptiehs should not learn the Tiari roads. Many Tiari men want to refuse a passage to the zaptiehs.

In all these affairs, the Tiarii have sometimes been in the wrong, but the bother of the whole mischief is the continual plunder by the Kurds.

The Kurds are continually sending telegrams to Constantinople and making out that the Christians are in fault. The Porte and the Ambassadors do not know the facts. How thankful our Government ought to be that, at first, from my sense of what was right, and now from obedience to the Archbishop, no such tales as the above have appeared in the "Times."

I hear that the Kurds have blocked the road from Mosul, so that merchants cannot come with things I want to buy.

Sunday night, August 19.—News has come that on Friday the Kurds pillaged Gundiktha, a village of Kurds who are subjects of Umra Iktaia, and so allies or subjects of Tiari.

Fifteen thousand Kurds are reported to be already in arms.

——— and ———, of Asheetha and Gegoo, came to me this morning and want you to telegraph to our Queen.

I do not know whether you can telegraph to the Archbishop.

In the spring there was fear that the Kurds would also come and destroy us and the other Ryats. I feel we ought to do something if we can that will at least show some sympathy and desire to help these unfortunate people, who are in imminent danger, and who say that, now that the battle has begun, the presence of the zaptiehs will be no protection. They also fear that the [? illegible] is in agreement with the Kurds about this affair.

I think that the Mosul Government are secretly consenting to the projected attack in the spring; and now that the Tiari folk can be shown to be to some extent in the wrong, I dare say the Van Pasha would not be sorry to have the Christians decimated and thoroughly reduced. But I do not see what our country can do till too late.

Kochannes, August 19, 1888.

Inclosure 5 in No. 32.

The Rev. W. H. Browne to the Rev. Canon Maclean and the Rev. A. H. Lang.

(Extract.)

Kochannes, August 23, 1888.

THERE has been no fighting as yet, but the Tehoma and Tiari men are gathered near Asheetha and the Kurds in Berner. Mutessarif Pasha agreed that he would go with ——— and they two would disperse the two armies. Now to-day he wants ——— to go alone, because he says he must wait for the Vali, who is expected to-day. Also there is news that two regiments of Askers are following the Vali. Doubtless they are for Tiari, as they would say the quickest route to the scene of danger is via Tiari. Of course, Tiari cannot, even if it ought, hold the road against the Asker expedition, as there is an overwhelming force of Kurds ready to fight in Berner. ——— says it is no use of him to go to Tiari and try to get Tiari to go to their homes, unless the Kurds scatter at or before that. He is also afraid that if he goes down to Tiari and yet there is a fight, the Osmanlis will put it on his neck or on Mar Shimoon's. Also he fears that the soldiers on their way will revenge Tiari and not only disarm the Tiari men. I suppose that, unless there is a mistake, Tiari will be disarmed, and probably the Kurds will not be, so that the Ashiret country will become, like Leevin and Berner near here, a prey to the Kurds and their will.

——— wants me to bear witness that he wishes to scatter the Tiari men, but does not see how he can if the Kurds are encamped in front; that he is most unwilling that there should be any fighting at all or any resistance to the Government. I feel sure that he is quite sincere in this. Is there anything that we can do to prevent the wrecking of Tiari by Kurds or by Government troops? Of course, a letter would take such a long time to get to England, still it might do some good, as the affair may not finish so quickly, though I suppose it will begin at once. The Osmanlis have got the Tiari men in a trap, and they will not let them off without slaughter and ravage, I feel convinced.

Mar Shimoon and ——— have sent messengers, and done all they could to prevent fighting, but there have not been adequate measures on the other side to hold the Kurds. It is the Kurds who want to fight now. Tiari and Tehoma want to go to their homes. I find that at the fold of Asheetha, of which I wrote to you, the Kurds ravished all the women, and killed and wounded some of them. This is a new feature in mountain affrays. It is aggravating to think we must not send a telegram to a daily paper.

Inclosure 6 in No. 32.

Dr. Shedd to Consul-General Abbott.

(Extract.)

Oroomiah, August 25, 1888.

I INCLOSE a letter just received from Mr. Coan, written two days ago in Kochannes. It explains a telegram that we are sending. Mr. Browne is also in Kochannes, and Canon Maclean gives you the view of the case from his standpoint.

The emergency seems so pressing to prevent massacre, that I have consulted with Canon Maclean, and now send a telegram. I can only add the hopes that the dreadful news of massacre may not come, and that you may be the means of averting such a calamity.

Inclosure 7 in No. 32.

Mr. Coan to Dr. Shedd.

My dear Dr. Shedd,

Kochannes, August 23, 1888.

WE came on here to Kochannes. We had heard rumours of trouble down in Tiari, but here got full particulars, and they are sad and terrible. Their import is such that I send Benjamin down immediately as a special messenger to you with the following particulars:—

A band of Kurds came up by stealth on to the Asheetha "zozanee" (pastures). There were only women with the flocks. They took off 12,000 sheep, outraged and killed all the women, cutting one woman to pieces, and killed, besides, a small child. This is more than man can stand, and so the Tiari people went to see what could be done, and found that the Kurds, certain of revenge for such an attack, were combining in immense numbers to completely destroy Tiari. Ikhoma has been warned, and Ikhoma, with the Apinshai Kurds, are now united with the Tiari people for the defence of their homes. It looks like a gigantic thing, as thousands and

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thousands of Kurds are gathering for war; it is but a fulfilling of the plan laid out in the spring. I heard two of the letters sent from Tiari, and in both the poor people are making an urgent appeal for help, and state that the beginning was by the Kurds, and they are anxious to prevent bloodshed, but will fight when it is necessary.

Worse than all, it looks strongly as if the Turkish Government was at the bottom of the whole thing, and helping the Kurds. The telegraph is in their hands, used only for their own purposes. No one can put a telegram through here now. The Pasha is encamped above here, and to-day the Vali comes. Troops are being collected, and there is great fear that, while the real object is concealed, the Government is covertly abetting the whole thing. All communication with Mosul is cut off by the Kurds, so that their plans may not be known. If ——— goes down to Tiari to scatter the people, they will only fall an easy prey to the Kurds. If there is a fight while he is there, the Government will say he precipitated it, and he is at a loss. The Government, as a pretext for apathy, or even active help to the Kurds, are trying to lay the blame upon the Nestorians. We, who happen to know the truth, know how matters lie. I can see help in only one way. To appeal to the Government is in vain. To telegraph from here by Turkish lines is useless, so I send Benjamin to you as rapidly as possible, begging you, in the name of Mar Shimoon, ———, and this Christian people, to telegraph immediately to the Consul at Tabreez, asking him to telegraph to Constantinople immediately, that other Powers interfere in behalf of the Nestorians. Benjamin will arrive Saturday. Write Dr. Holmes and the English Consul the particulars, and have them do something at once before it is too late. ——— says, if an answer, or some word can come to the Turkish Government here, or at Amadia, within six or ten days, ordering them to disperse the Kurds, it may serve the whole of Tiari, Ikhoma, and the Mountains. He says he can hold the Nestorians in check, if we only can hold back the Government, or the Government the Kurds. . . . The English Consul had better telegraph through Russia, not Turkey. All that is needed is orders from Constantinople for the Government to interfere, and let them know that Christians can't be massacred in the nineteenth century without arousing a Christian world.

I am, fraternally,
(Signed) FRED. G. COAN.

Inclosure 8 in No. 32.

Consul-General Abbott to Canon Maclean.

My dear Maclean,

Tabreez, August 29, 1888.

ON receipt of your telegram I immediately telegraphed to Sir Drummond Wolff, who replied that he had laid the matter before Her Majesty's Government and telegraphed to Constantinople.

The Turkish Consul-General here, at my suggestion, has also telegraphed to the Pasha of Van, urging upon him the importance of doing everything in his power to pacify the Kurds and for the protection of the Christians. He has also telegraphed to the Porte and to the Turkish Ambassador at Tehran to inform them that he has taken this step.

I have taken copies of Browne's letters and of yours to the Archbishop, and am sending them to-day to Tehran. The originals went on yesterday to His Grace.

Please inform Dr. Shedd that I am also sending Mr. Coan's letter written from Kochannes on to our Minister.

You will thus see that I have done everything in my power.

Please keep me informed as much as possible of all that is going on. Any expenses to and from Browne I will pay; and if you think it necessary, send special messengers on horseback to me. Do not trust too much to Persian telegraph, unless absolutely necessary.

Our Minister at Tehran has taken the affair well in hand, and I sincerely hope that the machinations of the Kurds will be nipped in the bud.

Please be careful and write names of places plainly; there are one or two in Browne's letter I could not make out.

Ever yours, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

Consul-General Abbott to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 3.)

My Lord,

Tabreez, September 13, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch to your Lordship of the 8th instant, I have further the honour to inform your Lordship that the condition of affairs in Turkish territory, in the vicinity of the Nestorian Patriarchate, appears to have undergone some improvement, which I trust will be of a durable character.

The Rev. Canon Maclean, writing to me from Oroomiah on the 8th instant, states as follows:—

“Mr. Coan has come from the mountains, and reports the probability of peace. I believe this is greatly due to your prompt action. It has made the Vali of Van (who pretends there was nothing on) send soldiers immediately and take action by telegraph with Mosul. Some of the wavering Kurds, seeing that the Turks had been obliged (no doubt unwillingly) to take measures to protect the Christians, took their side, and thus the balance of power is so even that an invasion is unlikely. The mountain Christians, as well as all of us, cannot be too grateful to you.”

My Turkish colleague also confirms the above intelligence as regards troops having been summoned by the Pasha from Van to overawe the Kurds and for the protection of the Christians at Julamerk or Kochannes, the Patriarch's residence.

It is so far satisfactory to note that the Porte's officials in the disturbed districts, after due reflection, came to the conclusion that, for all parties concerned, it would be advisable to remove every obstacle in the way of a peaceful settlement of questions at issue between Kurds and Christians, and it is to be hoped they will continue to give convincing evidence of their sagacity in this respect.

Trusting that my conduct will meet with the approval of Her Majesty's Government, I have, &c.

(Signed)

WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to Foreign Office.—(Received October 5.)

My dear Sir,

Lambeth Palace, October 3, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge with very sincere thanks your letter of the 29th September,* informing me that order has been re-established in Kurdistan, and inclosing a copy of the despatch of Mr. Abbott, dated Tabreez, 8th September.

Our missionaries in those districts have reason to be very grateful to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran, as also to Mr. Abbott at Van, for the promptitude with which effectual representations have been made to the Porte and the issuing of serious instructions secured.

If it had not been for the distinctness with which the claim to protection was enforced by the Foreign Office, there is abundant cause to believe that great disaster was at hand.

The firmness and force with which Her Majesty's Government and Representatives have spoken have evidently had that effect which our missionaries (from their knowledge of the people and of the Turkish officials in that country) have always said that such decision would immediately produce.

I hope that now that it is seen that our Government is strenuous in its determination to have order where their subjects are concerned, we shall hear little or nothing more of disturbances.

I beg you to accept my most respectful thanks for your good offices on behalf of our missionaries and the Christians, and have, &c.

(Signed)

EDW. CANTUAR.

* Inclosing No. 30.



Sir H. Drummond Wolff to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 8.)

My Lord,

Gulahek, September 13, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 4th instant, I have the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, reporting the dispersion of the Kurds in the neighbourhood of Kochannes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. DRUMMOND WOLFF.

Inclosure in No. 35.

Consul-General Abbott to Sir H. Drummond Wolff.

Sir,

Tabreez, September 4, 1888.

THE post from Oroomiah came in this morning, and I have the honour to communicate, for your Excellency's information, the following extract of a letter addressed to me by Canon Maclean, and of another which I have received from Dr. Holmes, embodying the contents of a letter written to him by Dr. Shedd.

Canon Maclean states, under date of the 1st instant: "Very many thanks for your letter of 29th August, and for your prompt action. We thought such an important matter would justify our troubling Her Majesty's Government. No more news; I will let you know at once when there is."

Dr. Holmes states: "Dr. Shedd writes, under date of 1st September, that Mr. Coan has returned from Kochannes, and that the Vali acted promptly on receipt of the telegrams, and that the Kurds have for the present, at least, disbanded."

"Dr. Shedd and Mr. Coan both write in strong terms their appreciation of successful efforts to prevent a massacre . . . I hope this will be the last of the trouble."

Your Excellency will thus see that the steps which you were good enough to take in telegraphing to Her Majesty's Government and to Constantinople have produced the desired effect.

I still think that a letter from your Excellency to Her Majesty's Representative at Constantinople, requesting him to impress upon the Porte that it is necessary to keep a very vigilant eye upon passing events in Turkish Kurdistan, will be further productive of beneficial results of a permanent character.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. G. ABBOTT

No. 36.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 8.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 22, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 4th instant, stating that the Grand Vizier had promised to telegraph to the Vali of Van respecting the alleged intention of the Kurds to massacre the Christians in the neighbourhood of Kochannes, I have the honour to inclose translation of a telegram from that functionary, copy of which has been communicated to me by His Highness.

The Vali states that beyond the usual cattle raids, and four or five cases of manslaughter, nothing has occurred which is likely to excite one party against the other. It is, he says, a pure invention that the Kurds intend to massacre the Christians, and there is now perfect tranquillity in the district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 36.

Halil Pasha to the Grand Vizier.

(Translation.)

I WAS requested on the 20th August by the Ottoman Minister at Tehran and the Consul-General at Tabreez that the tribes on one side should not be allowed to cross the frontier in order to carry out their intention of massacring the Nestorians in the neighbourhood of Urmiah. Having previously learned that there was enmity between the Kurds and Nestorians, I lately made a tour of inspection to Chuzmerek and ascertained that beyond the usual cattle raids, which go on from time to time, and except four or five cases of manslaughter on either side, there was nothing likely to excite one party against the other. It is a pure invention that the Kurds intended to massacre the Nestorians, and as the ordinary cases of theft take place in Chuzmerek, which is far from the Persian frontier, no attack has been made on the village of Urmiah, but there is now perfect tranquillity, and all necessary measures have been taken to reconcile the conflicting parties. This is the real state of the case, and the allegations to the contrary proceed from calumniators.

(Signed)

HALIL, *Vali of Van.**August 24 (September 5), 1888.*

No. 37.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 8.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, October 1, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a Memorandum, drawn up on the 24th ultimo by Colonel Trotter, on the subject of the recent disturbances in the Nestorian Mountains.

Since this Memorandum was written I have received information from Sir Drummond Wolff that his Excellency has news from Kochannes, of date 1st September, to the effect that the Governor-General of Van had acted promptly, and that the Kurds were for the present at least disbanded.

I have also received your Lordship's telegram of the 24th September, and the Memorandum* drawn up by the Rev. Mr. Browne, of date 19th August, which your Lordship subsequently sent to me, and which was not included in the papers to which Colonel Trotter had had access.

Although there does not appear to be any danger of a general massacre such as at one time appears to have been anticipated, I have not failed, as instructed by your Lordship's despatch of the 24th ultimo, to urge the Porte to take effectual measures for the protection of the Christian population in Kurdistan and the Nestorian country; and I beg to inclose a copy of the note addressed by me, and should like to know whether your Lordship wishes me to take any further steps at present.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 37.

Memorandum respecting the alleged ill-treatment of Christians by Kurds.

I HAVE carefully read through various letters and telegrams that have been shown to me on the subject of the reported disturbances and ill-treatment of Christians in the Nestorian Mountains.

It is clear that there was no foundation for the alarming reports of a proposed raid on the part of the Turkish Kurds across the Persian frontier, with the object of massacring the Nestorian Christians in the neighbourhood of the Persian town of Oroomiah, but it would appear from Mr. Browne's letters, and from the Report of the Governor-General of Van, that there may be some cause for anxiety on account of the disturbed relations between Kurds and Christians in the heart of the Turkish Nestorian districts. It is well known that the mountain or tribal Nestorians, as distinguished from the non-tribal Nestorians of the plains, have never been thoroughly subdued by the Turkish Government, and there are many places where the Turkish tax-gatherer

* See Inclosure 4 in No. 32.

dares not show his face. It seems that about the middle of August the Nestorians of the mountain districts of Tiyyari and Tehoma were assembled in arms near the villages of Asbeetha and Ligan, lying to the west of Tiyyari, and that a large force of Kurds, estimated by the Rev. Mr. Browne at the very improbable number of 15,000 men, were collected with hostile intent in the Berwari district, still further to the west. The Governor-General of Van was then hastening to the scene, followed, it was said, by a couple of battalions of infantry. In the Rev. Mr. Browne's letter from Kochannes of the 23rd August it was stated that the Vali was expected to arrive on the following day, and on the 5th September we have the Vali's Report of his having visited the disturbed districts, and declared that there was nothing serious in the state of affairs.

It seems that the Nestorians fear that the Turkish Government may seize this opportunity of consolidating their power in the Nestorian mountain districts—a not unlikely contingency, and one for which the Government are hardly to be blamed, provided the auxiliary Kurds are kept within proper restraint, a most difficult proceeding even with the most well-intentioned Governor. It would also seem that the Nestorians contemplate resistance to the Turkish troops by force, in which case there will probably be much bloodshed.

It is, of course, very difficult to get at the truth on these matters, especially with the scanty details supplied. The Rev. Mr. Browne appears to have been imperfectly informed as to the state of affairs, and his statements must be received with caution.

(Signed)

HENRY TROTTER, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

Constantinople, September 26, 1888.

Inclosure 2 in No. 37.

Note Verbale.

HER Majesty's Embassy has the honour to thank the Sublime Porte for its courtesy in unofficially communicating to it the telegram from the Vali of Van, dated 24th August (5th September), relative to the state of affairs amongst the Nestorian and Kurdish population on the Persian frontier near Urmiah.

Her Majesty's Embassy ventures to hope that should there be any danger of disturbances in this or the neighbouring districts the Sublime Porte will take measures for the protection of the Christian inhabitants.

Therapia, October 1, 1888.

No. 38.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 22.)

(Extract.)

Therapia, October 13, 1888.

A FEW days ago the Rev. Mr. Brooks, an English clergyman resident at Constantinople, called at Her Majesty's Embassy and presented a Petition emanating from certain Protestant Armenians, begging that I should take steps at the Sublime Porte on behalf of a number of their community who, it is alleged, are suffering persecution at the hands of the Turkish authorities at Samsoun.

Complaints of this kind would, in the ordinary course, be submitted to the Protestant Vekil, who would be able to bring them to the notice of the Central Government. No Vekil has, however, yet been definitely appointed, and I thought I should, on this ground, be justified in granting the community some assistance in bringing the case before the Porte.

I accordingly caused a letter to be addressed to Mr. Brooks, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, informing him that if the Armenians would draw up a Petition to the Grand Vizier setting forth the facts of the case, and would forward it to the American Legation and to this Embassy, I was prepared on this occasion to assist them in bringing the grievances of the native Protestants before his Highness. I also pointed out that it might be well to send a copy of the Petition to the German Embassy.



The Protestant Armenians accordingly drew up a Petition in duplicate, and forwarded one copy to Mr. King, the United States' Chargé d'Affaires, and the other to myself; they did not, however, apply to the German Embassy.

Mr. King subsequently consulted me in the matter, and it was agreed between us that we should both cause the Petition, of which I herewith inclose a translation, to be presented unofficially to the Grand Vizier, and this was subsequently done.

Inclosure 1 in No. 38.

Petition of Protestant Armenians to Grand Vizier.

(Translation.)

To His Highness the Grand Vizier:

Highness,

YOUR petitioners humbly set forth the state of Nicolaki Effendi Kouzoujak Oglou, an honourable merchant of Alacham (Kaza of Bafra, Sandjak of Janik, Vilayet of Trebizond), and a member of the Protestant community, the most loyal and faithful of the subjects of His Imperial Majesty.

In accordance with the usage and the requirements of his faith, this man has always had prayers in his house with his family; both morning and evening and on Sunday he has had his co-religionists at worship with him, since there is no Protestant church in Alacham. This habit of worship, although permitted by the laws of the Empire, has aroused the bigotry of people who are hostile to the Protestant doctrine. For this reason, such people at different times during the last two years have falsely alleged against Nicolaki Effendi that he has opened a reading-room, that he invites men to be Protestants by the use of money, and that, not being himself a priest, he officiates at weddings and at other religious rites; and the Local Government, in order to please those who make these accusations, has imprisoned him repeatedly contrary to the laws, and several times have sent him to Bafra and Samsoun on such charges without the slightest foundation, whereby Nicolaki Effendi has been kept from the pursuit of his mercantile affairs, and subjected to very great hardship and loss. Within two months he has been forced to give security in the person of well-known men of the Armenian and Greek communities at Samsoun that he will not make his house a church, will not open a reading-room, things which he had no intention to do, but only upon his giving security was he released.

A week later the Greek Metropolitan declared that Nicolaki Effendi is a disturber of the public peace, that he is performing religious functions without authority, that he tries to seduce people into becoming Protestants, that he holds a Greek girl concealed in his house, and various other stories of an entirely fictitious character.

Upon this Nicolaki Effendi was arrested, and sent under arrest to the seat of Government of the Vilayet, where, without trial or sentence, he is now imprisoned.

This accusation is entirely calumnious, and is evidently on the face of it a fabrication of those who are hostile to the religious faith of the Protestants. Hence, that the local authorities, moved by a desire to please the Greek Metropolitan and the people, should repeatedly arrest Nicolaki Effendi, take him from his business, and carry him from place to place in an unhappy condition; and that, after a long period of such conduct, they should put him in prison at Trezibond without trial or sentence, is evidently opposed to the love of justice of His Imperial Majesty and to the glorious laws of the Empire.

Your petitioners thereby beg that Nicolaki Effendi may be restored to his home, that he may be protected from molestation in the worship of God according to the rites of his Church, and that the officials who have wantonly caused an honourable man so much pain and grief and loss be made to feel the consequence legally attaching to such conduct.

(On behalf of the Council of the Protestant Community),
(Signed) HOGOPOS H. DJEDJIZIAN.
AVEDIS ASADOOVIAN.
AVEDIS CONSTANTIAN.

Muharrem 20, 1306 (Eilul 14, 1304).

Inclosure 2 in No. 38.

Sir W. White to the Rev. C. H. Brooks.

Sir,

Therapia, September 19, 1888.

WITH reference to the Petition that you presented to the British Embassy to-day, I am of opinion that the best possible course to adopt is to advise the Protestant Armenians to draw up a short Memorandum in English and Turkish addressed to the Grand Vizier, setting forth the details of this case, and to send it to the American Legation and to this Embassy, begging that it be presented to the Grand Vizier. Should they think it desirable they might also send a copy, accompanied by a similar request, to the German Embassy.

I am prepared to assist the native Protestant community in laying their grievances before the Grand Vizier on this occasion pending the appointment of a Vekil, who would be the proper medium for calling the attention of the Porte to such matters.

I am, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 39.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 24, 1888.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 13th instant, reporting the steps which you had taken to bring to the notice of the Grand Vizier a Petition from certain Protestant Armenians, complaining of the persecution of a member of their community by the Turkish authorities at Samsoon.

Your action and views, as reported in that despatch, are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 40.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 3.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 18, 1888.

ON the receipt of the inclosed despatch from Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan, I instructed Sir A. Sandison to bring to the notice of the Grand Vizier the reports which had come to Colonel Chermiside's knowledge as to hostile attacks and reprisals between Kurds and Nestorians, and the consequent dispatch of two battalions intended to act against the latter.

His Highness stated, in reply, that, to his knowledge, perfect tranquillity prevailed over the country where the disturbances are supposed to have taken place, and that, under the circumstances, he could give no credence to the reports mentioned in the despatch.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 40.

Colonel Chermiside to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, October 2, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that about a month ago a Staff Officer left this station for the Sandjak of Hekkiari, capital of Bashkalah, owing to reported trouble in that district.

I have received no news on the subject from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, but have heard here that two battalions have been sent against Mar Shimoon's Nestorians.

It is stated that in the first instance some Kurdish tribes plundered some



Nestorian flocks, and that thereupon Nestorians, it is asserted under Mar Shimoon's directions, attacked and pillaged Kurdish villages. Khurshid Pasha, the Mutessarif of Bashkalah, was placed in arrest, but has been released; he is said to have been favourable to the reported proceedings of Mar Shimoon's Nestorians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

No. 41.

Memorandum communicated by Rustem Pasha, November 14, 1888.

VERS le mois de Septembre dernier, le bruit avait été répandu que les Kurdes Ottomans préparaient une incursion du côté de Tiary et de Tehoman (frontière Persane) dans le but d'y massacrer les Nestoriens.

Ces rumeurs se sont trouvées être fausses; mais elles avaient produit une vive émotion et donné lieu à une échange de correspondances officielles.

Il résulte de l'enquête faite par les autorités Impériales que ces bruits ont été mis en circulation par deux missionnaires Anglais, nommés Maclean et Browne, qui se trouvent, le premier à Ourmiah (Perse), et le second à Koraks (Turquie).

Comme il paraît évident que les agissements du Dr. Browne jettent le trouble dans les esprits et peuvent provoquer de fâcheux incidents, sa présence à Koraks ne peut avoir aucun bon résultat.

Le Chef religieux des Nestoriens, dont il est l'hôte, le verrait volontiers abréger son séjour dans le pays; et le Gouvernement Ottoman, de son côté, croit devoir porter ces faits à la connaissance de Lord Salisbury, et de lui demander de prendre des mesures pour l'éloignement de ce missionnaire.

Londres, le 12 Novembre, 1888.

(Translation.)

TOWARDS the end of September last, a rumour had been spread that the Turkish Kurds were preparing for an incursion in the neighbourhood of Tiary and Tehoman (Persian frontier) with the object of massacring the Nestorians there.

These rumours turned out to be false, but they had produced considerable alarm, and had given rise to the exchange of official correspondence.

It appears from the inquiry instituted by the Imperial authorities, that these rumours were put into circulation by two English missionaries, named Maclean and Browne, the first of whom is at Ourmieh (Persia), and the second at Koraks (Turkey).

As it seems evident that Dr. Browne's proceedings disturb men's minds, and may occasion unfortunate incidents, his presence at Koraks can lead to no good result.

The religious Chief of the Nestorians, whose guest he is, would not be sorry if he shortened his stay in the country; and the Ottoman Government likewise thinks it right to bring these facts to Lord Salisbury's notice, and to ask him to take measures for the removal of this missionary.

London, November 12, 1888.

No. 42.

Evangelical Alliance to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 14.)

My Lord,

7, Adam Street, Strand, London, November 13, 1888.

REFERRING to former correspondence on the subject of religious liberty in Turkey, I have now, on behalf of the Council of the Evangelical Alliance, the honour to transmit to your Lordship an extract from a letter received from our correspondent in Constantinople. This matter of the continued persecution of Nicolaki Effendi has received the attention of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and the Council of the Alliance venture to ask your Lordship's kind consideration, with a view to further representations being made to the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. J. ARNOLD, Secretary.

Inclosure in No. 42.

The Rev. ——— to Evangelical Alliance, London.

(Extract.)

Bible House, Constantinople, October 6, 1888.

SINCE I last wrote to you the Christian merchant at Alacham, referred to in our Memorial as being in prison, has been released on bail (the Governor having attached such conditions to the bail as he supposed could not be fulfilled), and has therefore been allowed to return home. He had not been at home a week before an order to arrest him again was sent to the local Governor. Without explanation of the new charge the merchant (whose name is Nicolaki Kouzoujak Oghlou, by the way) was seized, hurried off under guard 50 miles to Samsoun, put on a steamer, and sent, under charge of soldiers, to Trebizond, where he was imprisoned and informed by the Chief of Police that he was to be banished. As soon as his arrival was known in the city one of the most wealthy Moslem merchants of the place went to the Government House and offered to become his bail, in order that he might be allowed to go out of the prison. This offer was refused, on the ground that his crimes were too great to admit of bail. Later, through the kind offices of the British Consul, Nicolaki Effendi was released on bail, and permitted to see the charges against him.

These charges are:—

1. That he has tried to deceive people, even children, into being Protestants, by offering them money.
2. That he has made his house into a church.
3. That he has opened a reading-room in his house.
4. That he has secreted a Greek girl in his house, whom he detains by force from her parents.

Nicolaki Effendi has been once examined by the Chief of Police, but the questions related only to religious doctrine, especially to the doctrine of the Trinity. This is the present state of affairs.

Meanwhile, the Protestant Central Council here, finding that they could get no attention from the Porte, called at the British Embassy to beg for help. The Ambassador could not see the delegation, but sent one of the Secretaries, who told them that while he would present their Memorial to the Ambassador, he was bound to say that, in his view, the Embassy could not interfere. No reply having come to this application of the Protestants, after ten days an English member of the Evangelical Alliance called at the Embassy, with the result of securing from Sir W. White a promise to serve as intermediary in presenting a Memorial in behalf of Nicolaki Effendi to the Grand Vizier, "since the Protestants have no Vekil." The Memorial for the Grand Vizier has been prepared by the community and sent to Sir W. White, but the Secretary who received the document took occasion to remark again that the Embassy cannot interfere, since Nicolaki Effendi is a Turkish subject. Hence the Protestants are rather disheartened.

Nicolaki Effendi has been three weeks under arrest in Trebizond on these absurd charges, of whose falsehood a domiciliary visit of five minutes by the police of Alacham would have given convincing proof. So far, the only thing that our efforts are known to have accomplished is the acceptance of the Protestant Memorial by the Embassy for transmission to the Grand Vizier.

No. 43.

The Marquis of Salisbury to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Foreign Office, November 14, 1888.

My dear Lord,

THE Turkish Ambassador has brought me the inclosed from his Government.* As far as I can gather, they apprehend danger from Mr. Browne's efforts. But I know so little of the details that I could simply reply that I should refer the matter to your Grace.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

Foreign Office to Evangelical Alliance.

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 20, 1888.

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant relative to the imprisonment at Trebizond of an Armenian Protestant Christian, named Nicolaki Effendi.

I am to state, in reply, that it results from a Report received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople that his Excellency had suggested the preparation of a Petition setting forth the facts of the case, which should be forwarded to the British Embassy and to the American Legation for presentation to the Grand Vizier. Sir W. White also recommended that a copy should be sent to the German Embassy, but it does not appear that his advice on this point was followed.

Sir W. White and the United States' Minister subsequently caused the Petition to be presented to the Grand Vizier. But it is his Excellency's opinion, in which Lord Salisbury concurs, that, as Nicolaki Effendi is not a British subject, the case is not one in which Her Majesty's Government can properly take official action.

Lord Salisbury will, however, request his Excellency to inquire, unofficially, whether the Petition has been considered and the facts investigated, and with what result.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 20, 1888.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 13th ultimo, and to my reply of the 24th ultimo, on the subject of the imprisonment of an Armenian merchant named Nicolaki Effendi, at Trebizond, I transmit to your Excellency herewith a copy of a letter from the Evangelical Alliance,* asking that further representations should be made to the Porte on behalf of this individual.

I also inclose a copy of my reply,† stating that the case is not one in which Her Majesty's Government could properly take any official action, but that your Excellency will be requested to inquire unofficially whether the Memorial has been considered, and with what result.

I should be glad if you would intimate, unofficially, that the case is attracting attention in England, and would endeavour to ascertain whether any inquiry has been made into the grounds of Nicolaki Effendi's imprisonment.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

SALISBURY.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 21.)

My dear Lord,

Addington Park, Croydon, November 19, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your Lordship's letter of the 14th November, with the inclosure from the Turkish Embassy.

In reply to the statement that untrue rumours as to the threatening preparations of the Kurds for an attack on the Christians emanate from our missionaries, I beg to inform your Lordship that two English travellers have just returned from the scene of the incidents—Mr. Riley and Dr. Cholmondeley (an English physician).

They state that they themselves actually found the Tiari (Christian) Chiefs assembled at Kochannes, deliberating as to how they should defend their people from the vast muster of the Kurdish tribes.

They state that the Kurds had in the first instance made a terrible attack on the Christian women (300) and a few shepherds, who had gone with the flocks as usual to the uplands. They violated the women and killed many.

The Tiari people had then assembled, and the Kurds, on the other hand, had mustered in very great masses, armed with Martini rifles.

At this moment the British Representatives promptly intervened, and in consequence Turkish troops were sent in all directions and to great distances through the country to disperse the Kurds.

The two English travellers themselves were present when the Vali of Van himself, with his troops, arrived at Kochannes. He received the travellers kindly.

The state of the case was notorious and visible, but the Vali courteously denied to them the existence of what they saw and the motive of his own presence. They also visited him at Van, and were entertained by him. The facts were patent. They are perfectly well known to the French and American missionaries, as well as to our own.

I would call your Lordship's attention to Mr. Abbott's despatch of the 8th September last, in which he says: "The Kurdish army which threatens their (the Christians') safety has dispersed."

Your Lordship is aware that the Turkish officials on the spot objected to the presence of Mr. Russell, who took an interest in the Christians. I believe that he has been removed. The Turkish officials are not likely to approve more of Mr. Browne's presence or to consider him discreet, but I feel certain that his departure would be the signal for oppression, which has largely ceased since he went to live at Kochannes.

We are also able to deny that the Patriarch Mar Shimoon is wishful (as the Memorandum states) that Mr. Browne should leave his country. He keeps him in close companionship with himself (and with his designated successor), and is most anxious that he should not leave. He not only states this in writing, but the two travellers have within the last two months seen how much he values his presence, and how grateful he is to England, from which he and his people have for the last forty years asked the boon of a resident teacher.

Mr. Riley and Dr. Cholmondeley are drawing up a Memorandum, which I shall have the honour of forwarding to your Lordship.

Mr. Riley would attend your Lordship at any moment to give his personal impressions, or, if that is impossible, perhaps your Lordship would allow him to wait on Sir James Fergusson.

And I would particularly request that instructions might be given to Colonel Chermiside (to whom the Kurdistan district is assigned) to make inquiries on the spot and to report the facts to your Lordship.

I have endeavoured to put the main facts before your Lordship as shortly as I am able, but must apologize, I fear, for the length of my letter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDW. CANTUAR.

No. 47.

Evangelical Alliance to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 28.)

My Lord,

7, Adam Street, Strand, London, November 26, 1888.

I AM instructed by the Council of the Evangelical Alliance to thank your Lordship for the letter of the 20th instant, written by Sir Julian Pauncefote. Our Council will look anxiously for the reply to the inquiries made, under your Lordship's directions, by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, as to the result of the Petition presented to the Grand Vizier in reference to the case of Nicolaki Effendi.

There is one point in your Lordship's letter upon which I have to remark. The suggestion of Sir William White, that a copy of the Memorial should be sent to the German Embassy, has, we trust, before this been adopted, but probably our Committee in Constantinople were waiting in the hope that instructions would be issued by the German Government to its Ambassador at the Porte in regard to the matter. We have long felt it desirable that Germany, as a great Protestant Power, should be urged to support the representations made from time to time by Sir William White and the United States' Minister upon the subject of religious liberty in Turkey. The German branch of the Evangelical Alliance has this matter in hand, and we trust that before long instructions in this sense will go forth from Berlin.

Again thanking your Lordship for the attention given to our communications, I remain, &c.

(Signed) A. J. ARNOLD, Secretary.

Memorandum by Mr. A. Riley respecting the recent Outrages on Christians in Kurdistan, and the Residence of the Priests of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Mission in the Province of Hakkari, lately incorporated with that of Van.—(Received December 3.)

THE Assyrian, Chaldean, or Eastern Syrian Christians are divided into the subjects of Turkey and the subjects of Persia inhabiting the country lying on the frontiers between these three points—Lake Urmi, Lake Van, and the town of Mosul.

The Turkish Assyrians are either Ashirets, tribal, dwelling in confined valleys, semi-independent of the Imperial Government, or Rayahs, non-tribal, dwelling in the plains and exposed valleys, completely under the officials of the Porte.

In Persia all the Assyrians are non-tribal, inhabiting the great plain of Urmi.

The Supreme Head, spiritual and temporal, of the whole Assyrian people is the Patriarch Mar Shimoon, Catholicos of the East. He resides at Kochannes, in Turkey, is recognized by the Provincial Government, and receives a small annual salary from the Porte. He has, however, no representative or Vekil at Constantinople, and no means of communicating directly with the Central Government.

The Assyrian Christians are surrounded on all sides by the Kurdish tribes, and perpetual struggles have been going on between them for centuries. The Christians are numerically the weaker, and also worse armed than the Kurds. Since the Russo-Turkish war a large proportion of the Kurds are armed with Martini and other modern rifles; the Christians rarely possess any better weapon than the old flint-lock musket, swords, and light wicker targets or shields; thus they are only safe within their valleys, which serve as fortresses into which neither Kurds nor Turkish troops penetrate.

The Rayahs, or non-tribal Assyrians, are entirely at the mercy of both Kurds and Turkish officials. Their lot is a very hard one. It is true that murders and outrages on women are comparatively rare, but they have to submit to every kind of injustice and tyranny. The state of things may be best described as follows: the Kurds rob the peasants of their sheep, money, irrigation water, in fact, of all their property, no protection is afforded by the Government, which, when the taxes are due, and the unfortunate Christians are unable to pay them on account of the Kurdish robberies, severely punishes them for their inability.

The Ashirets, or tribal Assyrians, are in a somewhat better condition. They are secure within their valleys, and pay less taxes than their brothers of the plains (the amount of their taxes was fixed when the Porte first occupied the country more than eighty years ago), but the area of land capable of cultivation within their valleys is very small; they are therefore obliged to pasture their flocks outside their valleys, and to obtain corn from the neighbouring plains. The Kurds take advantage of this to carry off their flocks, and the local Turkish Governors, by preventing caravans from entering the valleys, starve the tribes into paying such tribute as they think fit to demand. I cannot say for certain that they are thus made to pay more than the agreed tax, but the mountaineers are so miserably poor that it is difficult to understand how they can pay any taxes at all.

This summer the sheep of Ashitha, the largest village of Tiari, were being fed in a "zoma," or mountain pasture, outside Tiari, in charge of between 200 and 300 women and girls and two men. On the 31st July the encampment was suddenly surrounded by a large body of Kurds, the two men were killed, all the women and girls violated, five were killed, one pregnant woman being ripped open, the child protruded, and one slowly put to death by twenty-five dagger-wounds (I saw the husband of this woman, Rais Yakhanis), four others wounded, and the rest stripped entirely naked, and left in that state to make their way back to Ashitha. So terrible an outrage has not occurred since the massacres of Bedr Khan Beg in 1843. The object of the outrage was clearly to draw on the Tiari tribe to attack the Kurds, and this happened; the men of Tiari prepared to avenge the honour of their women. To meet them there assembled the Kurdish tribes Gougaii, Zereknaii, Berwarnaii, and Sindaii, the authors of the outrage, together with others in overwhelming numbers, 15,000 it is said; I cannot say the number was as large as this, though I am satisfied that it must have been at least 10,000. The Tiari tribesmen then gave up all idea of avenging the honour of their women, feeling themselves, even with the assistance of the neighbouring Assyrian tribe of Thoorna, unable so much as to defend the entrance to their valley. The Turkish authorities had shown no sign of interfering up to the end of August, when the Rev. W. H. Browne, of the Archbishop of Canterbury's

Mission, who had been stationed in Hakkari since November 1887, and who is, I believe, the only European of any kind in the province, fearing a massacre, sent a special messenger across the frontier to Canon Maclean, the Head of the Mission at Urmi. The Canon instantly telegraphed to Mr. Abbott, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, and, I believe, the other Missions in Urmi, *i.e.*, the French and the American, telegraphed to their representatives.

The Vali of Van was communicated with through the Turkish Representatives at Tabreez and Tehran, and I believe I am right in saying, denied the existence of any troubles in Hakkari. However that may be, the Turkish authorities then took steps to disperse the Kurdish army, and when I was at Kochannes on the 13th September I found the Vali of Van had himself arrived some days before with a body of troops to pacify the country. I visited him, and, in the course of conversation, he told me that he had also sent troops in the direction of Berwar, near Ashitha.

All the Chiefs of Tiari, about twenty in number, were assembled at Kochannes during my visit to that village last September. I had the opportunity of talking to them collectively and individually.

The Assyrian Christians have held their lands from time immemorial, and on this title had been allowed to hold their property since the Turkish occupation. Recently, because they possess no title-deeds, the Turkish authorities have been selling Christian villagers to Kurds, which means a gradual expatriation of the Christians. This occurred principally during 1885 and 1886.

The Archbishop's Mission is an educational one, sent out in 1886 at the request of Mar Shimoon, the Assyrian Bishops, and the people. It is non-proselytizing, aiming simply at the education of the people without detaching them from their Church. No work of any kind is undertaken amongst the Mahommedans, the English clergy having strict orders to confine their labours entirely to the Assyrians. The present Mission priests are:—

Rev. Canon Maclean, M.A., late Scholar of King's College, Cambridge.

Rev. W. H. Browne, LL.M., of St. John's College, Cambridge.

Rev. A. H. Lang, M.A., late Scholar of St. John's College, Oxford.

Rev. A. R. Edington, M.A., of Worcester College, Oxford.

Three of these priests are working in Persia, where they have large schools and colleges. The fourth, Rev. W. H. Browne, has resided in Turkey since November 1887, at the special request of the Patriarch Mar Shimoon and the Metropolitan. In 1884 and 1886, when I was visiting the country, both Patriarch and Metropolitan urged me to persuade the Archbishop of Canterbury to send a clergyman to reside in Turkey, as the mere presence of an European in the province would be a protection to them.

Since Mr. Browne took up his residence at Kochannes as the guest of Mar Shimoon, the Turkish authorities have used every endeavour to dislodge him, have subjected him to every species of annoyance, and have even punished Mar Shimoon and his people for harbouring him. This spring, finding that the Patriarch's salary had been unpaid since his arrival, and his host otherwise harassed and threatened, Mr. Browne asked Mar Shimoon whether he had better not leave Kochannes and return to Persia. The answer was that the Patriarch and his people must put up with the increased annoyances of the Government as best they could, for they desired him to stay, as his presence might save them from a massacre. This prediction was remarkably fulfilled in the circumstances connected with the outrage of last July.

The Patriarch further told Mr. Browne last spring to write to the Archbishop of Canterbury asking him not to believe any report that might be sent to England from Constantinople. That he and his people wished to have him amongst them, and that any statement to the contrary effect, purporting to come from him, would be either a fraud or extorted from him by force, he being absolutely at the mercy of the Vali of Van.

I have visited the Province of Hakkari on three different occasions, in 1884, 1886, and during last autumn (1888). With few exceptions I have travelled through all the districts inhabited by the Christians, and I am personally acquainted with most of their chief men. I have made careful notes during my visits, and have watched the changes in the condition of the country during the last four years.

I cannot come to any other conclusion but that the Porte has determined upon the destruction of the people as a race; that the Kurdish oppressions are not only connived at, but even instigated, by the local Governors (often Kurds themselves, as Fikri Pasha,

the late Vali of Hakkari, and the present Kaïmakam of Julamerk); and that their destruction will be accomplished partly by forcing them to emigrate to Persia and Russia, partly by massacre, such as the one undoubtedly projected this summer.

In the interests of the Assyrian Christians, three things seem desirable:—

(a.) The recognition of the Assyrian Christians as a distinct religious community, with a representative at Constantinople.

(b.) The establishment of schools amongst them. At present there are but few Assyrians that can speak Turkish, the official language, and the Patriarch and his Council are ignorant of the rudiments of Turkish law, knowing neither how to formulate their grievances, nor how to seek redress. Indeed, it would be difficult to find an Assyrian of sufficient education to act as representative as suggested in recommendation (a). It is impossible to exaggerate the helplessness of the people in this respect.

(c.) The residence in Hakkari of a Consul or other Representative of some European Government. At the present time, not only are there no Consuls nearer than at Mosul and Van, both outside the Assyrian country (and a British representation at the latter town alone, the Mosul Consulate having been lately suppressed), but if Mr. Browne were to leave the country I think I am correct in saying there would not be a single European of any description in the province.

(Signed) ATHELSTAN RILEY.

2, Kensington Court, London,
December 1, 1888.

Note by Dr. H. P. Cholmeley.

Having accompanied Mr. Athelstan Riley on his visit to Kurdistan this autumn, I am in a position to corroborate his information concerning the outrage of the 31st July and its attendant consequences.

The facts rest upon the following data:—

(a.) The general consensus of testimony from all quarters, natives in Persia and Turkey, the English Mission, and the French and American Missions at Urmi, so far as they received information from their independent agents in Hakkari.

(b.) The unanimity of detail in this testimony.

(c.) The evidence of Mr. Browne, whom I saw at Kochannes, and who was resident in Hakkari throughout the whole of the disturbance.

(d.) The evidence of the Tiari Chiefs who were assembled at Kochannes to consult as to the measures to be taken for the safety of their tribe, and some of whom were the husbands and fathers of some of the outraged and murdered women.

(e.) The evidence of the Patriarch Mar Shimoon and his family.

(f.) The presence near Julamerk of the Vali of Van and his troops. His Excellency acknowledged that there had been a disturbance which he was there to quell, though he affected to make light of it.

As to the numbers of the Kurdish force assembled against Tiari, all accounts agreed in putting them at 15,000; but I cannot say from my own knowledge of the country whether or no these numbers are probable.

Mr. Riley puts them at not less than 10,000, basing his calculation upon his knowledge of the strength of the Tiari and Thooma tribes, whose country he visited in 1886, upon which occasion I was not with him, though I was in 1884.

Taking into consideration the natural strength of their position, their aptitude for war, and the number of fighting men they can raise, he thinks that not less than 10,000 Kurds could have reduced these Tiari Chiefs to the state of terror they were evidently in when we met them at Kochannes.

As far as my information goes, I entirely concur in the conclusions Mr. Riley has drawn from the facts, and the recommendations he has made thereon.

(Signed) H. P. CHOLMELEY, M.B.

No. 49.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Foreign Office, December 10, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 18th October last, relative to reports of hostilities between the Kurds and Nestorians, which are discredited by

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the Turkish Government, I transmit to you herewith a copy of a Memorandum which was delivered to me by Rustem Pasha on the 14th ultimo, in which these reports are attributed to the Rev. Mr. Browne;* and Her Majesty's Government are requested to take measures for removing him from Kochannes, where he is now residing with Mar Shimoon, the Spiritual Head of the Nestorians.

I also inclose copies of correspondence† with the Archbishop of Canterbury on the subject, and of a statement drawn up by Mr. Athelstan Riley and confirmed by Mr. Cholmeley, two English travellers who have recently returned from the districts in question.‡

It will be seen that these gentlemen entirely corroborate the information previously received from Mr. Browne, and from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, as to the events which have occurred, and as to the danger which at one time existed of still more serious disturbances.

It would be desirable to obtain, as soon as possible, a Report from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van on the subject, after which it may be a matter for consideration whether Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum might with advantage be directed to visit that part of the country in the ensuing spring.

I have in the meanwhile addressed to Rustem Pasha the inclosed reply.§

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 50.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Rustem Pasha.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Foreign Office, December 10, 1888.

I HAVE been in communication with the Archbishop of Canterbury on the subject of the Memorandum which your Excellency did me the honour to leave with me on the 14th ultimo, requesting that Her Majesty's Government would take steps to remove the Rev. Mr. Browne from Kochannes, where he is residing as the guest of the Spiritual Chief of the Nestorians.

The grounds on which this request is made are that Mr. Browne has disseminated false reports as to a threatened attack by the Kurds on the Nestorians, and that the Chief of the Nestorians would himself be glad if Mr. Browne's stay could be brought to an end.

I think it right to inform your Excellency that the independent accounts which have been received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, and from Mr. Riley and Dr. Cholmeley, two British travellers who have recently returned from a tour in the localities in question, entirely confirm the reality of the danger at the time, though it may now be considered at an end, owing to the arrival of the Vali of Van with a considerable body of troops.

Messrs. Riley and Cholmeley state that before the arrival of the Vali outrages of the most atrocious character had already been committed by the Kurds, and they add that Mar Shimoon, the Chief of the Nestorians, so far from desiring the departure of Mr. Browne, has earnestly requested that he will remain with him.

Under these circumstances I cannot help thinking that your Government has been misinformed. I shall be happy to obtain a further Report from our Consular officers in the neighbourhood of the spot, but I do not feel that I should be justified, in the present state of my information, in further pressing upon the Archbishop of Canterbury the wish of the Porte that Mr. Browne should withdraw from Kochannes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 51.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 13.)

(Extract.)

Constantinople, December 8, 1888.

A FEW days ago the new Armenian Patriarch called upon me, and, after compliments, alluded to the irritation produced in high quarters here in consequence

* No. 41.

† Nos. 43 and 46.

‡ No. 48.

§ No. 50.



of the publication in London of an Armenian newspaper called "Le Haiasdan," a circumstance of which I had heard previously.

The Patriarch then mentioned the Armenian nation, and that he had every reason to believe that the Sultan was animated by the most benevolent intentions towards those of his subjects who belong to it; but his Beatitude added that he was afraid that the tone adopted by his co-religionists domiciled in England might interfere with the realization of any kind intentions on the part of the Sultan.

No. 52.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 27.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 19, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatches of the 7th and 11th May respectively, on the subject of the arrest and trial of a Protestant Armenian at Erzeroum, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship a further communication which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum reporting that a sentence of exile for life has been passed on the prisoner.

This sentence has been appealed from to Constantinople, but as such a procedure may last a very long time in this country it would be extremely hard on a prisoner, whose sentence is exile, to be kept in close confinement during the whole period when this appeal is pending.

I concur with the view expressed by Colonel Chermside that the case is not one in which we can interfere by official representations, but the American Minister has likewise received a report from the United States' Consul at Erzeroum, and takes a warm interest in this and similar cases. We have agreed to take such unofficial steps as we properly may to obtain the liberation of this prisoner on bail pending the trial of his cause in appeal, when it is hoped the sentence may be revised in such a way as to be considerably mitigated.

Of course, even then there would remain an appeal to mercy.

The present sentence is out of all proportion to the offence, and is evidently due to the fear of the local Judges of being suspected of indifference in a political cause.

I believe that my American colleague, Mr. Straus, has spoken to the Grand Vizier, and I have instructed Mr. Stavrides to exert himself unofficially in furthering the same object, and I hope in doing this I shall meet with your Lordship's approbation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 52.

Colonel Chermside to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, December 6, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the trial of an Armenian (Protestant) school teacher under the circumstances described in the despatches of the 19th April, 26th April, and 14th May has concluded.

The pupil teacher mentioned in despatch of the 4th April died in prison in the month of August.

After reference of the preliminary "dossier" to Constantinople the trial of the school teacher took place here. He has been sentenced to exile for life.

I consider this sentence of quite uncalled-for severity under the circumstances; but I quite agreed with the views of the late Acting Consul that it was not a case in which it would be judicious in any way to interfere, nor in view of the reference to Constantinople would such local interference have been likely to have any desirable result.

The Rev. W. Chambers, however, your Excellency will remember, wished the Acting Consul to interfere, and his manner and remarks to myself have given me the impression that he considered such action a duty which my predecessors would not have neglected. I have therefore thought it right to give your Excellency my opinion as above.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 3, 1889.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 29, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 19th instant, with regard to the sentence of exile passed on an Armenian school teacher at Erzeroum, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a further despatch on the subject which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 53.

Colonel Chermside to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, December 12, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency, with reference to my despatch of the 6th December, that the sentence on the individual therein mentioned is "exile for life," and not "imprisonment for life." This sentence has been in the usual course referred to the Final Tribunal ("Temyiz") at Constantinople for ratification or the reverse.

I have the honour to forward, at his request, a statement by the Rev. D. Richardson concerning the case, which may interest your Excellency. This gentleman informed me that a lawyer is to be engaged at Constantinople to observe the proceeding as to decision of sentence on the defendant's behalf; the intermediaries in this affair will be American missionaries in Constantinople, and it seems quite possible that they may request the American Minister to exert influence in the case.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 53.

Statement by the Rev. D. Richardson.

THE defendant in this case, Apramham Seklemian, is charged with violation of section 66, Criminal Code, and is sentenced to life exile.

He protests against this decision, and appeals to the Supreme Court, Constantinople.

The facts charged are as follows:—

The defendant was teacher in the Erzeroum Protestant High School. He was handed an essay for correction, which proved to be a seditious poem. He admits having made two grammatical corrections in the first part before reading the poem. It is charged that he made a third in the latter part, but he does not admit this. There is no evidence to show that he made any of the corrections, except his own confession. It is not charged that he did anything in the matter except to make these three corrections.

He appeals on the following grounds:—

1. He admits negligence in not personally destroying the document, but considered his order to the pupil to do so sufficient.

2. He is not guilty of section 66, Criminal Code. This law punishes with life exile those "who make a seditious harangue, post up in a public place such a document, or publish such an article." It is not charged by the prosecution that he has done any of these things, or that he has been accessory to any of them. Further, he is not charged with violation of any other law, yet he is found guilty and sentenced to the full penalty of section 66, Criminal Code—life exile.

3. Neither can his action in this case be said to have violated any law in any particular. While it is admitted by the defence that the poem was seditious, it is admitted by the prosecution that the defendant did not write it. Neither was he accessory to its writing. He merely marked two grammatical errors in the early part of the poem, then, noticing its seditious character, handed it back to the pupil,

reprimanding him severely, and ordering him to destroy it immediately. This the pupil neglected to do. The prosecution brings no evidence to show these statements false, the Court merely disregarding them in its decision.

4. The defendant protests against being condemned without being allowed to produce witnesses in his own defence, or having credence given to his statements explaining his confession, which is the only valid evidence of the prosecution. The defendant further alleges that he is a loyal subject of the Sublime Porte, having never had sympathy or connection with sedition in any form.

Copy of statement by Rev. D. Richardson, given to me 9th December, 1888.

No. 54.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 10.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 2, 1889.

IN forwarding to your Lordship the accompanying copy of a preliminary Report drawn up by Colonel Chermide, C.B., C.M.G., on the recent troubles at Hakkari, I trust your Lordship will see how difficult it is to obtain anything approaching to accuracy from such a distant and inaccessible district.

In addition to tribal permanent jealousy and hostility always existing between the Mussulman Kurds and the Christian Nestorians, there was, it appears, in the recent scare the natural fear on the part of the latter that the Turkish force which was being concentrated was so for the purpose of disarming them, and of forcing taxation in those localities which have hitherto refused to be subjected to anything of the kind.

It is impossible to say with any degree of certainty whether, and to what extent, a religious animosity entered into these dangerous feuds which are always recurring from time to time, and on which a very sharp look-out must very naturally be kept.

A few days ago Colonel Bell, R.E., spent a day here on his way home, and, although he had not visited the actual spot during his progress, he gathered some rumours which are not without interest as to the condition of that locality in which his Grace the Primate takes such a warm interest, and your Lordship may deem it worth while to ask Colonel Bell for a Memorandum with reference to the Nestorians, who, it is to be hoped, will be left in peace in future.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 54.

Consul Chermide to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, December 20, 1888.

WITH regard to your Excellency's telegram of the 17th December concerning recent troubles in Hakkari, and previous despatches on the subject, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I have received no official reports on the subject, either from the late or the present Vice-Consul at Van. On the 12th October I passed your Excellency's despatch of the 27th September to the latter, with its inclosures, a Memorandum from Lieutenant-Colonel Trotter, and a letter from the Rev. Mr. Browne. I mentioned in a private letter to your Excellency the great difficulty at present existing in obtaining intelligence at Van, owing to the suspicion with which the Vice-Consulate is regarded by the authorities. Mr. Devey, I may mention, appears to have entered into very good relations with the Vali.

Mr. Devey, however, as I informed your Excellency, told me I must give him time. On receipt of your Excellency's telegram I called on Mr. Devey to forward the Report as soon as possible.

The following are the facts as far as I have been able to gather and connect them.

I may mention to your Excellency that in 1881-82 I travelled all through the districts in question.

The tribal Nestorians are established, as your Excellency is aware, in the most rugged, difficult, and "accidenté" portion of the Zab Valley and its tributaries, their districts are more or less bounded on all sides by high mountain uplands of far easier contour, with many rolling tracts of pasture land, the rights of grazing in which belong to various Kurdish tribes who leave them in winter.

These tribes in their emigrations skirt or pass through parts of the tribal Nestorians' country, besides which, as the Nestorians have flocks, there are often questions concerning the rights to pastures.

The most important tribe are the Hartush Kurds; their name is written in Kiepert's Map across their summer pastures, north-east of the Nestorian country, but in winter they are mostly to be found south of Amadiéh, and between that and Mosul they have some villages near Akra.

To the north and north-east of Amadiéh is the wide Berwari Valley, the Christians of which, though of the same race as the Nestorians, are mostly Catholics, and called Chaldeans. There are a few non-tribal Nestorian hamlets. To the north and north-west of this lies the most important Nestorian tribal district, Tiyyari, containing the villages of Asheetta and Lizan, besides many hamlets. The Kurds of Berwari are traditionally hostile to the Tiyyaris, but Berwari, if my memory is correct, is not the habitat of any one important Kurdish tribe.

To the east of Tiyyari and of the Zab, beyond the great Salaberka Valley, lies the Nestorian tribal district of Thkoma, and on the south of this come the Pinyanish tribal Kurds, who remain permanently more or less in the same district. There are traditional feuds between the Thkoma (or Thkoba) and Tiyyari tribal Nestorians. The Pinyanish Kurds are usually on good terms with the former, and hostile to the latter.

The Hartush Kurds are usually on fair terms with the Tiyyari, partly, doubtless, from expediency, as the latter hold a very strong position on the Hartush communications.

Occasionally the Kurds combine against the Christians, as some fifty years ago, at the time of the massacres by Beder Khan, described in Sir H. Layard's books. The tribal Nestorians up till now, or till quite recently, only paid contributions, not regular taxes, and their two great causes of fear from the Government have been the enforcing of regular taxes, and being deprived of their arms.

An armed Christian population is naturally looked on by the Turkish Government with suspicion. It is, moreover, in an important strategical position as regards Mesopotamia, and has been several times visited of late years by Russian officials and travellers (*e.g.*, 1881—M. Yussefovitch, a high official of Tiflis Government, who held large meetings of the Nestorian Chiefs in a monastery in the Walto district, November 1881).

During the operations against the Kurds in Nerwi, Baradost, Gerdi, and Shemdinan in 1879-81 the Nestorians were most excited as to the possibility of action by the Government against themselves, and were talking of armed resistance. In the present year, from some cause which I have not ascertained, the Hartush Kurds were hostile to the Tiyyari Nestorians.

Further, last winter a Sheikh Mehmed Nourri, or Nourallah, who, I believe, resides in the Pinyanish district, proposed an expedition of any Kurdish tribes he could rally in the spring against Tiyyari; the Southern Hartush were doubtless asked to join, and even if the latter were a separate subsequent movement, this general ebullition of hostile feeling was probably the cause of the Kurdish troubles in Berwari, where the Kurds are in a minority.

The Thkoma tribal Nestorians were invited, I believe, by the above-named Sheikh to join in the attack on their traditional fellow-Christian enemies, the Tiyyari. This they do not appear to have done. The Kurds this spring and summer mustered on the south of Tiyyari, and their numbers (probably exaggerated) are said to have reached 8,000. A village or villages were, I believe, undoubtedly attacked, some women ravished, and seven lives lost.

While the Kurds were mustering, news reached the Nestorians that the Government was sending troops from Van and Mosul, and their old fears as to being disarmed, and probably as to taxation, revived.

It was at this time that Mr. Browne appears to have written the statement which your Excellency forwarded to me (it is at Van, and I have not a copy yet). The Kurds further looted 4,000 sheep. As yet I have heard of no excesses on the part of the Government troops, and only the necessary repressive action against the Kurds. The column from Van consisted of two battalions under the

command of Mehemed Bey, a Staff officer from Erzeroum. The Vali of Van also proceeded to Hakkari.

The sheep, with the exception of 600 to 700, were recovered and restored to their owners. It is also, I believe, proposed to exile the Sheikh who incited the Kurdish movement. On one occasion, I believe, in Nerwi or near Rizan, in Sherwan, resistance was shown to the troops by the Kurds. With their muzzle-loading rifles they were not able to keep the ground for a few minutes against the Martini rifles of the regulars, and were speedily dispersed, with a loss of fifteen killed and wounded. Part or all troops have returned to Van, the officer commanding to Erzeroum. All reports agree that tranquillity was very easily restored, and Mr. Devey informed me in a private letter that he had forwarded in November to your Excellency a letter from Mr. Browne, from Kochannes, reporting the satisfactory line followed by the Vali towards the Nestorians and Kurds, and thanking your Excellency for your action in the matter and your Excellency's representations to the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE, Colonel.

No. 55.

Memorandum by Colonel Bell on Recent Events, &c., in Hakkari.—(Received January 16, 1889.)

BEFORE leaving Tehran in November last I had heard rumours of excesses of Kurds in the Lower Tiari valleys. About the middle of December, near Erzeroum, I met an Armenian Inspector of Roads who had just returned from Tall and Julamerik, where he had been with the Vali. He told me that there had been no rising of the Kurds in that vicinity. His narrative was somewhat as below: that zaptiehs having been dispatched to the Tál Valley from Julamerik or Bash-Kala (head-quarters) to collect revenue, had, according to their custom, quartered themselves on the Nestorians of that valley; that the Tálnai declined to meet their forced requisitions, but offered provisions on payment. Certain exactions roused their anger to such a pitch that they attacked the zaptiehs, who thereupon opened fire and killed some thirty of the villagers. But the excitement spreading through Tiari and the southern Nestorian valleys, reinforcements of troops (one battalion) were moved to Julamerik and Tál, where the Vali repaired in person and called upon Mar Simon to exercise his authority with the tribes to induce them to pay revenue; not only was the yearly revenue demanded, but in addition arrears for the past thirty or forty years during which it has remained unpaid. Mar Simon promised to collect the year's revenue if time were allowed; the troops were withdrawn before its collection, and none has since been paid.

Although my informant denied the gathering of the Kurds, after reading the paper sent to me it seems most probable that to check reprisals on the part of the Tiari, &c., some such gathering did take place, and that the Turkish authorities took little or no notice of it, perhaps even connived at it. The hill Nestorians are the most unruly and ignorant of the subjects of the Porte in Kurdistan, pay no revenue, give no aid to the State, and can scarcely in consequence expect the authorities to go to much expense to protect them.

A most anomalous state of affairs exists in the valleys of Tiari, Tchob, Salabacca, &c. (fully appreciated by Colonel Trotter, *vide* his Memorandum).* My sympathy is rather with the Governors than the governed, for in this "kingdom within a kingdom" a condition of things exists scarcely to be tolerated in any even semi-civilized country, resulting in all power being in the hands of the lawless minority.

It was in 1886 that I visited the Nestorian hills, and yet I cannot agree either with the estimate of the policy of the Porte made by Mr. A. Riley, or with his remarks on the tyranny of the Turks, for no Turkish official had been able to exact revenue from most of the valleys up to that date, *i.e.*, for some thirty to forty years back, and I heard of no "boycotting" of supplies by the Turks. The Tálnai provided me with mules, and accompanied me to Mosul. In Tál there were complaints that the Pinianish Kurds still exercised their ancient pasture rights over that valley and exacted a corresponding money tribute. I found Kurdish villages scattered amongst those of Nestorians and all living on friendly terms.

Although asked for no opinion, I beg to be excused for expressing some, *viz.*:—
That it is necessary to teach the Nestorians that amount of subjection necessary

* See No. 37.

to all good subjects (a more impracticable lot of unreasonable beings—the powerful minority*—it would be difficult to find anywhere).

That measures are necessary to be taken to afford the surplus hill Nestorian population a means of extending their holdings southwards (this is possible). They must starve without some outlet near at home, notwithstanding that very many of them seek employment during the winter in such centres as Diarbekir, &c.

I have no doubt that the Government, notwithstanding the difficulty of settling disputes amongst semi-nomads, can arrange without difficulty that appropriate limits and grazing grounds shall be assigned to both Nestorians and their Kurdish neighbours without prejudice to existing tenure and ancient grazing rights, and that an equitable taxation be settled and arrears cancelled. Good soil in plenty exists towards Amadiah, Mosul, Shaiikh Adi, &c., and Kurds and Nestorians can live together on good terms under Turkish rule.

January 14, 1889.

(Signed)

MARK S. BELL, Colonel.

No. 56.

Evangelical Alliance to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 16.)

(Extract.)

7, Adam Street, Strand, January 10, 1889.

REFERRING to your Lordship's letter of the 20th November last in regard to the case of Nicolaki Effendi in Turkey, I am directed by the Council to send your Lordship the inclosed extract from a letter recently received from our Committee in Constantinople.

Inclosure in No. 56.

Extract from Letter of Secretary, Evangelical Alliance, at Constantinople, December 6, 1888.

NICOLAKI EFFENDI is still detained at Trebizond. The Governor-General, in conversation with the local representative of the Protestants in that city, said that there are no charges against Nicolaki Effendi sustained by any evidence, but that it is thought best to detain him. On being pressed with the injustice of allowing a man's business to be ruined by such prolonged detention without cause, he replied that Nicolaki Effendi had been sent to Trebizond by orders from the Sublime Porte, and that he could not take the responsibility of permitting him to return to his home.

No. 57.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 21, 1889.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 20th November respecting the imprisonment of an Armenian merchant named Nicolaki Effendi at Trebizond, I transmit to your Excellency herewith a copy of a further communication from the Evangelical Alliance, stating that Nicolaki Effendi is still detained at Trebizond, notwithstanding that the Vali is reported to have admitted that there are no charges, sustained by any evidence, against him.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

SALISBURY.

P.S. January 22.—Since the above was written I have received a further letter from the Evangelical Alliance, of which a copy is also inclosed, to the effect that Nicolaki has been set at liberty, though he is not yet allowed to return to his home.

S.

* Amongst the tribes are to be found high-minded men of ability, such as Khoja Solomon, a Catholic Nestorian or Chaldean of Gundukhta, &c., anxious to pay a fair tribute and to live on good terms with their rulers.

Foreign Office to Evangelical Alliance.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 21, 1889.*
I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, reporting the continued detention of the Armenian merchant, Nicolaki Effendi, at Trebizond, although the Vali is reported to have admitted that there are no charges, sustained by any evidence, against him; and I am to inform you that a copy of your communication will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople with reference to the instructions which have already been sent to his Excellency on the subject.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

Evangelical Alliance to Foreign Office.—(Received January 22.)

Sir, *7, Adam Street, Strand, January 22, 1889.*
I AM much obliged by your letter of yesterday's date, written on behalf of the Marquis of Salisbury, with reference to the case of Nicolaki Effendi.
As we have just received a further letter from our correspondent in Constantinople, which shows that Nicolaki is now released, though not allowed to return to his home, I send you an extract from the letter; for the Council of the Evangelical Alliance are anxious that this should go to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople with the previous extract which I had forwarded to the Marquis of Salisbury.

I remain, &c.

(Signed) A. J. ARNOLD, *Secretary.**Inclosure in No. 59.**The Rev. ——— to Evangelical Alliance, London.*

(Extract.)

Constantinople, December 21, 1888.

NICOLAKI EFFENDI, of Alacham, has been released at last from Trebizond, and has returned to Samsoun. Whether this results from the interest in the case shown by Sir W. White I cannot say, but I am inclined to think that it is the result of his unofficial inquiry. However, Nicolaki Effendi is not yet out of difficulty, for the Governor of Samsoun has declined to allow him to return to Alacham for the present. We hope that further efforts which we are making here will result in his entire freedom.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 24.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 20, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship, with reference to your Lordship's despatch of the 10th December last and my despatch of the 2nd instant, copy of a despatch, and its inclosures, which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan on the subject of the disturbances in the Zab Valley.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 60

Consul Chermside to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, January 9, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Excellency the Report from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, called for in your Excellency's despatch of the 9th October, and telegram of the 17th December. The chief points in Mr. Devey's Report not mentioned in my *ad interim* Report of the 20th December are (1) that the Goyyan Kurds were concerned in the disturbances: this is a nomad tribe of many clans who frequent the Eastern Bohtan district and the mountainous valleys of the Upper Khabur River and parts of the Berwari district; (2) that the Sheikh Nourullah has been exiled; (3) that the local officials of the Mosoul Government are to blame in not discouraging the anti-Christian agitation among the Kurds in its earlier phases.

The Van authorities appear to have acted judiciously, and tranquillity to have been easily restored.

The disturbances emphasize the expediency of the Turkish Government enforcing its control over the nomad and other Kurds in the Bohtan and Hekkiari, as well as in other districts, and the application of some military service would probably be the most advantageous thing.

Great financial difficulties stand in the way of a strong Civil Government, as the district is a very unremunerative one, and would be, as it I believe is under present arrangements, administered at a loss. The stationing of numerous small detachments of troops, almost all of Turkish origin, among the Kurdish districts, is not only expensive, but acts very prejudicially on the efficiency of the important 4th Army Corps. It would be preferable for any detachments required near Amadiyah to be furnished from the 6th Army Corps.

The establishment of local military Kurdish centres would have many advantages, but it is very doubtful if the desertion which would ensue from Kurds serving in or near their own districts would not render such an idea unfeasible.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE, Colonel.

Inclosure 2 in No. 60.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Chermside.

Sir,

Van, December 24, 1888.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 13th October last, I have the honour to return herewith the three inclosures therein contained, and to report that at present perfect tranquillity reigns in Hekkiari, and that the relations between Kurds and Nestorians are much more satisfactory than they were at the beginning of the year. It would seem that about that time a Roman Catholic missionary on the way to Mosoul with a certain Hojja Shliemon of Gundiktha, a village of Kurds friendly to the Tiyari, had been plundered by the Nestorian tribe Tkhouba, and that the usual retaliation followed in which some lives were lost. Besides this affray, the Kurds about Julamerik had given offence in various ways, in particular by the desecration of a church, and the Tiyari had sworn vengeance, and had already possessed themselves of a number of Kurdish sheep. The Hekkiari Government, anticipating trouble, ordered restitution of the stolen sheep, but this the Nestorians, under Melek Ismail, refused, on the grounds that the Kurds were retaining more of their sheep than they had of the Kurds, and they were further discontented at the partiality shown by the Julamerik authorities in administering justice, as whilst they were punished for crimes of stealing, wounding, &c., the Kurds went scot free for the same offences.

Whilst the position of the Tiyari, therefore, on the one hand beset by the Kurds, and on the other unfairly treated by the local authorities, was far from agreeable, a certain Sheikh Mehmed Nouri or Nourullah (since exiled) began to preach to the Kurds in the region of Amadiyah a general massacre of the Christians, and his exhortations finally bore fruit in a proposal by the Kurds (Mehmed Agha of the Goyyan tribe taking the lead) to the Tkhouba to join them in annihilating the Tiyari. By August the number of Kurds under arms exceeded 6,000, if it did not reach 8,000, and they were making forays, and had on one occasion at least ravished several women; altogether seven lives only were lost, and 4,000 sheep lifted. All the



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sheep have since been restored with the exception of 400, for which indemnification is to be made at the rate of 40 piastres per head. There can be no doubt that the Mosoul Government were well aware of Nourullah's preaching, but instead of promptly suppressing it rather led the Kurds to believe, though without committing themselves to any overt act or declaration, that they were at liberty to attack the Nestorians. The Vali of Mosoul has recently been removed.

In the meantime, the Vali of Van received instructions to re-establish order in Hekkiari, and two battalions, the 3rd of the 29th Regiment and the 2nd of the 32nd Regiment, were proceeding there from this town for the purpose. These troops advanced to Beit-es-Shebab, where they first came into collision with the Kurds, whom they gradually drove back to Chal. The fighting was of a most trifling character; on one occasion the soldiers were stoned as they were passing a mountain in Tkhoubä, and the Kurds also fired upon them, but with their inferior ranged weapon could not oppose any effective resistance to the advance, even assuming they were in earnest; two soldiers were wounded, and possibly some few Kurds fell. The two battalions returned here a fortnight ago. The Vali reached Julamerik in the last week of August, and spent about five weeks there, chiefly occupied in causing restitution of the stolen sheep, while the Nestorians returned to their homes, and the Kurds were dispersed almost without opposition. Order being by this time restored, his Excellency proceeded down the Tkhoubä Valley to Chal, a Mussulman village of eighty houses, and the seat of a Kaïmakam, where he remained a fortnight, and thence returned here early in November. He appears to have executed justice impartially, and to have laboured to set the Government on a firmer basis, and whilst at Julamerik the Mutessarif of Hekkiari went on with Marshimoum to superintend the restitution of the sheep to the Nestorians of Ashitha. His Excellency was much pleased with the courage and frank straightforwardness of the tribal Nestorians, and amused at their notions, bred of peasant ignorance, of their own importance, but considers that their country would best be governed by military officers. In truth, the Nestorian community is not over well affected towards the Government, for while the poverty-stricken "Rayah" Nestorian suffers from Kurdish oppression and a heavy burden of taxes, his mountain brethren are constantly under the suspicion that the Porte is about to make an attempt upon their quasi-independence; hence the reports that the battalions sent this summer would begin by disarming them, which it will be quite early enough to set about when the Kurds are taught submission and loyalty; for at present Hekkiari contributes no single recruit to the active army. It would be, perhaps, a little rash to introduce a military administration "de but en blanc," but in no case should a district populated by 65,000 Nestorians (of whom more than half practically do not recognize the Porte at all), as many Kurds, and with an influx in summer of some 50,000 nomads, be without a permanent military force even in winter to maintain order, and it might be advisable to add to the present force of two battalions, numbering some 500 rank and file, scattering small detachments over the country in view of the difficulty of communication and of obtaining sufficient provisions. The reduction of the vilayet to its former grade of sandjak, brought about last May, cannot be of the slightest harm to the Porte or loss to the inhabitants, while the economy is considerable.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

No. 61.

Evangelical Alliance to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 2.)

My Lord,

7, Adam Street, Strand, London, February 1, 1889.

REFERRING to my letter of the 10th January, I have now the pleasure, on behalf of our Council, to inform your Lordship that we have this day received from our correspondent in Constantinople a communication, dated the 28th January, in which he reports that Nicolaki Effendi has been released and permitted to return to his home at Alacham.

It appears that the Governor of Trebizond, learning that the British Consul had received orders to make a report on the case, sent a despatch to the Governor of Samsoun, where Nicolaki then was, allowing him to return to his home.

This gratifying result is due to the attention devoted to this case of religious liberty by your Lordship, and to the instructions forwarded to Her Majesty's

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Ambassador at Constantinople. Our Council gratefully acknowledge your Lordship's valuable services, together with those of Sir William White.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) A. J. ARNOLD, *Secretary.*

No. 62.

Foreign Office to Evangelical Alliance.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 6, 1889.

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant, informing him of the release of Nicolaki Effendi, the Armenian merchant, lately imprisoned at Trebizond, who has now been allowed to return to his home, and I am to express his Lordship's satisfaction at the result which has been attained in this case.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 63.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 21.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 7, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting on the alleged desecration of churches in Mahmoudi.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 63.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Chermside.

Sir,

Van, January 9, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that a telegram was recently sent from here to Constantinople in three copies, addressed respectively to the Grand Vizier, the Minister of Justice, and the Armenian Patriarch, complaining of the desecration of the churches of the villages Hasbestan, Setmanis, and Akhorig (inhabitants Kurds and Armenians mixed), in the vicinity of Serail and Bashkalah.

The alleged desecration is stated to have taken place seven or eight months ago, and to have been instigated by the Kurdish Aghas of the villages, and especially by Hussein Agha of Akhorig.

Information was sent to the Armenian Bishop here, and he made a communication to the Vali, who promised redress; at the same time, a complaint was lodged with the Hekkiari authorities. A Mustantik was shortly afterwards sent from Bashkaleh, but being unable to obtain evidence, gave sentence that there was no case. The Vali thereupon gave orders to a Sous-Procureur-Général, newly appointed to Hekkiari, and at that time passing through Van, to make further inquiries, and he also reported the complaint as being purely vexatious. Finally, his Excellency being in that district last August, made a personal investigation, and also privately questioned a resident, Nestorian Melik (Chief), as able to bear impartial witness, and was satisfied either that no desecration had taken place at all, or, that if some foolish and objectionable practical joke had been thoughtlessly played near the church doors, Hussein Agha was in no way concerned. Hussein Agha was in general well disposed towards the Christians, and, with the high respect in which Moslems exceed perhaps Christians for places of sanctity, had been known to make offerings in money to Christian churches and monasteries. His Excellency was inclined to ascribe the renewal of the complaint after so long an interval to the intrigues of certain malevolent persons.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

No. 64.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 21.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 12, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship, with reference to my despatch of the 20th ultimo, copy of a further Report of Mr. Vice-Consul Devey on the subject of the Zab Valley disturbances, which has been forwarded to me by Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 64.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Chermiside.

Sir,

Van, January 9, 1889.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 24th December last, I have the honour to state that I find it difficult to obtain further information, but have no reason to believe that the southern parts of Hekkiari Sanjak are in other than a perfectly tranquil condition. A telegram was lately received here, stating that the Nestorians were pasturing their flocks in those districts with complete security. It would seem that Berwari is divided into two parts, viz., Bala (Upper) and Zir (Lower); Berwari Bala is by far the more considerable, and contains numerous villages; and I am told that two-thirds of the lands here belong to the Nestorians, who have been able to collect their rents without trouble.

The Vali to-day told me that he considered it would be advantageous to establish a military cordon, or build a small barrack, as has been proposed on a previous occasion, at a village named Destan in the Zab Valley between Chal and Berwari, the position of which is excellently central, whilst communication with the town of Amadiyah at seven hours distance is always easy; the recurrence of last year's disturbances would thereby be rendered highly improbable. Destan is also not 10 miles from Ashitha, near which resides Tatar Khan Bey, a fanatical Agha of the settled Kurds, and honorary Mudir of his village, who gave considerable encouragement to the late disturbances.

The Mutessarif of Hekkiari, Tahir Bey, bears a good character; he is, at all events, upright and honest, but the administration requires firm and delicate handling, and assuredly the appearance of more force than there is at present.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

P.S. *January 18.*—I hear that Mosoul is fortunate in gaining the services of Reshid Pasha as Vali in place of Ali Kemali Pasha: it is possible he may be induced to take measures to settle the Heriki, Hartoushi, Miran, and other tribes within the vilayet, and stop their annual migration into Hekkiari.

G. P. D.

No. 65.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 26.)

My Lord,

Lambeth Palace, February 25, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to thank your Lordship for your letter of the 29th January, and the despatches which it contained (which I return herewith), on the subject of the relations between the Mussulman Kurds and the Nestorian Christians.

I am glad to learn from these despatches that the danger of serious disturbances, which last year seemed imminent, is for the present, at all events, averted; and it is satisfactory to note, that although the point of view from which these disturbances are regarded by Colonel Bell (whose information on this particular subject seems to have been altogether derived from an Armenian Inspector of Roads, near Erzeroum), and by Mr. Riley, is somewhat different, there is in Colonel Chermiside's despatch substantial confirmation of the fact that the Kurdish raid upon the Nestorians had

taken place, and that shocking outrages had attended it. I observe also that Mr. Devey reports that Sheikh Nourallah has been exiled for the part which he took in the matter, and that, in his opinion, the local officials of the Mosoul Government were to blame for not discouraging the anti-Christian agitation among the Kurds in its earlier phases.

I readily perceive the difficulty which Colonel Chermide mentions of securing permanent safeguards against such disturbances among wild and unsettled populations, and in a country which does not pay the costs of its own Government, and I need not say that I recognize the fact, which your Lordship alludes to, that Her Majesty's Government have no right to claim a Protectorate of the Nestorians. But I am glad to think that, under the watchful eye of such an officer as Colonel Chermide, and with the powerful influence of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople in the background, there is every reason to hope that the Nestorian Christians will be safe from a recurrence of the danger which lately threatened them.

I may add that possibly Mr. Russell, who was Vice-Consul at Van during the time when these disturbances were taking place, would be found able to give accurate details of the facts with any further information that might be desired.

Thanking your Lordship for your interest in these Christian tribes, which through the greatest trouble and poverty cling firmly to their faith, and appeal to us for a little assistance, in education only, and not in politics, I have, &c.

(Signed) EDW. CANTUAR.

No. 66.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 28.)

My Lord, Lambeth Palace, February 27, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to thank your Lordship for kindly sending me the despatch of Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, dated the 9th January, which I have read with great interest and now return.

The despatch is very encouraging to us who have a special interest in the Nestorian Christians, and gives promise of greater security in the future for them against the neighbouring Kurds. I trust that the suggestions made by Mr. Devey as to defensive measures may in time be carried out.

With my sincere thanks to him as well as to your Lordship for your kind interest in the matter, I have, &c.

(Signed) EDW. CANTUAR.

No. 67.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir, Foreign Office, February 28, 1889.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatches of the 2nd and 20th January, I transmit herewith a copy of a letter from his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury on the subject of the relations between the Mussulman Kurds and the Nestorian Christians.*

His Grace suggests that Mr. Russell, who was Vice-Consul at Van at the time of the disturbances, might be able to furnish some useful information, and I have accordingly to request your Excellency to call upon that gentleman for a Report.

Mr. Vice-Consul Devey's despatch of the 9th January, inclosed in your Excellency's despatch of the 12th ultimo, was also communicated to his Grace; and I annex a copy of a letter containing his comments thereon, which has just been received.†

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

* No. 66.

† No. 6.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury. — (Received March 7.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February 22, 1889.*

WITH his despatch of the 1st instant, of which a copy is inclosed, Colonel Chermide has sent me copy of a Report from Mr. Devey, setting forth certain facts in connection with prosecutions of Armenians, showing a state of things in that district which I can hardly suppose exist there with the Sultan's knowledge.

Your Lordship is aware, from previous Reports of mine, that my action with His Imperial Majesty on Armenian subjects is greatly paralyzed by the interpretation which evil-disposed persons are constantly giving to the interest or sympathy which Her Majesty's Government or this Embassy may happen to show at any time in the condition of that race.

In this instance, however, I have considered that it was impossible for me not to take some step by which His Imperial Majesty might learn from me the serious charges which reached Her Majesty's Embassy as to the conduct of the local authorities at Van.

I therefore instructed Sir A. Sandison to place in the hands of Sureya Pasha, the Sultan's First Secretary, a Turkish Memorandum, giving an account of the information I had received, and this unofficially, and "à titre de renseignement."

Sir A. Sandison reported on the 19th instant that he had carried out my instructions, and that Sureya Pasha promised to lay this Turkish Memorandum before the Sultan. I beg to inclose an English translation of it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 68.

Consul Chermide to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Erzeroum, February 1, 1889.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Excellency copies, in duplicate, of despatches from Her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE, Colonel.

Inclosure 2 in No. 68.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Chermide.

Sir,

I REGRET to have to report the continued persecution of the Armenians for past faults and misconceptions.

You will remember that a small police force was organized here nearly four years ago. These agents at once set to work to find out, and put down, any existing movements which might be qualified as of a seditious nature. Any attempt at association among the Armenians, whether for social, educational, or other purpose, was at once stopped, and numerous exilings and imprisonment of persons holding advanced views followed; they appear to have completely exhausted the list of such offences (in some cases possibly there was no offence), and now, whilst the system of espionage, both on Armenian correspondence and on their private acts, is at its zenith, so that any seditious movement is quite impossible, for occupation they have fallen back upon the period from 1878 to 1883. By our law, a positive criminal act can only be punished; but here a suspected criminal intent of many years back is quite sufficient to entail banishment or equal disgrace. I hear that the Gregorian Patriarch at Constantinople is taking steps to procure a general amnesty for past seditious offences, and earnestly trust that the acute persecution here may shortly be modified.

It would be, perhaps, not amiss to mention here a few instances of these proceed-

ings as conducted by Dervish Effendi, the Tabour Aghassi. After the famine years, 1879—1881, a subscription was raised and a Society founded for the maintenance and education of about a score of orphaned children; one or two small clubs and mutual benefit Societies also existed, and it is the members of these that are now summoned or arrested and brutally interrogated, as though they were guilty of the blackest treason. Further, a list of upwards of forty names of suspects has been made out, and individuals are constantly called up to certify to this list of "muzirr" (harmful) persons, under pain of their own names appearing in it if they refuse to turn "Moukhber" (denouncer). It would seem that the whole number will shortly be incriminated on each other's word through intimidation.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 68.

Memorandum.

(Translation.)

ACCORDING to trustworthy information received from Van, a Police Commission was formed there four years ago to investigate every action taken by the Armenians of that place, and to prevent anything considered as an intrigue. Upon this the Armenians were prevented henceforward from assembling in Council to deliberate on such matters as public education, &c., and very many persons were arrested, from amongst whom those who held the most liberal opinions were imprisoned and exiled.

To-day, considering the stringent measures taken to spy into and investigate all Armenian action and correspondence, it is naturally impossible for the Armenians to undertake any intrigue.

In order that this Police Commission shall not remain idle, it is employing itself with examining into all that happened from 1878 to 1883 A.D., so that if any Armenian was suspected of misdemeanour or crime several years ago, this is sufficient to bring exile or other punishment upon him to-day.

It is clear that the conduct of the Major of Gendarmerie of this Commission, being entirely opposed to the Imperial justice, cannot be permitted by the Imperial Government. After the famine and distress, which lasted from 1879 to 1881, subscriptions were opened, and, amongst other charitable associations, a Society was founded to educate twenty poor orphan children; now the members of those associations are being summoned, arrested, and put under examination as if they had committed a crime.

Besides this, a list is drawn up containing the names of, say, forty dangerous individuals; numerous persons are then pressed to give evidence that the contents of this document are true, and that the individuals named therein do belong to the criminal class, and if any refuse to give such evidence they are threatened with having their own names inserted in the list. In this manner, by degrees, the whole of the inhabitants can be incriminated in one way or another.

No. 69.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Foreign Office, March 9, 1889.

Sir,

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your despatch of the 22nd ultimo respecting the state of affairs at Van, and the persecution of the Armenians in that district.

Her Majesty's Government approve the steps which you have taken to bring the proceedings of the local authorities to the notice of His Majesty the Sultan.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 70.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 29, 1889.

THE Turkish Ambassador, in conversation the other day with Sir James Fergusson, referred to the "Haiasdan" newspaper, and Mr. Bryce's question in the House of Commons respecting Armenia.

His Excellency said that this paper contained grossly calumnious statements, viz., that the Turkish Government designed to exterminate the Armenians, and had made it lawful for every Armenian to have four wives.

Alluding to the conversation which your Excellency had with the Armenian Patriarch in the month of December last, he said that he understood that the Patriarch had disclaimed all connection with this paper, and had deplored its tone as likely to have an injurious effect upon Armenian interests.

Rustem Pasha proceeded to say that the Sultan wished to deal justly with the Armenians as with all his subjects, and that the reports to which he had alluded were invented by conspirators against the Government.

He said that there were occasionally Kurdish raids, but that they were repressed, and large bodies of police were employed to maintain order. The Porte selected the best officers at its disposal for the Armenian provinces, and his Excellency maintained that the improvement there, as well as in the other provinces of the Empire, was very remarkable.

Sir J. Fergusson observed, in reply, that Her Majesty's Government had, as his Excellency knew, abstained from pressing the Porte on the subject, in spite of the reports which had reached them, that the Armenians were suffering from considerable hardships, for they knew the difficulties with which the Porte had to contend.

Though full credence was not to be attached to all the reports which appeared in the papers, yet he feared that the Armenians did suffer from inadequate protection, if not from undue severity.

Sir J. Fergusson said that the receipt of well-founded reports of sufferings endured by Rayah subjects of the Sultan must operate injuriously to the interests of the Ottoman Empire.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 71.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 4.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 29, 1889.

ON the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 28th ultimo, I transmitted to Mr. Russell a copy of the letter from his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, and instructed him to furnish me with any further information on the subject of the relations between the Mussulman Kurds and the Nestorian Christians.

There is little new in Mr. Russell's reply, copy of which is herewith inclosed, but he points out the difficulty in the way of a Consul at Van obtaining reliable information unless he has reliable agents on the spot where the disturbances take place.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 71.

Vice-Consul Russell to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Dardanelles, March 24, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch dated the 12th instant, inclosing a copy of a letter addressed to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State by his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury concerning the relations between the Kurds and Nestorian Christians, and also a request from your Excellency for me to furnish a Report on the question.

I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I left with Mr. Vice-Consul
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Devey some of the Rev. W. H. Browne's letters which refer to this matter. I also had the honour to send to your Excellency two letters in original which I had received from that gentleman during my residence at Van, and extracts from other letters of his.

In the month of August 1888, the Rev. W. H. Browne received instructions from his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury not to report to me the tyrannies taking place in his part of the country, and as Van is a long distance from the scene of the disturbances, which occurred in another vilayet, it was impossible for me to obtain further information.

A few days before I left Van I heard again that it was quite true that the Kurds did in the winter arrange a plan to wreck Tiari, and had asked help from Tkhorna, and that there was also a scheme to deprive the Ashirets of their arms, which could not have been carried out without bloodshed, and that the Kurds did assemble near Ashutu, and had ravished a large number of women and had killed two of them.

I beg to say that unless Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van had reliable agents in those mountainous districts, or unless he went himself to verify rumours of disturbances or bloodshed which might reach Van in an exaggerated form, it would be simply impossible for him to give a trustworthy report of what was going on in those savage parts of Kurdistan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. F. RUSSELL.

No. 72.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 18.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, April 13, 1889.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch of the 29th September last, I have the honour to state that the difficulties with regard to the election of a Protestant Vekil have terminated with the appointment of M. Boyadjian.

The question has been pending since 1887, when the last Vekil resigned, and the inclosed Memorandum by Mr. Block gives an account of all the difficulties in connection with this appointment. The Imperial Iradé was communicated to M. Boyadjian on the 13th ultimo, and he was also granted an audience of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan.

Mr. Block has also, at my request, drawn up a Memorandum giving a clear and compendious history of the Protestant community since 1847, of the elections of the three Vekils, and an account of the various attempts to obtain a "constitution." This paper, which has been drawn up with much care, may be of interest to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 72.

Memorandum by Mr. Block respecting the Armenian Protestants.

IN June 1846 a Vizirial letter, instructing the Pasha of Erzeroum to see that the civil rights of the Protestants were not infringed so long as they were faithful subjects of the Sultan, is, as far as I am able to ascertain, the first document ever issued by the Turkish Government for the protection of its Protestant subjects.

The English, Prussian, and American Ministers at Constantinople had for some time past been using their influence on behalf of the Protestants and to procure for them a guarantee for their civil rights, but it was Lord Stratford de Redcliffe who contributed chiefly to this issue by his energetic and unceasing action during many years in urging upon the Turkish Government the necessity of securing to its Protestant subjects the right of pursuing their lawful callings without molestation.

In the year 1847, Lord Cowley exerted himself to obtain for the Protestant Armenians a distinct recognition on the part of the Porte and a formal organization which should place them on the same footing as the other religious communities of the Empire, and on the 15th November, 1847, Lord Cowley received from the Minister for

Foreign Affairs copy of a Vizirial letter, signed by Reshid Pasha, recognizing the native Protestants as constituting a separate community in Turkey.

The part taken by Lord Cowley led the missionaries to address to him a letter of acknowledgment, dated the 21st December, 1847. In the letter mention is made of the efficient instrumentality of Lord Stratford, as well as of the humane and liberal policy of the British Government itself. Lord Cowley's reply to the missionaries of the Armenian Board is dated the 28th December, 1847.

Lord Stratford, on his return to his post in 1850, lost no time in again making representations to the Porte on behalf of the Protestant Armenians, and in that year an Imperial Firman was granted to them by Sultan Abdul Medjid. Among other privileges, the Protestants were authorized "to appoint from among themselves, and by their own selection, a faithful and trustworthy person with the title of 'Agent of the Protestants' ('Protestan Vekili')," for the purpose of facilitating the conduct of their affairs. This Firman is dated Mouharrem 1267, year of the Hegira.

In April 1853 (Shaban 12, 1269), Sultan Abdul Medjid granted a "Hatti-Sherif" to his Protestant subjects addressed to Stefan, the then Vekil of the Protestant community, and almost simultaneously with this, a special Circular in favour of the Protestants was addressed to the Pashas and Governors in the interior, in whose jurisdiction Protestants were known to exist, repeating the injunctions of the Firman first issued, and enforcing the same by more positive and stringent orders.

Thus in 1269, viz., 1853, Stefan Agha, who was a brother of the Armenian Patriarch, was the first Protestant Vekil.

He was elected by the Constantinople native Protestant Notables in an informal manner, and his election was confirmed by the Firman of 1853, obtained partly through the agency of Lord Stratford.

Stefan Agha was burned in the great fire of Stamboul of 1865. During his tenure of office a so-called representative Council existed, and its members, the number of which varied from time to time, were nominated in an informal manner by Protestants in the provinces, *i.e.*, from time to time the Notables of Constantinople instructed the provincial native Protestants to name as their representative on the Council some leading member of the community at Constantinople, which they obediently did. One of the members was M. Boyadjian, the present Vekil, who, after studying in America, returned to Constantinople in 1859, and was informed that he had been elected Deputy for Diarbekir.

The community had no "constitution," but certain rules were approved of by the community, according to which they managed their internal affairs, and in virtue of which the so-called representative Council existed, but these rules were not recognized by, or even known to, the Turkish Government.

On the death of Stefan, his secretary, Daoud Ghazaros, prevailed upon the "Beilikdji Bey" (the Grand Chancellor of the Imperial Divan at the Porte), who was a friend of his, to appoint a new Vekil. The "Beilikdji" agreed, and a meeting of four Armenian Protestants of Constantinople, among whom was Ghazaros, was called together, and each man elected himself; the names were given to the "Beilikdji," who appointed Ghazaros. Ghazaros then addressed a Petition to His Majesty, saying that the Firman given to Stefan had been burnt at his death and asking for a copy, and a Firman was accordingly granted addressed to Ghazaros, repeating almost word for word the Firman granted to Stefan (this was in 1284). Ghazaros held the post for two years, working under similar rules to his predecessor, but his conduct not meeting with the entire approval of the community nor of the Porte, the "Beilikdji," who seems at that time to have been the chief mover in these matters, caused a meeting of Protestant Armenians to be called, and obtained from them a request for a new Vekil. Ghazaros was dismissed, and the leading members of the community came to an understanding with the party of Ghazaros and his brother-in-law, by which the various quarters of the capital should be requested to send delegates, who should proceed to the election of a Vekil, and to furnish at the same time the name of the person they considered best fitted for the post. Twenty-four persons were accordingly named as electors, and three names were submitted for election, amongst them that of Boyadjian: he received 18 votes, a certain Minassian 6, and the name of the third, a certain Agdo Matteosian, was put aside.

The result of this election was submitted to the "Beilikdji," who stated that it was now too late, since the party of Ghazaros had submitted to him (the "Beilikdji") the name of Matteosian, whom they had elected at a private meeting held in spite of their seeming adherence to the above-mentioned understanding, and that he had already (in twenty-four hours) obtained the Iradé confirming the appointment.

There was nothing to be done but to accept the situation, and Agob Matteosian continued as Vekil till 1884; he received, however, no Firman, but continued to manage the affairs of the community in the same way as his predecessors; he resigned in 1884, but his resignation was not accepted till 1887, when Her Majesty's Embassy was again asked to use its influence to obtain the appointment of a new Vekil, which it did with the result that M. Boyadjian has been elected and appointed in the manner I shall have the honour to relate in a separate Memorandum; he is the fourth Vekil.

I have shown that the Protestant Agents (Vekils) have been hitherto elected in a most informal and irregular manner.

2. I will now attempt to show the steps taken by Her Majesty's Embassy to obtain a "constitution" for the Protestant Armenians.

In 1879 Sir H. Layard, then Her Majesty's Ambassador, seeing the necessity of the Protestant community possessing a regularly recognized "constitution," instructed Mr. Dragoman Marinich to draw up a "constitution" with the help of M. Agdo Matteosian, the Vekil; a most elaborate "constitution" was accordingly drawn up, and approved by Sir H. Layard and the German Embassy, and Sir Alfred Sandison was instructed to press the Porte to agree to its being accepted.

This "constitution" was submitted to the Porte by Her Majesty's Embassy in a note of the 28th May, 1880 (Sir H. Layard to Sawas Pasha). A copy of it is to be found in Mr. Marinich's Memorandum of April 1880. It was examined by a Committee at the Porte, but was never put into execution.

Sir H. Layard states in his note that His Majesty the Sultan had told him that he had issued an Iradé for the Protestant "constitution," but that he, Sir H. Layard, had reason to believe that the "constitution," which had been submitted by the Porte, and approved of by Her Majesty, was one which had already been rejected by the Protestant community as containing unacceptable clauses; and in his despatch to Lord Granville of the 1st June, 1880, Sir H. Layard explained that His Majesty had been induced to give his sanction to an unacceptable "constitution." In my Memorandum of the 25th February, 1888, I had the honour to inclose translation of a "Règlement" ("Nizamnamé") for the Protestant community, dated the 11th March, 1878, and this mentions a "constitution" as existing, which must be the objectionable "constitution" referred to by Sir H. Layard.

Sir H. Layard did not succeed in obtaining the approval of the Imperial Government to the "constitution" proposed by him, and there is at the moment, therefore, no duly authorized "constitution."

Hence has arisen to a great extent the present unsatisfactory condition of the relations between the Porte and the community, as well as the confusion in the internal relations of the community, more especially with regard to the mode of election of the Vekil on the last as well as on former occasions; and for this last reason, if for no other, I humbly suggest that M. Boyadjian will be rendering immense service to his co-religionists if he will draw up a "constitution" acceptable to the community at large, and obtain for it the approval and sanction of the Sublime Porte.

(Signed) A. BLOCK.

Constantinople, April 9, 1889.

P.S.—I beg to add that M. Boyadjian has informed me he hopes to be able later to draw up a short history of the community from the documents in their possession, of which he will give a copy to Her Majesty's Embassy.

A. B.

Inclosure 2 in No. 72.

Memorandum by Mr. Block respecting the Election of a Protestant Vekil.

IN my immediately-preceding Memorandum of this day's date concerning the Protestant community, I stated that in 1887 Agop Matteosian, the then Vekil, resigned. Thereupon the Ministry of Public Worship authorized the native Protestants to proceed to the election of a new Vekil.

The community split into two parties, the one insisting on the right of election by the Protestant National Council ("Millet Medjlissi"), supposed to be composed of representatives of the community in the whole Empire, and the other advocating the

election by the Notables of Constantinople. The latter had the support of the Ministry of Public Worship and elected M. Boyadjian.

M. Boyadjian had in former years been the leading spirit in the so-called National Council, but had separated from them, not approving some of the decisions and acts of the Council.

The Council elected a certain M. Djedjizian, and at this stage of the proceedings Her Majesty's Embassy was appealed to by each party to obtain the sanction of the Imperial Government for its nominee, which each party contended had been legally chosen representative of the community. The Turkish Government, unable to decide the claims of the two disputants, remained passive.

Her Majesty's Embassy endeavoured to reconcile the two parties without success, and at the Porte restricted its action to urging the Porte to postpone the election of the Vekil until the Protestants could settle their differences with regard to the mode of election.

I should mention here that the chief reason for which the Porte declined to accept the candidature of M. Djedjizian was that in its opinion the "Millet Medjlissi," or National Council, had no authorized or legal status. Her Majesty's Embassy then endeavoured to persuade the Porte to settle upon a mode of election satisfactory to both parties, as reported to Lord Salisbury by his Excellency Sir W. White in his despatch of the 22nd June, 1888, but, finally, the Porte decided to appoint M. Boyadjian, and his name was sent to the Palace for Imperial sanction. His Excellency the Ambassador reported this stage of the proceedings to Lord Salisbury in his despatch of the 11th September, 1888, in which his Excellency stated that it might be well that the Protestants should now settle their differences and should avail themselves of M. Boyadjian's influence with the Turkish Government to obtain the "constitution" they have so long desired, but have been hitherto unable to obtain, in which "constitution" the mode of election would be settled for the future. Lord Salisbury approved of this attitude in his despatch of the 29th September, 1888.

Matters, however, dragged on, and as such an unsatisfactory state of things was prejudicial to the community itself, Her Majesty's Government felt compelled to take unofficial action at the Porte with regard to matters concerning Protestant complaints which properly came within the scope of the Vekil's action. Repeated applications were, moreover, made to Her Majesty's Embassy to induce the Porte to act in accordance with the Imperial Firmans and by appointing a Vekil to put an end to a state of affairs which was considered a grievance and an injustice. Accordingly you, Sir, and myself, were again instructed to urge the Grand Vizier and the Minister of Public Worship to appoint an Agent or Vekil, which Her Majesty's Embassy considered it had a right to demand, declining to enter into any personal question as to who should be the occupant of the post. Finally, in the month of March His Majesty issued his Imperial Iradé appointing M. Boyadjian as Vekil, and his appointment was communicated to him on the 13th March last.

M. Boyadjian has called on Her Majesty's Ambassador, thanking him, on behalf of the community, and for the continuation of his friendly action on behalf of the native Protestants, which has been constant and uninterrupted since the time of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

On the 6th April M. Boyadjian was summoned to the Palace, with the Armenian Patriarch and the Grand Rabbi; after they had all been received in audience together, M. Boyadjian had another audience alone, in which His Majesty stated as follows: "I am glad to see you on this occasion. I congratulate you on your appointment, and I wish you all success in your office. It is my wish that all my subjects, without distinction in the matter of their faith and worship, should have perfect equality and liberty, and that no one should molest them."

I may add, in conclusion, that I am given to understand that the two parties are gradually reuniting, and will no doubt eventually act in concert under M. Boyadjian's supervision.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

Constantinople, April 9, 1889.

No. 73.

Prince Malcom Khan to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 15.)

M. le Marquis,

80, *Holland Park*, le 14 Mai, 1889.

D'APRÈS le compte rendu de la séance du 13 courant de la Chambre des Lords, je vois avec surprise qu'à propos des atrocités dont se plaignent les Arméniens de Turquie, l'Ambassadeur Ottoman a dit à votre Excellence que ces atrocités étaient commises par des tribus Kurdes qui venaient du côté de la Perse.

Dans cette assertion, il doit y avoir une erreur; car le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Schah ne connaît aucune circonstance où les Arméniens de la Turquie aient jamais formulé des plaintes contre des maux venant de nos frontières. Pour connaître les vrais auteurs de ces atrocités nous n'avons qu'à nous en rapporter aux témoignages de ceux mêmes qui en sont les victimes.

Heureusement l'entente cordiale qui existe aujourd'hui mieux que jamais, entre le Schah et le Sultan, ne permet point de supposer que la Porte cherche à jeter sur un pays voisin et ami la responsabilité des actes que les autorités et l'Ambassadeur Ottomans déplorent avec le monde civilisé.

Agréez, &c.

(Signé) MALCOM.

(Translation.)

My Lord,

80, *Holland Park*, May 14, 1889.

IN the Report of the sitting of the House of Lords of the 13th instant I see with surprise that, with reference to the atrocities complained of by the Armenians of Turkey, the Ottoman Ambassador has stated to your Excellency that these atrocities were committed by Kurdish tribes from over the Persian border.

This statement must be erroneous; since the Government of His Majesty the Shah is aware of no case in which the Armenians of Turkey have ever made any complaints on the subject of outrages committed from our frontier. In order to discover the true authors of these atrocities, we have only to refer to the evidence of the victims themselves.

Fortunately, the cordial understanding now existing more than ever between the Shah and the Sultan precludes the supposition that the Porte is trying to throw on a neighbouring and friendly country the responsibility for acts which the Ottoman authorities and Ambassador deplore in common with the civilized world.

Accept, &c.

(Signed) MALCOM.

No. 74.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 27, 8 A.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, May 26, 1889, 11 P.M.

COLONEL CHERMSIDE telegraphs on the 24th instant from Trebizond as follows:—

"I am forwarding a despatch concerning Kurdish Chief mentioned in your telegram of 15th. Up to 7th May he had not been arrested, and his retainers held roads near Mush. I have heard of three serious outrages by him or by his followers during the past two months, including the murder by fire of Lha of Arkavanan, near Mush."

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.—(Substance telegraphed.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 29, 1889.

HER Majesty's Government have been most painfully impressed on learning from your telegram of the 26th instant that the rumours respecting the perpetration of outrages in the neighbourhood of Mush are confirmed.

As soon as you receive Colonel Chermside's detailed Report, you should address suitable representations to the Porte, and urge the adoption of effective measures for the maintenance of security and good government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 76.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 31.)

(Extract.)

Constantinople, May 20, 1889.

DURING the audience given me last night by the Sultan His Imperial Majesty in general avoided politics, but an allusion to the answer given by your Lordship to a question of Lord Carnarvon's in the House of Lords on the evening of the 13th instant gave him an opportunity to express his high appreciation of the spirit of fairness shown by your Lordship in dealing with the internal difficulties of keeping the peace in that distant portion of the Sultan's dominions.

I have the honour to inclose a statement by Sir Alfred Sandison of the interview.

Inclosure in No. 76.

Statement by Sir A. Sandison of the Interview of Sir W. White with His Majesty the Sultan on May 19, 1889.

IN the interview which the English Ambassador had with the Sultan, the former spoke of the reply given by Lord Salisbury to the question asked by Lord Carnarvon in the House of Lords, whereupon His Majesty remarked—"The sentiments of justice expressed by Lord Salisbury have caused satisfaction; his explanations were clearly founded on information given by you, so that I express my pleasure to you also. Thank God, even in the distant provinces of my Empire security and tranquillity reign supreme. The Persian Kurds pass the frontier and venture on all kinds of marauding expeditions, and on being pursued by us again return to Persia; and even though the Persian Government be dissatisfied with this state of things, yet these places, being destitute of inhabitants, are suitable for this kind of vagabond to take refuge in. If any men from our side join them they are Rafigis, who have taken timely refuge on our territory from Persia, and have settled down there.

"As our soldiers can only pursue them as far as the frontier, and naturally cannot cross the border, it is very difficult to put them down and punish them. As for the complaints which have been made against Moussa Bey, the actions attributed to him are so entirely opposed to Mussulman character and custom, that they can never be believed. He is on the road to Constantinople to defend himself from the charges made against him. I hope that he will soon arrive. Of course, his trial will be conducted with perfect fairness and justice."

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 31.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, May 25, 1889.

SINCE the reported atrocities at Moosh reached me by means of extracts from various foreign journals, I have been at great pains to discover the accuracy of these allegations, which were denied at the Porte, and upon which, notwithstanding all my repeated efforts, I am quite unable to give your Lordship any reliable information with the exception of a précis drawn up by Mr. A. Hardinge of that given to Sir Alfred Sandison and Mr. Marinitch, with reference to the complaints of a deputation from Moosh on the subject.

I have even complained to His Majesty the Sultan of my inability to comply with my duties on this point.

In this matter, therefore, I was glad to observe that the Earl of Carnarvon gave me due credit for my sincere desire to ascertain the nature of the actual facts, but, unfortunately, I have found myself unable to carry out my earnest wish, and to follow in the footsteps of my predecessors in this respect.

A couple of days ago I asked Colonel Trotter to see ———, thinking that they might have received intelligence from which I could draw reliable data.

The only thing which the ——— showed Colonel Trotter was news from the Nestorian country, but most of it refers to what took place last year.

It seems, however, that ——— are afraid that the disturbances of that period will break out afresh during the present summer.

I cannot, of course, say whether there is any foundation for these apprehensions, but the Nestorians as well as the Armenians in a portion of those districts appear to be in constant fear of Kurdish outbreaks; and these gentlemen have information bearing out the accounts of the insecurity prevailing in portions of the Vilayets of Van and Hekkiari.

Under these circumstances, I would venture to suggest that Colonel Chermiside should be instructed to visit some of those districts and report what comes under his observation.

Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum is particularly well-fitted by his intelligence, experience, and tact for so delicate an inquiry, and I am sure that, even if he were not able to collect any new data, the very fact of a visit from him and the interest just displayed by Her Majesty's Government would be conducive to much good in those disturbed districts.

Should your Lordship authorize me, by telegraph, to instruct Colonel Chermiside accordingly, there would be some advantage in his commencing this tour before the hot season begins.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 77.

Memorandum.

MR. MARINITCH reports that on Wednesday the 2nd instant, when the Council of the Armenian Gregorian community held its usual sitting under the presidency of the Patriarch at Koum-Kapou, a large crowd assembled outside the churchyard, consisting of a deputation from Moosh (Vilayet of Diarbekir), and of most of the Constantinople Armenians originally from that place, who had come to complain of outrages committed by Moussa Bey, an influential local Kurdish Chief. The Patriarch having called some of them before him, they stated that Moussa Bey had been imprisoned on a charge of oppressing the Armenians, but had managed to escape, and, in revenge, had collected his Kurdish followers and fallen upon the Armenian villagers, plundering houses, violating girls, and torturing and murdering the population, some of whom he had burned alive after pouring petroleum over them.

Whilst these statements were being made to the Patriarch, a telegram was handed to him confirming them, from the inhabitants of Moosh. It had come by the post, its senders having been afraid to entrust it to the telegraph office. The Patriarch endeavoured to calm the people, and decided to report the matter to the Grand Vizier, with a view to obtaining redress, and, at the same time, to send two or three of the deputation



to his Highness for reference in case of necessity. They were followed to the Vizirate by the greater part of the crowd, which was, however, dispersed by the police without resistance. The Minister of Police is said to have reported fully to the Sultan on the incident, which, it is asserted, has created a certain impression at the Palace, and has led to the secret dispatch of some officials to the spot to make inquiries.

Sir A. Sandison inquired of the Grand Vizier on the 9th instant as to the so-called "Armenian demonstration." His Highness admitted that a deputation of some seventy or eighty persons had appeared at his Department, but he professed himself unable to understand the real meaning of their proceedings. It was, however, apparently to complain of certain murders of Armenians at Moosh, laid to the charge of Moussa Bey of that place. He added that he did not see how a crime committed at Moosh could affect the Armenians at Van, Ismid, and Constantinople, who had joined the deputation, the real object of which, in his view, was to create a sensation, and afford subject matter for the foreign press.

Constantinople, May 13, 1889.

No. 78.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 31.)

(Extract.)

Constantinople, May 26, 1889.

WITH reference to my despatch of yesterday's date, I have received a telegram dated Trebizond, the 24th May, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose, and which I had the honour to repeat to your Lordship.

I shall endeavour to make any use I properly can of this information immediately after the Ramazan fast, and the Baïram feast which follows it, are over, which will be in another week's time, or even earlier should a favourable opportunity present itself.

Inclosure in No. 78.

Colonel Chermide to Sir W. White, Telegraphic, May 24, 1889.

[See No. 74.]

No. 79.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 31.)

(Extract.)

Constantinople, May 27, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith a copy of a despatch I have received from Colonel Chermide, inquiring as to whether he should visit the district of the Nestorian Christians.

In my despatch of the 25th instant I suggested that it would perhaps be advisable that Colonel Chermide should be sent to make inquiries into the reported outrages on Armenians, and it is in connection with this proposal that I venture to submit the present despatch for your Lordship's consideration, and hesitate to reply to Colonel Chermide before receiving your Lordship's instructions.

Inclosure in No. 79.

Consul Chermide to Sir W. White.

(Extract.)

Erzeroum, May 11, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I propose, in accordance with your telegraphic authority of the 24th March, to proceed to Van in June.

I am inclined to think it will be well to meet Mr. Devey there, should there be no reason to bring him to Erzeroum; should my travels be prolonged much beyond Van, he might then proceed to Erzeroum.

No. 80.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, June 2.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, June 2, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to report that, in compliance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram of the 29th ultimo, I made representations at the Sublime Porte on the subject of the atrocities of which Moussa Bey was accused.

The reply given me was as follows:—

"According to official information, Moussa Bey is on his way to Constantinople. He passed through Bitlis on his way here.

"On his arrival at Constantinople he is ready to answer all the charges brought against him. He is accompanied by officials of the Vilayet of Bitlis."

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 81.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 4.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, May 30, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the copy of a despatch received by me from Trebizond from Colonel Chermiside, and inclosing one he received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van from Bitlis, giving an account of Moussa Bey and of his outrages.

I have likewise the honour to inclose a copy of the telegram I have just received from Colonel Chermiside from Trebizond on the same subject.

I shall not fail to act on your Lordship's telegraphic instruction of yesterday's date.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 81.

Consul Chermiside to Sir W. White.

(Extract.)

Trebizond, May 24, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Excellency, in confirmation of my telegram of this day's date, two copies of a despatch by Mr. Devey, which, though dated Bitlis, 27th April, only reached Erzeroum on the 18th May, and were received by me here on the 23rd. Mr. Devey has recently visited Bitlis with my sanction, but at his own expense. I have also received news from Mr. ———, and from other sources, relative to the doings of Moussa Bey.

Since the occurrences mentioned in Mr. Devey's despatch, news has been received of Moussa Bey's having killed two men at Akhlat, on Lake Van. In his despatch Mr. Devey states Ohannes of Akhavank to have been killed at Moussa Bey's instigation; but according to the information which reached me direct he was killed by Moussa Bey with his own hand under circumstances of atrocious cruelty, and it was this which led to the Government deciding to make the arrest from which he at once escaped. I have also been informed by travellers that Moussa Bey's Kurds hold all the roads near Mush, and that traffic has consequently to make a considerable détour.

The Vilayets of Van and Bitlis are in a very unsatisfactory state as regards the impunity which outrages and crime enjoy, and the supineness, apathy, or culpable negligence of the Governors.

Inclosure 2 in No. 81.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Chermiside.

Sir,

Bitlis, April 27, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you of the escape while under arrest of Moussa Bey, of Khuit, which took place four weeks ago.



Moussa Bey is about 30 years of age, the son of Mirza Bey, who was killed in a Kurdish feud at Bulanyk four years ago; one of Mirza Bey's wives was the sister of Bahri Pasha, Mutessarif of Pera, at the capital; the "Ijra Memur" of Bitlis Vilayet is also a cousin of Moussa Bey. Born at Khevian, a village near Mush town, beyond the Caza of Khuit, his rule is absolute over five or six large Kurdish villages of Khuit, and he is able to do much as he likes both there and in the Mush Plain between Bitlis and Mush; it is said nearly 1,000 armed men are under his orders, and 110 at present hold the roads, and are preventing the villagers from taking their corn to be ground at the mills and from moving about. It was Moussa Bey who wounded two American missionaries in May 1883.

His escape has greatly troubled the local authorities. The Tabur Aghassi, who was responsible for his detention, was put in prison, and is now under interrogation, and it may bring about the dismissal of the Vali.

Moussa Bey, it appears, had been continuing a career of violence, and had committed divers actions of oppression and lawlessness for several years past. The villagers of the Mush Plain appealed for redress to the local authorities, and, finally, to Constantinople, but could obtain no satisfaction. Of late only their complaints were taken into consideration, and orders were issued from the capital for inquiry. But Moussa Bey enjoys great influence in this town, and is a close friend of the Sheikhs Haji Nejmeddin Effendi, of the Idaré Council, Yusuf Agha, and other prominent members of the Government, and the orders were put aside. Further, Moussa Bey was residing all the winter in the town, and had not of late been committing excesses, nor did any one venture to bring any charge against him for past misdoings; on the contrary, he had rendered valuable service to the Government in buying the tithes of Khuit for £ T. 500, and collecting them himself to his own advantage, whereas the Government would have been able to do very little if left to their own resources. During the winter Mehemet Ali, Mutessarif of Mush, was making various efforts to bring Moussa Bey to justice; soldiers were even sent to arrest him, but perhaps their behaviour was not very exemplary. The conduct of the Mutessarif is variously interpreted; it has been affirmed that he was persecuting Moussa in order to extract a bribe from him, but I am inclined to believe he is an honest man, and was really striving to keep order and administer justly. Moussa Bey was angered at the Mush Christians for the complaints they were forwarding against him, which possibly were not entirely true; a certain Ohan of Akhavank village, resident at Mush, had taken a prominent part in forwarding these complaints; having occasion to come to Bitlis about six weeks ago, Ohan carefully kept his intention secret, but Moussa, however, learnt his presence here, and placed four or five men on the road near this city, who captured him, though fleeing by night to escape observation; they took him to Gotni, a Kurdish village on the Mush road, and there put him to death by fire, under circumstances of appalling torture. Hereupon a fresh order was received from Constantinople for Moussa's arrest and exile; the Government then attempted to carry this out, but Moussa Bey promptly made his escape from the Tabur Aghassi's house and the midst of the zaptiehs, saying that the local authorities were not acting honestly and openly by him. He went at once to the village of Hartz, where he plundered the house of a certain Mouro, absent at Mush, abducted a young daughter of his, and slew her grandfather. He was then said to be threatening to pillage the post if the sum of £ T. 700 he had given as bribes to the authorities was not returned. He has just written a letter to the authorities expressing his willingness to return to reside at Bitlis under guarantee (from them), and maintaining that he is innocent of crime, and that, as was seen here, no one had any suit to bring before the Law Courts.

Some members of the Local Government and others now blame the Vali for attempting to arrest Moussa forcibly and openly, and say he should have been persuaded to withdraw voluntarily to Constantinople, as though by the Sultan's desire, and that this would still be the best course to adopt, and is practicable. The Government is indeed miserably feeble at the moment; the vilayet force of zaptiehs consists of 520 (200 are horse), but Moussa Bey would smile at the futility of any attempt on their part to seize him.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 81.

Consul Chermside to Sir W. White.

(Telegraphic.)

Trebizond, May 30, 1889.

MOUSSA BEY is stated on reliable authority to have appeared in streets of Bitlis from the 14th to the 20th May unmolested by authorities. He is even reported to have been well received by them.

No. 82.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, June 4, 1889, 2.15 P.M.

YOUR despatches of 25th and 27th May.

Send Chermside as suggested in yours of 25th, but he need not go to Nestorians.

No. 83.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 6.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, June 2, 1889.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch, and its inclosures, which reached me this morning from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, on the subject of the outrages recently committed by Moussa Bey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 83.

Vice-Consul Devey to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Van, May 21, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, with the object of saving time, one copy of a despatch I have addressed to Colonel Chermside on the subject of the outrages recently committed by Moussa Bey, together with the copy of a letter written by Mr. ———, which, though Mr. ———'s information is derived from entirely different sources to mine, corroborates much of what I had reported, both in my letter of the 27th ultimo and in that of the 18th instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 83.

Bitlis, May 7, 1889.

MOUSSA BEY, a young man of 30, but old in iniquity, spent this last winter as a guest of one of our Kurdish Sheikhs; it happened that an Armenian Headman of Arkavan, eleven hours from here, on Mush Plain, came on business to this city; Moussa had a grudge against him because he had signed a Petition to have the Bey arrested; the latter went in pursuit in the night and found his victim in lodgings and asleep, eight hours from here. First he ignited powder he had poured into the right hand and one of the pockets—the one used to sign said Petition, and the other in which he had conveyed it. Afterwards he stabbed him and threw him on a bonfire which he had ordered made. To a bystanding Kurd, on remonstrance with him at inflicting such cruelty, he replied, "Let me not hear a word from you, or I will treat you in the same manner." The Pasha summoned the Bey on his return to the city, but allowed him to make his escape to his village on Mush Plain. This was during the first week of last month, since which he has created terror by robbing caravans, and murdering those against whom he had a grudge, or the wealthy for their money. Week before last a cotton caravan, of some fifty animals and twenty men, were passing on their way from Karpoot to this city. Two of them, natives of the

village of Tehme, were singled out, taken to the Bey's village, and stripped of their clothing; but as they proved not to belong to this Pashalic, their clothing was restored to them. These men came and told us their story. Within four days past a caravan, on their way from Aleppo, viz., Karpoot, with goods for Van, while passing through the Mush Plain, were attacked; seven animals, with their goods, were seized, and three men, some say six, were killed.

— writes us from Mush, on the 3rd instant: an Armenian and son were plundered near the village of Darpan; in a village near Horhannes Monastery two men have been murdered. When Moussa Bey was asked why such proceedings were allowed, he replied that the Mutessarif of Mush had robbed them, the Kurds, of 1,200 animals, and they were determined to murder an Armenian for every animal taken, that Moussa Bey affirms that he has given our Pasha from £ T. 800 to £ T. 1,000 bribe, and that he will requite himself by plundering tenfold that sum from the Christians, &c. The Bey with thirty-five horsemen fell upon Bastavank and killed its Reis, or Headman, and also his father, and such cruelty was exhibited that two lads, grandchildren of the latter, died from fright on the spot.

This was on the night of the 27th ultimo. Threats of similar treatment were sent to other places in that (Aklate) province, and — writes us on the 13th ultimo from Purkhus [*sic*], where he lodged, that the night was rendered hideous from the screams of the villagers who were warding off attacks upon their threatened village, which is one hour from Bastavank. By reason of this threat a few are fleeing to this city for protection: a Petition by 150 Armenian signers here was prepared last Saturday, and, at an expense of 500 piastres, sent by telegraph to the Sublime Porte, begging for protection. But it is the opinion of the more knowing that such a Petition will never reach the Porte, and if it does will prove of no avail.

Inclosure 3 in No. 83.

Vice-Consul Devey to Colonel Chermiside.

(Extract.)

Van, May 18, 1889.

WITH reference to my letter of the 27th ultimo, I regret to have to draw your further attention to the very dangerous condition obtaining in the Mush Plain, consequent on the escape of Moussa Bey.

Outrages of the gravest nature are being daily perpetrated with impunity, nor am I aware that any steps have been taken by the authorities to re-establish public security.

News from Mush only filters through to Van, and it is possible that some of Moussa Bey's crimes may be reported in exaggerated terms here; but it is certain that more than one Van merchant has suffered very heavy loss from caravans being plundered on the Mush-Bitlis road, and I am told that on one occasion some lives were lost. An Aleppo caravan of Aleppo people was also plundered, but the things stolen were restored on the grounds that Moussa Bey had no spite against strangers. Moussa Bey frequently commands these forays in person, and I believe that he personally applied the fiery tortures by which the man Ohan was so cruelly put to death. His Kurds are said to dress themselves as women, and, approaching unprotected groups of village women when in the open country, to seize and violate them. Lastly, Moussa Bey is levying blackmail on the neighbouring villages of from £ T. 20 to £ T. 50 apiece in a lump sum. In one village, of Akhlát, where his demand met with a refusal, the Kiaya and another man were killed on the following day. The state of alarm is said to be so great that the villagers in some parts leave their houses, and hide from sunset to sunrise.

It is true that Moussa Bey has served his Government in various ways, and was for a considerable time Mudir of Khuit Nahiyýé, and this even after proven crimes had been condoned; at the time he seemed to have reformed. But his late defiance of the Government, not to say open revolt, and his "Khunkyar"-like disposal of the property, lives, and honour of the Mush Armenians are matters that cannot be overlooked, least of all in Bitlis Vilayet, where Moslem fanaticism in every quarter has recently taken fresh root.

P.S. May 19.—I learn that a Sheikh of Bitlis (probably Sheikh Emin) and Haji Nejmeddin Effendi personally induced Moussa Bey to return to Bitlis, where he was received with honour, and lodged as a guest in the Sheikh's house. It is

added that, by Imperial Iradé, Moussa Bey and his family will reside within, and not leave the limits of Bitlis city.

No. 84.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 14.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, June 2, 1889.

IN my despatch of the 20th ultimo I had the honour to report to your Lordship the manner in which, in the audience I had of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan on the previous evening, the conversation turned to the subject of Moussa Bey.

I have since been careful to forward to your Lordship every information that I could collect on the subject, and I have also not failed to take advantage of what the Sultan had said to me by sending Sir A. Sandison to Sureya Pasha, His Majesty's First Secretary, and I beg to inclose a copy of the statement made by his Excellency to Sir A. Sandison.

Your Lordship will thus perceive that I have not lost any opportunity in making respectful representations to the Sultan in the form I thought most conducive to obtain a result corresponding to your wishes in this matter.

I am assured that Moussa Bey will come here in due course, and, until the expectation is either confirmed or disappointed, nothing else can be done.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 84.

Memorandum by Sir A. Sandison.

I HAVE the honour to report that I did not fail to speak to Sureya Pasha this afternoon, in the sense of your Excellency's instruction of to-day, in reference to Moussa Bey and the disturbed condition of the Asiatic provinces inhabited by the Armenians.

With regard to Moussa Bey, his Excellency replied much in the same sense as the Grand Vizier, viz., that there are facts and circumstances (which he would willingly communicate for your Excellency's information after the Bairam) which, in his opinion, clearly establish the innocence of Moussa Bey in regard to the crimes and atrocities laid to his charge. His Excellency continued the conversation by stating that he was not personally acquainted with Moussa Bey, but that he had been able to gather from the correspondence which has been going on between the Palace and the Valis of the said provinces that Moussa Bey, who appears to be a very rich and considerably influential "Turk" throughout the country, has got more enemies than friends, who seek by every means to attribute to his initiation and instigation every act of murder committed in the country.

Sureya Pasha went on to say that there appeared to be much exaggeration connected with the crimes or atrocities Moussa was accused of, but it was submitted to His Imperial Majesty that he should, in the first instance, be summoned in writing to present himself to the provincial authorities, and proceed personally to Constantinople to answer the charges in question. A communication was accordingly made to him to that effect, whereupon he unhesitatingly expressed his readiness to come at once to Constantinople. Sureya Pasha concluded by saying that, according to the Palace information, Moussa Bey had actually started, and that he is positively expected to reach the capital in about ten days.

Pera, May 27, 1889.

No. 85.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 14.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, June 5, 1889.

IN continuation of my despatches of the 30th ultimo and 2nd instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a further despatch respecting Armenian affairs from

Colonel Chermiside, together with its inclosures, two Reports from Mr. Devey on the subjects of the Mutessarif of Hekkiari and of recent phases of Armenian public feeling.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 85.

Consul Chermiside to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Trebizond, May 27, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Excellency two copies of a despatch by Mr. Devey, Her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul, Van, reporting the transfer of the Mutessarif of Hekkiari to another post. As there seemed great doubt whether many of the allegations against him were not due to the intrigues of the local Kurdish Chiefs, the above is more satisfactory than his dismissal.

I also inclose a copy of a despatch, and its inclosure, on the subject of recent phases of Armenian feeling and affairs in Kurdistan. Mr. Devey having been four years at Erzeroum is well qualified to give such a résumé: the publication in London of an Armenian paper, the "Haïasdan," has set in circulation very inaccurate and misleading statements on Armenian affairs, especially as to the action of the Turkish Government. I accordingly called on Mr. Devey for the Report in question and other information.

The petty harassing persecutions of Armenians in the Van district is a matter of regret. I consider the Armenian population in those districts restless and disaffected, but possessed of a minimum capacity for causing any serious trouble to the Turkish Government. There is no doubt that subsequent to the Berlin Treaty there has been a considerable amount of revolutionary agitation at work: this culminated four or five years ago in an abortive attempt to form Secret Societies similar to those existing in Bulgaria prior to 1877, and to procure arms.

The Van and Erzeroum districts were principally affected by this movement, those of Erzinjian, Kharput, Malatia, Diarbekir, as far as I have been able to learn, in a very minor degree.

The movement is not one which could of itself prove dangerous to the Ottoman Government, and the repressive measures have destroyed or prevented any power of organization or cohesion. The innate sentiment of disaffection to the Turkish-Moslem Government will always remain.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. CHERMSIDE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 85.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Chermiside.

Sir,

Van, May 14, 1889.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 30th March, I have the honour to state that the Mutessarif of Hekkiari is to exchange posts with Nezié Effendi, Governor of Arghani Maden.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 85.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Chermiside.

(Extract.)

Van, April 13, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to offer with great diffidence, for your consideration, some observations on the present condition of the Armenians of Van in particular, and on Turkish views respecting this branch of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan's subjects in general.

The proverb about giving a dog a bad name might be aptly quoted in respect of the Armenians of Van. Having, unfortunately, got into ill-odour with the Government generally (even officers who have never had anything to do with this vilayet have been led to form a too adverse and unjust opinion of them as a set of seditious intriguers), it



has apparently been considered necessary to continue these exaggerated notions of their black designs and disloyalty. One or two local functionaries at the same time have not been remiss, and let slip so fine an occasion for the display of their zeal, and whilst devoting their time and energies to the discovery and scotching of Armenian revolutionary plots and Societies, many of which were purely imaginary or misunderstood, hope for promotion, rewards, and decorations to crown their efforts; such, by the way, was the result of the course pursued by the late Fikri Pasha (*vide* Mr. Barnham's despatch of the 8th July, 1886).

The Van Armenians, though they may be somewhat fanatical about their Church and nationality, are on very fair terms with their Moslem neighbours, who appreciate more justly such doings as the frequent arrests, recent searchings of the Varak Monastery (Yedi-kilissé), the vague accusation that Armenians bought or stole military rifles for insurrectionary purposes (the Martinis in question, I have reason to believe, were dishonestly collected by Persians for use in Persia; it was the time of the Sheikh Obeidullah disturbances; but the Armenians were as a community entirely innocent), the character of their various Societies founded some eight years ago and since suppressed, and similar affairs. Then, again, the local factions serve to complicate the question, and it would be far wiser to leave the Armenians wholly indifferent than to endeavour to induce them to join one party or another. The Armenians, resenting their recent treatment, are at present inclining towards the Temir-Oglou opposition, however much they may fear and hate this family, of whom Major Clayton (despatch of the 3rd August, 1879) remarks that they are said to be the curse of the whole neighbouring country, and he considers among measures for improvement "first and foremost the extinction of the influence of the notorious families above mentioned, which can hardly be attained except by their permanent banishment." Khalil Pasha has made the first move in this direction; but there remains the question, is it altogether well for a Government to rid itself of the trammels of criticism, and of the wholesome check of an opposition, however corrupt and bad that opposition may be.

Ottoman officers in the Administration, and more rarely Moslem inhabitants, may often be heard comparing Armenia with Bulgaria. A cautious regard for the interests of the Armenians restrains the foreigner from observing that a contrast would be more appropriate. The vast difference in origin, language, character, and Church should alone be sufficient to demonstrate the falseness of such comparison. But, it is advanced, the war of 1877 took its rise in the agitation and disturbances which occurred in Bulgaria, and such a condition must never be allowed to obtain again among the Christians of Turkey, and the Armenians have shown premonitory symptoms. Agreed. We will not, however, discuss the mode of treatment of the disease, and suggest that a return to the statesman-like policy of more than one of the Kiuprili Zadés in winning the affection and sympathy of the Raya subject by conciliation and equal justice would be more efficacious and profitable, whilst measures of repression such as those adopted here are calculated, if, indeed, to hide the sore, no less to drive it to rankle inwardly.

After the war and until the spring of 1884, Hassan Pasha was Vali here; Mr. Eyres refers more than once to his system of managing the Armenians, and keeping them well in hand by showing them certain proofs of revolutionary designs which he had found, and threatening to make use of these documents and of the weapon of political banishment if they were disobedient to his wishes. Hassan Pasha was the one Vali who kept entirely aloof from local factions and intrigues; he was generally respected if feared, and is now specially regretted by the Armenians; at all events, during his administration there was not, as at present, the acute phase of hunting out Armenian seditious movements. Hamdi Pasha succeeded; he is described as having been timid, fanatical, and weak, and from the date of his arrival identified himself with the Temir-Oglou party; he came with preconceived notions of Armenian rebelliousness, and in every party intrigue or excitement he saw, or chose to see, the commencement of a serious revolt, as in the affair of the elections in 1886, or again, *vide* his opinions as expressed in Mr. Barnham's despatch of the 23rd December, 1886. It was he who had previously established the small local police force, and made a most unhappy selection of officers. He died two years ago, but even by his death bequeathed further trouble to the Armenians, for, their mutual dislike being notorious, a story was some months later trumped up to the effect that they had caused him to be helped out of this world by poison.

Khalil Pasha next arrived as Governor-General of Van in the spring of 1887, and until the late autumn all went well, as he kept religiously out of all party intrigues, and attempted to keep them under. The Armenians were contented and tranquil, but soon after his arrival the Temir Oglous began to complain that the Rayas were unduly favoured and themselves neglected, and showed an inclination to form an active opposition

and give trouble. The Vali did not, however, side at once with the rival though much less powerful party, the clique formed by the Dilaver Oglous, Jameshji Zadés, and their partisans, though he may now, perhaps, be open to the charge of having extended to some of them his special protection as a set-off to the Temir-Oglou influence. At this period also (November 1887) the Armenian question suddenly cropped up again; it would seem that Boghos Effendi had intrigued and stirred up the authorities out of hostility to Mgr. Krikoritz, who had superseded him as Murakhass several months earlier.

From this time forward the system of repression and intimidation was reverted to, and has been actively kept up; Armenian individuals or small batches have been constantly arrested and questioned on practically frivolous counts, and a close espionage exists at the Post Office; in the great majority of cases the prisoners have been at once discharged, and no persons have been exiled, though two sentences of banishment for life have been passed, and are now being appealed against; but it is the brutal arbitrariness and the rude severity with which these inquiries are conducted that are most complained of; and with this, if the tale be true, the existence of an extraordinary Court of Inquiry (Tahkikat Commission), formed by order from Constantinople about a year ago, which consisted of the Vali, the Sous-Procureur, the late Juge d'Instruction, the Tabour Aghassi, and one or two police employés, with two Armenian translators, who hold occasional sessions at irregular intervals, presumably for the purpose of discussing measures for crushing out any germs of sedition, the existence of which may still be suspected.

It should not be forgotten, at the same time, that Van is a long way from the capital and difficult of access, and that the Porte has only the reports of its own employés to depend on; thus, much is left to the discretion of the local officials, and with the special powers intrusted to them in respect of the Armenian question, it cannot but be admitted that they are exposed to the temptation of an excessive or arbitrary use of their functions. The Tabour Aghassi has been, and is still, a great offender in this way; but it would seem that he has rendered particular service to the Vali, who persists in remaining blind to his faults, and in describing him as a pattern officer. The recent visit of an impartial Inspector of Justice has produced some salutary reforms in the Judicial Department. One is led to think that the Executive and other Departments might be benefited by such visits if really capable, honest, and independent men could be found for the difficult and delicate work of inspection in a country where intrigue is as the breath of the nostrils. It must be observed that very little reliance can be placed on the constant Mazbatas, by whomsoever signed, that are forwarded from here to the capital.

Major Clayton some years ago spoke of the want of moral ballast, self-reliance, and cohesion he observed among the Armenians, and he deprecated their love of faction and party jealousy and intrigue: little is heard of their cliques now, for all alike fear to fall under the suspicion of the authorities; "young Armenia" has apparently disappeared, and even the Boghosian* and anti-Boghosian parties seem to be extinct. The Vali, however, declares himself to be annoyed at the character of "representative of the nation," as it were, arrogated to themselves by some four or five persons, notably, the two members of the Administrative Council: assuredly, if it should be necessary to speak on behalf of the community, after their Bishop and "Millet Bashi," the Murakhass-Vekil, these members have a certain claim to be heard; and I feel convinced that Khalil Pasha, liberal minded as he is, would not advocate the total suppression of the expression of public opinion in any form whatever. It would be well if the Patriarchate could find a fit ecclesiastic as Head of the Church and Community here, a *persona grata* to the Government, active in guarding their temporal interests, and who, whilst convincing the authorities of the real loyalty of his nationalists, would induce them to have done with any silly inclination to pose as victims and martyrs, to be more steady and rational, and not to slip back into the slough of factious intrigue.

No Armenian question exists in the neighbouring Vilayet of Bitlis, where so-called seditious movements have not sprung up and flourished at all. Their condition is, however, miserable, for since the vilayet was established after the war it has ever been most corrupt, and during the last three years Moslem fanaticism has grown surprisingly; in the country round Kurdish oppression is as bad as ever, and neither effective protection nor justice is available. Though there is no trouble with the police, their sufferings are really pitiable, and if they are not looked upon as seditious by the Government, the utter contempt and neglect they meet with must be felt as a sore

* Vide Annex 2.

burden. Kurdish Sheikhs even hold that the vilayet is "bil istissna" (under exception), i.e., that the Laws and Regulations as in force elsewhere do not apply, and act accordingly.

The Armenian community of the Erzeroum Vilayet is in a degree more civilized than that of Van; there is commerce, more intercourse with the capital and with foreigners, they have larger and better schools, and the Government has been established on a firm basis for some centuries. Here again the Armenian question is little heard of; the insurrectionary movement of the winter 1882-83 was so thoroughly suppressed, and the ignorant peasants (mostly) who had received or signed the objectionable papers were so promptly and severely punished, that courage was not left to breathe a word. Mustapha Pasha acted with a certain amount of dignity, though doubtless he was inclined to over-estimate the danger, and treat it as of the most serious political importance. The prisoners have, I believe all, since been pardoned by the Sultan, and I am not aware that any attempt was made to rake up old charges, or to represent the Armenians in seditious colours. Once only a report was spread, in February 1886, that the Armenians had rifles hidden in their church, but it only led to the calumniators being imprisoned for a short term. The townspeople were left to follow their business in tranquillity, but occasionally crimes and outrages committed in the districts escaped with impunity, or met with shamefully inadequate punishment. No ill-considered action was taken, the result of groundless fears, not to say ridiculous trepidation, such as on more than one occasion disgraced Hamdi Pasha's administration. The one serious matter was the arrest and banishment in 1887 of an Inspector of Schools named Sarian; in this case it would seem that the Government acted rather harshly.

In the interests of the Ottoman Government, I venture to think it very highly desirable that the Armenian question should be speedily terminated, as far as Van is concerned; the Armenians are far from having any disloyal views or sentiments, as indeed the Vali avows, and the sore feeling created by unmerited suspicion and consequent persecution would die a natural death from want of aliment, if, while the present strongly repressive policy were abandoned, more was done to divert their minds to the development of material prosperity, if trade were promoted and roads built, if the much-talked-of steamers were placed on the lake, if more attention were paid to forests and mines, while their local Councils might continue in undisturbed enjoyment of their various functions and supervision over church and school matters.

Before concluding, a word ought to be added on the harm done to the Armenians of Turkey by the publication of such papers abroad as "l'Arménie" and the "Haïasdan" and others; the "profession de foi," of the last named is, "revendiquer par les moyens pacifiques et fermes, la prompte réalisation de l'autonomie administrative et locale," on the lines of an Ambassadorial note addressed to the Porte in 1880, and on the grounds of Turkish misgovernment and Kurdish oppression. The entirely sufficient reasons disposing of Armenian autonomy need not be recapitulated, and the opinion of educated Armenians of these parts of Turkey, honestly speaking, is that autonomy is unnecessary and undesirable. Journals of the "Haïasdan" genus, however, eagerly seize on every instance of wrong, well authenticated or not, hold it up to European execration, and aggravate what little ill-feeling there may be already between Moslem and Christian, and Raya and Government. With their views they cannot, of course, allow that the Porte is even attempting to govern, and its policy they interpret as based on a plan of exterminating the Armenians by employing every method of oppression and injustice, and by encouraging Kurdish brigandage and cruelty.

I have the honour to subjoin a list of political prisoners and exiles of Van.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Annex 1.

List of Political Prisoners at Van.

1. A Vartabed, named Daniel, of Alexandropol, fairly well educated and brought up by Mgr. Khrimian, lately Abbot of a monastery at Archag, near Van, was, it is said, quite falsely, accused of having preached sedition in a Van church, and suggested burning the barracks, has been in prison without trial more than a year.

2. Arsen Tokmalian, the Vartabed who uttered an inflammatory discourse at the Arzrouni Hall in Tiflis, also is a man of some education, and had a hobby of collecting old manuscripts and histories from monasteries in the neighbourhood.

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3. Apkar Dabanian was a schoolmaster at the Bartoghimeos Monastery (St. Bartholomew's), near Bashkaleh; his offence was singing patriotic songs and teaching them to his pupils. He was imprisoned for six or seven months at Bashkaleh and then at Van; he and the Vartabed Arsen were tried together, and condemned in the Court of First Instance to life exile, but they appealed.

4. Karakin Pageshtzian, a young artisan of Van. A letter containing seditious expressions was written him from a friend in Roumania. In prison more than a year.

5. Seven villagers of Allahkeui (3 leagues distant) addressed a Petition to Mgr. Khrimian whilst here, declaring they were suffering from Kurdish oppression, and asking for arms to defend themselves. Have also been in prison a year or more. The letter was signed by thirty-one villagers and also the schoolmaster, who has lately been released.

Annex 2.

List of Armenians exiled or punished summarily.

1. The schoolmaster Portokalian, now editor of "l'Arménie" at Marseilles.
 2. Natanian Garabed Effendi (*vide* Mr. Lamb's despatch of the 30th June, 1885), now residing in liberty at Van.
 3. Kaljian Sahag Effendi (*vide* Mr. Lamb's despatch of the 29th December, 1885).
 4. Natanian Margos Effendi, a young schoolmaster at Mush, exiled in 1886.
 5. Terlemezian Mugrerditch was banished, it would seem, for having sent a Map of the environs of Van to a comrade in Erzeroum.
 6. The three boys mentioned in Mr. Barnham's despatch of the 23rd December, 1886.
 7. Khanigian Muguerditch, sent to Constantinople last year, now released.
 8. Mahdessi Aslanian Khatchadour, condemned to imprisonment for life at Erzeroum last year. His father and brother were recently summoned to Erzeroum, but discharged.
 9. Aghavenian Krikor, Issakoulian Karekin, Ajemian Mardiros, all of Van, were examined and sentenced at Constantinople last year. The last-named escaped hence to Russia without going to Constantinople.
 10. Tashvartanian Haji Vartan and Aghavenian Haji Artin (father of the above Krikor) were banished lately from Constantinople to Van, but are at liberty.
 11. Sarian Effendi, exiled to Kastamboul referred to above.
- Archbishop Khrimian was recalled from Van by desire of the Porte.

No. 86.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 14.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, June 10, 1889.

IN continuation of previous despatches on the subject, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a further despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, inclosing an extract of a letter from Bitlis, on the proceedings of Moussa Bey.

The accompanying copy of an extract of a letter from Mush is of interest when taken in connection with the information supplied by Mr. Devey.

I have instructed Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond to inform me by telegraph should Moussa Bey pass through that city on his way here. The Grand Vizier informed Mr. Block on Saturday, the 8th instant, that a telegram had been received announcing his arrival at Erzeroum, which he was to leave for Constantinople to-day.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 86.

Vice-Consul Devey to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Van, May 28, 1889.

WITH reference to previous correspondence respecting Moussa Bey, I have the honour to inclose copy of an extract which may interest your Excellency. It would

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seem that Moussa Bey did not remain long in Bitlis, but was allowed to return within a day or two to his village in company with the Vilayet Mektubji, who went apparently in the triple character of guest, hostage, and custodian, for as soon as Bairam (3rd June) is over, the two are to go on to Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 86.

to Vice-Consul Devey.

(Extract.)

Bitlis, May 9, 1889.

RECENTLY, in lieu of executing an order long since sent by the Porte to seize Moussa Bey dead or alive, our Pasha sent two or three to him, not soldiers, but private citizens, to persuade him to come to the city. Their mission proved unavailing. He replied that he was willing to comply with the commands of the Government, but he did not recognize the wishes of the Pasha as such, "Else why did he allow me to make my escape when I responded to his summons? No," added he, "I will not go to him. Let him and others in the city to whom I have given 1,000*l.* refund it; otherwise I will procure a load of noses and ears from slaughtered Christian victims." It is however reported that he did make a flying visit upon the Pasha night before last. The Kurds in all parts of this region are now giving trouble. In order to plunder those Armenian villages which they suspect will resist by fire-arms they resort to stratagem—*e.g.*, they slaughtered some forty sheep belonging to Popshen, one of our out-stations, $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour from the city, with the expectation that the owners would vacate their village to rescue their property, and thus the village be the more easily plundered. The owners came and entered complaint before our Pasha, who ordered them from his presence, accusing them of falsehood. They attempted the same kind of ruse at Khofrev,* three hours from here, by driving off one of their flocks of sheep, but the inhabitants chose to remain and defend their homes to rescuing their lost property. ——— writes us from Tookh that the Kurds entered their village with the view of plunder, but they were resisted. Those villages that are so fortunate as to have fire-arms have a nightly armed guard.

May 14. ——— arrived here from Mush 11th instant. He could not come except by paying a medjidieh as blackmail, and by having one of Moussa Bey's confederates as a body-guard all the way. ——— confirms the report that Moussa Bey has established a cordon between here and Mush consisting of some six stations, at each of which are posted from five to fifty armed men, who swoop down upon and plunder the passing caravans. The result is that the latter have nearly ceased to enter our city from any direction, and business is coming to a standstill. Last Saturday a company plundered Choorhor,† four hours distant, carried off several hundred sheep and some twenty or thirty yoke of oxen, and carried off everything belonging to the three wealthiest families. The inhabitants, on seeing them coming, fled up Mount Nimrud, at whose base the village is located. Usually a sum of money is exacted, and woe to that village if it fails to pay. I have the names of several villages thus to be doomed; one of these has already been deserted by its inhabitants. Between fifteen and twenty armed men endeavoured to enter to plunder St. Kevork (Armenian) Church night before last, but the inmate rang the bell and soon brought the rescuing parishioners. Yesterday the Sheikh who entertains Moussa Bey, accompanied by a large retinue of Turks and Christians, went out two or three hours and escorted into the city in great honour Moussa Bey; and we are told that this Sheikh and the Pasha have forgiven the Bey, and he is to-day promenading our streets. What does all this mean? we ask. In reply we are told it is to secure fees. In fine, we are having about the irregular state of things as existed during the war twelve years ago.

Inclosure 3 in No. 86.

Extract from a Letter communicated by ——— to ———.

May 22, 1889.

ON or about the 15th May certain citizens from Bitlis, by request of the Vali, went after Moussa and tried to prevail upon him to come to Bitlis as per the Pasha's desire

* Khakhrev.—G. P. D.

† A large village near Tadvan known as Chukur or Chalkani.—G. P. D.

His reply was that he should not come for the Pasha as such, for he had taken money of him and let him go; if he wished to arrest him now, why did he let him escape?

If the Government wanted him he was quite ready to go on to Constantinople, not in chains nor by zaptiehs, but as any other traveller, and he had an invitation to come by letter from Bahri Pasha. It was said a strict order from the Porte had come that he be taken dead or alive. On or about the 22nd May he left Bitlis, some said with an officer to go Moush way, and it was reported he was to pass on to Constantinople.

Babri Pasha is his relative, and, I hear, Governor of Scutari, and likely it is through him he hopes to clear his way. He was said to have sent 800*l.* to Constantinople for use.

No. 87.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 18, 1889.

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch of the 2nd instant, reporting the steps you have taken to bring to the Sultan's notice the information which you have received respecting Moussa Bey's proceedings.

Your action in this matter is approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 88.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 26, 1889.

THE Turkish Ambassador spoke to me to day about the rumours which had been in circulation as to atrocities alleged to have taken place in Armenia. He stated very positively that there was no truth whatever, either in the story of the bride who had been boiled, or the man who had been roasted alive; that a murder had taken place in one of the outlying villages, and the authorities were actively engaged in tracing the perpetrator of it; but that beyond this incident, which, however lamentable, could not be said to indicate any special feebleness in the Government, there was no truth in the outrages, the existence of which had been so systematically proclaimed. He proceeded to point out the extent to which this case was analogous to that of Bulgaria twelve years ago, and said that he had no doubt whatever that these legends of atrocities were invented purely from a political aim. It was quite impossible, however, under any circumstances, that Armenia could receive institutions resembling those of Bulgaria, inasmuch as the Christian population was only a minority in the district.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 89.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 28.)

My Lord,

Therapia, June 17, 1889.

WHEN I called at the Porte on the 15th instant and saw the Foreign Minister, at his Excellency's own request, he placed in my hands a *pro-memorid*, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, in which it is attempted to disculpate Moussa Bey and the authorities at Bitlis from the charges brought against them in a manner perfectly contrary to the allegations received from trustworthy sources such as persons residing in the province and Her Majesty's Consular officers.

I am assured that Moussa Bey is on his way to Constantinople, and I do not see that anything further can be done in this matter until we ascertain whether he actually arrives, which many persons still doubt, and what he will attempt to do when here to clear himself of the numerous charges brought against him.

According to telegraphic information received from Mr. Vice-Consul Devey, all



political prisoners were released at Van on the 14th June. I have no doubt that this is due to the unofficial representations I have made under your Lordship's directions both at the Palace and at the Sublime Porte, but I am awaiting further details from Van by post.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 89.

Pro-memoriâ.

LE Gouvernement Impérial a toujours prêté la plus grande attention aux plaintes et publications représentant les Arméniens d'Anatolie et notamment ceux de Van et de Bitlis, comme étant en butte à de mauvais traitements.

Il n'a jamais manqué de les contrôler, et des enquêtes effectuées il est toujours résulté que la plupart de ces assertions n'étaient pas fondées, et que les autres n'avaient trait qu'à des faits de droit commun comme il s'en produit dans tous les pays. Bien que la justice n'ait point failli à son devoir, les Arméniens ont dénoncé dernièrement Moussa Bey comme se livrant à des méfaits et à des actes de cruautés. Ému de ces accusations, Moussa Bey, qui se trouvait à Bitlis même, chef-lieu du vilayet, a voulu y mettre un terme en se retirant dans ses propriétés sises à Khoyoud ; l'autorité s'étant opposée à son départ il en fut tellement impressionné qu'il prit la fuite. C'est alors que les nommés Parseh Kazar, le Vicaire Arménien, Père Khorène, et les membres du Conseil laïque de Bitlis, l'accusèrent d'avoir brûlé vif un Arménien et de s'être rendu coupable de meurtre et de pillage à Moush.

Devant des imputations aussi formelles et ne pouvant plus les supporter, Moussa Bey, pour se justifier de ces calomnies, se livra lui-même à l'autorité en invoquant justice. Or, non seulement rien n'est venu jusqu'à présent prouver que de pareils actes aient été perpétrés, mais en admettant même qu'ils eussent été commis, Moussa Bey ne saurait-il en être soupçonné, attendu qu'au moment ou au dire des plaignants ces faits auraient eu lieu, il n'avait point encore quitté Bitlis. Cela seul suffit à démontrer son innocence. Du reste, Ohannès, qu'on accuse Moussa Bey d'avoir fait brûler au pétrole, a été trouvé mort dans un village. L'assassin est recherché. Quant à la jeune mariée qui aurait été enlevée pendant une noce, violée et jetée ensuite dans une chaudière pour être bouillie, le fait est absolument imaginaire. Il n'y a pas d'exemple que pareilles atrocités aient été commises dans l'Empire. La religion s'opposant à ce qu'un corps animé soit brûlé, les Musulmans se gardent bien de jeter au feu même l'animal le plus nuisible.

Les informations que le Consul d'Angleterre à Van a pu recueillir à Bitlis chez Avédis Effendi, où il a demeuré quatre jours, ne sauraient être considérées comme exactes et véridiques. En effet, Avédis Effendi est un de ceux qui cherchent à introduire et à répandre dans le pays le journal séditionnaire "Hindjall" paraissant à Londres. Le Vicaire Arménien avec lequel le Consul s'est entretenu chez Avédis Effendi, figure, comme il est dit plus haut, parmi les plaignants. Mais il est à noter que l'un et l'autre ont reconnu que les accusations portées contre Moussa Bey étaient mal fondées et le Vicaire a même avoué que s'il s'était joint aux plaignants c'est parce qu'il y aurait été induit et contraint.

Les autorités Impériales veillent toujours au maintien de l'ordre public, et dans un télégramme adressé à la Sublime Porte, le Père Garabed, Vicaire Arméno-Catholique à Bitlis, rend hommage aux efforts louables déployés dans ce but par les autorités de la province où la sécurité est parfaite, à la grande satisfaction de la population qui, déclare-t-il, jouit de la plus grande tranquillité. Le Vicaire ajoute que les nouvelles contraires sont répandues par quelques individus intéressés à déguiser la vérité et à créer des embarras au pays.

No. 90.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 28.)

My Lord,

Therapia, June 17, 1889.

THE translation of an Armenian Petition emanating from the Vilayet of Van has been circulated here in the officious press for the evident purpose of contradicting the allegations as to the disturbed condition of that province.

The Sultan's First Secretary has sent a copy of that Petition to Sir A. Sandison with a view to its being submitted to me by him, and I have the honour to inclose an English translation of it, omitting the list of signatures, which are too numerous (about 150). I have also the honour to inclose copy of a telegram I received from Mr. Vice-Consul Devey, whom I asked to furnish me with his views as to the value and weight to be attached to the above-mentioned Petition.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 90.

Extract from the "Tarik" of June 12, 1889.

Petition to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan (copy sent to the "Tarik" newspaper).

(Translation.)

Van, (by telegram) May 27 (June 8), 1889.

WE have heard with the greatest regret that certain foreign newspapers have lately been inserting, under the title of "Oppression of Armenia," a number of slanderous and hostile communications, and have been publishing various articles to the effect that the Mussulman Beys and Agas, not being able to find Circassian slaves, are seizing Armenian girls by force and carrying them off to their harems; that the Government is even a participator in this abuse; that, tranquillity being at an end, and the hostility between the Kurds and the Armenians at its height, the Kurds are always killing the Armenians; that a great number of arrests have taken place in the town of Van, and that the adoption of the necessary measures to put a stop to this state of things is imperative; further, we understand that these publications have given rise to discussions in several councils and assemblies. These publications are entirely without foundation, and no Armenian girl has been carried off by Beys or Agas by force nor with consent. With all the Mussulman inhabitants, and especially with the Kurds, against whom these complaints are laid, we are on a footing of equality as regards the commerce of the country, the rights of personal and landed property, legal and other matters, and no hostility exists between us. We do not rightly understand what is supposed to be the object of the arrests, but we have heard of no injustice or distress in this respect anywhere. The aim of these false announcements is a hostile one, viz., to alienate from Turkey those European Governments and peoples which are friendly to her; and to annihilate the hope and trust of your Armenian servants in the Imperial favour and benevolence. The hope and trust of your Armenian servants rests on the Imperial favour and mercy alone; there is no need of, or recourse to, anybody else. Under your Majesty's shadow our tranquillity is perfect. The Vali of the province, Khalil Bey, is your true, faithful, and upright servant. His zealous efforts for the preservation of tranquillity, and his prompt decision in doing justice if ever he hears of the least wrong, causes all your Armenian servants to call down blessings on your Gracious Majesty's head every day. If only he stays here let all the acts of tyranny enumerated by the papers take place!

We beg your Majesty to accept this humble Petition in the name of all your Armenian servants of the Province of Van as a refutation and denial of these publications; and as an opportunity of reiterating our loyalty to your Majesty.

(Signed)

(N.B.—The signatures fill about a column of the "Tarik.")

Inclosure 2 in No. 90.

Vice-Consul Devey to Sir W. White.

Van, June 18, 1889.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Petition carries no great weight I fear. Nevertheless, 400 reported to have signed, but at the instigation of the Vali it is said.

The release of the prisoners causes real and universal joy.

No. 91.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 1.)

My Lord,

Therapia, June 27, 1889.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 17th instant, I have the honour to report that the Kurdish Chief Moussa Bey arrived at Constantinople on Monday last, the 24th instant, from Trebizond.

I have also the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, giving some information of interest regarding this man's origin and antecedents.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 91.

Consul Longworth to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Trebizond, June 20, 1889.

ON the 6th instant I received a cyphered telegram from your Excellency asking me to ascertain and report whether Moussa Bey passes through Trebizond on his way to Constantinople, to which I answered that, though his visit to Constantinople is improbable, I would inform your Excellency should he pass through Trebizond.

On the 18th instant I telegraphed Moussa Bey's arrival here, and I have this day wired his having left by the Greek steamer for Constantinople.

The particulars of this man, as gathered at Trebizond, being of some interest, allow me to give them here as briefly as possible.

Moussa Bey, a handsome man of about 30 years of age, is the son of Mirza Bey, a Kurdish proprietor, who, some thirty-five years ago, revenged the dishonour of an aunt by slaughtering the inhabitants of an Armenian village in the Mush Plain, and who, in punishment for this massacre, was retained in custody at Constantinople, only to escape after ten years' imprisonment to renew his nefarious practices in Kurdistan, where the authorities, failing to recapture him, engaged his services in the pursuit of brigands, in which he was killed some six years ago.

Moussa Bey, suspecting that his father's rival, Nedjameddin Bey, an influential member of the Bitlis Administrative Council, conspired towards bringing about the death of his father, made several attempts on the life of this Notable, who, finding that he successfully evaded all efforts of the Executive, conciliated him by marrying his son to Moussa Bey's daughter, and by getting him named Sub-Governor of Boulanik.

His conduct as such, however, was so outrageous that he was soon dismissed from Government employ, and, as an alternative, took to a predatory life, terrorizing the whole country, Christians and Mussulmans alike, by a series of the most cold-blooded atrocities.

In the early part of last month Ibrahim Bey, the Constantinople Inspector of Justice, was proceeding on his round from Bitlis to Mush, and halting for the night at the midway village of Avzut, he there witnessed the flight of the terror-stricken inhabitants at the approach of Moussa Bey and his band of robbers. He himself, tired out as he was, could not make his escape, and being brought before this notorious character, with great tact and courage prevailed on him to accept an amnesty, and to submit himself entirely to the wishes of the Sultan.

As a consequence, the Porte invited Moussa Bey to Constantinople, where, though he is proceeding in company with the Head of the "Correspondance" of the Bitlis Vilayet, the authorities here, on my suggestion, had him secretly watched in order to prevent any attempt of his at stealthily disappearing from Trebizond.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

M. Hagopian to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 28.)

My Lord Marquis,

25, Chesilton Road, Fulham, London, June 27, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to bring under your Lordship's notice a matter which, unless it is officially and unmistakably contradicted by the Sultan's Government, would constitute a case of the most flagrant injustice perpetrated by it against the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.

It has come to our knowledge that a number of the Armenian deputation, who recently waited on the Grand Vizier at Constantinople to present a Petition on behalf of 500 natives of Moush, temporarily residing in the Turkish capital, praying for the punishment of the notorious Kurdish Chief, Moussa Bey, have been arrested by his orders and will be shortly exiled to Tripoli.

We further learn, on reliable authority, that Moussa Bey is an old delinquent, who has been already arrested twice in consequence of his numerous misdeeds and cruelties; that on the occasion of his first arrest, he has, for some unknown reason, been pardoned; that on the second occasion, he has succeeded in evading justice, and has since been allowed to remain at large; and that he has powerful friends and supporters at Constantinople.

I need not remind your Lordship that the Armenians have, from time immemorial, exercised the right of petitioning the Sultan or his Ministers, and that, by existing Treaties, they have morally and legally acquired the additional right of bringing their grievances before the Signatory Powers, and especially before Her Majesty's Government, by every available means. Under these circumstances, to deny them proper hearing, or to punish them for proffering well-founded complaints, be it against the oppressions perpetrated by lawless individuals and certain classes of the population who harbour and abet them, or against the numerous shortcomings of the prevailing system of administration in Armenia, would belie the professed "earnest desire" of the Ottoman Porte to "govern the Armenians with justice, and to maintain order in their country." I cannot help adding here, my Lord Marquis, that the non-execution by the Sublime Porte of the provisions of existing Treaties for the protection and well-being of the Armenians, and its treatment of the numerous cases which we had the honour of specifying in our last year's Memorial to your Lordship as exaggerations and mis-statements, has produced an unhappy impression both among the Armenians and in Europe. Moreover, my Lord, whatever excuse the Sultan's Government might bring forward in palliation of its negligence to perform the engagements it has contracted, if the sanctity of Treaties is to be observed, and is not an unmeaning phrase, Turkey cannot be absolved by public opinion for the regrettable state of things which it allows to prevail in Armenia, and for the quasi-hostile attitude, which it unhappily deems it its duty to assume in regard to the Armenian question, and which we, along with all its well-wishers, heartily deplore.

Thanking your Lordship for the kindly expressions of concern and sympathy for our long-suffering ancient people inhabiting Armenia with which you have honoured me on several occasions, and trusting that the matters it has been my duty to lay before your Lordship will receive the careful attention of Her Majesty's Government, I have, &c.

(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN.

No. 93.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 1, 1889.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a copy of a letter from M. Hagopian upon the subject of the alleged arrest at Constantinople of the members of an Armenian deputation.*

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

Mr. C. D. Collet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 4.)

My Lord,

7, Coleridge Road, Finsbury Park, July 4, 1889.

IN your reply to Lord Carnarvon and the Archbishop of Canterbury last week, you made no reference to the defence of the liberality of the Ottoman Government in the reply made to the invitation of the Pope by the Armenian Bishop of Smyrna.

I infer that you have not seen it, and I take the liberty of sending you a copy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. D. COLLET.

Inclosure in No. 94.

The Armenian Church and the Ottoman Government.

ON the 28th June, Lord Carnarvon called the attention of the House of Lords to alleged atrocities in Armenia, of which neither he nor the Archbishop of Canterbury, who supported him, indicated the localities, but which it is contended that the British Government ought either to believe and resent, or to categorically disprove.

In the course of his speech the following fell from the lips of the Archbishop:—

"The state of things was such that the Pope had addressed the Armenian Church through its Patriarch, asking that it should be placed under the Church of Rome. There had never been a nobler answer than that of the Armenian Patriarch to this tempting proposal. He had declined to purchase even an absolute protection at the price of the surrender of his faith and Church."

We have not hitherto heard of any reply from the Armenian Patriarch. We, however, read in "*La Revue de l'Orient*," last autumn, a reply from the Armenian Bishop of Smyrna.

We are very far from disapproving this reply; but why the proposal should be called tempting we are unable to discover. The Pope certainly has no power to reward a surrender of Armenian ecclesiastical independence by any protection, nor has he either the will or the power to persecute the Armenians for their courteous refusal of his invitation. This cannot be the reply to which the English Primate refers, or he would have given from it the following extract.

After explaining that the Armenian Church is, like that of Rome, of Apostolic foundation, Bishop Melchizedech continues:—

"But you are not the first author of this invitation. It has been made repeatedly in the course of centuries, since the inauspicious day of the schism of the Eastern and Western Churches—the Roman and the Greek. The Armenian Church has preserved its original form, and has ever been unwilling to join this schism, in order not to lose its independence, and to remain the free bride of her affianced Saviour. Certainly invitations to depart from this attitude have not been wanting; there have even been reproaches, menaces, and persecutions, with the difference that this time it is no longer the Greek Church but Russian policy which oppresses the conscience and the liberty of the Armenian Church. There are then two opposite influences which persecute the Armenian Church, which has suffered so much. The Vatican seeks temporal power by the recognition of the Papacy; Russia, on the other hand, seeks spiritual dominion by political unity. Both invite us. Russia with her policy has already penetrated into the holy places of the Armenian clergy. You invite us, but Russia says to us 'Such is my will.'"

"But if your means are not the same, the end is identical, that of putting an end, if not to the existence at least to the independence, of the Armenian Church."

To this Bishop Melchizedech adds in a note:—

"The love of truth imposes on us the duty of declaring that the Ottoman Government, far from persecuting us, or from exercising pressure on our religious liberty, has ordered that the men who wish to go over ("*se convertir*") to Islam should be sent to their spiritual chief, in order that he might make a last attempt to uaintain them in their ancient faith. In my position as Bishop of Smyrna I have been an eye-witness of a great number of such cases."

The Armenian Bishop of Smyrna is not the Armenian Patriarch, but his testimony to the liberality of the Turkish Government is not, on that account, the less valuable.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 12.)

My Lord,

Therapia, June 28, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a translation from the "Levant Herald" of the 25th instant of a telegram addressed by the Governor-General of Van to the Sublime Porte, giving an account of the discovery on the dead body of one of a band of Armenian brigands, dispersed by zaptiehs in Hakkiari, of revolutionary papers proving the brigands to be political agents whose crimes have for their object the stirring up of disturbances in Armenia.

I have asked Mr. Devey, by telegraph, to report to me anything he can learn with reference to this incident.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 95.

Extract from the "Eastern Express" of June 25, 1889.

LA SITUATION À VAN.—Le Gouverneur-Général de Van a adressé le télégramme suivant au Gouvernement Impérial :—

"A la nouvelle de l'apparition de huit brigands dans la localité Tchouh, près de Hekkiari, des gendarmes ont été envoyés immédiatement à leur poursuite, et ont réussi à en tuer deux ; les autres ont pris la fuite. Deux zaptiés ont été blessés dans l'engagement. Les brigands tués sont des Arméniens, et des trois fusils qui ont été saisis sur ces derniers et sur un des brigands en fuite, l'un est de la fabrique Martini et les deux autres sont des Berdans. Sur un des brigands tués on a trouvé un carnet contenant des papiers écrits en Arménien qui ont été immédiatement traduits. Parmi ces papiers il y a deux lettres portant les signatures de Avédis Badikian, à Londres, et de Portocalian, à Marseille, et adressées en Septembre à Vehemli Carabet Coulaksizian, du bourg de Heftuhouni, et une pièce portant la signature du dit Carabet Coulaksizian, avec cette annotation en tête : 'Mes dernières notes.' Le carnet porte des notes sur des événements journaliers. Le contenu de ces papiers méritant d'attirer l'attention, je m'empresse de le faire connaître.

"La lettre signée 'Avédis Badikian,' est datée du 25 Avril, 1305, et porte ce qui suit :—

"J'ai dit que vous avez fait des efforts pour troubler Van, et que vous avez constitué un Comité; c'est un bon signe. Ne divulguez pas la formation du Comité. Les Hellènes ont pendant sept ans gardé secrète leur Société, et ce n'est qu'après qu'ils se sont mis à l'œuvre. Si vous voulez faire du bien à notre pays, vous devez vous procurer de l'argent et des hommes. Il faut des actes et non des paroles."

"Dans la lettre de Portocalian portant la date du 27 Avril, 1305, il est dit :—

"Ayant reçu votre lettre, je l'ai fait publier par le journal Arménien. Donnez des nouvelles de la localité où vous vous trouvez et des localités avoisinantes, et surtout de Van. Nous avons formé ici une Société sous le nom de "Société Patriotique." Trouvez là des membres pour cette Société."

"Dans la pièce précitée l'auteur, en parlant du temps qu'il a passé les yeux bandés, de la tyrannie des cruels Tures, du désespoir de ses compatriotes, dit qu'il a fait vœu de se vouer jusqu'au dernier moment de sa vie à la délivrance de sa nation de la misère dans laquelle elle se trouve, et qu'il a décidé avec deux autres jeunes gens de mourir pour cette cause. Les annotations du carnet portent :—

"Pour l'homme qui vit au dix-neuvième siècle, il n'y a d'autre air à respirer que l'air de la liberté. Laissez-moi souffrir avec mes conationaux. Peut-être suis-je capable de les aider. Toi, je sais que tu as des torrents de larmes."

"Après ce préambule, l'auteur dit que la nuit du 17 Mai, afin que l'on ne sût pas où ils devaient se rendre et en trompant tout le monde, sans même avoir prévenu leur cher Président, ils sont sortis de Heft et de Van déguisés en Kurdes ; ils ont été forcés de marcher pendant la nuit et le matin du 18 ils sont restés dans les vallées, et étant arrivés le même jour à la frontière Turque, il se sont cachés derrière des rochers. L'auteur rend ensuite compte comment ils ont marché jusqu'au jour du 23 Mai, nomme les localités qu'ils ont traversées, les magasins où ils se sont

couché et dit que le 24 ils sont arrivés à la localité précitée de Tchouh. Ces annotations sont faites jour par jour en forme de journal.

"On sait qui est Portocalian à Marseille. Quant à Badikian, c'est un intrigant qui, sous prétexte d'exercer son métier de photographe, voyage partout. L'année passée il est allé en Europe; il est originaire de Van. Carabet Coulaksizian est aussi de Van; il a fait ses études dans les écoles des églises d'Érivan, en Russie. Il y a quelques années, il était venu à Van où il a été professeur dans quelques écoles. Ensuite, il s'est rendu à Heftivan, en Perse, et il a enseigné dans l'école de cette localité. Il était le chef des bandits dont il est parlé plus haut et c'était un des deux tués; c'est sur lui qu'on a trouvé les papiers en question.

"L'agent de police Avédis ayant connu parfaitement le dit Carabet a été expressément envoyé sur les lieux pour faire les constatations nécessaires. Le résultat de ces constatations et des enquêtes sera communiqué ultérieurement.

"L'apparition des brigands Arméniens dans cette région dans le but de dévaliser les voyageurs et de commettre d'autres méfaits n'est pas sans précédent. Il est évident que ceux-ci sont des révolutionnaires qui, au moyen de correspondances échangées avec les Arméniens établis à Londres et dans d'autres villes de l'Europe, se livrent à des crimes politiques afin de susciter des événements et faire à la fin éclater une révolte.

"Le fait que les malfaiteurs ont été détruits peu de jours après qu'ils ont franchi la frontière de l'Empire et non seulement avant qu'ils aient pu mettre leur projet à exécution mais avant même qu'ils aient pu commettre le moindre acte; le fait que Coulaksizian a été tué et que des papiers ont été saisis sur lui constituent un succès de grande importance remporté sous l'égide de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan."

(Signé) HALIL, le Vali de Van.

Le 8 (20) Juin, 1305.

No. 96.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 12.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 1, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch addressed by Mr. Devey to Colonel Chermiside reporting that on the receipt of the Petition drawn up by a large number of the natives of Van alluded to in my despatch of the 17th ultimo, all the Armenians detained on quasi-political grounds were released, including those mentioned in Mr. Devey's despatch of the 13th April, which was transmitted by me to your Lordship in my despatch of the 5th June.

I have no doubt that the action of the Turkish authorities in releasing these prisoners is in a great measure due to the representations which I made to the Sublime Porte on the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch of the 29th May, and is a symptom of a desire on the part of the Sultan to relax the system adopted by the Vali of Van lately with regard to his Armenian subjects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 96.

Mr. Devey to Consul Chermiside.

Van, June 15, 1889.

(Extract.)

I HAVE the honour to inform you that about a week ago certain Armenians, who had by some means or other heard that questions had been asked in the British Houses of Parliament respecting reported abuses and outrages committed in Armenia, and that exaggerated accounts of the same had been published in some foreign newspapers, prepared and forwarded to Constantinople two statements signed by about 400 natives of Van, bankers, merchants, members of Courts, &c., of which one was addressed to the Sultan, and the other intended for publication in the "Tarik," to the effect that no such abuses and outrages had occurred in this province, that they were proud and happy to live under Ottoman rule, at present so ably administered by Khalil Pasha, and that they begged leave to assure the Sultan of their perfect devotion and loyalty in spite of anything said or reported that might lead His Majesty to think otherwise.

The telegram to the Palace was duly acknowledged, and in the reply signed by

the First Secretary, the Vali was requested to convey the thanks of His Majesty the Sultan, and his appreciation of their dutiful and loyal sentiments to a deputation of those who had signed. This was done with due ceremonial at the Government House, and next day, yesterday, all prisoners detained on quasi-political grounds, including without exception those mentioned in Annex I of my despatch No. 9, were released. Hereupon a universal demonstration of thanks was made; Armenians of all classes and parties and ideas hastened to express their gratification, and renew their protestations of loyalty. Terzibashian Artin Effendi took occasion to make a short extempore speech, and it is said that about 1,000 Armenians asked permission to visit the Vali, either at the Government House or his private residence. A long telegram of thanks is being sent to-day by the whole community, and special prayers for the Sultan are to be offered in the churches. It is said that the Vali is about to request by telegraph that the following exiles from Van should be allowed to return to their homes, viz.: the three boys, Odian, Natanian, and Kaukanian, and also Terlemezian Muquerditch, Aghavenian Krikor, Issakoulian Karekin, and Natanian Margos; the first three are in Konia Vilayet, the second three at Tripoli, and the last at Jerusalem.

It is perhaps not out of place here to remark that the Van Murakhass Vekil lately tendered his resignation, and only continues to remain in office temporarily at the request of the Patriarchate.

No. 97.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 12.)

(Extract.)

Therapia, July 2, 1889.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose herewith a translation of a statement which has appeared in the Turkish newspaper, the "Tarik," stating that Moussa Bey, who recently arrived in Constantinople, has presented a Petition to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan denying all the charges that have been brought against him, and adding that he is fully prepared to answer them in a Court of Justice, and can prove that they are unfounded.

I have at the same time the honour to transmit a copy of a despatch which I have received from Colonel Chermiside, inclosing a statement as to an outrage committed by Moussa Bey on American missionaries some years ago, for which no redress was ever obtained.

Inclosure 1 in No. 97.

Extract from the "Tarik" of July 1, 1889.

(Translation.)

MOUSSA BEY, son of Mirza, of Mush, who has arrived lately in Constantinople, has addressed a Petition to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, in which he declares that the oppression and brigandage attributed to him by certain persons are without foundation; that on the contrary he has rendered true service to the State in the war and in the offices he has held, and that he has come to the throne of His Majesty to complain of the charges made against him.

Whoever the complainants may be, he is ready to stand with them before the Court and abide judgment, and, while he will willingly accept any punishment which may be pronounced against him, he begs that if slander is proved against the complainants they may be punished according to law. In consequence of this, and as he asserts that the things said about him are pure slander, an Imperial Iradé has been issued instructing the Ministry of Justice to recommend to those concerned that the complainants must bring their charges, whatever they may be, before the competent Tribunal in the regular way, and that if any suit is instituted against Moussa Bey it must be examined and decided with the greatest justice, equity, and dispatch.

This Iradé further provides that the Vilayet of Bitlis shall be instructed that, if there are any persons on the spot who bring forward claims against Moussa Bey, they must at once come to Constantinople, and that, if there are any destitute plaintiffs or if it is necessary to send witnesses, the expenses of the journey shall be advanced provisionally by the Treasury of the Province to be repaid by whoever shall be condemned.

This has been communicated to the Vilayet by telegram from the Grand Vizierate.



Copy of the Petition presented to His Majesty by Moussa Bey:—

"I, your humble servant, are one of those who from their youth up till now has shown fidelity and good service to your Imperial Majesty both in offices and in war, even to the point of risking life.

"A parcel of fabrications have been submitted to your Majesty making me out a brigand and a notorious rascal.

"I, your servant, while purposing to come to your Majesty's throne and submit my case and not to accept any one of these fabrications, immediately on your gracious message set out and came to take refuge in your Majesty's justice.

"Now, whoever has suffered any injustice, wrong, or oppression from your servant, let him come forward; I am ready to appeal to your Imperial justice. I venture, relying on your Majesty's clemency, to pray that, if I am found guilty of these fabricated charges I may be punished, but, if I am found innocent, that the authors of them may be punished for their calumnies and that any right may be made public.

"This, and all other matters depend on the Iradé and Firman of your Majesty.

"Your servant,

(Signed) "MIRZA BEY ZADE MOUSSA BEY."

Inclosure 2 in No. 97.

Consul Chermside to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, June 20, 1889.

I HAVE the honour, in confirmation of my telegram, to inform your Excellency that Moussa Bey, of Khuit, conducted by the Chief Secretary of the Bitlis Vilayet, left this city for Trebizond and Constantinople on the 6th June.

I inclose a statement as to an outrage on American missionaries six years ago by Moussa Bey, which formed the subject of a lengthy correspondence between the United States' Minister and the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE, Colonel.

Inclosure 3 in No. 97.

Statement respecting Outrage on American Missionaries in 1883 by Moussa Bey.

ON the 31st May, 1883, Rev. G. C. Knapp, and G. C. Raynolds, M.D., Missionaries of the American Board, stationed respectively at Bitlis and Van, were on their way from Mush to Bitlis.

While temporarily separated from their attendants they met three armed Kurds, who set upon them in the most wanton and unprovoked manner, inflicting numerous and severe sword cuts upon Dr. Raynolds, and after robbing them, left them bound and blindfolded among the bushes. A few of the articles taken were returned through the zaptiehs sent by the Government.

Afterwards, Mr. Knapp was confronted, in open Court, with a number of Kurds, and positively identified one of them as the man who inflicted the sword wounds.

This man proved to be Moussa Bey.

This case has been the subject of prolonged diplomatic correspondence between the United States' Minister at Constantinople and the Porte, which continued through at last three years, but no redress was ever secured from the outrage.

As Moussa Bey has just now gone on to Constantinople, and it is most desirable that he should meet his deserts, for the multiplied outrages of which he has been guilty, it seems as if it might be a favourable opportunity renewedly to press the demand for redress in this case, and thereby help forward any efforts made for his punishment in other quarters.

(Signed) G. C. RAYNOLDS.

Erzeroum, June 20, 1889.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 12.)

(Extract.)

Therapia, July 4, 1889.

MY attention has been called to the following paragraph in a speech made by the Earl of Carnarvon in the House of Lords on the 28th ultimo, speaking on the subject of the reported outrages in Armenia:—

“There was a case which had been cited far and wide, and which, as far as he knew, had not been denied. It was that of a young Armenian, 16 years of age, who was foolish enough to write a patriotic song. He did not publish it, he simply wrote it; but this young man was seized, and committed to one of those prisons where, after a few months, he died. The schoolmaster, too, from whose school this young man had been taken, and who had seen the poem, but had not in any way, as he understood, assisted in making it, was punished, he believed, by being sent into exile.”

As this statement is apt to convey an erroneous impression, I venture to state what really took place. The poem complained of was considered by the authorities to be of a seditious nature, and corrections made therein were found to be in the handwriting of the Armenian teacher in question. The matter was at the time reported at length to your Lordship. The sentence eventually passed on the teacher was one of exile for life, and in the early part of this year he was sent here.

In consequence of my unofficial representations to his Highness the Grand Vizier, the man was released in May last.

No. 99.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 12.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 8, 1889.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 2nd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum respecting outrages in Kurdistan; also a copy of a despatch from Mr. Devey to Colonel Chermeside reporting on the disturbed state of the Hekkiari district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 99.

Consul Chermeside to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Erzeroum, June 26, 1888.

WITH reference to the last paragraph of my despatch of the 4th June, I have the honour to inform your Excellency as follows:

With regard to the principal outrage in the Van district which, as reported, consisted of cattle-lifting, &c., Mr. Devey, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul, informs me, that the matter had been much misrepresented and exaggerated by Armenian villagers at the instigation of a Moslem local faction hostile to the Vali.

As regards the outrage by Kurds on Armenians at or near Hani, in the Diarbekir Vilayet, the Vali at once sent gendarmes in force under the Major of Gendarmerie.

The Kurds retired to the mountainous Nerjib district.

The Vali, therefore, applied for permission to use two companies of troops.

An order was at once sent from the Palace to dispatch a whole battalion forthwith.

Very often such dispatch of troops results in nothing, but many of the Turkish officers are very skilful in mountain warfare.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE, Colonel.

Inclosure 2 in No. 99.

*Mr. Devey to Consul Cherm-side.**Van, June 18, 1889.*

Sir,

A FRESH outbreak of crime is reported in Hekkiari Sandjak.

There have been several instances of petty theft and robbery on the road to Serail and the Persian frontier lately. The road from Van to Bashkaleh is also unsafe: it is said that two Armenians were lately shot near Khoshab by mistake. I will not, however, trouble you with detail, but merely add, that I hear that the road from Bashkaleh to Jelamerik, and one way thence to the frontier, are also disturbed, and that some of the nomads are again carrying off sheep in the Berwer, near Kochannes, and near Gevver.

With the return of summer and the nomads from the south, this state of things can only be expected; but what is more serious is, that it is said that the officials in some parts do not seriously endeavour to repress such crime. The Vali, however, assures me that he never hears of any such crime without immediately taking the necessary measures on behalf of public security and justice.

In the immediate neighbourhood of Van, on the road to Bitlis and to Argish round the lake, there is very little of this highway robbery; but Kerim, the Russian brigand, is said to be hovering somewhere near Argish and Pergri.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

No. 100.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 12.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 8, 1889.

IN your despatch of the 25th July of last year, your Lordship instructed me to ascertain whether it was true that the Porte was arranging to bring into the country about Van large bodies of Circassians, and to settle them there. At that time Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum was unable to discover this to be the case, but I have now received a despatch from him, copy of which is herewith inclosed, reporting that a number of Circassians now at Trebizond are to be established in the Van district. I have instructed Sir A. Sandison to make inquiries on this subject at the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 100.

Colonel Cherm-side to Sir W. White.

(Extract.)

Erzeroum, June 26, 1889.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 14th August, 1888, in answer to a telegram by your Excellency of the 12th August, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that there are at Trebizond a number of Circassian families, stated to be over 100, which it is proposed to establish in the Van district.

These families have passed the winter there.

No. 101.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, July 14.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 14, 1889.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch of the 1st instant on the subject of Moussa Bey's outrages on Armenians, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the story of the arrest of an Armenian deputation not only meets with an absolute denial in Turkish official circles, but is discredited even by prominent members of the Armenian community.

It appears that the latter are still uncertain as to whether the evidence of the witnesses in the case of Moussa Bey will be forthcoming.

The Porte assures me that the trial of this notorious Kurdish Chief will be publicly held at Constantinople, but the Court which is to try it has not been decided on by the Minister of Justice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 102.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 15.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 11, 1889.

IN my despatch of the 28th ultimo, I stated that I had telegraphed to Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van to inquire whether he had been able to ascertain anything with regard to the telegram sent by the Vali of Van to the Sublime Porte, stating that revolutionary papers had been discovered on the bodies of brigands proving them to be Political Agents. I have now the honour to transmit a copy of Mr. Devey's telegraphic reply, which reached me yesterday.

From this your Lordship will perceive that the papers which are said to be of a revolutionary nature have been communicated to Mr. Devey, and he considers the Vali's interpretation of them a coloured one.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 102.

Vice-Consul Devey to Sir W. White.

(Telegraphic.)

Van, July 9, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to report that two men carrying arms, schoolmasters by profession, who had arrived from Persia with the object of stirring up sedition, were killed in an encounter with the zaptiehs.

The seditious documents found on the men above mentioned have been handed to me by the Vali for communication to your Excellency. His Excellency the Vali's account of this incident which appeared in the Constantinople papers of the 25th June is, in my opinion, somewhat exaggerated.

Full information on this subject contained in my despatches to Colonel Chermiside, which should reach Constantinople before the end of the month.

No. 103.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 26.)

(Extract.)

Therapia, July 17, 1889.

ON receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 1st instant, inclosing a letter from M. Hagopian on the subject of the alleged arrest of the members of an Armenian deputation, I at once instructed Mr. Marinitch to make the necessary inquiries on the subject, and I have now the honour of inclosing a Memorandum by that gentleman giving the information he has been able to obtain.

From it your Lordship will perceive that no such incident has occurred lately, and it would seem that the circumstance which gave rise to these rumours may have been the arrest of certain Armenians at Van about a year ago.

As regards the charges against Moussa Bey, I am at a loss what to believe or to expect in the midst of conflicting statements as to the intention of the witnesses to appear in support of the charges against him, and assertions made that they will not come forward.

Inclosure in No. 10 3.

Memorandum by Mr. Marinitch on Lord Salisbury's Despatch No. 220 of July 1, 1889.

IN obedience to the instructions conveyed to me by Her Majesty's Ambassador, I made inquiries in order to ascertain whether M. Agopian's complaint was correct, and, in answer, I have the honour to report, on information obtained from trustworthy sources, that there is a misunderstanding in that gentleman's statements. Neither a single person of the Armenian deputation, who recently waited on the Grand Vizier to present a Petition on behalf of natives of Moush now residing at Constantinople, requesting the punishment of the notorious Kurdish Chief Moussa Bey, has been arrested by His Highness, nor is it contemplated for the present to exile to Tripoli any one of them.

The circumstance which must have given rise to such a report is probably that about one year ago the Turkish authorities at Van had arrested and banished some Armenians for alleged conspiracy against the Ottoman Government, but these people have been lately pardoned by the Sultan, and have already been allowed to return to their homes.

(Signed) MARINITCH.

Pera, July 10, 1889.

No. 104.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 26.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 22, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Vali of Bitlis has been removed, and Raouf Pasha, formerly Governor of Jerusalem, and recently Governor of Beirut, has been appointed in his place.

Aziz Pasha, former Vali of Yemen, has been appointed Vali of Beirut, and his Excellency Tahir Pasha has been appointed Vali of the Province of Mosul.

His Excellency Raouf Pasha enjoys a good reputation, and the appointment is a judicious one. At the time of his Excellency leaving Jerusalem, Mr. Consul Moore gave a favourable account of him in his despatch of the 6th May, of which a copy accompanied my despatch to your Lordship of the 24th May.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 105.

Saïd Pasha to Rustem Pasha.—(Communicated to the Marquis of Salisbury by Rustem Pasha, July 31.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Le 25 Juillet, 1889.

DANS les discours qu'il a prononcés à propos des affaires Arméniennes, Lord Salisbury avait parlé des bandes qui viennent du dehors commettre leurs méfaits sur le territoire Ottoman.

A l'appui de cette assertion, je crois devoir signaler à votre Excellence deux crimes commis dernièrement encore sur notre frontière dans des circonstances analogues. Une bande de vingt brigands dont sept de la tribu des Hamavends, et treize de la tribu des Menkiours, toutes deux de la Perse, ayant fait son apparition sur notre territoire, quatre détachements de gendarmes et de soldats Ottomans furent envoyés à sa poursuite. Dans une rencontre qui s'ensuivit avec le détachement placé sous le commandement du tabour Agha Osman Bey, le neveu de celui-ci fut tué par les bandits. Poursuivie jusqu'à la frontière par Osman Bey, cette bande se réfugia sur le territoire Persan; mais bientôt après, le fils de la victime, Saïd Bey, était également tué pendant qu'il effectuait la perception de la taxe des moutons dans ces parages. Les auteurs de ces méfaits trouvent un asile sur le territoire Persan.

Ces faits prouvent une nouvelle fois combien les accusations lancées contre nous sont injustes et combien Lord Salisbury est dans la vérité. En vue d'affermir sa Seigneurie dans cette conviction, je prie votre Excellence de vouloir bien lui faire part de ce qui précède.

Veillez, &c.
(Signé) SAÏD.

(Translation.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

July 25, 1889.

IN the speeches delivered by him relative to the affairs of Armenia, Lord Salisbury has spoken of bands coming from beyond the frontier to commit their misdeeds on Ottoman territory.

In support of this assertion, I think it right to report to your Excellency two crimes recently committed on our frontier under analogous circumstances. A band of twenty brigands, seven of whom belonged to the tribe of the Hamavends, and thirteen to the Menkiour tribe, both belonging to Persia, having appeared on our territory, four detachments of gendarmes and Turkish soldiers were sent in pursuit. In an encounter which followed with the detachments placed under the orders of the "tabour," Agha Osman Bey, the nephew of the latter, was killed by the brigands. Pursued as far as the frontier by Osman Bey, this band took refuge on Persian territory; but soon after, the son of the victim, Saïd Bey, was also killed while levying the sheep tax in this district. The authors of these misdeeds find an asylum on Persian territory.

These facts prove once more how unjust are the accusations made against us, and how right Lord Salisbury was. With a view to confirming his Lordship in this conviction, I beg your Excellency to be good enough to communicate to him the above.

Accept, &c.
(Signed) SAÏD.

Correspondence respecting the Condition of the
Populations in Asiatic Turkey: 1888-89.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Com-
mand of Her Majesty. August 1889.

(Signed) SAID.
Acceptd. &c.

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