

TURKEY. No. 6 (1891).

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

AFFAIRS IN THE EAST.

[In continuation of "Turkey No. 3 (1891):" C. 6319.]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
July 1891.*

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Further Correspondence respecting Affairs in the East.

[In continuation of "Turkey No. 3 (1891)": C. 6319.]

No. 1.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Athens, January 1, 1891.

PATRIARCHATE.

With reference to Sir William White's telegram to your Lordship of the 29th December,* M. Deligeorges demurs to the statement that the dispute between the Sublime Porte and the Greek Patriarch is caused by the action of "ill-advised Greek leaders." His Excellency argues that, as a matter of conscience, his Beatitude cannot renounce his claim as to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, that claim being that the Ottoman judicial and religious authorities shall not render this jurisdiction of no value by the attitude they assume towards it.

The abstention of the Hellenic Government from all interference, which has been complete, must not be taken to imply that the Patriarch's conduct is disapproved by them; and M. Deligeorges' language made it clear to me that no advice of any kind will be given to the Patriarch from Athens.

His Excellency said that, as the Chamber will adjourn to-morrow, he may possibly make a statement on the present position of this question before the Deputies separate for Christmas.

Repeated to Sir William White.

No. 2.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 2, 1891.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, December 26, 1890.

HER Majesty's Vice-Consul at Nisch mentioned to me a rumour that five Bulgarian refugees, named Tenieff, Velikoff, Ratkoff, Kazareff, and Mancheff, all residing at that place, were preparing an insurrection to break out next Easter at Kustenzil, in Bulgaria, but that their designs were frustrated by the Servian Government; also that they boast that they have only to show themselves across the border for the whole country to rise.

As regards the first point, I have been assured here that the Government know nothing of such an intended expedition, and could, therefore, not have taken the course alleged to prevent it; and, as regards the second point, it may be asked if it only requires their presence on Bulgarian territory to effect a change of régime in that country, why do these refugees continue to reside in Servia.

Mr. Macdonald has further reported to me a rumour that they are maintained by the Servian Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

No. 3.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 6, 1891.)

(Extract.)

Belgrade, December 31, 1890.

I AVAILED myself yesterday of an excellent opportunity of calling on General Grouitch, for the purpose of inquiring whether there was any foundation in the persistent rumour that Serbia was importing mountain artillery in the manner* indicated in the inclosed newspaper paragraph,† to which my attention had been on the previous day drawn, I said, by one of a party of four gentlemen from England (lately arrived here on business-connected with a very important industrial enterprise), with the remark that such rumours are calculated to greatly deter the British public from investing their money in this country.

General Grouitch replied that it was the misfortune of Serbia to be always credited with the most sinister motives, while Bulgaria could do anything she chose without incurring suspicion; and he instanced the amount of war material transmitted to that country from Austria-Hungary over Servian railways, which far exceeded the quantity brought to Serbia.

I rejoined that it was not the mere fact of the importation of war material, but the circumstance of the widely circulated rumour that Serbia endeavoured to disguise her action in this respect that created universal suspicion.

General Grouitch retorted that such suspicion was most unfounded, and he assured me in a very solemn manner, begging me to inform Her Majesty's Government, that beyond the Berdan rifles from Russia, with ammunition amounting to 200 cartridges per rifle (the war footing complement being 1,000 per rifle), no war materials have reached this country; and he desired it to be generally known that the rifles in question were not, as was generally supposed, received in gift from Russia.

The distribution of weapons to the militia, now said to be taking place, is consistent with the scheme of reviving the ancient Servian system of an armed population, and may lead to more or less adequate means of self-defence, but certainly not to an aggressive policy against neighbouring countries.

No. 4.

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

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 6, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the Greek churches in this capital have been reopened for public worship this morning, being Christmas Day of the Eastern Church.

I shall send your Lordship full details by post.

I have informed Sir E. Monson and Mr. Charles Hardinge of the above.

No. 5.

Consul Biliotti to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 6.)

(Telegraphic.)

Canea, Crete, January 6, 1891.

THE Orthodox Greek churches were opened this afternoon owing to communi-
cations from the Porte and the Patriarch.

No. 6.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 9.)

My Lord,

Bucharest, January 3, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a translation in French,‡ which has been published in the "Indépendance Roumaine," of the speech delivered by the Rou-

* As candles.

† Extract from the "Daily Graphic;" not printed.

‡ Not printed.

manian Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Chamber of Deputies on the foreign policy of Roumania.

On the 29th ultimo a debate took place in the Senate in which M. Marzesco moved an amendment to the Address to the effect that the Roumanian Government should make representations to the Austro-Hungarian Empire in order to obtain the cessation of the persecutions to which the Roumanians in Transylvania were subjected.

I have the honour to inclose a translation in French of this amendment, as well as a summary of the speech in reply made by M. Lahovary,* in which his Excellency declined to express an opinion as to the alliances which Roumania should make under certain circumstances. He referred to a charge which had been brought against him of having changed his opinions since he had become a Minister, and maintained that while he was in Opposition it was not possible for him to obtain accurate information of the situation, and that in his action as Minister for Foreign Affairs he was not to be bound by the speeches he had made in Opposition. He added that he was alone responsible for the conduct of foreign affairs, and that the difference between his views and those of M. Carp were very slight. The whole foreign policy of Roumania should be directed to avoid war, and if certain Powers had united to maintain peace, Roumania could not but rejoice, although she had not entered into any Treaty with them.

As regards M. Marzesco's amendment, M. Lahovary strongly deprecated the idea of intervention, which Roumania would strongly resent if applied to herself. The Roumanian Government would fulfil all their international engagements and would not interfere in the affairs of other countries or allow any interference with their own. It was owing to such a wise and patriotic policy, which had been pursued by all the former Governments, that Roumania had been able to maintain her individuality and become an independant and loyal State, and, in maintaining her self-respect, had secured the respect of all the world.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 7.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 9.)

(Extract.)

Bucharest, January 4, 1891.

THE question of the position of the Roumanian inhabitants of Hungary has lately been again attracting attention here, and the Opposition newspapers have been criticising the statements made by M. Lahovary in the Chamber and Senate, to which I had the honour to refer in my despatch of yesterday's date.

They have lately published an interview between M. Maioresco, the Minister of Public Instruction, and the correspondent of a German newspaper with the view of showing that a considerable difference of opinion exists among the Ministers on this subject, but they omit to state that the interview took place some time before M. Maioresco became a Minister.

No. 8.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 9.)

(Extract.)

Belgrade, January 4, 1891.

THE general tone of the Servian press is of a nature at the present moment which would lead one to suppose that this country was on the eve of a great political crisis, and that there existed an almost universal cry among the people for compliance with the demands made by an aggrieved mother, in the person of ex-Queen Nathalie, for access to her only child. While some newspapers affirm that the pledges given by the Regents and Government to ex-King Milan not to interfere with his Constitutional rights as guardian to the young King, must involve their speedy removal in view of the alleged popular clamour.

General Grouitch, with whom I spoke yesterday, informed me that the reports of an impending Ministerial crisis and those of the immediate return to this country of

* Not printed.

ex-King Milan in consequence, were utterly unfounded, and he assured me that up to the moment of the dispersal of the members of the Skuptchina for the Christmas holidays, no Government could have parted on better terms with the Legislature than did that over which he presides.

The projected law-giving power to dismiss corrupt Judges—though denounced by opponents as a measure devised for the sole purpose of installing political sympathizers—has passed a First Reading by a very large majority, and General Grouitch's announcement to the Chamber, before closing, that his demands for an indemnity, to be paid by Turkey to the widow of the Servian Vice-Consul at Pristina, had been met by a gift from the Sultan of 3,000*l.*, was received with applause.

No. 9.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 9.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 5, 1891.

I AM not in a position to report to your Lordship any favourable change in the dispute between the Œcumenical Patriarchate and the Sublime Porte; negotiations still continue and public worship has not been as yet resumed in the Greek churches (with the exception of two chapels, which are under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Jerusalem).

In the above paragraph I have employed purposely the word Patriarchate, though I notice in communications coming from Athens that Hellenic Ministers speak of the Patriarch as if personally engaged in these discussions.

His Beatitude resigned at the commencement of these disputes in the month of August 1890, his resignation was refused, and no Prelate has been canonically elected either as his successor or *locum tenens*; all the business is carried on only by the Ecclesiastical and Lay Councils, and the name and person of the Patriarch Dionysius V no longer appears since his resignation in any official document; that is why I have substituted in my Report the word Patriarchate to denominate collectively the various bodies now exercising control over the churches under the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

To-morrow is old Christmas-Day, and kept as the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord with great solemnity by the Eastern churches. It was therefore generally expected that in consideration of the grievous wrong done to Christians of the Eastern Greek Church by denying them public worship some means would be found by their Bishops to put an end to this evil.

This hope exists still, though I am unable to ascertain what foundation there may be for its realization.

The whole dispute resembles those which distracted our own country in the reigns of King John and Henry II, and it would require great historical research and special knowledge of such matters for any one to give an opinion on the merits of the Patriarchal claims; that is why it is not a question upon which any foreign Power can properly advise the Porte without incurring serious responsibility, especially since the Patriarchal authorities have had recourse to such a coercive measure as the denying of worship in their churches, and even of sacraments and other rites to their own faithful, and thus causing a degree of irritation which may at any moment produce a riot in one place or another inhabited by Greeks and cause the shedding of blood.

The negotiations of the Porte with the Patriarchate on the subject have continued ever since, and no impartial person can venture to say that the Porte has not shown a spirit of conciliation under considerable provocation. It has even conceded to the Greek Episcopate a primary jurisdiction in testamentary causes of adherents of their Church.

The Patriarchate was, however, not satisfied with this, and insisted that some word or explanation should be added in the Ministerial "Teskéré" making the ecclesiastical decisions *final* in such cases.

The presentation of this last demand was followed by an interview of delegates from the Patriarchate to the Palace, who had a long interview on the subject with Surreya Pasha, the Sultan's First Secretary, and M. de Nélidow sent likewise to his Excellency his First Dragoman recommending strongly the amicable termination of this dispute, and adding, on behalf of the Ambassador, that the reopening of the Orthodox churches for worship would please very much in Russia.

The Porte addressed a new "Teskéré" to the Patriarchate, a translation of which

I have the honour to inclose, in which the views of the Ottoman Government are clearly explained, and it now remains to be seen to what decision the Patriarchate will come as to the religious functions at this holy season.

I have sent a copy of this despatch to Sir E. Monson.

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

Inclosure in No. 9.

Vizirial Letter to Ministry of Public Worship (for Œcumenical Patriarchate).

(Traduction.)

Constantinople, le 18 Décembre, 1890 (v. s.).

PAR son "Teskéré" en date du 14 Djemaziul-ewel, 1308, votre Excellence m'avait transmis le "takrir" qu'elle a reçu de sa Sainteté le Patriarche en réponse aux dernières communications qui lui avaient été faites relativement aux affaires du Patriarcat Grec.

Le Conseil des Ministres vient d'examiner le "takrir" ainsi que la requête soumise sur le même sujet par le Conseil Mixte à Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, requête que d'ordre Souverain le Secrétariat du Palais Impérial a communiquée à la Sublime Porte.

Par ces pièces, le Patriarcat expose la nécessité d'établir que "les sentences rendues par les Conseils Ecclésiastiques en matière de mariage, de divorce, de dot, de pension alimentaire et de testament doivent être exécutées comme définitives et sans immixtion d'aucune part, et considérant que les testaments confirmés par les chefs religieux seront considérés valables par les Tribunaux de l'État, il demande à ce que les contestations qui surgiraient sur la validité de tels actes soient, à l'instar des autres contestations résultant de testaments, jugés par les Conseils susmentionnés.

Les affaires d'ordre religieux jugées par les Conseils Métropolitains sont toujours mises à exécution sans ingérence de la part des Tribunaux de l'État.

Les chefs religieux sont libres d'exercer leurs fonctions sacerdotales en matière de mariage et de divorce et les procès de dot et de pension alimentaire qui en résultent sont jugés par le Conseil Mixte du Patriarcat, conformément à son règlement spécial.

Du moment que les décisions rendues soit à Constantinople par le Conseil Mixte, soit en province par les Conseils Métropolitains dans des questions de pensions alimentaires sont, ainsi qu'il a été précédemment dit, exécutées par les Bureaux Exécutifs, il est tout naturel que celles qui sont rendues par les dits Conseils dans des procès de dot et à des propriétés Mulks. Seulement si un Chrétien a recours au Gouvernement pour se plaindre d'une décision rendue à son égard celle-ci, si celle est de première instance, sera référée au Patriarcat pour être révisée et la décision définitive qui interviendra sera exécutée. Quant à la question des testaments, elle est, comme il a été expliqué dans une réponse antérieure, d'ordre civil et soumises aux lois du pays, et bien que les testaments confirmés par le Patriarche, par un Métropolitain, ou un Evêque soient reconnus valables par les Tribunaux de l'État et que le jugement des contestations qui en découlent soit, conformément aux décisions précédentes, déferé aux Conseils du Patriarcat et des Métropolitains, ces actes devant être cependant, d'après l'Article 12 du Chapitre du Règlement du Patriarcat relatif aux attributions du Conseil Permanent Mixte, conformes aux lois et règlements de l'Empire, cette question qui exige une compétence légale, ne peut être abandonnée d'une manière absolue aux chefs religieux en dehors de leur compétence. Ainsi, lorsque le testament d'un Chrétien porte sur des Vacoufs, des terres Miriés ou, sur un bien ou sur une propriété contestés par un tiers, le fait seul d'être légalisé par le Patriarche ou par un Métropolitain ou un Evêque ne saurait suffire à faire admettre cet acte sans objections.

De même les procès civils qui en découlent doivent être jugés par les Tribunaux de l'État, soit qu'ils n'intéressent que des sujets Ottomans, soit que l'une des parties appartienne à une nationalité étrangère. Dès lors seront seules valables les parties de ces testaments comprenant des biens meubles et immeubles qui seraient reconnus légalement admissibles. Dans le cas où de tels testaments auraient trait à l'héritage, le jugement des contestations qui surgiraient entre héritiers pourra, conformément au Firman des Réformes promulgué en 1272 être référé du consentement des intéressés, aux Conseils du Patriarcat et des sièges Métropolitains, et les décisions qui en interviendraient seront considérées exécutoires par le Gouvernement, à l'instar des sentences analogues.

En conséquence il a été décidé d'engager sa Sainteté le Patriarche à agir conformément aux éclaircissements qui précèdent ainsi qu'aux résolutions et conseils qui lui ont été déjà communiqués.

Votre Excellence voudra bien porter cette décision à la connaissance du Patriarche.

(Translation.)

Constantinople, December 18, 1890 (v. s.)

WITH your "Teskéré" of the 14th Djemaziul-ewel, 1308, your Excellency transmitted to me the "takrir" which you had received from his Holiness the Patriarch in reply to the most recent communications which had been made to him concerning the affairs of the Greek Patriarchate.

The Council of Ministers has examined the "takrir" as well as the request submitted on the same subject by the Mixed Council to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, a request which, by order of His Majesty, the Secretariate of the Imperial Palace has communicated to the Sublime Porte.

In these documents, the Patriarchate sets forth the necessity of laying down that "sentences delivered by the Ecclesiastical Councils as regards marriage, divorce, dowry, alimony, and wills, should be carried out as final and without interference from any quarter, and whereas wills confirmed by the religious authorities will be deemed valid by the Tribunals of the State, it asks that claims which may arise as to their validity may, in the same manner as other claims relative to wills, be decided by the above-mentioned Councils.

Cases connected with religion decided by the Metropolitan Councils are always carried out without interference on the part of the State Tribunals.

The religious authorities are free to exercise their priestly functions with regard to marriages and divorce, and legal proceedings resulting therefrom in questions of dowry and alimony are decided by the Mixed Council of the Patriarchate, in accordance with its special regulations.

As decisions given either at Constantinople by the Mixed Council or in the provinces by the Metropolitan Councils in questions of alimony are, as above stated, carried out by the Executive, it is quite natural that those given by the said Councils in questions of dowry should also be so carried out in so far as they refer to personalty and "Mulk" lands. But if a Christian complains to Government of a sentence pronounced in his case, such sentence, if it is one of first instance, shall be referred to the Patriarchate for revision, and the ultimate decision taken shall be carried out. As regards the question of wills, it is one, as explained in a previous reply, of a civil nature and subject to the laws of the country, and although wills confirmed by the Patriarch, by a Metropolitan, or by a Bishop, are recognized as valid by the State Tribunals, and the adjudication of claims connected with them is, in conformity with previous decisions, relegated to the Councils of the Patriarchate and the Metropolitans, nevertheless, as these deeds must, in accordance with Article 12 of the Regulations of the Patriarchate dealing with the functions of the Permanent Mixed Council, conform to the Laws and Regulations of the Empire, this question, which requires legal knowledge, cannot be handed over absolutely to the religious authorities so far as it is beyond their jurisdiction. Thus, if the will of a Christian deals with Vacoufs, "Mirié" lands, or with property or lands contested by a third party, the mere fact of its being legalized by the Patriarch, or by a Metropolitan or a Bishop, will not be sufficient to establish its validity without discussion.

In the same way, civil suits arising therefrom must be tried by the State Tribunals, whether they concern Ottoman subjects only, or whether one of the parties is of foreign nationality. Such portions of these wills only will therefore be valid as deal with real and personal estate which would be legally recognized as admissible. In cases where such wills refer to inheritances, the adjudication of the claims which may arise between the heirs may, in conformity with the Firman of Reforms promulgated in 1272, be relegated, by consent of the parties interested, to the Councils of the Patriarchate and of the Metropolitan Sees, and the decisions arrived at will be put in force by the Government, in the same manner as analogous sentences.

It has therefore been decided to invite His Holiness the Patriarch to act in conformity with the above explanations, as well as with the resolutions and advice which have already been communicated to him.

Your Excellency will be good enough to bring this decision to the knowledge of the Patriarch.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 12.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 6, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a translation of a document which has appeared this morning in a special edition of a Greek local paper, announcing the termination of the Greek Patriarchal dispute and the opening of the churches.

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

Inclosure in No. 10.

Extract from Special Supplement to "Constantinopolis" of December 24, 1890 (January 5, 1891).

(Translation.)

WITH great joy and sincere gratitude to His Majesty, our much beloved Sovereign Sultan, Abdul Hamid, and his Ministers, we beg to announce the pleasing news to all the Orthodox people that this evening, under the sanction of His Imperial Majesty, the question of the privileges has been favourably settled, and that His Holiness the Œcumenical Patriarch withdrew his resignation, considering the complete removal of the reasons for such resignation. Consequently, the great holiday of to-morrow will be celebrated with exceptional splendour and pomp in all parts of the Empire, and the churches which have been closed for three months will be opened, the news of this fact having been telegraphed to all the dioceses under the Œcumenical Throne.

We beg, therefore, to communicate these tidings joyful from every point of view by this Special Supplement at midnight, in order that the Orthodox people, hearing of the settlement of this question, may hasten to attend Divine Service, and celebrate with pomp and joy the Divine Incarnation of Jesus Christ, and may at the same time offer up prayers for the precious life of His Imperial Majesty our august Sovereign.

The favourable settlement of this question has been arrived at as the result of the discussion which took place to-day with the Minister of Justice, upon whom, as we announced in our daily issue, the Archbishops of Heraclea and Derkou, accompanied by M. Yenidounia, member of the Mixed Council, had attended. On the occasion of this deliberation, which was prolonged up to 1 o'clock in the night (Turkish), were also present some Greek Notaries in the service of the Imperial Government, such as Sartinski Pasha, Antopulo Pasha, Photiades Bey, Constantine Carathéodory Bey, and others.

The Director of Religious Affairs, his Excellency Ziver Bey, proceeded to the Phanar, and accompanied the said Archbishop and Yenidounia Effendi to the Minister of Justice. This mission from the Patriarchate returned to the Phanar at 2 o'clock in the night (Turkish), where the other members of the Holy Synod and the Mixed Council were awaiting their return. As soon as the favourable settlement of the privileges question was announced, settlement which was heard with pleasure by both bodies, a *procès-verbal* was at once drawn up and signed by all the members of the said bodies. This *procès-verbal* was at once (3 o'clock) communicated to the Patriarch at Macrikuni. In this *procès-verbal* both bodies inform His Holiness that the reasons of his resignation, for which the doors of the Orthodox churches were closed, having been removed, it behoved him to authorize his representative at the Patriarchate to announce everywhere in the capital and in the provinces the good tidings, and the order to immediately open the churches, celebrate Divine Service with all pomp, and offer up prayers for the long life of His Imperial Majesty, to whose generous initiative and will the favourable settlement of this question is due.

On our side we give these good tidings to all our co-religionists, and wish that our Orthodox people may ever celebrate joyfully the Divine Incarnation of our Saviour under the paternal and auspicious protection of our magnanimous Sovereign. This news will be soon brought to the knowledge of the Orthodox people by the tolling of the bells of the Orthodox churches.

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

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 9, 1891.

WITH reference to my despatch to your Lordship of the 6th instant, I have the honour to inclose herewith a translation of a special supplement of the Greek paper "Neologos," reporting the manner in which a settlement has been arrived at on the various points in dispute between the Œcumenical Patriarchate and the Porte respecting the privileges of the former.

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

Inclosure in No. 11.

Special Supplement to the "Neologos" of December 24, 1890 (January 5, 1891).

(Translation.)

THE "Neologos" relates what took place at the Ministry of Justice and how the final question about wills which remained unsettled was decided. It recapitulates the points at issue and gives the decision come to on each point.

1. Question of alimony.
2. Wills.
3. Schools.
4. Taking of oath by and special jurisdiction of the clergy.
5. Bulgarian Berats.

1. The question of alimony was decided as follows :—

If one of the parties complains that the amount to be paid for alimony is excessive, the Patriarchate will be called upon to re-examine the question, and when it has given a final decision the Executive authorities will put it in execution without any further appeal being allowed.

2. *Wills.*—That Christian wills shall not be submitted to any judicial examination or confirmation, but that they shall be accepted before any Court of Justice, when they are made in the proper legal form, viz., when they bear the sanction of the Patriarch, Metropolitans, or their representatives, and that the lawsuits arising from wills shall be amenable to the jurisdiction of the Mixed Council at Constantinople and the Metropolitan Councils in the provinces, and that the execution of such decision is obligatory.

When one party is in prison and cannot pay, the other party is not bound to pay the alimony money usually paid by creditors to debtors in prison. This matter shall form the subject of a future Article.

3. *Schools.*—The programmes of every school are to be approved of by the Patriarch or the Metropolitans, and likewise the diplomas and certificates of school-masters and school-mistresses. But as it is necessary that the same should also be known to the Government, when the Inspector or Director of Public Instruction, in examining the methods of teaching in schools, finds that something wrong is being taught, or that a school-master or mistress is without certificate or diploma, they should arrange for the Patriarch or Metropolitan, and by means of such latter such teaching should be prohibited, and the school-master or mistress changed.

4. *Taking of the Oath and Special Jurisdiction of Priests.*—That the priests shall be sworn in the Patriarchate or the Metropolitanates in conformity with their religious belief, and a Special Act of law was enacted to this effect.

As regards the arrest and judgment on the clergy, when the question is about debt, they shall be arrested in the Patriarchate and Metropolitanates as before. This rule is not to be observed in penal cases. The summons issued by the "Juge d'Instruction" and the Tribunal, when at Constantinople, shall be communicated through the Patriarchate, and in the provinces through the Metropolitanates, and the latter, on receipt of summons, are bound to hand over the accused to the authorities. In case this is not done, and the priest for whom the summons is issued does not obey, the prescription of the law for disobeying the summons shall be carried out, and until such person is proved guilty, and the penalty pronounced, the priest shall not be kept

in prison, as is done for the laity, but in a special apartment in the Court building, as their sacred character requires, viz., in the apartments reserved for persons of distinction. When his guilt is proved, in case of simple misdemeanour, where his sacerdotal character is not taken away, he shall undergo the penalty of imprisonment pronounced in the Patriarchate or the Metropolitanate; but when he is accused of a crime he shall be kept in the special apartment till conviction, when he shall be deprived of his sacred character, and undergo his penalty in a common prison.

In case martial law is proclaimed in some part of the Ottoman Empire, in consequence of sedition and breach of public peace, the criminals are to be tried by courts-martial, but the latter are bound to observe the above rule in the case of priests.

5. *Bulgarian Berats*.—A change of costume shall be recommended as before to the Exarch.

No. 12.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 17.)

(Extract.)

Athens, January 10, 1891.

SIR W. WHITE has been so good as to send to me a copy of his despatch to your Lordship of the 5th instant, with its inclosure, respecting the questions which have been at issue between the Sublime Porte and the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

It is perfectly true, as his Excellency states in that despatch, that the Hellenic Ministers have persistently spoken of the second party to the dispute as the Patriarch himself, although his Beatitude resigned five months ago, and has had no canonically appointed successor or *locum tenens*; and I suppose that they have adopted this language advisedly, amongst other reasons, because they wish to fix upon the Patriarch individually the chief responsibility for the attitude he has assumed, and to give him the credit of whatever may happen in consequence. At any rate, the manner in which M. Deligeorges recently spoke to me implied that, although the Hellenic Government think that his Beatitude could not have acted otherwise than he has done, his conduct has been adopted *proprio motu*, and is not due to the initiative or inspiration of any other person whatever.

The news, which became public in the course of the day, the Greek Christmas, caused intense satisfaction in Athens.

No. 13.

Mr. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 24.)

(Extract.)

Cettinje, January 16, 1891.

I REGRET to have to report that a very shocking outrage was perpetrated in the neighbourhood of Podgoritza at the end of last month.

Two Mussulman Albanians of Dinosh, who had crossed the frontier to attend the market at Podgoritza, were killed on Montenegrin territory by Montenegrins while on their way to their homes.

The murdered men were found not only pierced by bullets, but also decapitated and horribly mutilated. One of them had marks on his wrists as if he had been tightly bound with cords, and it is very possible that they were seized just outside Podgoritza, taken a short distance, and then robbed and murdered.

The Turkish Vice-Consul at Podgoritza reported the murder to the Captain of the district, who made no attempt to deny it, but said that the Albanians had probably come to rob, and that the frontier guards (a body of men existing solely in the imagination of the Captain) had challenged them three times, and had only fired when they took to flight.

The excuse is a singularly feeble one, as the men have both been shot through the chest, which would not have been the case had they been running away; and, moreover, even if they were robbers, which is not proved, the mutilation of the bodies would not be justified.

The Turkish Legation has as yet received no satisfaction from the Montenegrin Government, but the Minister tells me that he is awaiting some further details, and that when he receives them he will make the strongest remonstrances.

Mr. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 27.)

My Lord,

Cettinje, January 18, 1891.

IN my despatch of the 18th October last,* I had the honour to report to your Lordship that a Mixed Commission was engaged in delimitating the pasture-lands lying between Sekular, on the Montenegrin side, and Rugova, on the Turkish side of the frontier.

The Commission has now concluded its labours, and an arrangement has been come to which I am told is considered satisfactory.

The question of the rents due to the Gussinje land-owners, which is one of considerable importance, has not yet been settled, nor has the Commission alluded to in my above-mentioned despatch even met to discuss it. Till this question is settled the Montenegrins of Sekular will not be allowed to take possession of the pasture-lands assigned to them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 29.)

(Extract.)

Belgrade, January 24, 1891.

I AM privately informed by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Nisch, who has lately visited the extreme south-west districts of Servia, of evidence there of a continuous migration of Serbo-Christians across the border from the neighbourhood of the Turkish towns of Ipek and Djakova, and that this movement, he was told by a person in authority, has amounted to about 200 families per annum ever since the district was annexed to Servia by the Treaty of Berlin, with the result that all the villages which were then abandoned by the Mussulman population are now in course of being occupied by Christians.

Mr. Macdonald calculates from the number of old villages now repeopled and villages newly built that this immigration must, in the aggregate, far exceed the amount admitted to him by the Servian local authorities.

The districts thus populated are said to be the most fertile in Servia.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 6.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, February 3, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, in translation, the Agreement signed, on the one hand by King Milan, the day after his abdication, and, on the other hand, by the three Regents regulating the authority of His Majesty over his son, King Alexander, whilst a minor.

I am told that this document was so long kept secret in consequence of the nature of the designation given to ex-Queen Nathalie as King Milan's "divorced wife," and that it was finally resolved to publish the document in order to correct the erroneous and in many cases malevolent surmises as to its contents.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

Inclosure in No. 16.

Agreement between King Milan and the Regency on the occasion of the former's Abdication.

(Translation.)

HIS Majesty King Milan I and the Royal Regents, appointed in conformity with Article 70 of the Constitution, with the object of determining their mutual relations

* "Turkey No. 3 (1891)," No. 87, p. 51.

and arranging all questions arising from King Milan's act of abdication on the 22nd of the same month, by which the Royal power was conferred on King Alexander I, have by common agreement embodied the following :—

1. The Royal Regents consider it their duty to place on record that the abdication of King Milan I was voluntary and effected on his own initiative despite every endeavour of the undersigned Regents to dissuade him from such a course and convince him of the necessity of the retention of the throne of his illustrious predecessors, by which he would have still more benefited his beloved country, and would have added fresh lustre to the throne by his great experience of State affairs, as well as by the brilliant talents which providence has so lavishly bestowed upon him.

The Royal Regents cannot enter on their duties without expressing their deep regret at the failure of all their attempts to prevail on His Majesty to reconsider the reasons which have led to his abdication.

2. Matters being thus, the Royal Regents take note of the declaration of His Majesty King Milan that he reserves to himself the right of residing in Serbia, of departing from Serbia, and of returning to his country as he may deem necessary or convenient, and especially of Article 72 of the Constitution which confers on him the right of supervision over the education of his son, the young King.

3. In order to provide against any possible future contingency inconsistent with the new position of King Milan, His Majesty considers it incumbent on him to assure the Royal Regents that he foregoes all interference in State affairs in Serbia, and will, whether residing in the country or out of it, set an example of submission to its laws.

4. On their side, the Royal Regents bind themselves, should King Milan elect to reside in Serbia, to assure to him all Royal honours consistently with those due to the ruling King, King Milan binding himself, on his side, to assume, when abroad, the title of Count of Takovo.

5. At the request of King Milan, the Royal Regents will place at the disposal of His Majesty an official Secretary and a military officer, the latter to act as Aide-de-camp.

6. The Royal Regents take note of the desire of King Milan that the Court Chamberlain, the Aide-de-camp, and orderly officers appointed by Royal Decree of the 21st of the present month, to attend on His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, be retained in order to attend on His Majesty the young King.

7. His Majesty King Milan gives notice that, in conformity to Article 72 of the Constitution, he shall exercise exclusive supervision over the young King's education, and that he will strenuously oppose any interference, whether direct or indirect, on the part of his divorced wife; it being calculated to injuriously affect the young King's education.

The Royal Regents, with due regard to these wishes of King Milan, propose that the young King shall, accompanied by his tutor, pay one or more visits, yearly, during feast days or vacations, to his mother, at any place abroad agreed upon by King Milan and the Regents.

His Majesty King Milan gives notice of his acceptance of the above proposal made by the Regents.

8. His Majesty King Milan acquaints the Royal Regents with the Royal Act appointing, simultaneously with the transfer of the Royal power to his successor, the Councillors of State, Dr. Nicholas Krstitch and Dr. Lazar Dokitch as tutors to the young King, with the duty of taking over the management of the Civil List and all privileges devolving on him as King.

The administrators of the above-mentioned revenue shall carry out the instructions connected therewith which they may receive from King Milan, with the approval of the Regents.

The Regents, while taking note of this Act and recognizing the obligation of keeping up the position of the ex-King, agreed, in accord with the Administrators of the Civil List of King Alexander I, to place at the disposal of King Milan the sum of 30,000 fr. monthly, at any bank which he may name.

Done at the Royal Palace of Belgrade, the 23rd February, 1889 (o. s.).

(Signed)

MILAN.

K. S. PROTITCH.

GOV. RISTICH.

J. BELI-MARKOVITCH.

No. 17.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 11.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, February 8, 1891.

I LEARN from M. Dimitroff, the Bulgarian Agent, that the Servian Government have officially requested him to notify to his Government that they have selected Delegates to a Mixed Commission to be appointed for the purpose of settling their long-pending frontier question with Bulgaria, and inviting that Government to act in like manner, so as to enable the Commissioners of both countries to meet at Tzaribrod on the 13th instant (N. S.).

The step thus at last decided on by Servia may be looked upon as a symptom of better feeling and greater independence of action towards Bulgaria than has prevailed here since the advent of the present Government to power.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

No. 18.

Consul-General Blunt to Sir W. White.—(Received at the Foreign Office, February 14.)

Sir,

Salonica, February 5, 1891.

WITH reference to the lawlessness which it is alleged continues to reign on the Serbo-Albanian frontier (*vide* "Times" of the 17th January, 1891), I have received a letter from a trustworthy source in the Vilayet of Cossova, in which the writer states, in reply to my inquiries, that he had not heard of the grave outrages described in the "Times," and has not been able to procure any information thereon. I regret that I am equally unable at present to test the truth of these alleged outrages, and that the Military Pasha of Salonica whose command extends to the Servian frontier is not at all communicative.

Some of the officials of the Salonica-Uscup-Mitrovitza Railway whom I have questioned on the subject told me that they had only heard of cattle-raids from both sides of the frontier, and that these raids were less frequent this winter owing to the intense cold which prevails, and the abundance of snow which has fallen in North Albania.

In connection with the situation on the Turco-Montenegrin frontier the block-houses which have recently been constructed by the Turkish military authorities will, it is hoped, be of service for preventing the recurrence of affrays between the Albanian and Montenegrin mountaineers.

The construction of such block-houses was also recommended by the Joint Commission instituted about two years ago by the Turkish and Servian Governments, to report upon the best means for checking cattle-raids and maintaining order on their frontier, but I have no knowledge of any further action of either Government in this matter.

Order and tranquillity continue to reign on the Turco-Bulgarian frontier, and Galib Pasha ascribes this satisfactory state of things to the good understanding between the authorities on both sides.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 19.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 14.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, February 10, 1891.

REFERRING to Mr. Blunt's despatch to your Lordship of the 5th instant, which reached me under flying seal, it appears that the disturbances reported in the "Times" of the 7th instant as having occurred on the Serbo-Albanian frontier were first published by the Servian Government organ "Odjek," and are based on official reports from the Servian Vice-Consul at Pristina, who furnished all the details to his Government, such as the attack by 2,000 armed Arnauts on the town of

Drenitza, the flight of the Turkish authorities, and the destruction by fire of the Government buildings.

Subsequent accounts received by the Servian Government describe the place as restored to order.

If these facts be true, they would account for the Pasha's reticence with Mr. Blunt.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

No. 20.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 16.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, February 16, 1891, 12:30 P.M.*
"TIMES" leading article which appeared in issue of the 11th instant is completely misleading, and likely to affect seriously all British undertakings in this country, of which the situation is undergoing marked improvement with every prospect of continuance of peace.

Might not the substance of this telegram become generally known?

No. 21.

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

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, February 18, 1891.*
WITH reference to the recent incursion of Albanians across the Montenegrin frontier, I have the honour to report that on my receiving Mr. W. Baring's telegram of the 16th instant to your Lordship,* I at once communicated with the Grand Vizier. His Highness had also received a Report from the Ottoman Representative at Cetinje, and took immediate steps to cause the necessary reinforcements to be sent to the frontier. I am happy to learn, from Mr. Baring's later telegram of the 17th instant,† that no time has been lost in carrying out the orders of the Grand Vizier.

No. 22.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 20.)

My Lord, *Sophia, February 11, 1891.*
DISPUTES having frequently arisen on the Servo-Bulgarian frontier connected with questions of customs and taxation on farms situated partly on each side of the frontier, the Bulgarian and Servian Governments have agreed to the settlement of all such disputes by a Mixed Commission, whose duty will be to endeavour to arrange an amicable exchange of lands, and to prevent the possibility of future incidents of this kind by the clear demarcation of the frontier.

With this object in view, M. Péeff and M. Kouvatheff have been appointed Delegates for the Bulgarian Government, and left yesterday for the frontier.

I have forwarded a copy of this despatch to Mr. St. John.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.

No. 23.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 20.)

My Lord, *Sophia, February 12, 1891.*
I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I am informed by M. Grecoff that M. Steitch, the Servian Agent, having made inquiries on behalf of his Government as to whether the Bulgarian Government would be willing to resume at Belgrade

* See No. 25, p. 16.

† See No. 29, p. 19.

the negotiations for a Commercial Treaty, interrupted more than a year ago by the impossibility of agreement between the Delegates upon the classification of merchandize, he at once expressed the readiness of the Bulgarian Government to do so, and his reply has been referred to Belgrade.

The appointment of Delegates by the Bulgarian Government has not yet been made.

In commenting upon this advance made by the Servian Government, his Excellency remarked that it was all the more satisfactory in view of its friendly nature, and that it had given considerable satisfaction to the Bulgarian Government, as a presage of more friendly relations between the two neighbouring States, and as a refutation of the hostile intentions of which the Servian Government had been recently suspected.

I have forwarded a copy of this despatch to Her Majesty's Minister at Belgrade.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.

No. 24.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 20.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 14, 1891.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 5th ultimo and to previous correspondence on the subject of the discussion between the Sublime Porte and the Œcumenical Patriarchate, which made so much noise at the time, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a translation, which appeared in the semi-official "Tarik" of the 7th instant, of a Circular addressed by the Grand Vizier to the Governors-General of the provinces, dated the 22nd January, 1891 (o. s.), and communicated to the Patriarchate.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Circular of the Grand Vizier.

(Translation.)

22 Jemazi-ul-Akhir, 1308 (January 22, 1891, o. s.).

IN conformity with the examinations and deliberations which took place several times on the "Takirs" sent by the Greek Patriarchate, requesting the preservation and continuation of the religious privileges granted to it *ab antiquo*, such as the carrying into execution as before of the sentences pronounced by the Patriarchate on suits about alimony resulting out of the acts of marriage and divorce, as well as suits relating to questions of dowry and *trousseau*, and, further, such as questions of wills, the superintendence of schools, the administration of oaths to the clergy, and the mode of arrest and trial by the latter in criminal cases, and pursuant to the decisions communicated at different times through the Ministry of Justice and Public Worship to the said Patriarchate, in confirmation of the privileges with which it is invested by virtue of Imperial Berats, it has been decided at the Council of Ministers and sanctioned by Imperial Iradé, as follows:—

Since questions of alimony arising out of acts of marriage and divorce have always been examined by the Patriarchate at Constantinople and by the Bishoprics in the provinces, the old system will be followed for the future, and the decision in such cases given by the Patriarchate in Constantinople and by the Bishoprics in the provinces regarding the appreciation of the amount to be paid as alimony will be carried out, and if the party condemned complains at the time of execution against such decision, stating that the amount is too heavy for him, such appeal shall be referred to the Patriarchate again for a second examination; but the decision pronounced after such second examination shall be final, and the executive authorities shall have to carry it out. Moreover, when it becomes necessary to imprison the defendant in execution of such sentences, according to the Law on executions, the plaintiff shall be exempted from paying the daily allowance granted to such prisoners by the said Law.

As to the matter of wills, according to Article 3 of the Regulations regarding the attributions of the members of the Mixed Council of the Patriarchate, the exami-

nation and settlement of such matters being within the competence of the Council, when the will of a Christian who has heirs of age or under age is found confirmed by the Patriarch, Archbishop, or Bishop, it shall be considered valid by the Court, and legacies, with the exception of Vakouf or Crown property, shall be delivered to the legatees without any further interference; and likewise the disputes which may arise between heirs and on the part of guardians or minors concerning the will or the validity of the same shall, in conformity with Article 3 of the aforesaid Regulations, be examined in Constantinople by the Mixed Council of the Patriarchate and in the provinces by the Bishoprics, and the sentences pronounced on such matters by those authorities shall be carried out by the executive authorities. As, however, this rule applies exclusively to the Orthodox community, when some of the heirs belong to another community, and where a will which is confirmed has a bearing on Crown or Vakouf property, or upon property real, or personal, which is in dispute with a third party among Ottoman subjects or foreigners, the examination of suits arising out of such wills belongs to the ordinary Tribunals of the Empire.

The programmes of schools shall be drawn up and confirmed by the Patriarch and the Bishoprics, as well as the certificates and diplomas of the teachers, male and female; but as such programmes and diplomas should be known to the Government, the officials of the Ministry of Public Instruction shall inquire into the teaching of the schools, and if they find that the teaching is harmful and that the teachers, male and female, are not furnished with the necessary certificates, the Ministry of Public Instruction at Constantinople and the local authorities in the provinces shall enter into communications on the subject with the Patriarchate and the Bishoprics, in order to stop, by means of the latter, the harmful teaching, and to have such teachers changed.

Since the time when the Law of Criminal Procedure was established, the refusal of the clergy to take the oath like other people when brought forward as witnesses in criminal matters has put difficulties in the way of the administration of justice. The priests, therefore, whose oath is necessary as well in civil as in criminal cases, shall henceforth have the oath administered to them, according to the requirements of their religion, at the Patriarchate or at the Episcopal Palace, and on this point the clause inserted in the Law shall be complied with.

As regards the arrest and trial of priests, in cases of debt the priests have hitherto always been imprisoned at the Patriarchate in Constantinople and at the Bishop's Palace in the provinces. This rule shall continue to be observed. When priests are submitted to an interrogatory, or put on their trial at the Court of Justice in criminal cases, the procedure shall be as follows:—

The summons to a priest, either from the "Juge d'Instruction" or from a Tribunal, shall be served on him through the Patriarchate at Constantinople and through the Archbishop or Bishop in the provinces, and the latter, as soon as they receive such summons, shall immediately serve it on the accused party. Should they fail to do so, or should the priest not obey such summons, he shall be dealt with according to the requirements of the law. Pending the proof of his guilt, and the decision of the Court as to his penalty, he shall be confined, not in the common prison, but in a separate room suitable to his office, and reserved for persons of rank. If his offence belonging to the category of correctional cases it is not found necessary to unfrock him, he shall undergo his imprisonment either at the Patriarchate or the Metropolitan Palace; but when he is accused of a criminal offence, pending his examination he shall be kept in the room appointed by the Government; but after sentence has been pronounced, and he has been unfrocked, he shall undergo his term of imprisonment like an ordinary convict in the common prison.

When in any part of the Empire, in consequence of sedition or of a disturbance of the public peace, a state of siege is proclaimed, pending the quelling of such sedition all criminals without distinction shall be tried by court-martial: however, with regard to the arrest and imprisonment of clergy, the above Rules must be observed.

You are therefore required to act in conformity with the Rules above stated.

Mr. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 24.)

My Lord,

Cettinje, February 16, 1891.

THE Governor of the Coast Districts, M. Simo Popovich, telegraphed about midnight that 1,200 Albanians belonging to the Catholic clans had crossed the Montenegrin frontier near Dulcigno. He asked for reinforcements, and added that the troops at his disposal were insufficiently provided with cartridges. Orders were telegraphed to the Commanders of the Vir Bazar and Tzrmnitza battalions to proceed at once to Dulcigno, where I hear they arrived in the course of the afternoon.

During the day a very considerable amount of excitement has prevailed here.

The Turkish Minister, on receiving the above information, telegraphed to the Vali of Scutari urging him to take measures to check the movement, and also telegraphed to the Sultan, to the Porte, and to the Turkish Consul at Dulcigno. The latter sent a series of telegrams in the course of the day, which Tewfik Bey has been good enough to show me.

He confirms the news respecting an Albanian movement, says that there is much excitement at Dulcigno, and that every available man has been sent to repel the attack. Fighting went on from the early morning to well into the afternoon, when he reported that the Albanians had retired, and that one wounded Montenegrin had been brought into Dulcigno.

The losses on both sides appear to have been insignificant: two Albanians are said to have been killed, and two Montenegrins wounded. The Vir Bazar and Tzrmnitza battalions apparently took no part in the engagement, as when they reached Dulcigno the Albanians had been already repelled by the small force originally sent against them. These facts lead me to suspect that the whole affair has been much exaggerated, and that the Albanians never numbered anything like 1,200 men.

The accounts received up to the present are somewhat confused, and accurate details are wanting, but still it is very possible that something more serious than an ordinary frontier dispute has taken place.

The affair is undoubtedly unfortunate, as, whatever may be its real importance, the Montenegrins will not fail to make capital out of it, and the ill-feeling which always exists between the Albanians and the Montenegrins will be considerably increased.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 24.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, February 19, 1891.

I LEARNT to-day from the Agent of Bulgaria that, in accordance with the requirements of the Servian authorities, two of the persons captured by the brigands near Bellova arrived here a few days ago, apparently from Bulgaria, one an Austrian, the other a Greek subject, and on being confronted with the prisoner Kosta Ivanoff, both identified him as the leader of the band.

They, moreover, gave circumstantial evidence as to the manner in which the Turkish messenger had been murdered in their presence and in that of the prisoner.

It was also proved, by comparison, that the latter was wearing one of the Greek subject's shirts with elaborate embroidery on the front.

From documents sent by the Bulgarian Government it was, moreover, shown that Ivanoff resided for eight years in Eastern Roumelia, and had during that time exercised all the rights of citizenship, such as voting at elections.

His identity and Bulgarian nationality were thus established to the perfect satisfaction of the Judge, who has reported accordingly to the Servian Minister of the Interior.

It remains to be seen whether the Servian Government will surrender him to Bulgaria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 25.)

(Extract.)

Belgrade, February 21, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to report that General Gruitch, the President of the Council, and Minister for Foreign Affairs, resigned yesterday, and that M. Passitch, President of the Skuptchina, has been intrusted by the Regency with the formation of a new Cabinet.

No specific reason is yet assigned for the fall of the Ministry, but it is thought in many quarters that its leader's moderate opinions were too little in harmony with sentiments of the more advanced and dominant party in the Skuptchina.

Mr. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 26.)

My Lord,

Cettinje, February 17, 1891.

WITH reference to my despatch of yesterday's date respecting the Albanian attack on Montenegrin territory near Dulcigno, I have the honour to report that the latest accounts show that the original Montenegrin version was greatly exaggerated.

It appears now that only a small body of Albanians actually crossed the frontier, and that they were driven back by the inhabitants of Dulcigno and the neighbouring villages. It is said that not only the Slavs of Dulcigno, but also the Mahomedans and Catholics, who form the majority of the population, joined in repelling the aggression. This fact goes far to prove that the attack was anything but serious. The Mussulmans and Catholics of Dulcigno have hardly any arms, as they are not allowed to carry the rifles and revolvers without which no Montenegrin stirs abroad, and if they could drive back the invading Albanians, it shows that the latter could not have been in force.

I was only able to see the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon, but on meeting him I told him that I thought that M. Simo Popovich, the Governor of the coast districts, was to blame for having, without adequate information, dispatched the alarmist telegram which caused so vast an amount of excitement here.

Yesterday, a casual observer might well have imagined that Montenegro was on the eve of a great war. The Minister of the Interior passed the night at the telegraph office, troops were sent off in all haste, councils of war were held, and all because a band of Albanians, now variously estimated at between 50 and 100 men, had passed the frontier.

M. Vukovich admitted that there had been a good deal of exaggeration in the original accounts, but he maintained that there had been a large and hostile gathering of Albanians on the frontier, and that though only a small band had actually crossed into Montenegrin territory, the rest had had the intention of doing so, and were only deterred by seeing that they might expect opposition. M. Simo Popovich was not at Dulcigno at the time, having gone to Antivari to meet the Prince, and the Commander of the troops at Dulcigno had also unfortunately been absent from his post. M. Popovich had based his first Report on information which he had received from two "Captains" of districts situated close to the frontier, and who, though they resided far apart, had sent in Reports of Albanian aggression at different points, which practically coincided.

M. Vukovich said that the loss on both sides had been very small, the Montenegrins having only had two men wounded. He did not know what the Albanian loss amounted to, but Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Scutari informs me that they had one man killed and one wounded.

Mr. Lamb, with whom I have been in correspondence since the news of the raid was received, has been good enough to send me information to the following effect:—

He considered the Montenegrin accounts exaggerated, but had heard that 1,000 Catholic mountaineers had assembled yesterday on the frontier. Twenty of these men had been brought into Scutari as prisoners; they were implicated, it was said, in the murder of two Montenegrins. He subsequently informed me that only 80 or 100 Albanians really crossed the frontier, and that they retired on finding that they were opposed by a superior force. The object of the raid was not certain. With regard to the twenty prisoners he had previously mentioned, they had nothing to do with the

present affair. I should mention that two Montenegrins were killed on the frontier a short time ago, their relations at once retaliating by killing an Albanian, and it is possible that the prisoners may be connected with these murders. Mr. Lamb further states that a few Albanians, who, I presume, are connected with the raid, are under arrest.

There is no doubt that the Albanians cut the telegraph wire between Dulcigno and Scutari, and yesterday, in order to communicate with the latter place, I was obliged to telegraph by way of Cattaro and Bosnia, but it remains to be seen whether this was not a pure piece of mischief, as the careful interruption of telegraphic communication hardly enters into the system of warfare practised by the mountaineers.

M. Vukovich's statement, that there was a gathering of Albanians on the Turkish side of the frontier, is borne out by Mr. Lamb; but I do not believe that the danger was pressing enough to justify M. Simo Popovich's alarmist telegram.

I had some conversation with M. Vukovich on the subject of the position of the Albanian mountaineers in the neighbourhood of Dulcigno, which is to some extent peculiar.

These people, who all, or nearly all, belong to the Skrelli and Klementi clans, occupy during the summer the mountain districts to the north of Scutari. In the winter they migrate with their flocks to the low grounds. Many members of these clans go to the districts situated near the mouth of the Drin, and about the River Mat, but others have been in the habit of occupying the lands on the right bank of the Boyana, and which now belong to Montenegro.

It is an open secret that the Montenegrins would be very glad to get rid of these people, and there is no doubt that they have been at times treated harshly by the Dulcigno authorities.

Last autumn the Montenegrin Government refused altogether to allow the mountaineers to pass into the Dulcigno district with their flocks, and the Prince succeeded in prevailing on the Sultan to give orders to the Vali of Scutari to aid in enforcing this prohibition, on the plea that Turkey was looked upon in many European countries as infected with cattle plague, and that, consequently, the admission of Turkish sheep and cattle would destroy the nascent Montenegrin cattle trade with Austria and France.

On being personally appealed to by the Prince, the Sultan, as usual, yielded, and no proper provision was made for the location of the mountaineers, who suddenly, in a very rigorous winter, found themselves deprived of their pastures. It was said that the Vali of Scutari would provide them with some temporary location, but I cannot discover that steps were taken to do anything of the sort. The consequence of this state of things has naturally been a considerable amount of distress, and a still more considerable amount of discontent among the mountaineers.

M. Vukovich in the course of his remarks dwelt on the great importance of the cattle trade to Montenegro, which he said would be ruined by the admission of beasts from Turkey. He said they were quite willing to admit the Albanians themselves, but their flocks could not pass. I need hardly say that as the mountaineers are a purely pastoral people, the permission to pass into Montenegro without their flocks is not of any very great value.

M. Vukovich went on to say that he denied the right of these Albanians to come to Dulcigno at all. None of them had any title-deeds. He had made careful inquiry among the inhabitants of Dulcigno, and had learnt that the lands really belonged to Mahomedans of that town, who were mostly seafaring men. The mountaineers had at some time come and occupied the pastures; the proprietors were frequently away at sea, and when they returned home they were powerless against the mountaineers, who, being Catholics, were protected by the foreign Consuls at Scutari.

I told M. Vukovich, in reply, that to my certain knowledge some of the mountaineers who migrated every autumn to Dulcigno had bought and paid for their lands, and held regular title-deeds. There were, no doubt, others who could not legally establish their claims, but still it must be remembered that a really good title was by no means so very common in the Ottoman Empire, and that if every occupier of land were suddenly called upon to prove his title to every acre he held, many a land-owner would find his property greatly curtailed. These people had held the lands at Dulcigno long before the Montenegrin occupation, and it seemed to me that, whether their titles were good or bad, they had some presumptive right to them. As to their having seized lands belonging to Mussulmans, I could not discuss the point, but it seemed to me improbable that anything of the sort could have happened.

I know that some of the Albanians would only be too glad to sell their holdings

at Dulcigno, and thus be quit altogether of Montenegro; but they complain that the authorities will not allow them to do so. The truth, I believe, is, that there is no actual prohibition against sales, but that when an Albanian offers to sell his land, the authorities take care that there should be no buyers, or else the Government comes forward as a buyer, offering as many florins as the property is worth pounds.

I asked M. Vukovich whether it would not be worth the while of the Montenegrin Government to facilitate sales of property held by the Albanians. He replied that they were ready to do anything in their power to arrange matters. The Albanians evidently feared confiscation, but he denied any such intention on the part of the Government, and said they were ready to recognize the rights of any Albanian who could prove his title.

The whole question is not devoid of importance, and until it is settled finally there will always be feuds, frays, and disturbances on the frontier. I am far from saying that these migratory Albanian mountaineers are the most desirable subjects that a State could possess, but I do think that if firmly and, at the same time, justly dealt with, they are not so very difficult to manage. The Montenegrins dislike them heartily for many reasons. They are Catholics, and cling with tenacity to their faith; they think, rightly or wrongly, that they enjoy more civil and religious liberty under the rule of the Sultan than they would under that of the Prince of Montenegro, and they therefore show no wish to throw off their allegiance to the former. Whatever they may be, and their origin is no doubt obscure, they are not Slavs; they take no interest in the revival of the glories of the Serb Empire, and they show no desire to become Serbicized, and to abandon their own language for the Serb tongue.

For these and other reasons, it will easily be understood that they are not exactly popular in Montenegro.

The Montenegrin Government has, of course, a perfect right to protect its frontier from aggression, and is also justified in taking any sanitary measures it may think proper to adopt; but in dealing with these Albanian mountaineers, it should bear in mind that if it has rights it has also obligations which it took over when, by the permission of the European Powers, it annexed the district of Dulcigno.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

No. 29.

Mr. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 28.)

My Lord,

Cettinje, February 20, 1891.

THE Turkish Minister informed me on the 17th instant, on the authority of the Consul at Dulcigno, that troops had been sent from Scutari to the frontier.

Yesterday morning the Minister for Foreign Affairs wrote to Tewfik Bey and told him that from information he had received it appeared that the "Chief of the Mountaineers" and the Vali had prevented the dispatch of troops, and that a fresh attack was expected. On hearing this I telegraphed to Mr. Vice-Consul Lamb, inquiring what was the truth about the troops. He replied that the day before yesterday one battalion had been under orders, but that it had not started. The Vali had stated that the mountaineers had been transferred across the Boyana, and that there was no fear of further complications.

Tewfik Bey has also shown me a telegram from the Vali much to the same effect. He said he had sent the "Jibal Reisi," or the "Chief of the Mountains," a functionary who I believe is supposed to look after the affairs of the Catholic mountaineers, to the frontier, that the mountaineers had dispersed, and that it would not be necessary to send troops.

I saw the Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day and asked him what news he had from the frontier. He said that things appeared now to be quiet, but that there had been a momentary alarm that hostilities would be renewed. He surprised me somewhat by saying that a detachment of Turkish troops had arrived on the frontier. I expect his information is incorrect, as the Vali of Scutari, who is also Military Commandant, must know whether troops have been dispatched or not.

It does not look as if any further complications would arise now on the Dulcigno frontier, but I expect that in the spring, when the Albanians return to their summer quarters, there will be trouble in the mountain districts. As long as they are on the

ow grounds they are pretty well under control, but in the mountains they are perfectly free, as they cannot be got at by the Turkish troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

No. 30.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 1.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, February 24, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to report that I received to-day an official intimation from General Gruitch of the resignation of the Cabinet over which he hitherto presided; and that I was subsequently informed, by a formal communication from M. Michael K. Georgévitch, that the Council of Regents have appointed M. Passitch as President of the new Cabinet and himself as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Pending a detailed account of the causes which have brought about this change, I beg to inclose herewith a list of the members of the new Ministry, as published yesterday in the official Gazette.

With exception of the President of the Council, and the Ministers of War, Justice, Interior, and Public Works, all held portfolios in the last Cabinet, a circumstance which would seem to indicate no material alteration in the general policy of Servia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

Inclosure in No. 30.

List of the Members of the new Servian Cabinet.

PRESIDENT of the Council, M. Nicholas Passitch; Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Michael Georgévitch; Minister of the Interior, M. Jovan Gjaya; Minister of War, Colonel Radovan Miletitch; Minister of Finance, Dr. Michael Vuitch; Minister of Justice, M. Glisha Gersitch; Minister of Public Works, M. Peter Velimirovitch; Minister of Commerce, M. Kosta Tauschanovitch; Minister of Public Worship and Instruction, M. Andrea Nicolitch.

No. 31.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 1.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, February 25, 1891.

ON Sunday last, an extreme Radical Member of the Skuptchina, named Stanoijevitch, who is known for his anti-dynastic sentiments and his sympathies for the banished House of Karageorgévitch, took advantage of the then pending Ministerial crisis to call on the people, in a printed paper, for the deposition of the Regents, the abolition of all constituted Government, and the election of a permanent Committee of nine Members of the Skuptchina who should administer the affairs of the country under direct control of the Legislature.

This manifesto, which is said to have been drawn up on the lines of similar productions during the first French Revolution, occasioned such alarm among those in power, that the garrison was ordered to be kept for a whole night under arms and the Palace guarded by a strong body of troops.

Events proved, however, that these precautions were unnecessary, for the public only laughed at the insensate attempt at revolution, and thereby gave evidence of the falseness of the reports in English newspapers that Servia was on the verge of some great cataclysm of which no one could foresee the results.

I understand that the name of the author of the paper was at once removed from the list of members of the Radical Club, an institution which practically represents the majority in the Skuptchina, and that fourteen others have in consequence left it.

It is inferred that a formal application which has been made to that body for its authority to apprehend M. Stenoïjevitch and try him before the Law Courts on a charge of high treason will not be rejected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

No. 32.

Petition to the Marquis of Salisbury from the Patriarch of the Syrians and others.—
(Received at the Foreign Office, March 2, 1891.)

(Translation.)

From the house of the Patriarchate of the old Syrians at Mardin, No. 104.
To the most Honourable, the Vezir Salisbury, of high resolves, Premier of the exalted State of England, whose glory may God perpetuate with honour and prosperity.

AFTER prayer and salutation in the Lord Jesus, and the presentation of all due and excelling respects, I submit what has befallen our people at the holy Jerusalem on the part of the Armenian nationality (or Church) in the way of homicide, assault, and wounding, together with the seizure of sites belonging to us from times of old, during 1,700 years, and other acts besides of the nature of misfortunes, which have grieved us exceedingly.

We comprehend not by what right and justice or on what support the Armenian Church has entered upon these manifestations of encroachment and tyranny over our feeble community (or Church), letting alone the seizure of our properties belonging to us from times of old, and possessed by us for numbers of years, as is known to the public.

Consequently, and in conformity with what we know of the reputation of your justice and equity, together with your not acquiescing in such wrong and tyranny over any one, especially as to sites, the deprivation of which is not only not unknown to the members of the community resident in the Ottoman dominions, but is felt by the individuals of our Church resident in the countries of India, which countries of India are under the sway of the exalted Government of England, and your Lordship possesses the right to extend protection to them in any emergency.

Wherefore, we have ventured to submit these lines of supplication in the hope that, of your goodness and compassion, you will assist us and grant us the possession of your good-will in perpetuity; more especially, of the safe-keeping of the rights of those of our community who reside in India, which is a prerogative of your Lordship.

We repeat our supplication for the exertion of your endeavour and good-will by giving the needful instructions to your Ambassador at Constantinople, that he may put in a claim for that of which the Armenians have deprived us by violence, and by enforcing upon him with the utmost pressure that he may lose no time, as did a former Ambassador, who gave up our churches to the Papists.

In any case, your reward will not be lost with God.

We have presented these lines of supplication to express our satisfaction from first to last at your threshold. Accept then, O Prime Minister, with our due and exceeding respects.

May God perpetuate you in all power and prosperity. To you does it belong to command.

(Sealed by the Patriarch, eight Members of his Council,
and with the Seal of the Syrian Council at Mosul.)

January 21 (O. S.), February 2 (N. S.), 1891.

No. 33.

Mr. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 3.)

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a translation of an extract from the "Glas Tzrnogortza" of yesterday, giving the Montenegrin official version of the recent disturbance on the Dulcigno frontier.

Cettinje, February 22, 1891.

If the Montenegrin authorities were expecting an attack on the Saturday, it appears strange that the fact should not have been communicated to the Central Government till early on Monday morning. No mention is made of the steps taken by the Vali of Scutari to check the Albanian movement. It is said that the Albanians dispersed as soon as they saw that "they were exposed to danger." The real truth is that they were made to retire from the frontier by the officials sent from Scutari. If they did really disperse at once on seeing the Montenegrin forces ready to oppose them, M. Vakovich's complaint against the Vali that he prevented the dispatch of troops, falls to the ground.

No official demand for satisfaction has, at any rate as yet, been addressed to the Turkish Minister here by the Montenegrin Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Inclosure in No. 33.

Extract from the "Glas Tzrnogortza" of February 21, 1891.

(Translation.)

THE Malisors* from the district of Scutari have once more assembled to make an armed attack on our frontier population. They employed a considerable time to get together so large a body of men. On Saturday they numbered more than 1,000. They cut the telegraph wires between Dulcigno and Scutari and between Antivari and Dulcigno, the latter line being on our territory, and also the main international line. About midnight on Saturday the Montenegrin authorities had notice of the hostile intentions of the Albanians, and every man in the districts of Antivari and Dulcigno turned out to defend the country against the aggressors. The Malisors on seeing themselves surprised by so strong a force of the inhabitants of our frontier sent a certain number of their men on in front to attack our advanced guards; they were, however, quickly driven back across the frontier. In the encounter, we had two men wounded, while the aggressors had one man killed and one wounded.

The main body of the Malisors which kept behind the men who commenced the attack dispersed as soon as they saw they were exposed to real danger.

Our Government will call upon the Porte once for all to keep these miscreant Malisors in check, and will demand full satisfaction for this disagreeable incident and for the violation of the frontier.

No. 34.

Mr. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 3.)

My Lord,

Cettinje, February 24, 1891.

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the subject of the affairs on the Dulcigno frontier, I have the honour to inclose an extract from a private letter which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Lamb on the subject.

Mr. Lamb states that not more than 200 or 300 mountaineers assembled on the frontier, and though no doubt they would have done better to have held their meeting somewhere else, it is by no means certain that they intended making an attack on Montenegro. I think it extremely probable that, as Mr. Lamb says, the Albanians who did pass the frontier really came to collect the stores of provender which belonged to them, and which they would naturally now require to feed their flocks during this very severe winter.

As far as the Vali of Scutari is concerned, I think it is only fair to say that though he may not have done much he probably did enough. His object was to remove the mountaineers from the frontier, and this he succeeded in doing by sending out an official with some mounted police. He evidently saw that the Montenegrin version of the affairs was enormously exaggerated, and he therefore did not think it necessary to employ troops, though, be it observed, he had a battalion in readiness to march in case of need.

I saw the Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day and told him that the information I

* Mountaineers.

had received, not only made it clear that there had been great exaggeration in the original estimate of the number of Albanians who had assembled on the frontier, but also led me to doubt whether these people really met with a hostile intention.

M. Vukovich insisted on the truth of the Montenegrin version, and said that the Albanian plan was to make a demonstration on the frontier and then, when the Montenegrin forces had been drawn away, to attack Dulcigno and to massacre the Christian inhabitants. I asked M. Vukovich how the Albanians, who were Catholics and consequently Christians, could have planned to massacre their co-religionists, who are numerous in and about Dulcigno, but his Excellency explained that by Christians he meant Montenegrins!

Your Lordship will observe that Mr. Lamb mentions having heard the report that an attack on Dulcigno was contemplated; he, however, disbelieves the story as also do I.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Inclosure in No. 34.

Vice-Consul Lamb to Mr. Baring.

(Extract.)

Scutari, February 18, 1891.

ON the Sunday a palaver was held at Klijeshne attended by 200 to 300 Malisors (it was said here on Monday 1,000, but that number is plainly ridiculous). I attribute the meeting to the news of the Prince's return. They met to discuss what was to be done, and whether an Embassy should be sent to Cettinjë.

One version (of Mussalman origin) states that they formed a plan of marching on Dulcigno, but I incline rather to believe that which represents the 80 or 180 Malisors who actually crossed the frontier as having gone for the purpose of bringing away stores of provender which they had stacked during the summer.

The Montenegrins were on the alert, having had news of Sunday's palaver, and believing it to prelude an attack.

Bahri Pasha does not seem to have done much. He sent the Sergherde with some Souaris who made a few arrests and transferred a lot of Malisors over to the left bank of the Boyana, where they are kept under surveillance. A few Skrelli were also arrested in the city to keep them out of harm's way. Yesterday a battalion of infantry was ordered to hold itself in readiness to march, but it was not moved.

The prisoners whom I mentioned in my first telegram, as having been brought in on Monday night, had nothing to do with this, but were a mixed batch of malefactors and deserters dressed as Malisors who were sent up from Alessio.

Orders have been issued calling in all Martinis in the possession of the population. One lira compensation is to be paid up to the end of June, after which no compensation but confiscation and punishment.

No. 35.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 6.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, March 1, 1891.

REFERRING to my despatch of the 19th ultimo, I have the honour to report that the brigand, Kosta Ivanoff, was two days ago set at liberty by the Servian Government on the plea that the crimes of that individual were committed in Eastern Roumelia, a Turkish province not yet formally incorporated with Bulgaria, who demanded his extradition.

Such conduct on the part of the new Servian Government bodes slight prospect of those better relations with Bulgaria which I ventured to point out in my despatch No. 15 of the 8th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

No. 36.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 9.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 27, 1891.

WHEN the first intelligence of the recent raid of Albanians across the Montenegrin frontier, near Dulcigno, reached Constantinople, considerable importance was attached to an affair which now, in the light of Mr. Baring's despatches of the 16th and 17th February to your Lordship, of which he has been so kind as to send me copies, appears to have been, as usual, much exaggerated.

The prompt action of the Grand Vizier, which I had the honour to report to your Lordship in my telegram of the 18th February, has, I am happy to learn, been most successful, and there appears to be no further danger of any immediate collision on the frontier.

I have instructed Sir A. Sandison to express to the Grand Vizier my satisfaction that his Highness' steps have proved so effectual.

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

No. 37.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 9.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 2, 1891.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Scutari reporting upon the raid made by Albanians across the Montenegrin frontier, and the encounter between Montenegrins and Albanians.

This proves the correctness of my surmise that the first accounts which reached Constantinople of this incident were greatly exaggerated.

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

Inclosure in No. 37.

Vice-Consul Lamb to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Scutari, February 17, 1891.

IN my despatch of the 25th September last,* I had the honour to call your Excellency's attention to the action of the Montenegrin Government in prohibiting the Albanian mountaineers of Skrelli and Klementi from entering their winter quarters in the district of Dulcigno, the motive of which action I believe to be nothing more nor less than the desire eventually to exclude them from the country and confiscate their lands.

As I then ventured to predict, the mountaineers met with but feeble support on the part of the Ottoman authorities.

I am informed that Prince Nicholas made a direct appeal to the Sultan, requesting that the matter should be allowed to stand over for this year, on the pretext that, if the Albanians were permitted to cross the frontier with their herds, Austria would prohibit the importation of Montenegrin cattle into her dominions, and thus injustice would be done to his own subjects, who were already suffering severely from the effects of a bad harvest.

This pretext, if advanced, was purely fanciful, as no cattle disease exists in this province, and the Austrians entirely disclaim the intentions attributed to them. Nevertheless, the Porte gave way, and after being kept for several weeks in so-called quarantine outside this town, the tribesmen were informed that they could not, at any rate for this winter, cross into Montenegro.

Some prospects were held out of compensating them by gifts of other lands in the Sandjak of Durazzo, but as the present ownership of the lands in question is in dispute, and their situation is exceedingly unhealthy, the mountaineers naturally stood upon

* "Turkey No. 3 (1891)," No. 85, p. 49.

their indefeasible rights, and declined to renounce their claim on their Dulcigno holdings. Out of about 200 families concerned, some 10 or 12 only seem to have accepted the Montenegrin conditions as to permanent residence, &c., and gone to occupy their lands, while the rest have distributed themselves as best they could upon the holdings of their fellow-clansmen on this side of the border, or in the neighbourhood of Alessio. It was well known that the general feeling amongst them was one of intense exasperation, but it was hoped that they would allow this winter to pass without committing any act of violence, trusting that by next autumn the prohibition would be removed.

Yesterday morning, however, an incident occurred which, being grossly exaggerated by the Montenegrin authorities at Dulcigno, gave rise to serious anxiety. A small party of Albanians crossed the frontier, with what object is not yet clearly ascertained. Being speedily confronted by a superior force of Montenegrins, they withdrew after a few shots had been fired, leaving one of their number dead and another wounded, while two of the Montenegrins are likewise said to have been wounded. The Governor of Dulcigno telegraphed a highly-coloured version of this encounter both here and to Cetinje, whence it is probable that an exaggerated account will reach the European press.

The incident is the more to be regretted as it is calculated to prejudice the cause of the Albanian mountaineers, who will be made to appear in the light of wanton aggressors, whereas in the present instance they are really the victims of injustice.

Moreover, when blood has once been spilled in these questions, their ultimate settlement becomes doubly difficult.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HARRY H. LAMB.

P.S.—The number of Albanians that crossed the frontier, though small relatively to the reports at first sent from Dulcigno, was still considerable. The band seems to have comprised from 80 to 100 men. It is alleged that their object was to fetch away hay stacked on their lands during the summer, of which they now stand in need for the preservation of their cattle.

H. H. L.

No. 38.

Consul-General Blunt to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 9.)

My Lord,

Salonica, February 27, 1891.

IN my despatch to Sir William White of the 5th instant, I reported upon the disturbances alleged in the "Times" of the 17th January last to have occurred on the Serbo-Albanian frontier.

I have since received from Her Majesty's Minister at Belgrade a copy of his despatch of the 10th instant to your Lordship, in which he refers to occurrences at Drenitza, reported in the "Times" of the 7th instant.

Drenitza is at a considerable distance from the Servian frontier, and of these occurrences I had heard nothing when I wrote to Sir William White my despatch of the 5th instant. I have since endeavoured to obtain information on the subject from the Commander-in-chief, the Mushir Hussein Fewzi Pasha, but could get nothing from him but professions of ignorance.

The "Cossova Gazette," in a leading article, a translation of which I inclose, denies the truth of most of the statements which have recently appeared in the European press about the condition of North Albania, and endeavours to minimize the importance of the disturbances which it admits to have occurred in Drenitza and other districts in the Vilayet of Cossova.

I have, however, obtained from sources more or less well informed the following account of the Drenitza affair:—

Ahmet Eyoub Pasha, ex-Vali of Cossova, established last year at Laoucha a Kaïmakam, with jurisdiction extending over all the villages in the Nahié of Drenitza.

The Albanians of the district at first opposed this measure, which threatened their local privileges, but seeing that Ahmet Eyoub Pasha was determined to put it into execution, they ceased to offer any resistance (*vide* my Report of the 12th June, 1890).*

* "Turkey No. 2 (1891)," No. 136, p. 80.

The Kaimakam was installed at Laoucha, and followed there by a staff of municipal and police functionaries, who at once addressed themselves to the task of organizing their departments. So long as Ahmet Eyoub Pasha was in the province, the Albanians submitted to these changes, but as soon as he had left and had been succeeded by a man of less energy and less prestige, they began to agitate against the Kaimakam and to deny his authority. They invited him to leave the district, and, on his refusing to do so, took up arms to the number of 1,000 men and marched upon Laoucha, but before their arrival the Kaimakam, with all his staff, had left for Pristina, and the Albanians, after setting fire to the materials which had been collected for the construction of a konak, quietly dispersed and returned to their homes.

My informants also assure me that these seditious proceedings were not aggravated by any bloodshed or destruction of private property, and have not caused much alarm to the Christian inhabitants in the district.

I should add that the military authorities at Useup and Salonica, as far as I know, have set no troops in motion, nor taken any other steps towards punishing the ringleaders of these disturbances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 38.

Extract from the "Cossova Gazette" of February 11, 1891.

(Translation.)

IN spite of many previous refutations, stories about this part of the Empire have been for some time past appearing in certain European newspapers.

These stories are found, upon examination, either to be entirely false or to be highly coloured representations of such ordinary events as occur in every country.

We refer to telegrams in the London "Times" and in the Vienna "Neue Freie Presse," and to statements in the Servian journal "Odjek."

In the "Times" telegram we have the familiar falsehood about Christians fleeing from the persecution of the Arnauts, and joined with this, in the same telegram, are two stories, one about the Judge of the Criminal Court at Prisrend—about the murder of his attendants, the robbery of his money and effects, the burning of his house, and the perpetration of other daring outrages—and another to the effect that one Ghalib Bey, of Useup, had murdered three Christians and escaped from custody.

In the "Neue Freie Presse" telegram we are told that 2,000 Arnauts have risen in revolt against the Government in the district of Drenitza, in Sandjak of Pristina, and have marched upon Pristina.

This, too, is a grossly exaggerated account of what has happened, and it is lamentable to observe the evident malice with which the statements on the subject in the Servian paper "Odjek" are inspired.

In reply to this whole mass of slanders we declare that all classes and all races in the Empire enjoy complete peace and security under the beneficent rule of our Sovereign, and are living in the quiet pursuit of their daily business and in fervent gratitude to their gracious Ruler.

It is utterly false to say that Christians have been fleeing from the persecutions of Arnauts. The Arnauts are famed amongst their friends and enemies for the respect which they pay to the rights of their non-Mussulman fellow-countrymen. The only foundation for the story is that some peasants in the neighbourhood of the frontier, who were in deep distress, being overwhelmed with debt, were induced to quit their abodes by designing persons, who took advantage of their unhappy situation.

That this is the truth of the matter is shown by the fact that these peasants are now gradually returning, having repented of the course which they had taken, and having realized the felicity of living under the Sultan's government.

The story about the Judge of the Criminal Court at Prisrend is nothing but a spiteful and baseless calumny. As to Ghalib Bey—supposing that by him is meant Hadji Ghalib Bey, a highly respected member of one of the leading families of this town—it is needless to point out how devoid of truth the accusations against him must be.

As for the events in the district of Drenitza, it is well known that this district, consisting of sixty villages, was formerly included in the Caza of Mitrovitza, but was a year ago, by order of His Majesty the Sultan, for the good of the people, and for

greater convenience of administration, formed into an independent caza. Steps were taken for the construction of a konak, the inhabitants bringing timber and other necessary materials. Two weeks ago some scoundrels, taking advantage of the absence at Mitrovitza of the Deputy Kaïmakam, set fire to some of the building materials and threatened some officials engaged in the works.

Information was at once given to the authorities, and the malefactors threw themselves on the mercy of the Government. The rest of the inhabitants showed them no sympathy, and demanded that they should be punished. What was required in the case was promptly done.

Such are the commonplace acts of mischief on the part of obscure and ignorant men, which have been magnified into important events by the malice and dishonesty of enemies.

Such is the truth about the sensational stories with which the Servian newspaper has so long been filling its columns.

No. 39.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 9.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, March 1, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith copy of the programme of policy of the new Servian Government as laid before the Legislature on the 26th ultimo.

Passing over the first and second paragraphs as merely introductory, I commence with the third, containing an assurance on the part of the Government that it will devote its best efforts to the preservation of the situation as left two years ago by King Milan's abdication; and that it will carefully guard this situation from all attack whencesoever directed, thus implying a warning, seemingly, both to anti-dynastic agitators and to the ex-King himself.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth paragraphs refer vaguely and exclusively to internal measures.

The seventh paragraph professes to desire the maintenance of good relations with neighbouring States, and solidarity with such as sympathize with Pan-Servian ideas.

The eighth paragraph expresses a hope that the Skuptchina will concur in the line of policy thus set forth.

The ninth and last paragraph professes unswerving loyalty to the King, the Regents, and the people.

I may add that the reading out of this document to the Skuptchina was followed by general and prolonged applause.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

Inclosure in No. 39.

Programme of the new Servian Cabinet.

MM. les Députés,

EN prenant les rênes du pouvoir auquel nous a appelé la confiance de la Régence Royale et l'accueil prévenant que nous avons été heureux de trouver au sein de l'Assemblée Nationale, nous considérons comme notre premier devoir de préciser sans retard la ligne de conduite que nous allons suivre dans l'exercice de nos fonctions.

2. Mais, avant de faire cet acte, nous considérons également comme notre devoir de témoigner hautement devant l'Assemblée Nationale nos remerciements et notre reconnaissance si justement mérités par le Cabinet qui nous a précédé et qui a, sous la présidence de l'honorable homme d'État, accompli avec un patriotisme et un dévouement éprouvés la tâche difficile de faire passer le pays de l'état dans lequel il se trouvait dans la nouvelle ère du régime Parlementaire.

3. Le nouveau Cabinet s'efforcera avant tout de conserver l'état créé par la nouvelle Constitution et par l'abdication du Roi Milan; il s'efforcera de protéger constamment cet état contre tout atteinte d'où qu'elle vienne.

4. Le nouveau Cabinet s'efforcera également de consolider la vie Parlementaire en protégeant les libertés et les droits acquis par des lois spéciales répondant à l'esprit de la Constitution et aux exigences du temps moderne, de manière que la Serbie,

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reconstituée et reconfortée, fusse prête à accomplir avec succès ses aspirations nationales.

5. Le Gouvernement nouveau s'appliquera également au travail de rétablissement des finances, travail qui a été déjà poursuivi avec des succès incontestables, afin d'arriver par le maniement de l'économie nationale et par la création et l'organisation des industries nationales, à une consolidation financière définitive.

6. De même, le Gouvernement aura soin d'introduire progressivement d'autres réformes, répondant à l'esprit et aux principes du parti, des rangs duquel il est sorti.

7. Étant fermement résolu de protéger le nouvel état et l'ordre intérieur, le Gouvernement est de même persuadé de la nécessité de sauvegarder la paix extérieure. Dans ce but, le Gouvernement continuera sincèrement et loyalement à maintenir et à développer les relations d'amitié déjà établies avec les Puissances voisines et, ayant constamment en vue la politique nationale, tous ces efforts tendront à établir la solidarité avec les peuples disposés à aider la prospérité de la race Serbe.

8. Pour être en état de répondre à cette tâche, à la réussite de laquelle le Gouvernement emploiera toute son énergie et tout son dévouement, il lui est indispensable l'appui de l'Assemblée Nationale.

9. Comptant trouver au sein de l'Assemblée Nationale l'appui nécessaire à la réussite de la tâche que nous allons entreprendre, lequel appui nous est également indispensable pour accomplir le devoir que la patrie attend avec raison de nous, nous avons assumé cette responsabilité et, pleins d'espoir de nous montrer avec vous dignes de la confiance de la Couronne et du peuple, nous nous écrions :—

Vive le Roi Alexandre I ! Vive la Régence Royale ! Vive le peuple Serbe !

(Translation.)

Gentlemen,

IN assuming the reins of Government to which we have been called by the confidence of the Royal Regents and the favourable reception which we have been happy to meet with from the National Assembly, we consider it our first duty to indicate without delay the line of conduct which we intend to follow in the exercise of our functions.

2. But, before doing so, we consider it also our duty to express publicly before the National Assembly our thanks and our gratitude so justly deserved by the Cabinet of our predecessors, who have, under the presidency of the honourable statesman, with tried patriotism and devotion, accomplished the difficult task involved in the transition of the country from the state of affairs formerly existing to the new era of Parliamentary Government.

3. The new Cabinet will devote itself before all to preserve the régime created by the new Constitution and by the abdication of King Milan; it will devote itself also to constantly protecting this régime from all attack from wheresoever it may come.

4. The new Cabinet will also strive to strengthen the Parliamentary régime by guarding the liberties and rights acquired by special laws in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution and the exigencies of modern times, in such manner that Servia, reconstituted and supported, may be enabled successfully to carry out her national aspirations.

5. The new Government will devote itself also to the task of restoring the finances, a task which has already been pursued with incontestable success, in order that, by national economy and by the creation and organization of national industries, it may attain a position of definite financial stability.

6. Further, the Government will be careful to introduce successively other reforms, in accordance with the spirit and principles of the party from whose ranks it has been formed.

7. Being firmly resolved to protect the new state of affairs and internal order, the Government is also convinced of the necessity of preserving external peace. With this object, the Government will continue sincerely and loyally to maintain and develop the friendly relations already established with neighbouring Powers, and, bearing the policy of the country constantly in view, all its efforts will tend to establish community of action with countries disposed to aid the prosperity of the Servian race.

8. In order to be in a position to carry out this task, for the success of which the Government will employ all its energy and all its devotion, the support of the National Assembly is indispensable to it.

9. Confident of receiving from the National Assembly the support which is necessary for the success of the task we are about to undertake, support which is also indispensable to us in order to fulfil the duties which the country rightly expects us to perform, we have assumed this responsibility, and, full of hope that we shall prove ourselves with you worthy of the confidence of the Sovereign and of the people we exclaim:—

Long live King Alexander I! Long live the Royal Regents! Long live the Servian people!

No. 40.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 16.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, March 10, 1891.

THE first weekly reception at the Department of Foreign Affairs since the formation of the present Ministry, as reported in my despatch of the 24th ultimo, took place on the 7th instant, when I availed myself of an opportunity of expressing my satisfaction to M. Georgevitch at the prospect indicated in his Circular to Servian Representatives abroad of a continuance of that friendly policy towards immediate neighbours so auspiciously commenced by the late Government, of which he was a member; and I told him that Great Britain, as a great commercial and manufacturing nation, desired to see this country quiet, prosperous, and independent; and it seemed to me, in order to attain such an end, that Servia, while cultivating the most friendly relations with the Great Powers generally, should ally herself with none. If an alliance was indispensable, let it, I said, rather be with one of her own standing—for with nations, as with individuals, an excess of intimacy where there was great disparity of power and wealth always inspired feelings of jealousy and contempt towards the weaker and poorer—and I pointed to Bulgaria as a country with which such an alliance could be formed without risk of loss of prestige to either, and with great advantage to both.

I was anxious to speak in this sense, because I had heard that the Servian Delegates to the Mixed Frontier Commission at Zaribrod had, in consequence of the recent change of Government here, received instructions to suspend their sittings till further orders—a circumstance from which it was inferred that Servian policy as regards Bulgaria, presumably at the instigation of other Powers, was undergoing a change.

I was glad to perceive, however, by M. Georgevitch's language and manner that such was not the case, and that he thoroughly appreciated and concurred in what I said. He concluded by assuring me that the feeling of independence was now such in Servia that no Government would be tolerated for a moment that showed itself in any degree disposed in internal matters to suffer dictation or interference from without.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

No. 41.

Mr. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 17.)

My Lord,

Cettinje, March 9, 1891.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 24th ultimo respecting the Albanian raid on the Montenegrin frontier near Dulcigno, I have the honour to state that I now hear on good authority that the question of attacking Dulcigno was really discussed at the meeting held by the mountaineers, but that a large majority of those present expressed themselves against any such hostile measure. A small physical force party appears, however, to have been formed, and the result was that about eighty men did cross the frontier to make a raid or demonstration.

I still maintain that the importance of the affair has been exaggerated by the Montenegrins, and I cannot but think that if the Prince's Government had shown any inclination to treat the Albanians fairly, there would have been no collision of any sort.

As it happens, the moment chosen by the Montenegrins for keeping these mountaineers from their winter pastures is an unfortunate one, as, owing to the cold, dry weather, there is no fresh grass for their flocks, and their losses of sheep and cattle have been considerable. They can therefore hardly be expected to entertain very kindly sentiments towards the authorities of this Principality.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

No. 42.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 20.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 7, 1891.

WITH reference to my despatch to your Lordship of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to inclose herewith copy of a further despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Lamb on the subject of the raid by Albanians in the neighbourhood of Dulcigno. From this despatch your Lordship will observe that the precautionary measures which have been taken are considered sufficient to prevent any further disturbance.

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

Inclosure in No. 42.

Vice-Consul Lamb to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Scutari, February 23, 1891.

SINCE the date of my preceding despatch no fresh incident has occurred on the Dulcigno frontier.

It seems that at the meeting which I reported as having taken place on the 15th instant a large majority of the clansmen were opposed to risking the ultimate injury of their cause by any injudicious action. About eighty of them, however, determined at least on paying a visit to their lands, a portion of which were known to have been already occupied by Montenegrins. Whatever hostile intentions they may have entertained as regards the latter were abandoned on their finding themselves unexpectedly confronted by a superior force.

A battalion of Montenegrins is still encamped on the frontier, but on this side a display of military force has not been deemed necessary, the influence of the Sergherdé, coupled with the arrest of a few principals and the transfer of a number of families to the left bank of the Boyana being considered sufficient to restrain the mountaineers from any further movement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HARRY H. LAMB.

No. 43.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 27.)

(Telegraphic.)

Sophia, March 27, 1891.

M. BELTCHEFF, the Bulgarian Minister of Finance, was assassinated this evening. The murderers escaped, and are still at large.

No. 44.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 28.)

(Telegraphic.)

Sophia, March 28, 1891.

AN investigation of the circumstances attending the murder of the Minister of Finance, reported in my telegram to your Lordship of yesterday's date, has shown that the assassination of M. Stamboloff, who was at the time walking with

M. Beltcheff, was intended, and that the former had an almost miraculous escape. There is little doubt that the crime is of a political nature. As the Government is in possession of a description of the assassins, it is hoped that their arrest will be effected. It is reported that they came from Constantinople.

No. 45.

Mr. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 31.)

My Lord,

Cettinje, March 24, 1891.

IN my despatch of the 17th ultimo I had the honour to report to your Lordship the substance of a conversation I had had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the Albanian raid near Dulcigno, and on the position of the migratory tribes which visit Montenegrin territory in winter. His Excellency then stated that these Albanian Catholic mountaineers, who enjoyed the protection of the foreign Consuls at Scutari, had occupied lands belonging to the Mahomedans of Dulcigno, and that the latter had been powerless to resist these acts of spoliation.

Thinking Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Scutari might be able to obtain some information on this subject, I wrote to him, repeating M. Vukovich's statement, and I have now the honour to inclose an extract from a private letter I have received from him reporting a conversation he has had with a native of Dulcigno, who still holds land there, but who has resided at Scutari since the Montenegrin occupation. Your Lordship will observe that this person, who may fairly be presumed to be impartial, does not in any way bear out M. Vukovich's statement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Inclosure in No. 45.

Vice-Consul Lamb to Mr. Baring.

(Extract.)

Scutari, March 19, 1891.

I HAVE just had a long talk with Bezzi, who came to inquire whether I thought Ibrahim Pasha would like to hear the views of the Dulcignote Muhadjirs.* I sounded him on the subject of the Malisors title to their holdings. He was not at all conscious of being a victim of their spoliations. He says that whenever the Malisors were in possession of arable land they paid for it. Much of the land over which they established rights of pasture was "Arazi-i-khalie,"† where the grazing rights thus established coexisted with the cutting of wood exercised by the Dulcignotes, but both the latter and the Turkish authorities acquiesced in whatever was done, and the lapse of more than a generation suffices to establish a legal title.

No. 46.

The Marquis of Salisbury to the Patriarch of the Syrians.

Most Reverend Sir,

Foreign Office, March 31, 1891.

I HAVE received the Petition, signed by yourself and others under date of the 21st January, 1890 (2nd February, 1891), praying for the intervention of Her Majesty's Government in the disputes which have arisen between your Church and that of the Armenians.

I have transmitted a translation of the Petition to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, but I have to inform you that the question is not one in which Her Majesty's Government can interfere.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

* Refugees. The term is applied to those Mussulmans who quitted Montenegrin territory after the signature of the Treaty of Berlin.

† Waste, or unoccupied lands.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 1.)

(Extract.)

Belgrade, March 26, 1891.

I LEARN that, after much solicitation, the Servian Government has at last replied officially to the Bulgarian demand for the extradition of the brigand, Ivanoff, in the sense that having already quitted Servia, his surrender was impossible; but if he returned here it should be effected.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 3.)

My Lord,

Sophia, March 19, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I was to-day informed by M. Grecoff that the Servian Delegates on the Serbo-Bulgarian Frontier Commission had been recalled at the very moment when the negotiations were about to be brought to a practical and satisfactory solution. The only reason alleged for this action was the desire of the Servian Government to examine the instructions issued to the Delegates by their predecessors in office, an excuse of which the futility was apparent to all.

M. Grecoff told me that he had spoken very plainly to M. Steitch, the Servian Agent, respecting this flagrant breach of good faith on the part of his Government, and had stated to him that the Bulgarian Government found it hard to reconcile the actions of the Servian Government with the professions of good-will and friendship so repeatedly and profusely offered by them. He added that this arbitrary rupture of negotiations in which the Servian Government had originally taken the initiative, was most ill-timed, and lent an unfriendly colouring to the news which the Bulgarian Government had received of military armaments, of the construction of new fortifications on the frontier, and of the storage of provisions in the military depôts, all of which information the Government had been ready to overlook so long as the Servian Government continued to maintain a friendly policy towards Bulgaria.

The Government appears to be somewhat uneasy as to the intentions of M. Pasitch's Ministry, this unfortunate incident having occurred so shortly after the liberation of the brigand Ivanoff.

I have sent a copy of this despatch to Mr. St. John.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

CHARLES HARDINGE.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 3.)

My Lord,

Sophia, March 29, 1891.

I HAD the honour to inform your Lordship, in my telegrams of the 27th and 28th instant, of the tragic event which occurred on the evening of Good Friday, when M. Beltcheff, the Minister of Finance, was cruelly murdered by four unknown assassins.

The following is a brief account of the occurrence.

After a Cabinet Council, M. Stamboloff and M. Beltcheff were returning together to their homes at nearly 8 in the evening, when four individuals, three of whom were well dressed, the fourth wearing the ordinary Macedonian costume, suddenly emerged from the garden, and aiming at M. Stamboloff, fired four shots from their revolvers, of which two struck M. Beltcheff, who immediately fell dead, being shot through the heart. M. Stamboloff took to flight and escaped unhurt, as did also the assassins. The troops were immediately called out and a cordon placed round the town to prevent the escape of the criminals, while the police were occupied in making numerous arrests during the night. As the assassins had been sufficiently observed in their flight for a description to be given of them, the Government was very sanguine yesterday of effecting their arrest; but I regret to say that I learnt this afternoon from M. Grecoff that the police has at present lost all trace of them, although it is

fully believed that they are in some place of concealment in the town. They are said to be strangers, and to have come from Constantinople.

I saw M. Stamboloff this morning, who, though full of his usual fire and energy, appeared to be still suffering from the shock; and he told me that a deeply-laid plot had been discovered, and that one of those connected with it had given information to the Government, which showed that a conspiracy not only against his life, but also against that of the Prince and two other Ministers had been planned by the leaders of the Russophil party. He added that the police had succeeded in arresting all the initiators of the conspiracy; but that, although they had not yet succeeded in laying hands on the actual assassins, they did not despair of eventually securing them.

I can hardly describe to your Lordship the dismay and indignation felt by all classes at this dastardly murder of a Minister who was universally and deservedly popular; and the exasperation is intense against that infinitesimal fraction of the population which, having failed in its attempts to overthrow the existing régime by disturbances and risings in the country, has now resorted to organized assassination as the only means of attaining the disintegration of the Government by the murder of its most prominent members.

It is to be feared that if the Government fails to detect the assassins and to mete out to them condign punishment, other attempts of a similar nature may be made, which, if successful, must entail most serious consequences upon the Principality, under the peculiar circumstances in which it is placed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.

No. 50.

Consul-General Blunt to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 3.)

My Lord,

Salonica, March 22, 1891.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that, by order received from the Sultan's Chief Secretary, the authorities of the Vilayet of Cossova have caused thirty-seven Arnauts to be arrested as ringleaders in the recent disturbances at Drenitza. The arrested persons have been brought to Salonica, where they are now awaiting their trial.

The latest information which I have received from Cossova is to the effect that order has been restored in the district of Drenitza.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 51.

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

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 25, 1891.

WITH reference to previous correspondence* on the subject of the serious charges made against Hussein Bey of Prevesa, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a *pro-memorid* which I have this day received from the Sublime Porte, to the effect that the inquiries made into these charges have shown them to be unfounded.

It does not appear from this paper that this result has been arrived at by a Commission of Inquiry such as I recommended, in view of the partiality hitherto shown by the local authorities to Hussein Bey, and the language of the *pro-memorid* itself is somewhat vague, and unsatisfactory in more ways than one, but, before taking any further action, I have thought it desirable to send a copy of it to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, for such remarks as the latter and Mr. Vice-Consul Blakeney may have to make upon it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 51.

Pro-memorid.

LES renseignements fournis par le Gouverneur-Général du Vilayet de Yanina au sujet des plaintes formulées contre Hussein Bey se résument ainsi qu'il suit.

Hussein Bey ne s'est livré à aucun acte vexatoire à l'égard des habitants de Louro et de Paléoforo. Quelques cultivateurs de ces villages ayant essayé d'empiéter sur la ferme lui appartenant ainsi qu'à son Excellence Abeddin Pacha, son frère, et à Veissel Pacha, et de s'emparer par force d'une partie de la récolte, il les en a empêchés sur la base de deux jugements qu'il a obtenus en Première Instance et en Appel.

La complicité dans l'affaire du meurtre de l'avocat n'ayant pu être établie, la Cour Criminelle l'a acquitté. Quant à l'enlèvement et au viol de la fille Cléopâtre Photi, une enquête judiciaire a constaté que Hussein Bey n'y était pour rien et que ce crime avait été commis par Vasil Yanaki, avec l'aide de son frère Constanti et du nommé Mezaraki Saliko. La justice s'est saisie de l'affaire et a lancé un mandat d'arrestation contre le fugitif Chaban, qui y est également impliqué.

D'ailleurs les villageois, comprenant le mal-fondé de leurs réclamations contre Hussein Bey, ont cessé leur hostilité. A la suite d'une entente intervenue entre eux, Hussein Bey a, de son côté, renoncé à l'indemnité à laquelle les cultivateurs avaient été condamnés, et il est à espérer que M. le Vice-Consul d'Angleterre à Prevesa lui-même ne lui garde plus rancune d'occuper une maison qu'il désirait prendre à location.

Le 24 Mars, 1891.

(Translation.)

THE information supplied by the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Yanina respecting the complaints brought forward against Hussein Bey may be summed up as follows.

Hussein Bey has not committed any wanton act against the inhabitants of Louro or Paléoforo. Some cultivators of these villages having attempted to encroach on the farm belonging to him as well as to his Excellency Abeddin Pasha, his brother, and to Veissel Pasha, and to take possession by force of part of the harvest, he prevented them from doing so in virtue of two judgments, which he had obtained from the Courts of First Instance and Appeal.

Complicity in the affair of the murder of the lawyer not having been proved, the Criminal Court acquitted him. As regards the abduction and violation of the girl, Cleopatra Photi, a judicial inquiry established that Hussein Bey had nothing to do with it, and that the crime in question had been committed by Vasil Yanaki, with the assistance of his brother, Constanti, and of a person named Mezaraki Saliko. The matter was taken up by the judicial authorities, and a warrant was issued for the arrest of the fugitive Chaban, who is also implicated in it.

Moreover, the villagers, finding that their claims against Hussein Bey were unfounded, have ceased their hostility. In consequence of an agreement which has been arrived at between them, Hussein Bey has, on his side, renounced the indemnity which the cultivators had been condemned to pay, and it is to be hoped that the British Vice-Consul at Prevesa himself does not bear him ill-will any longer on account of his occupying a house which the former desired to rent.

March 24, 1891.

No. 52.

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

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 30, 1891.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a further despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Lamb on the subject of the recent collision on the Dulcigno frontier, in which he reports the arrival at Scutari of the Commission to inquire into the matter.

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

Inclosure in No. 52.

Vice-Consul Lamb to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Scutari, March 17, 1891.

THE General of Division Ibrahim Pasha, who is charged with a special mission from the Sultan to inquire into the causes of the late collision between Albanian mountaineers and Montenegrins on the Dulcigno frontier, arrived here yesterday evening. He was received, apparently at his own express desire, without any special ceremonial or display.

Nothing has yet transpired as to the tenour of his instructions, but representatives from all the Catholic mountains, and also from the district of Gussigné, have been assembled in Scutari, and await his summons.

Ibrahim Pasha is accompanied by a certain Omer Pasha, and by a civilian named Achmet Bey, representing the Foreign Office.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HARRY H. LAMB.

No. 53.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(Telegraphic.)

Sophia, April 6, 1891.

WITH reference to my telegram of the 28th ultimo, the Bulgarian Government has so far obtained no definite information as to the whereabouts of the four assassins of M. Beltscheff, who are supposed to be in Roumania. The investigation is being actively pursued.

Some letters threatening death, addressed to the Prince, Princess Clementine, and the Ministers, have been traced by the police to an employé of the Russian Agency, who, at the request of the Government, has been arrested and expelled by the German Consul.

No. 54.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 11.)

My Lord,

Athens, April 2, 1891.

TWO or three incidents showing that acts of brigandage are still occasionally committed have occurred recently.

Three men seized a Thessalian farmer near Atalanti, and demanded a heavy ransom, but eventually released their prisoner on payment of 5,000 drachmae. This happened about ten days ago, and the outlaws disappeared towards the north of Thessaly.

A day or two afterwards, some detachments of Greek soldiery pursued and drove over the frontier into Turkish territory a band of some five or six men who had been seen near Voula.

About the same time, some brigands entered the house of a Turk near Larissa, and compelled him by torture to show where his money was kept. They carried off about £ T. 800; but it is understood that they have since been arrested.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 55.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, April 12, 1891.

AT yesterday's sitting of the Skuptehina a letter was read, which the ex-King had addressed to the Regents, declaring his intention to remain away from Servia during the minority of the young King, his son.

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The Government then proposed that the sum of 1,000,000 fr. should be paid out of the Civil List to ex-King Milan by instalments. This proposal was, after a prolonged and violent debate, voted by a majority.

The House subsequently passed a motion for the expulsion of ex-Queen Nathalie, declining to entertain a proposal for granting her pecuniary assistance.

The ex-King and ex-Queen are both making preparations for departure.

No. 56.

Consul-General Blunt to Sir W. White.—(Received at the Foreign Office, April 17.)

Sir,

Salonica, April 9, 1891.

WITH reference to the reported destruction of the Roman Catholic Church, and removal of the church bell at Uskup, I have not yet been able to obtain any independent information, but have the honour to inclose a translation by Mr. Assistant Monahan of the account published in the official "Cossova Gazette," from which it appears that a church bell was really removed by the Turkish authorities from the Roman Catholic place of worship at Uskup, in spite of the protest of the Austrian Consul there. I should also report that, according to the "Cossova Gazette" of yesterday, which arrived here this morning, the Vali of Cossova, Kemali Pasha, has by order of the Sultan been called to Constantinople to report personally on matters connected with the government of the vilayet. The Pasha has already arrived here, and leaves to-day for the capital.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 56.

Extract from the "Cossova Gazette" of April 1, 1891.

(Translation.)

THE Vienna newspapers publish telegrams and letters from Uscup stating that the Latin Church there had been destroyed by the authorities, the tower pulled down, the bell removed, and the sacred books belonging to the priests confiscated.

We have refrained from calling attention to the way in which the law was violated in the house of the Latin Bishop on Friday the 8th March of the present year. We are now obliged to speak.

It is well known that there is not a single native inhabitant of the town or district of Uscup belonging to the Latin Church, that a few years ago the Latins took a Mussulman's house for their Bishop to reside in, that their congregation now consists of ten families, and that it has not been found necessary to build a church for them. The Latin Bishop, an Ottoman subject, made a place of worship of a room in the ground floor of this house, and he and his flock have used this room with complete liberty and without any interference on the part of the authorities.

Not contented, however, with this, a Latin priest set up an arrangement of three beams against the wall of a shoemaker's shop adjoining the garden of the Bishop's house, and, on the 8th March, without any notice having been given to the authorities, had a large bell hung up from the beams. This event caused some stir in the town. A church may not be built nor a bell hung up without the permission of the Government. Moreover, the ancient Greek and Bulgarian Churches in Uscup with their large congregations have no such bells, and such a thing as a church bell has never been seen here before. Accordingly, the Police Commissioner was sent to the Bishop's house to inquire into the matter and to tell him that his house was not a church and that the bell should be taken down until permission for hanging it up was given.

The Police Commissioner found that the Bishop had left his house and officially informed a priest whom he saw there that the bell must be taken down.

He learnt that the Bishop had left secretly two days before for Prisrend, a place not within his jurisdiction.

He took away, to be examined by the Department of Public Instruction, two books which he saw in the hands of children in the Bishop's house. Now the Bishop is an Ottoman subject, and the house was his private residence; nevertheless, the Austrian Consul interfered in the business and addressed a protest to the authorities.

The latter, in reply, sent verbal and written messages to the Austrian Consulate and to the priest in the Bishop's house to the effect that the house was not a church, and even if it were, a bell could not be hung up without the Government's permission, that no church bell had before been seen in Uscup, and a bad impression would be produced upon the population, and that if the bell were not taken down within twenty-four hours, it would become necessary to take other steps to enforce the law.

Afterwards, with the view of settling the matter amicably if possible, a special officer was sent to invite to the konak the priest who said he represented the Bishop.

But the priest refused to come unless the Austrian Consul would allow him to do so. Then the Austrian Consulate was again requested to withdraw its opposition, and a further delay of twenty-four hours was granted. At the end of that time Lieutenant-Colonel Djemal Bey was sent to remove the bell, which was quietly done. There is then no Latin Church at Uscup, and no church has been destroyed; the supposed church is the Bishop's private residence, and it was lawfully entered by the officers of the Government. The belfry consists of three beams, which are still in their places in the Bishop's garden. The sacred books turn out to be: one of them a work on Eastern affairs, which is proscribed as objectionable, and which had been put in the hands of Ottoman children; the other, a forbidden work in Albanian, which had been secretly printed in Italian characters.

The Bishop as an Ottoman subject must have known better than any one the illegality of hanging up the bell. It is impossible not to think that in secretly withdrawing to Pristend and leaving his priest to break the law, he acted with the deliberate intention of causing trouble. It is lamentable that so high a spiritual dignitary should thus have failed in his duty to his Sovereign.

Complete religious liberty is enjoyed by all classes in the Empire, and, in the present case, no civilized Government would have acted otherwise than ours has done.

No. 57.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 17.)

(Extract.)

Sophia, April 7, 1891.

SINCE writing my despatch of the 29th ultimo, I have abstained until my telegram of yesterday evening from transmitting any information to your Lordship as to the success of the measures taken for the detection of M. Beltecheff's assassins, owing to the Government having had till the present moment no tangible proof of their whereabouts, although the investigation has been most sedulously pursued, and a great number of people arrested and rigorously cross-examined on suspicion of being concerned in the murder.

Within the last day or two, however, a Bulgarian emigrant at Belgrade, who has confessed to having been privy to the plot, being anxious to obtain the amnesty and the reward of 20,000 fr. offered by the Government to any person not the actual murderer who should give evidence which would lead to the detection of the assassins, has denounced the murderers to the Government, with full particulars of their movements, and of their actual situation. He has declared the ringleader and the actual murderer to be a certain Wassil Stoyanoff, formerly a cadet of the Military School, imprisoned for having plotted against the lives of the Regents in 1886, and who succeeded in making his escape from prison to Russia, where he continued his military education and became an officer of the Russian army. The names of his associates are also known. Stoyanoff with two of his companions are said to have left the town a few minutes after the murder, mounted on swift horses, and to have crossed the Servian frontier by the mountain paths. After reaching Belgrade they went to Pesth, crossed the Roumanian frontier, and are now said to be in hiding on a certain property situated between Craiova and Ploesti. The Roumanian Government has been communicated with, secret agents have been sent from here to watch the place, and news of their arrest is hourly expected. It is to be hoped that this may not be a ruse to detract the attention of the Government from other quarters.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 17.)

(Extract.)

Constantinople, April 11, 1891.

THE Austro-Hungarian Ambassador addressed to the Porte within the last couple of weeks some very urgent demands for satisfaction on what has been called "the Uskup Church incident," and those demands have attracted considerable attention at Constantinople, and have at last been reluctantly yielded to.

The incident itself was occasioned by the Vali or Governor ordering the entrance by force of the Catholic Church at Uskup, and destroying the scaffolding erected in it for the purpose of enlarging the belfry inside; disregarding in this act the protests of the Austro-Hungarian Consul.

The Governor who committed this outrage was Abdul Kader Kemali Pasha, recently appointed Vali of the Vilayet of Kossova, and he was seconded in this act by one Youssouf Effendi, his Dragoman, originally an Austrian subject and a Christian, but now in the Turkish service and a renegade.

Baron de Calice insisted on the removal of the obnoxious Vali from his post, and also that of his Dragoman, with the condition in the latter case that he should not be re-employed in any town where there was an Austro-Hungarian Consulate.

His Excellency further insisted that the Porte should issue instructions to the local authorities in the districts in which the Austro-Hungarian Government has *ab antiquo* the protectorate of Catholic churches, worship, and schools, enjoining strict compliance with the exercise of these rights, and, lastly, on compensation for all injuries done.

The Grand Vizier was for coming to terms with Baron de Calice as to these demands, but was overruled in the matter.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have received Mr. Consul-General Blunt's despatch of the 9th instant, of which a copy was sent by him direct to your Lordship. The account given therein of this incident was reproduced in the Turkish papers in this capital, but I am informed on good authority that the version given there is partial and inaccurate, and that this is admitted even at the Sublime Porte.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 17.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, April 13, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 11th instant a letter from ex-King Milan to the Regents intimating his determination to quit the country and remain absent from it during the young King's minority was communicated to the Skupshtina; whereupon the Government asked that body to authorize the issue to King Milan of the sum of 1,000,000 fr., the whole amount to be paid down in Treasury bonds bearing 6 per cent. interest, redeemable by means of the 30,000 fr. hitherto allowed him monthly out of the Civil List.

After a very stormy and prolonged debate the measure was passed.

A Radical Member of the House then proposed that the Government should take steps with a view to inducing the ex-Queen, for the good of the country, also to absent herself. This was likewise agreed to, but a suggestion made by one of her supporters that some provision should be made for her subsistence as had been done for the ex-King, was rejected on the ground that her private means are sufficient for the purpose.

The ex-Queen had resolved on shortly quitting Servia avowedly to visit a sick relative in Roumania. If, as is believed in some quarters, the announcement of this projected journey was only made in anticipation of a summary expulsion, it is possible that the more courteous method recommended by the Chamber may induce that lady to reconsider her decision; in which case the Government will find themselves in a dilemma—for while on the one hand the Regency, headed by M. Ristitch, will exercise pressure on them to carry out the expressed wishes of the Legislature, those intrusted with the unpleasant duty will have to consider the public odium to be encountered should coercive means be employed and an unseemly scuffle ensue—a contingency in nowise improbable under the circumstances.

I learn from one of the ex-Queen's advisers that an application from the Minister of the Interior for an audience yesterday morning, doubtless in order to communicate Her Majesty's decision to the Chamber before closing the Session in the evening, was met with the reply that it was customary to state the precise object of such audience, which has up to now not been done.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

No. 60.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 23.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, April 20, 1891.

THE wording of the Resolution adopted by a large majority in the Skuptchina on the 11th instant with regard to the ex-Queen's expulsion confers far more discretionary power on the Government than I was led to believe by one of her adherents, who sat near me in the Diplomatic tribune, when it was read out to the House on the day after, and I reported in my despatch of the 13th instant.

The precise translation is:—

"The Skuptehina invites and authorizes the Government to take measures in order that Her Majesty the Queen-mother should (like the ex-King) reside abroad until His Majesty King Alexander I comes of age; but in case of any serious illness of His Majesty King Alexander I, the Royal parents, on being invited to do so by the Regency and the Government, shall be permitted to reside with their august son during his illness."

It is sincerely hoped by all here who have their country's interests at heart that ere long some wiser counsels may prevail than those which seem at present to be guiding the ex-Queen's conduct, and that she will not expose herself, as at Wiesbaden three years ago, to the humiliation of being compelled to yield to police force.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. ST. JOHN.

No. 61.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 23.)

(Telegraphic.)

Bucharest, April 23, 1891.

I AM informed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that a concentration of Bulgarian troops on the frontier of the Dobrudja has been reported by the authorities there. They also report that the Bulgarian reserves have been called out, and that the railways have been ordered to hold themselves in readiness for the transport of troops.

I have telegraphed the above to Mr. O'Connor.

No. 62.

Mr. O'Connor to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 24.)

(Extract.)

Sophia, April 19, 1891.

WITHIN the last few days I have received several reports from the Danube and Eastern Roumelia of a somewhat alarmist nature. They state that the reserves of some brigades are being called out, that the horses throughout the country are being registered for military transport, and that the pay for the month of March, now due, of all civil functionaries and of the officers is withheld, and that detachments of troops have been sent towards the Servian frontier. Reports appear also to be prevalent that the export of grain is about to be prohibited, and there is apparently a general uneasiness in Southern Bulgaria.

I have endeavoured very carefully to ascertain what value should be attached to these reports, and I believe they are merely the exaggeration (not uncommon to the Thracian mind) of certain military measures lately adopted by the new and active

Minister of War, Major Savoff, with a view to the greater efficiency of the army in any case of sudden emergency.

The Bulgarian Government has made little secret of its intention to strengthen the defensive positions at Trn, Tsaribrod, and Koula, and it has lately sent detachments of sappers and pioneers to the Servian frontier for this purpose; but it has not called out its reserves in any unusual number, nor has it at the present moment any intention of doing so. The Minister of War has, however, directed his attention to improving the system of mobilization, and is adopting such measures as are invariably taken by every military Power, and there seems little doubt that in these measures have originated some of the sensational reports respecting approaching hostilities with Servia, or a declaration of independence, which are not unnatural in the tension of public feeling that still exists in consequence of the attempt on M. Stamboloff's life, and M. Beltcheff's assassination.

I may add that, so far as I have been able to ascertain, there is no truth whatever in the report of the intended prohibition to export grain from Southern Bulgaria. It is, however, very likely that these reports will be spread about and easily believed in Servia.

No. 63.

Mr. O'Conor to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 1.)

My Lord,

Sophia, April 22, 1891.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 19th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have received some reports from Mr. Graves, Acting Consul at Philippopoli, and Mr. Richards, Vice-Consul at Bourgas.

These despatches represent the uneasy feeling prevailing for some time past in the provinces, and especially in Eastern Roumelia, and Mr. Graves has sent me a translation of an article from the local newspaper "Plovdiv," an organ occasionally inspired by members of the Cabinet, strongly urging the Government to proclaim the independence of the country.

At the same time, I am glad to be able to say that there are no indications here of any intention on the part of the Government to embark at present upon so dangerous a course, and I believe such public excitement as still exists will soon be allayed by the calm and self-possessed attitude of the Prince and M. Stamboloff.

I understand that the Reserves which have been called out in the districts of Rustchuk and Shumla will be exercised with the Mannlicher rifle.

I further learn that the trucks and waggons reported by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Rustchuk as ordered to be kept in readiness are very possibly destined for the transport of some siege guns from Silistria to Widin, the latter fortress having been partially dismantled last year, and the guns conveyed to Sophia at the instigation of the Chief of the Staff, Colonel Petroff, with whose opinion as to the advisability of dismantling the fortress of Widin the present Minister of War does not agree.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 64.

Mr. O'Conor to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 1.)

My Lord,

Sophia, April 22, 1891.

THE repeated interruption of the negotiations for a Commercial Treaty between Servia and Bulgaria have at various times been reported to your Lordship by Mr. St. John in despatches, copies of which he has been good enough to send me, and the subject has also been referred to in reports from this Agency.

This Treaty has now been under discussion for nearly two years without any result, but I need not weary your Lordship with the various causes to which this is attributable. The main difficulties, however, seem to be that the commercial advantages anticipated by Servia are not likely to be shared in by this country. Servian products would find a good market in Bulgaria, whereas Bulgarian products are not in demand in Servia. The political advantages, on the other hand, are mostly on the side of Bulgaria; a formal Treaty would be a valuable public recognition of her

international status, but hitherto this consideration and the more friendly relations arising out of a commercial understanding has rather hindered than encouraged the Servian Government in urging forward the negotiations. Both Governments, however, equally attribute the failure to the other party, the Bulgarians saying that it is due to the hostile pressure exercised by the Russian Representative at Belgrade, and the Servian Agent imagining that the influence of Austria-Hungary is used to prevent an arrangement which would give Servia greater commercial independence. Be this as it may the present Servian Agent, M. Steitch, appears very anxious to reopen negotiations. He called upon me this afternoon, and after explaining in great detail the difficulties in his way, he asked me to give him any assistance in my power in coming to an agreement with the Bulgarian Government, and in disposing M. Stamboloff to a settlement which would at the same time embrace the Bregovo Frontier Delimitation question. He considered his Government were perfectly justified in coupling the two questions, and in proposing a definite settlement of the latter question as a *quid pro quo* for the conclusion of a Commercial Treaty.

I replied that Her Majesty's Government desired to see the most friendly relations exist between Servia and Bulgaria; that I thought the conclusion of a Commercial Treaty would greatly contribute to this result, and that I would not lose an opportunity of speaking to M. Stamboloff in the desired sense.

At the same time, I said that I thought he would greatly forward the object he had in view if he began by endeavouring to put an end to the newspaper warfare which was doing so much harm in both countries, and by persuading his Government to take advantage of the opportunities so ready to hand, to show that they were really animated with friendly feelings towards this Government. If he succeeded in this, I felt sure the Bulgarian Government would meet his advances more than half-way, and he might rely upon the success of his negotiations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 65.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 1.)

(Extract.)

Belgrade, April 25, 1891.

I LEARN that the Bulgarian refugee, Risoff, has, despite the request made by the Bulgarian Government for his apprehension, been allowed to quit Servia.

It had been expected that he would embark on a certain day in a Danube steamer for Roumania, but it now turns out that this was a feint, and that he left Belgrade, with a pass from the Servian Government, by Orient express train on the previous night (the 21st instant) for Hungary, since which time all trace of him has been lost.

I am informed there is no shadow of a doubt that Risoff was one of the chief instigators of the recent murderous plot at Sophia.

I also learn that three of M. Beltcheff's assassins and the brigand Kosta Ivanoff are still in Servia. The latter is employed, it is said, as watchman at a coal mine near Zaitchar—a town on the Servo-Bulgarian frontier, where he assumes the garb of a political refugee.

No. 66.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. O'Conor.

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 6, 1891.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 22nd ultimo, reporting a conversation with the Servian Agent at Sophia, on the subject of the negotiations for a Commercial Treaty between Servia and Bulgaria, and I approve the language which you held to M. Steitch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

Mr. O'Conor to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 15.)

My Lord,

Sophia, May 9, 1891.

IN my despatch of the 18th March, 1890,* I had the honour to report to your Lordship that the Russian Government had presented a statement of the amount due on account of arms and munitions ceded to the Governments of the Principality and Eastern Roumelia in 1878. Upon receipt of this information the Bulgarian Government asked, without, however, contesting the claim, for particulars as to the number and nature of the goods made over to the Principality, and I understand from my German colleague, who is charged with the protection of Russian interests, that these details have now been furnished, and that he has been instructed to apply again for payment of the sum of 572,988 roubles due on this account.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Mr. O'Conor to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 15.)

My Lord,

Sophia, May 11, 1891.

UPON calling on M. Grécoff on the 6th instant his Excellency informed me that M. Steitch, the Servian Agent and Consul-General, had, on the previous day, asked him for explanations respecting the military measures lately adopted by the Minister of War, and especially inquired as to the truth of the report that the Bulgarian Government were constructing fortresses and military positions in the direction of the Servian frontier.

In reply to these inquiries, which he presumed had been made by orders from Belgrade, M. Grécoff said that he had told M. Steitch very frankly that the Bulgarian Government had decided to erect strong military positions along the Servian frontier, and that they not only proposed to construct fortresses, but to place them, without delay, in a full state of defence; that if the Servian army was mobilized the Bulgarian army would also be mobilized, and that all military measures which threatened this country would be met by precautionary measures on the part of the Bulgarian Government, who were resolved not to allow Servia to attack them unawares as they had done in 1885.

At the same time, M. Grécoff assured M. Steitch that the Bulgarian Government were merely acting on the defensive, that they had no idea whatsoever of provoking a war with their neighbour, and that if the Servian Government gave them satisfactory assurances as to their pacific intentions, and abstained from any action threatening the security of this country, they would be only too willing to respond in the same manner.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 19.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, May 18, 1891.

AN attempt which was made to-day to expel ex-Queen Natalie was frustrated by the mob, who unharnessed the horses from her carriage, and drew it back again to her house, where Her Majesty alighted.

The cavalry, who had been called out, having been attacked with stones, replied by firing on the crowd, and several persons were killed and wounded.

M. Ristich, the First Regent, appears to be the object of popular animosity.

The military hold the streets in view of probable further disturbances.

* "Turkey No. 2 (1891)," No. 95, p. 62.

No. 70.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 19.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, May 19, 1891.

THIS morning at break of day a body of some thirty gendarmes forced their way into the ex-Queen's house by the back entrance, and escorted her to the railway station, whence she travelled by an ordinary train to the Hungarian town of Semlin.

The town is at present tranquil, but it is feared that disturbances may occur this afternoon at the burial of the victims of yesterday's riot.

It is expected that the garrison will be reinforced by a detachment from Nisch.

Much popular indignation, fomented by some of the leaders of the Opposition, continues to be expressed against M. Nistich and the Prime Minister, M. Passitch, whose houses are, in consequence, guarded with the greatest care.

No. 71.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 26.)

(Extract.)

Belgrade, May 21, 1891.

REFERRING to my telegram of the 19th instant, I have the honour to report that ex-Queen Nathalie, who was visited during the day she passed at Semlin by many sympathizing friends from hence (between 3,000 and 4,000 it is said) left yesterday morning by special steamer for Galatz, whence she will proceed by railway to Jassy; the object of this circuitous route being to avoid Bucharest during the Roumanian Jubilee fêtes.

It is generally thought here that the blunder which Her Majesty's advisers committed in dissuading her from departing before measures of coercion were resorted to, was vastly surpassed by the fact of the adoption of these and the manner in which they were carried out by the Government.

Had the authorities awaited the dispersion of the immense crowd collected near her residence, all might have gone well and the incident of the next morning forgotten, but the shedding of blood will now remain an indelible stain on the Radical escutcheon which Liberals, Progressists, and many Radicals out of office are turning to account.

The vacancy in the Mayoralty of this town occasioned by the accession of M. Passitch to the post of President of the Council, will be filled up by means of a municipal election on Sunday next, and the result will not fail to indicate the prevailing sentiment as far as the capital is concerned.

As regards the feeling in the immediately neighbouring rural districts, the circumstance that the Government has reinforced the garrison of Belgrade by strong drafts from Nisch, and that troops are patrolling day and night both the town and its outskirts, is sufficient evidence of a disquietude attributable, I believe, in far greater measure to the imposition of an octroi—affecting both producer and consumer—than to the more recent event of the ex-Queen's expulsion.

No. 72.

Mr. O'Connor to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 29.)

My Lord,

Sophia, May 24, 1891.

THE inclosed despatch from Mr. Graves reports a skirmish between the Bulgarian soldiers and some Pomaks on the Turkish frontier, which has given rise to some correspondence between the Turkish Representative here and the Bulgarian Government. I am, however, assured that the Bulgarian Government have given satisfactory explanations and that the incident is not likely to create any unpleasantness in the relations between the two Governments.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

Inclosure in No. 72.

Consul Graves to Mr. O'Conor.

Sir,

Philippopoli, May 23, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to report the following particulars which I have been able to gather here of the disturbance which occurred a few days ago on the Turkish frontier near Peshtera.

It appears that there are a number of small Pomak hamlets known as "Babeshki Kolibi," or "Babayak," and situated on the Bulgarian side of the frontier-line, the inhabitants of which own pastures on both sides of the frontier. A Bulgarian tax-collector proceeded thither to levy the sheep tax ("beylik"), and, meeting with resistance on the part of the armed inhabitants on the ground that they paid this tax to the Turkish authorities, he withdrew and returned with a force of gendarmes, with the intention of compelling payment. A skirmish ensued, in which one gendarme was killed and two wounded, the loss on the side of the Pomaks being exactly similar. Troops were then dispatched from Peshtera and Bazardjik, and a certain number of the Pomaks who had retired to two of the hamlets were surrounded and captured, the remainder having taken refuge in Turkey. It is said here that the prisoners, being also suspected of brigandage, will be tried by court-martial at Tatar-Bazardjik.

I am informed that Major Ibrahim Bey, the Secretary of the Ottoman Vacouf Commission, resident at Philippopoli, has proceeded to the scene of the disturbance with Major Ilieff, of the Bulgarian General Staff, for the purpose of investigating the matter, and that these officers will take advantage of their visit to definitely fix the frontier-line at this disputed point.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 73.

Mr. O'Conor to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 29.)

My Lord,

Sophia, May 25, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a despatch which I have received from Mr. Dalziel, reporting the arrest on board an Austrian Danube steamer, at Toutracan, of a Bulgarian named Ghiorghi Velikoff, suspected of complicity in the murder of M. Beltcheff.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 73.

Vice-Consul Dalziel to Mr. O'Conor.

Sir,

Rustchuk, May 8, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that an individual, named Ghiorghi Velikoff, took passage in an Austrian steamer at Belgrade, booking himself for Braïla.

On the arrival of the steamer at Rustchuk some days ago he was recognized, and the Chief of Police called on the Austrian Consul and requested his extradition, without, however, giving sufficient grounds for it. The Austrian Consul declined to take upon him the responsibility, but telegraphed to Sophia; meanwhile the steamer continued her voyage, so the Chief of Police also took passage in her, and having observed that Ghiorghi Velikoff intended debarking at Giurgevo, told him roundly that if he attempted any such thing he would blow his brains out.

On their arrival, later on, at Tutrucan, they found a telegram from the Austrian Agent at Sophia authorizing the captain to deliver Velikoff to the Bulgarian authorities, and he was accordingly landed and conveyed by carriage here. He is now on his way to Sophia, and the Prefect informs me he should arrive there next Monday, the 11th instant. It appears he is charged with instigating the assassins of M. Beltcheff.

The Prefect also informs me that the authorities are well aware that the actual assassins were one Montenegrin and three Macedonians, but consider these men as

mere tools, the real culprits being Velikoff and his associates, who organized the conspiracy.

Velikoff is said to be by birth a Bulgarian, but possesses a Russian passport.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. DALZIEL.

No. 74.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 29.)

(Extract.)

Belgrade, May 26, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to state that the account given in my telegram of the 19th and despatch of the 21st instant, of the essential incidents connected with the ex-Queen's expulsion, is entirely borne out by subsequent inquiry. It only remains for me to report that the popular resistance offered to the measure of the Government may be traced to three causes. Firstly, the desire of the leading politicians in opposition, both Liberal and Progressist, to undermine the position of the Radicals in power; secondly, the strong feeling throughout the urban population against the recently imposed "consumption" duties, rendering it a fertile soil for the former to work upon; and thirdly, a certain sentiment of chivalry which was aroused among the student class on seeing a beautiful woman, if not literally at least figuratively, dragged through the streets by a body of gendarmes, who as a matter of fact were respectfully following her carriage in hired cabs, and lost not a moment in hurrying out of sight when the stone-throwing commenced. The more serious portion of the drama was enacted, as already reported by me, after Queen Nathalie had returned to her house, and it was attempted to disperse the crowd by means of cavalry.

The feeling in the country is, I understand, one of supreme indifference as regards the ex-Queen personally and the dynasty generally; but leading politicians in opposition affirm that the Government have by resorting to coercive measures greatly exceeded their powers, in that by the terms of the Resolution of the Skuptchina they were only authorized to "invite" the Queen to absent herself from the country in the same manner as King Milan had consented to do.

I find, however, on reference to a dictionary that the actual term used in the Resolution, which, rendered in English, is to "obtain," to "procure" (the ex-Queen's absence), and, therefore, was sufficiently wide in meaning to admit of any interpretation.

No. 75.

Acting Consul-General Cumberbatch to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 2.)

My Lord,

Salonica, May 25, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to send your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch (with inclosures) which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject of the Roumanian movement in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 1 in No. 75.

Acting Consul-General Cumberbatch to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Salonica, May 25, 1891.

AN article on the Macedonian question appeared in the March number of the "Fortnightly Review" signed by A. Hulme Beaman. In it appeared the following statements: "In the large towns"—lying to the north of an imaginary line drawn from Salonica to Durazzo—"there remain the ruling elements of Turks and the commercial elements of Greeks and Wallachs. For the most part these Wallachs are Greek in sympathy and religion, though there is a dissident party with head-

quarters at Monastir, under the leadership of M. Apostol Margariti, which holds out for maintaining its Roumanian nationality. Still to all intents and purposes the Wallachs may be counted Greeks.

"Turning southwards"—of the same Salonica-Durazzo line—"we find a homogeneous Greek population, that is to say, Greeks and Wallachs with less of the Wallachs as we approach the Greek frontier."

These remarks of Mr. Beaman upon the Roumanian Propaganda are fully corroborated by Mr. Vice-Consul Shipley, in a Report he has sent to this Consulate-General at my request in consequence of certain information sent to the "Times" by its Vienna correspondent (22nd April, 1891).

In transmitting to your Excellency copy of Mr. Shipley's despatch and of the "Times'" extract, I have the honour to add that I have been able to confirm Mr. Shipley's account of the conflict at Vlacho-Klissura from a reliable Roumanian source, and from my information it seems beyond doubt that the Agents of the Macedo-Roumanian Propaganda, headed by M. Margariti, and supported from Bucharest where M. Urechia is recognized as the chief supporter of the movement—are as active as ever, and it is reasonable to suppose that the Roumanian Legation at Constantinople will give its support to the Delegate sent by the community of Vlacho-Klissura to the Porte.

A few days ago I had an opportunity of seeing a supply of prayer books containing the Liturgy of the Roumanian Church, specially furnished from Bucharest for distribution in Macedonia. They are elaborately got up and are printed in Latin characters.

It is interesting also to observe that the priest who persisted in officiating in the Roumanian language at Vlacho-Klissura and thus brought about the disturbance, had previously placed himself under the protection of the Roman Catholic Church, having formerly recognized the supremacy of His Holiness the Pope some time ago, in order to protect himself against the persecutions of the Greek priests, to whose order he officially belonged.

In conclusion I may add that the celebration of the 25th anniversary of King Charles' accession to the throne was taken advantage of by the "Roumanians of Macedonia," as they call themselves, to muster in considerable numbers at the Roumanian Consulate here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 75.

Extract from the "Times" of April 22, 1891.

BY a rather untoward mischance the twenty-fifth anniversary of King Charles' accession has brought news of a very troublesome religious conflict between Roumanians and Greeks in Macedonia. Last Saturday, the Wallachian church at Vlacho-Klissura, near Monastir, which has been built and endowed by the Roumanian Propaganda, was forcibly entered by the Greek Bishop of Monastir, accompanied by an escort of armed Kavasses. The Roumanian villagers have risen to defend their church, a sanguinary fight ensued, in which twenty persons, including eight women, were seriously wounded. The authorities, however, lent assistance to the Bishop, who drove all the Roumanians from the church, and left the building in charge of a Phanariote priest, appointed by himself. In this he is said to have acted by orders of the Ecumenical Patriarch; and, in consequence, the Roumanian villagers have appointed a deputation to go to Constantinople and lodge a complaint with the Porte. The Roumanian Government will, of course, support this complaint.

Inclosure 3 in No. 75.

Vice-Consul Shipley to Acting Consul-General Cumberbatch.

Sir,

Monastir, May 15, 1891.

IN reply to your letter of the 1st instant, calling my attention to the inclosed correspondence from Vienna, published in the "Times" newspaper of the 22nd ultimo,

containing the account of a conflict, on the 29th March last, in a church at Vlacho-Klissura, a small town distant about a day's journey from Monastir. I have the honour to report to you that, though it is true that a disturbance took place on the day in question, the account given by the "Times" correspondent is in other respects somewhat misleading.

The church referred to was not, it should be pointed out, built by the Roumanian Propaganda, nor does it belong to any one party exclusively, but is, with two others, the common property of the inhabitants of Klissura. As such, it has always been subject to the authority of the Greek Patriarchate, and has, from time to time, been visited by the latter's representative, who, in this case, is the Greek Bishop of Castoria, not Monastir, as stated in the "Times." With regard to the immediate cause of the disturbance, it would appear that the adherents of the Vlak party, who, at Klissura, are noted for uncompromising opposition to Hellenism, succeeded some three years ago in obtaining, as a concession to their views, that a part at least of the Liturgy should, in this particular church, be conducted in Vlak as well as in Greek. They would, however, never appear to have looked upon this arrangement otherwise than as a temporary settlement of the difficulty, and, profiting by the action of the Patriarchate in closing the churches last autumn, they have endeavoured to obtain still further concessions, the result of which would be, that the whole of the Liturgy would be celebrated in Vlak, instead of, as heretofore, in part only. Against this, however, the philo-Hellenic portion of the population entered a strong protest, and on the day in question, as the priest officiating at the above church, Nicolaki by name, was about to read the disputed portion of the Liturgy in Vlak, he was peremptorily forbidden to do so by the Bishop of Castoria, who had himself that day taken part in the service. The provocation which led to actual hostilities came, it would appear, from certain partizans on the Vlak side. In justice to the latter, however, it should be mentioned, that their own account of the matter is that, whilst their opponents came fully provided with clubbed sticks and weapons of a similar description, they themselves were totally unprepared for the struggle which took place; and in confirmation of their statement, they point to the fact that, whilst some seven or eight of their number, including one woman, have been seriously injured, their opponents escaped scot-free. The Mudir of Klissura refused, I am informed, to interfere when appealed to, being apparently unwilling to enter the church. An inquiry, however, has been ordered to be held into the matter at Castoria, the result of which has not yet been made known.

I have gone to some length into the above incident as there seems to be only too much reason to fear a renewal of the quarrel at no very distant date, neither party apparently showing any inclination to recede from the position it has taken up. Without at present entering into the question as to how far the partizans of the Vlak idea in Klissura may be justified in insisting as a right upon the use of their own language in place of Greek in a church which, though undoubtedly the common property of all, is subject to the authority of the Greek Patriarchate, it is impossible in the interests of peace and order among the population not to regret that the latter is apparently unable to find a means of reconciling Vlak demands with the exigencies put forward by its own supporters. As showing (apart from the recent disturbance) that an arrangement of some kind must sooner or later be come to between the two parties, I may mention that at Klissura itself, a town with a population of between 4,000 and 5,000 inhabitants, all of them, it should be noted, Vlak-speaking, the attendance during the year 1890 of children, boys and girls, at the schools supported by the Vlak Propaganda amounted to no less than 180 as against 220 at the schools supported by the Greek party, leaving a numerical superiority in favour of the latter of 40 only. In the year 1889 the number of children of both sexes attending the Vlak schools was 153, showing that, if anything, the movement is rather increasing than diminishing. I would, however, at the same time beg to be allowed to point out that in giving the above figures I have desired chiefly to show that the Vlak difficulty is one which has to be reckoned with rather than to convey an idea of the actual strength of the two opposing parties. At Klissura as at other Vlak centres in Macedonia where the Propaganda has obtained a footing, both the wealth and the influence of the community as represented by the leading families are in nearly every case on the Greek side, the Roumanian or, more properly speaking, Vlak schools being attended by the poorer classes of the population only. Many families, moreover, whilst allowing their children to attend a Vlak school are not necessarily desirous on that account of severing altogether their connection with the Greek name and, for reasons which it will be easy to understand, are still less desirous of taking an active

part either one side or the other. As is natural, the widest difference exists between the statistics furnished by the two parties themselves; thus at Klissura, whilst the Vlak party claim about one-half of the population of the town as their adherents, an authoritative Greek source puts them down at fifteen families only, a computation which, even if the considerations which I have given above be fully taken into account, I find impossible to reconcile with the statistics already granted and which as regards those for 1890, I have obtained from an entirely independent source.

In concluding my Report I should not omit to mention that, side by side with the Church question, there is also the question of the right claimed by the Vlak party of co-proprietorship in the school buildings which have been erected at the expense of the whole community. In the two instances, viz., Klissura and Nizôpolé (the latter a small Vlak centre in the immediate vicinity of Monastir) where the above question was submitted by them to the administrative Council of the vilayet, it has been decided in their favour. At Klissura, where there are two communal schools, one has been handed over to the Vlaks, and at Nizôpolé, owing to the existence of special difficulties, it has, I understand, been arranged that in addition to the three communal schools already existing, a fourth shall be built for the use of the Vlaks at the expense of the community generally. Though the school difficulty has thus for the time being been disposed of by the Turkish authorities, there would seem to be no probability of a similar solution being arrived at in the case of the churches. The authorities in this matter, indeed, appear inclined as at the commencement of the Bulgarian Church difficulty to leave the Christians to themselves, but this attitude, though consistent, can scarcely be said to be of any aid towards the settlement of a difficulty which, as I have endeavoured to show above, may have serious consequences if allowed to continue.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

No. 76.

Sir W. White to the Marquis² of Salisbury.—(Received June 3.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, May 28, 1891.

UPON the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 31st March,* I instructed Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem to report to me all that he might be able to ascertain respecting the dispute between the Syrian and Armenian Churches in Jerusalem.

I have now received a despatch from Mr. Dickson, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy herewith, from which it would appear that the Syrians have documentary proofs of certain rights being undoubtedly theirs, but that their neglect to assert these rights during the past fifty years has given the Armenians a certain claim to possession, which they now refuse to surrender.

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

Inclosure in No. 76.

Consul Dickson to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Jerusalem, May 11, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 22nd ultimo, transmitting to me a Petition addressed by the Patriarch of the Syrians to the Marquis of Salisbury, praying for support in a dispute between his Church and that of the Armenians, as well as a letter from Bishop Blyth, forwarding the Petition; and your Excellency instructs me to report at once all that I am able to ascertain concerning the rights and particulars of this claim.

On the receipt of your Excellency's despatch, I lost no time in making inquiries respecting this dispute, and I have now the honour to lay before your Excellency the following facts:—

It would appear that as far back as the sixteenth century the old Syrians, or

* Transmitting copy of No. 32, and calling for a Report.

Jacobite sect, have been accustomed to perform religious services in a small chapel, and room attached to it, situated on the western side of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but that their claim to the exclusive ownership of the place has for some time past been disputed by the Armenians, who for many years have been in possession of the keys of the chapel, and who assert that it is simply as a favour that they have allowed the old Syrians to perform their religious services in it.

The old Syrians, on the other hand, contend that the locality is their property, and that they possess several title-deeds and a Firman as proof of their claim, but they admit that about fifty years ago, in consequence of their community here having been a small and not a rich one, they were unable to provide for the maintenance of the proper number of monks to look after the chapel, and that the Armenians undertook to take care of the place instead.

On the 16th November last a quarrel occurred between the two sects, in consequence of the Armenians having attempted to make some repairs in the room attached to the chapel without consulting the Syrians, and several of the latter were beaten and wounded. The case was brought before the local authorities, who, after investigation, referred the matter to Constantinople for a decision, the Governor of Jerusalem having transmitted copies of the documents furnished by both sects in a Report addressed to the Grand Vizier, dated the 14th March last (o. s.).

The documents in possession of the old Syrians are as follows :—

1. An "Ilam Sheri" (decision of the "Mehkemé"), dated Jerusalem, 16th Zil-Kadi, 939 A.H. (1511 A.D.), exempting the Syrian monks in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and Syrian pilgrims who arrived to worship there, from taxes.

2. A Firman dated Rabi-Akhir, 972 A.H. (1545), ordering the local authorities not to molest the Syrian priest Jacob, and authorizing him to continue to live in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, "where he had resided for forty years."

3. An "Ilam Sheri" based on the above-mentioned Firman, and to the same effect, dated Jerusalem, Djemadi-Akhir, 974 A.H. (1547).

4. An "Ilam" (sentence), signed and sealed by the Judge of Jerusalem, and dated the 13th Rajeb, 991 A.H. (1565), permitting the Syrian Bishop of Jerusalem, Yohanon, to restore the roof and staircase of the Syrian chapel situated on the "western side," within the church of the Holy Sepulchre.

5. A permit, based on the above sentence, dated 1st Moharem, 1051 A.H. (1627), allowing the old Syrians to repair the chapel referred to.

It will thus be seen that the Syrians have documents of considerable antiquity, acknowledging certain rights as belonging to them, in connection with the chapel in dispute, whereas the Armenians, who, it is admitted, possess several places in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, can only produce the Firmans recognizing the appointment of their Patriarchs to Jerusalem, and their right to perform religious services within the church; but that they are able to show nothing as regards the particular chapel claimed by the Syrians.

The neglect, however, of the Syrians to appoint monks to look after the chapel in question for the last fifty years seems to have given the Armenians, who are a very rich and influential body, a certain right of possession which they now decline to waive.

I have the honour to return herewith the documents inclosed in your Excellency's despatch above mentioned.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 77.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 6.)

(Extract.)

Belgrade, May 31, 1891.

NOTWITHSTANDING the apparent calm which has followed the commotion raised by the ex-Queen's summary expulsion, there is reason to believe that Opposition leaders, both Liberal and Progressist, are making the most of the political blunder committed by their Radical adversaries, among whom is a section which condemns that measure as a violation of the 14th and 15th Articles of the Constitution, forbidding expulsion of Servian citizens, or their arrest even, except under judicial warrant, a formality alleged to have been omitted in the present case.

When called upon to use military force in suppressing the recent popular move-

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ment, Colonel Miletitch, the Minister of War, declined to give the necessary orders and resigned, with the approval of the officers of the army, whose sympathies are, however, not so favourable to Queen Nathalie as opposed to the Radicals now in power.

The new War Minister, Colonel Praporchetovitch, is no Radical, like his predecessor, but an uncompromising adherent of the Liberal party, to which belong all three Regents, and his selection constitutes a reassertion of the prescriptive right of the Crown, as exercised by King Milan, of nominating the Ministers of War and Foreign Affairs with every change of Government.

It is said that M. Passitch, on accepting office as Prime Minister, made it a condition that this right should be relinquished, but *tempora mutantur, &c.*, and the concession just made, in compliance with army exigencies, may lead to a change also in the Foreign Department.

It is notorious, however, that a large political meeting for the discussion of Servia's foreign policy, which was long ago fixed for to-day, has been prohibited, and that the calling out of the reserve forces for the usual yearly drill at this season has been postponed, on the avowed ground that it withdrew men from their agricultural occupations, an argument equally applicable in other years.

The semi-official newspapers, in describing the late disturbances, stated that the circumstance of no one having taken part in them except representatives of the lowest and most ignorant portion of the population, deprived the occurrence of all political significance.

In reply to these assertions, Generals Leschanine and Horvatovitch, two distinguished and very respected veteran officers, have written to the Opposition newspapers denouncing the ex-Queen's expulsion as an act of infamy, and claiming to have participated with some of the most prominent inhabitants of this town in the popular demonstration against it.

The Government, it is reported, have already instituted legal proceedings against all ringleaders in the movement, and will shortly arrest them.

As a member of the Skuptchina, General Leschanine is free from such liability; but not General Horvatovitch. It is scarcely probable, however, that the Government would risk incurring further odium by a display of severity against one who is considered by the nation as its greatest hero, and who had, until recently, never taken any active part in politics, while to proscribe only the uninfluential and obscure would appear contemptible.

As if to inspire confidence in the stability of things in Servia, M. Passitch, the President of the Council, has left for Italy, to meet his betrothed, a Dalmatian lady of wealth, and Dr. Vuitch, the Minister of Finance, has departed for Carlsbad for his health.

No. 78.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 6.)

(Extract.)

Belgrade, June 2, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to report that the election of a Mayor for this town, in succession to M. Passitch, the Prime Minister, resulted, on Sunday last, in the appointment of M. Marinkovitch, the Radical candidate, who obtained 800 votes. The 1,200 votes of Liberals and Progressists combined having remained unrecorded in consequence, it is said, of the pressure exercised by the Government in inducing the common candidate of the two parties in opposition, M. Josimovitch, to withdraw at the eleventh hour.

No. 79.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 12.)

My Lord,

Bucharest, June 4, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to report that I took an opportunity some days ago of asking M. Djuvara, who is now acting as Secretary-General to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, whether it was true that the extradition of Rizoff and Najaroff had been refused, and that they had been expelled from Roumania.



M. Djuvara replied that the report was perfectly accurate, and that he was at that moment engaged in drafting a note to M. Theodoroff, the Bulgarian Agent here, to inform him of the decision taken by the Roumanian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 80.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 12.)

My Lord,

Therapia, June 7, 1891.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 25th March, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Salonica, reporting the recall of the Greek Bishop of Prevesa, due, as is supposed, to his having furnished the information about Hussein Agha's actions.

I have instructed Sir A. Sandison to represent to the Grand Vizier the necessity of the Bishop's presence in Prevesa in the event of the Commission of Inquiry into the charges against Hussein Agha being agreed upon.

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

Inclosure in No. 80.

Acting Consul-General Cumberbatch to Sir W. White.

(Extract.)

Salonica, June 2, 1891.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 25th March on the subject of the charges against Hussein Bey of Prevesa, I have the honour to state that the Greek Bishop of Prevesa has been recalled, owing, as Mr. Blakeney thinks, to his having furnished the information about Hussein Agha's actions.

No. 81.

Mr. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 15.)

My Lord,

Cettinje, June 8, 1891.

THE Turco-Montenegrin frontier has been quiet for some time past, but I now regret to state that some disturbances have taken place not far from Podgoritza.

There is much contradiction in the reports received, but there is no doubt that Montenegrins and Albanians exchanged shots, and that the alarm being given a considerable number of armed men assembled on both sides of the frontier.

Fortunately, a company of Turkish troops arrived on the scene, and by getting between the would-be combatants prevented serious mischief.

Who the actual aggressors in the present instance were is not clear.

I am informed that the Vali of Scutari has telegraphed to the Turkish Minister here to say that the Albanian Catholics who own lands near Dulcigno, and who were not allowed to enter Montenegrin territory last autumn, now demand permission to cross the frontier to look after their fields.

Tewfik Bey has addressed a note to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject, but has as yet received no reply. The Prince is expected back the day after to-morrow, and till he returns probably no decision will be come to.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

No. 82.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 17, 1891.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch relative to the recall of the Greek Bishop of Prevesa, and I approve the representations which you instructed Sir A. Sandison to make to the Porte on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 83.

Acting Consul-General Cumberbatch to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 22.)

My Lord,

Salonica, June 16, 1891.

WITH reference to the recent incident on the East Roumelian frontier,* I have the honour to report that the Turco-Bulgarian Delimitation Commission has completed its mission, but its decision upon the disputed territorial rights has not yet been published here.

The Pomaks of the villages burnt by the Bulgarian troops are still on undisputed Turkish territory awaiting the results of the Commission, and they express an intention of not returning to their former homes if these are ceded to Bulgaria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

No. 84.

Acting Consul-General Cumberbatch to Sir W. White.—(Received at the Foreign Office, June 26.)

Sir,

Salonica, June 9, 1891.

WITH reference to the recent daring act of brigandage on the Adrianople Railway, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the latest reports on the doings of brigands received at this Consulate-General come from the Vice-Consul at Serres.

Towards the end of April a band of eleven Bulgarians, led by a certain Stortcho, showed themselves in the vicinity of Serres, and among other acts of violence they have levied blackmail on two owners of flour-mills situated near that town, and carried off a young Wallach of Bosdagh. Six men belonging to this band have been captured.

About the middle of May another gang of eight Albanians was heard of in the vicinity of Castri (six hours from Serres). They were supposed to have come from the Cassandra district.

Mr. Capety further reports that towards the end of May an encounter took place at Poloska, in the district of Menlik, between Turkish soldiers and Albanians. A corporal and a soldier were killed, and also one of the brigands. Two of the latter were captured, one being the chief, who has since been condemned to death by the Court of Serres on the charge of murder committed a year ago.

The public security in general in the district of this Consulate-General remains in the same unsatisfactory state, notwithstanding the attempts made by the authorities to keep down brigandage as much as possible, and no one of any position can travel without a strong escort.

Travelling in the interior is a risky undertaking, though there has been as yet no interference with railway passengers.

In the Korytza district (Monastir Vilayet) there have been rumours of active brigandage, but I have not received any confirmation thereof yet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

* See Inclosure in No. 72.

Mr. O'Conor to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 26.)

My Lord,

Sophia, June 20, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that, in consequence of the disturbances in some Pomak villages near Peshtera, referred to in my despatch of the 24th ultimo, the Turkish and Bulgarian Governments lately appointed a Commission to inquire whether the villages were situated in Turkey or Eastern Roumelia, and that it was decided that they were within the frontier of Eastern Roumelia, and that the inhabitants were consequently subject to Bulgarian laws and imposts. It was also agreed that the Bulgarian authorities had not exceeded their legitimate rights in the action they had taken to enforce the payment of taxes.

M. Grécoff now informs me that, upon learning this decision, he proposed to the Commissioners to draw up a Protocol stating the result of their inquiries, and demarcating anew the frontier, with a view to prevent the recurrence of similar disputes in the future; but that the Turkish Commissioners objected on the ground that they had no authority to do so, and, moreover, that it was unnecessary, as the frontier had been already delimited.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 86.

Mr. O'Conor to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 26.)

(Extract.)

Sophia, June 20, 1891.

IN the edition of the "Times" newspaper of the 12th instant there was a telegram from their Vienna correspondent, stating that "more than 150 persons are still being detained in Bulgarian prisons on suspicion of having been concerned in the murder of M. Beltcheff," and as this statement would imply a very serious condition of political affairs here, I have been at some pains to verify the exact amount of truth which it contains.

After careful inquiry I am led to believe that, at the present moment, there are only about nine persons of any note now in prison in connection with this matter, namely: MM. P. Karaveloff, ex-Regent and ex-Prime Minister; J. Tsanoff, ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs; D. Molloff, ex-Minister; Thoma Ghiorghieff; D. Oroshakoff, a lawyer; T. Ivanoff, an army contractor; Vladighéroff, an ex-Dragoman of the Bulgarian Agency at Bucharest, and two other persons, shop-keepers in the town, whose names I have not learnt. Against some of those mentioned there are, I understand, very strong grounds for suspicion, into which a Commission is now making inquiry, with a view to a public prosecution. But, as far as I can discover, there are not more than a score or so of lower-class suspects still detained in prison for complicity in this conspiracy.

No. 87.

Mr. F. R. St. John to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 26.)

(Extract.)

Belgrade, June 19, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to report that M. Tricoupi, the Greek statesman, left this morning for Sophia, after a week's stay in Belgrade, during which time he was the object of great attentions on the part of Servian politicians, especially those opposed to the present régime, who appear in this respect to have forestalled the Government, and to have almost monopolized M. Tricoupi by offering him a banquet which, although the members of the Cabinet were invited, was, for obvious reasons, not attended by them.

A surprising feature at this banquet was the presence of M. Katitch, the President of the Skuptchina.

Acting Consul-General Cumberbatch to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 29.)

My Lord,

Salonica, June 22, 1891.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 16th instant, I have the honour to report that the Turco-Bulgarian Commission, appointed to investigate the dispute about the position of the Rhodope villages claimed by the Bulgarian Government as belonging to the Principality, decided that those places are situated within East Roumelian territory.

It seems, however, that the Bulgarian Commissioners insisted upon having the formal record of their proceedings drawn up in French, as was done some years ago with reference to a dispute in the Kirdjali district, but the Turkish officials declined to do so, and they separated without signing any Protocol.

I hear that not only the inhabitants of the burnt-out villages do not intend to return, as stated in a former despatch, but also that a great many belonging to those now regularly incorporated in Bulgaria will emigrate to this side of the frontier. It is also feared that their presence near the frontier, and their evident dislike to the Bulgarians, will be fruitful of future conflicts with the frontier-guards of the Principality.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

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TURKEY. No. 6 (1891).

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE respecting Affairs in
the East.

[In continuation of "Turkey No. 3 (1891):"
C. 6819.]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Com-
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