

ԱՆԳԼԻԱՑԻ ՀԻՒՊԱՏՈՍԻ ՄԸ ՀԵՏԱՔՐՔՐԱԿԱՆ
ՎԿԱՑՈՒԹԻՒՆՆԵՐԸ ԱՐԵՒՄՏԱՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ
ԳԱՒԱՌՆԵՐՈՒՆ ՄԱՍԻՆ ԺԸ. ԲԴ ԴԱՐՈՒՆ

Աւելի քան 60 տարիներ արեւմտեան հեղինակներու կողմէ գրեթէ «մոռցուած» հայկական հարցը եւ ցեղասպանութիւնը, երկու տասնեակ տարիներէ ի վեր. նոր հանգրուան մը կը բոլորէ, որուն զլխաւոր դրոյապատճառը եղաւ անշուշտ բանի մը Հայկական գաղտնի կազմակերպութիւններու պատկանող երիտասարդներու գոհաբերութեամբ կատարած ահաբեկչական արարքը: Այսօր ունի պատմարան չի կրնար չյիշելու նախ անցեալին հայկական հարցի մը գոյութիւնը, Բ. հայկական ցեղասպանութիւնը: Այսուհանդերձ կան դեռ հեղինակներ, ոչ թէ միայն թուրք, այլ նոյնիսկ արեւմտեան պատմագիտական աշխարհին մէջ ինչ թէ շատ ծանօթ դէմքեր, որոնք դեռ կը ջանան արդարացնել կամ աղաւաղել այն սպանող որուն գոհ գնաց ոչ թէ միայն Արեւմտահայաստանի այլ նաեւ բովանդակ Փոքր Ասիոյ Հայ ժողովուրդը:

Հայկական ցեղասպանութիւնը եթէ 1915-ին «Երիտասարդ Թուրքերու» Կոմիտէի պարագլուխներուն կողմէ կատարուեցաւ, որուն իր մասնակցութիւնը բերաւ Թուրք եւ Քիւրտ ժողովուրդին զգալի մէկ մասը, իր արմատները կը գտնէ բնականաբար այն ընկերային եւ տնտեսական պայմաններուն մէջ որ Հայ ժողովուրդը դարերով ապրեցաւ իր դրացի ժողովուրդներուն հետ: Հետեւաբար հետաքրքրական է գիտնալ թէ ինչպէ՞ս էին Հայկական հարցի ծագումի նախօրեակին Հայ եւ Թուրք կամ Հայ եւ Քիւրտ ժողովուրդներու յարաբերութիւնները: Մեր ստորեւ ներկայացուցած երկար տեղեկագիրը էրզրումի հիւպատոս Թէյլըրի կողմէ 1869 տարուոյ Մարտ ամսուայ մէջ պատրաստուած է եւ ուղարկուած Անգլիոյ արտաքին գործերու նախարար Լորտ Գլաբլեմուրնի: Թէյլըր արեւելի քան երեք ամիսներ Արեւմտահայաստանի գաւառները շրջելէ յետոյ է որ այս տեղեկագիրը պատրաս-

տած է: Իբր չէզոք դիտող, կարելի չէ գայն նկատել «Հայասեր» մը որ Հայոց հանելի երեւնալու համար ցանկացած է ստորագնահատել կամ վարկարկել Օսմանեան վարչաձեւը: Այս վաւերաբնութիւնը բնագիրը այսօր պահուած է Անգլիոյ Հանրային դիւանի արտաքին գործոց նախարարութեան րաժնին մէջ FO 78/2439 ցուցանիշին տակ: Հետագային, երբ Պալմանեան ազատամարտի մը 1876-ին խիստ հրատապ քաղաքական կացութիւն մը ստեղծեց եւ Անգլիոյ վարչապետ Տիզրայէլի Ռուսաստանի յանուն իրատունեայ Սլաւ ժողովուրդները ազատագրելու համար ձեռնարկած պատերազմին իր չէզոքութիւնը յայտնեց, պայմանաւ որ Ռուսաստան նեղուցները պիտի չզրուէր, քաղաքի վաւերագրերու կարգին այս տեղեկագիրը եւս լոյս տեսաւ⁽¹⁾:

Վերջերս, Թուրք արտաքին գործոց նախարարութեան բարձր պաշտօնեաներէն Պիլալ Շիմշիր որ կը նգնի ամէն կերպով Թուրքիոյ անցեալի վարկը բարձրացնել՝ Անգարայի Թուրք Պատմագիտական Ընկերութեան կամ Հիմնարկի հրատարակչատունէն վերահրատարակեց անգլիական պետական դիւանի նախապէս լոյս տեսած կարգ մը փաստաբնութիւնները: Ան անգլիական *Կապոյտ Գրքի* մէջ 1877-ին լոյս տեսած այս փաստաբնութիւնը եւս վերահրատարակեց⁽²⁾: Միայն Պիլալ Շիմշիր Թէյլըրի տեղեկագրին այն էջերը կամ մասերը որոնք աննպաստ վկայութիւն կու տան Օսմանեան կառավարութեան վարչակարգին մասին նարպիկութեամբ զանց առած են: Մենք մեր այս հրատարակութեան մէջ վաւերաբնութիւնը լրիւ կու տանք քաղաքական գրքին որ աւելի քան երեսուն տարիներ առաջ տեսած եւ քաղաքական էինք *Կապոյտ Գրքին* մէջ երեւցող օրինակին հետ: Այս պարագան եւս ուզեցինք յիշել որովհետեւ անգլիական կառավարութիւնը առնե՞տք երբ *Կապոյտ Գրքերը* կը հրատարակէր երբեմն ալ զանազան քաղաքական նկատումներով փաստաբնութիւնները գրախնամութեան կ'ենթարկէր:

Ընթերցողին ուշադրութեան եւ գնահատանքին կը ձգենք Շիմշիրի հրատարակութեան մէջ ընչուած էջերու մեկնարանութիւնը որ մենք այս արտատպումին մէջ նախընտրեցինք ճարտարագիտական (italique) լոյս ընծայել: Այս փաստաբնութիւնը անհերքելի վկայութիւն մըն է որ ցոյց կու տայ Փոքր Ասիոյ արեւելեան գաւառներուն մէջ ապրելու դժբաղդութիւնը ունեցող իրատունեայ ժողովուրդներու կենցաղը եւ առ հասարակ ընկերային ոչ նախանձի եւ արգահատելի դրութիւնը:

Փարիզ, Յունիս 1992

Ա. ՊԷՅԼԷՐԵԱՆ
(Պատմ. Գիտ. Տոբէտօր)

(1) Cf. *Blue Book, Turkey* n° 16(1877), pp. 16-36.

(2) Bilâl N. SIMSİR, *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians*, Ankara, 1982, vol. I, pp. 54-70.

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ՎԿԱՅՈՒԹԻՒՆՆԵՐԸ ԱՐԵԻՄՏԱՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ
ԳԱՒԱՌՆԵՐՈՒՆ ՄԱՍԻՆ ԺԸ.ՐԴ ԴԱՐՈՒՆ

No. 13.

*Consul Taylor to the Earl of Clarendon.— (Received April 16.)
Erzeroom, March 19, 1869.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honor to inclose a report forming Inclosures Nos. 1 and 2 to this despatch.

The items of information it contains are the results of information and statistics I collected during the tour I made last year, as also of my experience of the country and people, after a six years' residence and after traversing it on horseback in every direction.

The commercial data I reserve for my report on the trade of 1868.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. G. TAYLOR

Inclosure in NO. 13.

*Report on the Social and Political Condition
of the Consulate for Koordistan.*

THE object of my journey in the summer and autumn of last year was to visit the northern districts of this Consulate contained in the Erzeroom Vilayet, more particularly that part of the country about the Russian and Persian frontier between Ardahan, Kars, Bayezid, and Van.

The route I pursued from Diarbekr led first through the rich grain district of Sileywan⁽¹⁾, and then to Nerjek, the seat of the Mudir of the hilly Kulp canton; from whence, by a difficult mountain pass of twelve hours, I reached the Moosh Plain and town of the same name.

Diarbeker Vilayet.— *Although Sileywan is one of the richest and most prolific grain-producing districts in the Diarbeker Vilayet, or even in Turkey, it was suffering, in spite of two abundant harvests ensuing the disappearance of locusts that had previously ravaged it for five years — from the intolerable measures pursued by the Government to collect the tithes. Each village was compelled to accept the tithes or grains, fruits, and cotton at a money value based upon winter and spring prices, although the former*

amounted to 11. 7s. 3d. a quarter, while the season's wheat barely realized 90 piastres, or 16s. for the same measure. Thus, the villagers of Aslo, near Farkeyn⁽²⁾, had to borrow 30,000 piastres at 2 1/2 per cent. per month, to make up the deficiency the Government agents forced upon them,— the whole of their produce, meanwhile, realizing only 22,000 piastres; and Farkeyn, the capital of the district, with a yield two years ago of only 14,700 piastres, had to pay 24,000 piastres; while this year again they have only 11,000 piastres worth of produce to discharge the Government claim for tithes of 20,000 piastres. Three years ago, with wheat at 250 piastres (2l. 5s. 5d) per quarter, the whole amount of tithe realized from this district was 4 lacs (4,000l. Turkish). This year, with wheat at 90 piastres (16s.), it amounted, under the extortionate system of collection practised to 7 lacs (7,000l. Turkish); during the same period, however, of 106 villages then existing, 76 only now remain; and in each one of the latter, five or six chifts or small farms are entirely deserted.

It will be sufficient for my purpose to cite the above cases only in illustration of the means employed to keep up the local revenues ostensibly up to the usual mark, and the inevitable consequences that must ensue, but I might multiply them at pleasure, for the whole of the vilayet labours under the same evil and the same falling off in agriculture and depreciation of real property is to be met with throughout its extensive limits. The fellahs⁽³⁾ — Moslems and Christians — thus thrown out of employ, emigrate to contiguous provinces, where at least they are, from the fact of their not being enrolled in the district books, free from the onerous burdens of poll-tax and conscription. In the meantime, although their lands remain fallow, the absentee's quota of direct taxes is added to the already heavy obligations of those who remain. Taxation thus increases, while population and capital decrease.

Such emigrations, or rather shiftings of locale from one province to another; the vicious system of tithe-farming, or rather of forcible saddling the acceptance of the tithes on the villagers at unheard-of prices; and a general addition to all the taxes, had the effect of bringing up in March, 1868, the debt due by the Diarbekr Province (or farmers of its revenue to the Treasury) to the enormous sum of 340 lacs of piastres (309,000l), against a nominal yearly net income of 150,000l.

The new Vali, Ismail Pasha, who also bears the appropriate name of Koort, or Wolf Pasha, exerted himself vigorously to recover a portion at least of this vast sum, and succeeded, by means incredible in our age, in wringing some 40,000l. from real or imaginary debtors. I use the latter term also, as, in the case of the Mardin Protestants, reported to Her Majesty's Embassy, any false charges, suggested by jealousy, religious intolerance, or revenge, was, if it involved a debt to Government, at once seized upon by the Vali.

It must be confessed his conduct was impartial, as Moslems and Christians, rich and poor, were equally the objects of his attacks and victims of

an unheard-of treatment to compel prompt discharge of real or fictitious obligations. Moolas, aged men, and Council members, were made to transport heavy loads on their backs in a burning sun, from one place to another, for no other purpose than by such torture to accelerate payment, their steps being unnaturally quickened by frequent blows from the muskets of the brutal soldiery appointed to superintend their unaccustomed labour. Married Christian women, Protestants, were dragged by night, in the absence of their husbands, from the harems, and stripped of their gold ornaments; while several of the aged male members of the same creed were so severely injured by the treatment they were subjected to, as to be confined to their beds for months.

A system of government allowing such practices, however much it may for the time intimidate defaulters, evil-doers, hordes of Koordish thieves, and temporarily relieve the Treasury, can in the end result in nothing but the depreciation of revenue, and effectually prevent any improvement in the present wretched condition of the Diarbekr Vilayet.

The barefaced corruption that characterized the ex-Vali's, Mustafa Pasha, three years of government, and the gross acts of injustice he was guilty of in consequence, gave rise, subsequent to his removal, to just and numerous complaints, that induced the Porte to send Special Commissioners — one Christian and one Moslem — to Diarbekr to inquire into their truth. But, although the charges imputed to him are well known to members of all classes in the vilayet, the gentlemen alluded to could not make up their minds as to the ex-Vali's participation in them or not, and, while thus to some extent exonerating him, caused the chief accuser — a certain Moosa Pasha, a Crim Tartar — to be thrown into prison for an alleged debt due to Government.

Such a procedure, while it inclines people to believe embezzlement and corruption are sanctioned in high quarters, effectually stops the mouths of all persons willing and capable of assisting the authorities to check similar nefarious practices, and must tend to perpetuate a continuation of those evils which are the ruin of the Empire.

Erzeroom Vilayet.— Moosh Muttasurruflik⁽⁴⁾.— The Mutasurruflik of Moosh contains the four Kaimakamliks of Bitlis, Malazgerd, Ikhlat⁽⁵⁾, and Boolanik. The former, from being mountainous, has little arable land, deriving, therefore, its cereals from Van and the two latter districts; but it abounds in other vegetable products, particularly madder and walnuts, from which latter oil is expressed in considerable quantities, which is used for dyeing.

Bitlis, with a total population of 4,000 families, of which 1,500 are Christians, is a town of great commercial and military importance, as being on the direct road between Bagdad and the Black Sea, and as commanding the pass leading from the hilly country of Armenia to the plains of Meso-

potamia. Its manufacturing industry is very considerable, particularly in cotton goods, the raw material being imported via Van from Persia; that when dyed, as is the custom, with different shades of madder red, form indispensable articles of female dress in Koordistan; 700 looms are employed in this industry, and 120,000 pieces annually exported.

Malazgerd, Ikhlal, and Boolanik are rich undulating plains, but of comparative little value now, as they are infested with the common curse of the country, the Koords.

These vagabonds prey upon the unfortunate agricultural sedentary classes to an extent that forces emigration to foreign countries or flight to adjacent districts. There is not one of their numerous Chiefs who has not been several times in prison for well-authenticated atrocities, yet still each time they have been in the most unaccountable manner released, to resume the same practices that first occasioned their imprisonment.

Moosh itself is a mean town, with scarcely 2,000 families there and in its vicinity, none of them being at all on a par with those of Bitlis, who justly have reason to complain their more important site has not been made the capital of the district.

The population in the whole Muttasurruflik is as follows;—

	Moslems	Christians
Bitlis	45,600	15,200
Ikhlal	3,000	2,000
Malazgerd	3,500	2,100
Boolanik	7,000	10,000
Chookoor and Varto	11,000	1,000
Moosh City and vicinity	7,000	6,000
Nahiehs in plain	9,000	12,000
Total	86,100	48,300

Six years ago, when I visited the Moosh district, the fine plain, on one side of which the town is situated, had a thriving aspect. The villages seemed well peopled, and the crops, though damaged by locusts, in far greater variety and profusion than now. Several visits I made to different parts of the plain, and a stay of some days in the town, where I had repeated conversations with Moslems and Christians on the subject, partly explained the cause.

The Armenians form the principal portion of the industrious inhabitants in the plain and near the city, supplying all agricultural labour and trade, while the Moslems, mostly pastoral, living on the slopes of the hills bordering the plain, occupy themselves simply with their flocks.

The Reshkotan and Bekran Koords — intolerable thieves — roam with their flocks over the mountain pastures to south; Jibraulee⁽⁶⁾ and Modikan Koords inhabit the high hills to the north-west and south-east; the

Hassanlee and Milanlee, the northern portions about Boolanik and Malazgerd.

The Kochers⁽⁷⁾ and Koords are under very imperfect subjection, and it is only by satisfying all demands, however outrageous, that the Christian agriculturists can maintain their position. One unbearable custom, that of Kishlak, has done more than anything else to contribute to their present paucity and decay. That custom, originating some years ago in the weakness of the Government and growing power of the Koords, enabled the latter to exercise the extraordinary right of quartering themselves and flocks during winter in and about the Christian villages, entailing upon the inhabitants large expenses, not only for fodder for their animals, but also food and fuel for themselves, during at least four months.

Repeated complaints to Government have done little to remedy this evil, and, consequently, to escape the intolerable burden, 750 families have, within the last six years, emigrated to Russia, while 500 more have this year sent representatives to Erivan to negotiate a similar step. The few peasants still unwilling, from old associations and attachment to the soil, to remove, in order to get rid at least of part of the great expense the Kishlak custom entails upon them, have entirely abandoned the culture of any other grain than wheat, as all others being in some form or other useful as food for cattle, their stocks would certainly be laid under heavy contributions by the Koords for that purpose. But the Koords do not confine themselves simply to plunder. The slightest complaint to Government on the part of the Christians against them is followed by night attacks or open assaults in the day upon them. In this manner, during the last year, no less than ten have been killed and forty wounded, because they — the Christians — had the temerity to complain to the authorities of the oppression they suffered at the hands of the Koords.

These marauders are aided and abetted by a society of so-called holy men, styled Sheiks, living in the Boolanik district of Moosh. They preach their conduct to be lawful, and even meritorious, when practised against Giaours⁽⁸⁾. The influence of such teaching instigated their mureeds⁽⁹⁾ or disciples last autumn to satisfy their fanaticism and avarice at the same time. They stormed and completely plundered the venerable church and convent — dating from the time of the Illuminator of Surb Ohann, not ten miles from Moosh itself. In the mêlée, two of the higher ecclesiastics were severely wounded, all the church plate, ornaments and embroidered robes carried off; but the most irreparable loss consisted in the complete destruction of the valuable MS. library by these miscreants. For these, and other cases alluded to, no redress has been given, no punishment awarded. Several Koords and mureeds have indeed been put into prison, and a species of inquiry instituted; but the venality or partiality of the Moosh Medjliss⁽¹⁰⁾, and indifference or sympathy of the Mutessarif, assured them from any further inconvenience.

Lately a new Commissioner, Osman Bey, a native of Erzeroum, has been sent to undertake a fresh inquiry, with a view of bringing the guilty parties to justice, but public opinion places no faith in the native selected for this purpose, or his desire to institute a searching inquiry. The immunity the Koords seem to enjoy disinclines the Christians from making complaints, or following them up if they do so, for, as stated before, should they do so and the guilty parties be punished, sooner or later they would, both in person and property, suffer more, endure infinitely greater calamities than those they originally complained of. It is thus that great crimes always unpunished, grievous oppressions unredressed, are perpetrated, and merge into what the Koords and Sheikhs consider, as warranted by custom, permissible. An active, upright Governor, really desirous of putting a stop to such practices, and punishing the criminals, is thus, from the popular Moslem clamour, unable to hold his post a month, while the time-server becomes a tool in their hands.

The heavy losses the Christians suffer, by such continuous systematic depredation, are increased by the irregular manner with which the Government agents levy tithes. It is the custom, applicable to the whole vilayet, to offer them for sale to the highest bidder, but no time is specified after which bids shall cease, therefore as they are hawked for sale over the whole vilayet, and even submitted for a probably ultimate higher offer at Constantinople, months elapse before it is really known who is the buyer, during which time weather and vermin have either materially diminished or greatly deteriorated the produce. This year a still greater hardship bore upon the fellahs. From the delay in settling who had really become the farmer of the grass tithes, it was only in mid-winter they were demanded, when, from original short crops, length and severity of the season, and consequently an unusually enhanced consumption, there was not enough fodder left to satisfy the Government demands in kind. The fellah had therefore to give current prices in lieu, a sum more than four times the value of the tithes, had they been taken in autumn.

Tobacco, amongst the most valuable productions of the Moosh district, contributing formerly some ten lacs of piastres (9,000l.) to the local revenue, has, since the institution of the monopoly tax, been so crippled in its culture as to yield now only a crop of 20,000 maunds, against 40,000 ten years ago — the revenue on this article, not including tithe, for the whole vilayet during 1868 being under 3,000l. A still further diminution in its culture arises from the fact that it has become the custom to assess the tithe on green crops, without waiting till they were ready for cutting, and that instead, as heretofore, taking the seller's bond for monopoly tax at four months, it is now exacted on the spot. As the greater part of the tobacco is exported to Russia, a serious delay and loss of interest arises between the payment and restitution of the drawback, unfavourable to the merchant and producer.

Being compelled to visit Erzeroom 30 hours (90 miles) from Moosh, instead of pursuing my original intention of following the route by Van, Kars, and Tchyldir to that town, I proceeded direct to it.

At the village of Arros, near Khunnus, 18 hours from Erzeroom, I was a witness to the strong Russian feelings pervading most of the Armenian peasantry. In the evening, a large party of the villagers, headed by their priest and Kehya (chief man), collected round my tent and began at once a recital of real and imaginary wrongs they were subjected to by the Turks and Koords. The priest, a native of Etchmiadzin, in Russia, was their spokesman, and mistaking me for the Russian Consul, openly declared that he and all his flock were anxious at once to become loyal subjects of the Czar, and ready to do his bidding in the event of any future war.

The conversation, which treated entirely on these subjects and sedition, lasted, with but few interruptions from me, amidst the applause of the ignorant Boors⁽¹¹⁾, for more than an hour. I stopped it at length by telling them I was an Englishman, at the same time warning them not to indulge in such indiscreet language, betraying ideas more likely to do them harm than good. I was sorry to hear, during the course of conversation, that an influential Koord Chief, a certain Kassan⁽¹²⁾ Agha, of Giök Su, more to the north, indulged in the same feelings.

From Erzeroom I made the round back again to it by the districts of Tchyldir, Kars, Bayezid, Van, and Bitlis. The northern limits of the Tchyldir, as well as of the Kars and Bayezid Governments, are bounded by the Russian-Caucasian provinces and Russian Armenia, while the eastern portion of that of Van touches upon Persia.

Tchyldir Muttasurruflik.— The road following the foot of the mountains from Erzeroom to Olti, the capital of the Tchyldir Muttasurruflik, is for the most part a gentle descent the whole way, along a good natural carriageable thoroughfare; that, however, in spring and early summer is cut up by brooks and torrents. The town, from its low position, numerous water-courses, and masses of gardens, is unhealthy in the summer and autumn, but the rest of the year delightful, the winters being far more temperate than at Erzeroom.

The Tchoruk Su⁽¹³⁾ and its tributaries the Olti and Pennek streams water the western portion of the district; numerous rills, forming the head of the Koor, the northern.

Excepting the Olti and Pennek⁽¹⁴⁾ plains, which lie very low, and the flat country about Ardahan, Poskow, and Shoshat, near the Russian frontier, this district is characterized by wooded mountains, everywhere traversed by the carts of the country, covered with extremely rich, luxuriant pasture and level highlands; the latter, from their altitude, producing no other crops than barley. But in the former wheat, millet, honey, and butter are extensively produced, while at Shoshat the culture of tobacco is largely

pursued. Near Olti is a mine of lignite, not used for fuel but worked into ornaments, forming a lucrative branch of export, and at Sivree, near Olti also, is a mine of good coal, useful for all purposes, though at present neglected.

Throughout the whole district sheep and horned cattle abound, the latter being far finer than elsewhere in the vilayet, fetching high prices, particularly the cows, as they give abundant supplies of rich milk twice a day. During the past year 10,000 head of cattle and sheep were disposed of to foreign purchasers for the capital, Aleppo, and Damascus, and a considerable quantity of corn and butter exported to Akkhalsik and Akherkel-⁽¹⁵⁾ in Russia.

Considering the scantiness of the population, want for roads, and comparative absence of proper inducement, this province shows great agricultural activity, although cultivation is very limited and money returns small in proportion to what they ought to be, were there suitable means of conveyance to Batoom or other parts of the coast, by which grain and cattle export would be facilitated. For the present a beginning might be made by constructing a highway to the nearest point where the Tchoruk first becomes navigable for boats, namely, to Livanch, twenty-four hours (seventy-two miles) from Olti. This work could be easily and expeditiously finished for as far as Ardanutsch⁽¹⁶⁾, forty-eight miles; a good araba (native cart) road exists already. At present 150,000 quarters of grain are raised in this district, giving, after the wants of the inhabitants are supplied, 50,000 quarters available for export.

The Muttasurruflik consists of the three Kaimakamlis of Olti, Ordahan⁽¹⁷⁾, and Ardanutsch, collectively, containing a population of 64,000 souls, namely :—

	Souls
Circassians and Georgians	7,200
Terrek Imam	13,500
Koords	26,000
Armenians	2,000
Total	48,700

The rest are Turks. In the town of Olti itself, and in some of the villages near the frontier, there are several Moslem families, who emigrated from Akkhalsik after its occupation by the Russians. Their numbers were originally greater, but by degrees they have been and are returning to their friends in Russia.

A few squadrons of Russian cavalry with ten guns, in all 10,000 men, were detached from the brigade encamped on the Göla plain during the late campaign, and after defeating a considerable Turkish force near Göla, and routing another at Pennek, advanced to Duzla, within six miles of Olti, where they remained some time.

All the inhabitants whom I conversed with, while complaining loudly

of the tyrannical conduct and unceasing requisitions of the Turkish officers, who invariably defrauded them of payment, spoke highly of the treatment they experienced from the enemy, alluding particularly to the great profits they derived by supplying their commissariat. Their eulogies render it probable they would hardly regard the national calamity of another Russian war with their country in that light.

Kars Muttasurrufluk.— The direct road to Kars, joining the Olti, Ardahan, and Akkhalsik road, an important strategical position, and as such occupied by the Russians, as shows above, is only eighteen hours (fifty-four miles) from Olti. I however took the round by Ardahan over the Kaullee Dag, and by the Tchylidir Lake to that town, to get a better idea, than I otherwise could, of the people and country.

The Kars Muttasurrufluk, with the exception of the high Soghanlee Dag, is a succession of extremely fertile plains, mostly level, although towards the Arras and Kaghizman rather hilly and undulating, but still very productive, owing to the abundant water supply. Horned cattle and sheep are abundant and cheap, the exports amounting to 30,000 head annually. Wheat, barley, linseed, and hay are the principal agricultural products, and during the course of my numerous travels I have rarely seen anywhere else in Turkey more exuberant crops. The export of wheat to Gumri in Russia seems a steady, though stationary, trade, 30,000 chevrets being sent there every year, as also 40,000 maunds of clarified butter. At the same time, all the building timber used by the Russians at that place for houses and fortifications has been and is still supplied them from the Soghanlee Dag. The same mountain furnishes Erzeroom and the villages in this district with timber and fuel from its valuable forests, but as there is no kind of conservancy practised, all species of wood are becoming dearer every year. It is felled indiscriminately, without regard to size or condition, and fire is often used to ease the labours of the woodman.

If some kind of supervision is not, therefore, exercised, there is every likelihood of Erzeroom being entirely deprived of such necessary materials at no distant date, a calamity I have often brought to the notice of the authorities as likely to occur. To give some idea of the extreme prices paid even now, in consequence of the scarcity and necessarily yearly increasing distance between this town and points of supply, I may mention it cost me during the winter months only 150l. for the necessary firing.

The Kars fortifications are being rapidly pushed on to completion, 2,000 men being constantly employed upon them during the summer months. Of these 1,500 are paid workmen and 500 volunteers from the town. The engineers say that in September the works will be so far advanced as to be available and efficient in case of an attack, but that another two years will

be required to finish them entirely, together with the necessary barracks, store-rooms, hospital and magazines.

The construction of those works there, excepting amongst the Karslees⁽¹⁸⁾, who have twice felt their want, has caused some discontent, as, although nominally paid 5 piastres (about 10d.) a-day, the labourer scarcely receives 2 1/2 piastres, their wages being reckoned by piece-work, taking them generally two days instead of one to complete. Their numbers too are recruited by force, the most distant districts, far removed from the frontier, being required to furnish their quota, who have first to reach the scene of their labours on foot before their pay commences. Such is the dislike to the service that people impressed procure substitutes, paying them, during the five months they are obliged to work, 5 piastres a-day, in addition to the Government rate, from their own pockets, commencing from the date of departure from their village.

The town thirty-six hours from Erzeroom has a population of 2,000 houses — 200 Christian, the rest Moslem — the most loyal in Turkey, as fully proved during the late war and their present sacrifices of time, money, and labour for the fortifications.

The Muttasurrulik consists of the three Kaimakamliks of Zerowshat, Shuragel, and Akbaba, containing among them a population of 51,700 souls, namely:—

	Souls
Terrek Imam	12,900
Koords, in tents	11,100
Turks	23,200
Christians	4,500
Total	51,700

The Koords belong to the Zelanlee, Kizkanlee, Sippikee, and Janadanlee tribes. Of the first 600 families are in Turkey, and 4,000 in Russia. Those who affect Turkish allegiance all reside close to the border, between Ani and Bayezid, none of them being farther than twenty to thirty miles from it.

It was dispiriting, on my onward route to Kaghizman through Shuragel, the ancient Shiraf⁽¹⁹⁾, formerly the richest and most populous district in Armenia, to pass to so many spots marking the sites of towns and villages, some of them only recently deserted, but now encumbered with their ruins or the mean huts of the indigent population that remained. On many

of these deserted sites the massive fabrics of early Armenian churches had successfully resisted the ravages of time and the efforts of man, urged by an implacable hostility to everything Christian, to destroy them. Round several, in spite of decreasing numbers, poverty, and oppression, the Armenians still cling with affectionate pertinacity, dragging on an existence, as well as they are able, under the tolerance of the Turkish Aghas or Beys who, either as the descendants of the Timariots⁽⁷⁰⁾ or in consequence of the poverty of former owners, have in the course of time dispossessed the Christians of the lands and villages about. But the Aghas, though deriving their income from the industry of the Christian fellahs, are unable to protect them or their crops from the rapacity of the Koords, the causes of most of the distress the Armenians labour under. It is hardly possible to enumerate the different methods they pursue to satisfy their wants at the expense of the peaceable sedentary agricultural classes. They are, however, without reckoning forced contributions and «corvée», so various and onerous as to curtail agriculture and stifle industry, reducing both to the smallest minimum compatible with existence. Thus, they have been driven from most of their ancestral lands by the increasing numbers and unpunished licence of the Koords; the crops on lands still in their hands are, when yet green, partially grazed by the flocks of the intruders, who, after what remains is ripened and cut, will not allow the owners to re-sow for autumn crops, as at that time, on their return from the hills, they turn their flocks into the after-grass that then springs up.

An original course a Koord adopts is to extract one of his teeth, and then purposely engage in a quarrel with a Christian, during which blows are of course exchanged. The Koord then makes a complaint to his Chief, producing the extracted tooth in evidence, which he swears was knocked out by the Christian during the quarrel. The Chief inflicts in every case, unless he is bribed by the Christian, a fine in money, varying with the reputed wealth of the falsely-accused aggressor, who has no remedy whatever against his accuser. The «pièce de conviction,» that is, the old tooth, never in any case being impounded, serves for many similar charges, and is sometimes lent to a friend for the like purpose. This custom is so common that a provincial proverb says «A Koord carries his teeth in his pocket.»

*From the depredations of the Koords comparatively little grain is raised in the district of Kaghizman, supplies being brought from Shuragel. The same causes operate against the culture of cotton and tobacco, while the system prevalent in the Muttasurrufluk of compelling the delivery of tithe-hay in Kars itself, instead of taking it on the spot, presses particularly heavy upon the fellah. The fruit gardens in the immediate vicinity of Kaghizman are extensive, yielding 800*l.* sterling annually in tithe, an earnest of what might be expected were labour free from the trammels already noticed. The town contains 700 Moslem and 150 Christian houses, who originally, owing*

to their vicinity to the Russian frontier, and consequent exposure to the attacks and requisitions of the enemy in time of war, were exempt from conscription and poll-tax. They are now, however, in common with all borderers, subject to these impositions, which has created considerable ill-feeling amongst them against the Government.

Bayezid Muttasurrufluk.— Crossing the steep grassy heights of the Danir Kapoo⁽²¹⁾ Mountain, I descended into the Alashgerd plain to Kara Keleesa, and then followed the Murad Su⁽²²⁾, or Eastern Euphrates, to Utch Keleesa and Diadeen, in the Muttasurrufluk of Bayezid.

The fine Alashgerd plain is in the Toprak Kalla Kuzzaa⁽²³⁾, thirty-six hours from Erzeroom. The majority of the inhabitants are Koords of the Chookoor, Zeelanlee, Jelalee, and Knal Hassanalee tribes. The plain is intersected by numerous brooks and deep water-courses that, as was the case this year, sometimes flood the fields, rendering them marshy and unfit for cultivation. These ducts at all times afford an abundant irrigating power, but little advantage is now taken of it, in consequence of the decrease in the real agricultural class — the Armenians — from the intolerable conduct of the Koords. They belong here principally to the Zeelanlee, who recognize as their Chief a certain Mehemed Pasha Surmelee, now at Constantinople; but his presence at the capital, instead of deterring, rather encourages his sons to practise the same injustice that rendered their father so disgracefully notorious while here.

Although the harvest was most abundant the villagers were downcast, as, from the heavy yields, best wheat was quoted at the nominal price of 150 piastres (*11. 7s. 3d.*) per quarter; Government at the same time demanded the tithe in money, instead of in kind. It was the same with grass. On account of its abundance kind was refused; the tax-gatherers insisting upon a money assessment of 60 piastres (*10s. 10d.*) per cart-load, ordinarily sold at 6s. In addition, the collective inhabitants of the plain, which is destitute of wood, were called upon to provide 5,000 poles for the telegraph between Van and Bayezid, and deliver them, eighty miles off, for 40 piastres (*7s. 3¼d.*) each. As only fifteen miles of road remained uncompleted, this large demand on them solely was a palpable injustice; and indeed, as reported, the materials, or their proceeds, were mostly appropriated by local functionaries, principally members of the Bayezid and its subordinate Councils.

During the late war, natives of the plain supplied Government with *12,000l.* sterling worth of grain, for which till this day they have never been paid. The same thing happened to others in this and the Diarbekr Vilayets. The money was in every instance debited to the Treasury, but never reached its proper creditors. It is easy to foretell the effect of such embezzlement on the people in the event of another war.

The Muttasurruflik has two Kaïmakamliks, containing —

	Souls
Turks	28,000
Christians	8,000
Koords	40,000
Terrek Imam	2,500
Bayezid town	
Turks	2,400
Christians	1,200
	3,600
Total	82,100

The Koords, taking all the districts into consideration, belong to the Zeelanlee, Jelalee, Sipikee, Tchukoorlee⁽²⁴⁾, Adamanlee, Mamakanlee, and Haideranlee, all more or less under the influence of Mehemed Pasha Surmelee and his family.

In the new plan for the frontier fortifications Bayezid is left out entirely; as also the entrenched position, twenty-seven miles from it, in the small plain of Utch Keleesa, that was occupied by a Turkish force during the late war. But it is contemplated to erect strong works near Kara Keleesa, twenty miles south-west of the latter, and forty-two hours (126 miles) from Erzeroom, in the fruitful Alashgerd plain.

Van Muttasurruflik.— Leaving Diadeen, I crossed the mountain called Alla Dagħ, peopled by the Adamanlee Koords, to Begir Kalla — the ancient Pergri of the Armenians — in the Muttasurruflik of Van, and from thence through its vast plain and along the eastern shore of the lake reached the latter town. The road, though mountainous as far as Begir, could easily be traversed by carts, the ascents and descents being gradual and easy, over a fine breadth of way. The country, however, is deserted, excepting by the roaming pastorals,— there being only one village between it and Diadeen.

On descending the heights of the Alla Dagħ and entering the Begir and Van plains, the contrast between the bare mountains and country from Kars, thus far entirely destitute of anything like wood, is very pleasing. For here every village is embedded in gardens; while the town of Van itself, built on the shores of the beautiful blue lake, stands at one end of a real forest of orchards, in each of which are the elegant and commodious summer-houses of the natives.

Although the country immediately about is not, from the poorness of its soil and want of water, favourable to cereals, most of the neighbouring districts are highly productive in all sorts of grain and cattle, which, combined with the important manufacturing industry of the town, form lucrative sources of trade. These and other varied productions and trades of the whole Muttasurruflik, find a ready market at Van, and have rendered the city, containing 18,000 souls, of which 10,000 are Armenian, a highly

important commercial site. Its merchants, nearly all Christians, are numerous and wealthy, resorting annually to Constantinople for the furtherance of their operations. Poverty at the same time is reduced to a minimum, as the surplus population emigrate yearly to the capital, where they are universally employed as porters.

The inhabitants of the surrounding country, from the richness of the soil, would undoubtedly make equal strides of prosperity and wealth were they not so completely under the absolute power of the Koords, who here, as elsewhere, either render every place in their vicinity a desert, or by their rapacity and requisitions effectually check all industry. The mischievous plan of employing local Turks or Koords in sub-Governments or other district employments, the temporizing measures the Government has for the last thirty years unfortunately pursued with respect to them, has inclined them to believe no power can reach them, and tended to increase their license, and render practices permanent that formerly were exercised at rare intervals only. Hence it arises that, not only the Haideranlee and Jelalee inhabiting the country about and to the north and north-west of Van, are in a chronic state of turbulence, but the Hakkaree also, a mountainous district south of Van, is in absolute insubordination. Government orders remain dead letters there; it is the Alsatia for all the brigands and miscreants in the land. Murder, robbery, and brigandage are every-day crimes, and when practised against the Christians receive the sanction and support of the so-called holy men, styled Sheikhs, who infest that country, and who, in fact, are as forward as the Koords in every act that fanaticism or avarice can dictate. The principal sufferers, although sedentary agricultural Turks must be included in the category, are the Nestorians, Armenians and Jews.

Within the last two years several have been murdered, others plundered of their property, forced to become Moslems, or emigrate for safety to Persia; while during the same period seven Christian churches have been destroyed, more than thirty human beings killed, virgins and married women abducted, whole villages devastated and plundered, without (in spite of repeated orders from Constantinople) the slightest notice on the part of the Van and subordinate authorities, or an attempt being made by them to check proceedings that promised ultimately to drive all peaceable people over the borders into Persia and Russia. The chief instigators, Sheikh Obeyd Ullah of Katoona and his mureeds (disciples) in the mean time enjoy the favour of the Kaimakams and Mudirs, and the former the adoration of ignorant Koords (blind instruments of his will), as they regard him as little short of the Deity.

The Koords inhabiting the Hakkaree, all incorrigible thieves and brigands, are partly agricultural, but mostly pastoral and nomade. The larger tribes emigrate during winter to the south, and also to Persia. It is during

these migrations that from their concentrated numbers and depredations they commit on their leisurely march, they are the terror of the country through which they pass. The following Table shows the names of the different tribes, their pursuits, and habitual localities:—

Names of Tribes	Numbers	Pursuits	Residence	Remarks
Pinyanish ..	3,000	Agricultural ..	Tchal ..	Sedentary and nomade.
Oromaree ..	6,000	Agricultural and pastoral	Jeylo Sar ..	Ditto.
Doskee ..	4,800	Agricultural ..	Gevver ..	Ditto.
Gurdee ..	7,200	Ditto ..	Shemsadino ..	Ditto.
Shemdeenan ..	4,800	Ditto ..	Neyree ..	Winter in Persia.
Beradost ..	2,000	Ditto ..	Frontier ..	Ditto.
Shekakee ..	2,000	Ditto ..	..	Ditto.
Deyree ..	9,000	Ditto ..	..	Not in subjection.
Pinyanish (Gevver)	3,600	Ditto ..	Gevver.	
Kharaatee ..	900	Ditto ..	Jeylo and Gevver.	
Herkee ..	24,000	Pastoral ..	..	Winter in Mossul; summer in Gevver.
Julamerk ⁽²⁵⁾ ..	6,000	Pastoral and agricultural	Julamerk.	
Beitish' Shebab	4,200	Ditto ..	..
Pinyanish of Norduz	8,400	Ditto ..	Norduz	
Berwar ..	6,000	..	..
Artooshee ..	12,000	Pastoral only ..	..
Shekakee of Albek ⁽²⁶⁾	4,800	Ditto ..	..	Summer in Albek; winter in Persia.
Total ..	108,700			

The Muttasurruflik of Van is divided into nine Kaïmakamliks, namely:—

	Moslems. Souls.	Christians. Souls.
Ardh el Jivaz ⁽²⁷⁾ , containing	9,700	15,500
Arjeesh	8,000	4,500
Mahmoodieh	30,700	5,400
Shattak	12,000	4,000
Möx	9,800	9,000
Kanash	23,000	14,400
Total	91,200	42,800
The Hakkaree —		
Julamerk, Gevver ⁽²⁸⁾ , Albek or Bash Kalla	108,700	111,000
Van and its neighbourhood	17,000	42,000
Total	216,900	195,800

The Hakkaree population is all Moslem or Christian Koord; those of Shattak, Möx and Mahmoodieh nearly all Koord, and Kanash half only Koord.

The Van Government is the most extensive in the Erzeroom Vilayet, and consequently before the amalgamation was always ruled by a Pasha,

independent of the Erzeroom Vali. From its position with respect to Persia, the unsettled state of the Koordish tribes inhabiting it, and the exceptional state of things in the Hakkaree, its proper administration is most difficult. While the whole of its eastern frontier is bounded by Persia, the population immediately on or about the border on both sides are Koords of the Jelalee and Haideranlee. This mixed nationality of one family, and the still unsettled state of the frontier near Kazee Göl, cause interminable disputes between the two Governments of Persia and Turkey. The Koords being equally at home in one country as the other, cross the border whenever they feel inclined, or it suits their purpose either for business or to evade proper punishment due to crimes committed in one or the other country. All attempts to levy taxes, enforce conscription, and arrest offenders are thwarted by a hasty migration to Persia or Turkey, as the case may be. The military cordon stationed along the line that ought, if efficiently organized, to assist Government in enforcing order and obedience, is totally useless for either, while the jealousies and quarrels invariably existing between the civil and military authorities, thwart any well devised action of the former.

The Military Commission for Fortifications, sitting at Erzeroom, proposes to repair the old Turkish castle on the rock of Semiramis, so as to convert it into a strong military work. Its position is important, particularly with respect to Persia, while, as situated in the centre of the Koord country, at a point where the high roads leading from Bayezid through the Hakkaree mountains to Mosul on one side and to Bitlis and Diarbekr on the other meet, it is an advantageous spot from whence to act against an enemy, seeking by the aid of the Koords or other disaffected people, to penetrate into the interior towards the south.

From Van, following the southern shores of the lake over a good though hilly road at times I reached Bitlis, already noticed, and from thence by the western side of the Van lake Ikhlat, situated on its shore.

Ikhlat.— The miserable hovels of the new town are built out of and amongst the splendid ruins of the old Armenian city of Klat. Gardens and ploughed lands occupy the extensive site of this once magnificent place. In the whole of the Erzeroom Vilayet I know no other spot so favourably situated for trade and agriculture, or for a military position from whence the Koords about Bayezid, Malazgerd, Boolanik, and Tchookoor, near Moosh, could be coerced and kept in due subjection, so as to allow peaceable subjects proper facilities to develop their industry and the producing qualities of the extensive lands, now deserted, in its vicinity.

The system of agriculture practised is more careful than anywhere else in my district, and the returns both in quality and quantity, consequently exceed in proportion all other localities in the vilayet. But here again, although only fifty miles from Erzeroom, the Koordish element is paramount, and its effects, as everywhere else where it exists, blighting. The Koords belong to the Hassanalee and Millikanlee tribes living in the vic-

nity of Akhlat, Boolanik, and Malazgerd, under the chieftainship of Soofie Agha, Khaznadar, and Eeseh Oghli. The depredations of their dependants encouraged by, and proceeds shared in by them, are manifest all around. Deserted villages, ruined churches, crumbling mosques, abandoned fields meet the eye everywhere. The ruthless conduct of these ruffians, rendered bolder by the feebleness of the Executive, has rendered what ought to be a paradise a desert. People who formerly possessed thirty to forty buffaloes, besides sheep and cows, at the same time working ten ploughs, are now begging their bread; and within the last two years the Christian villages of Medzk, Kosthiyan, Tapa Vank, Jizroke, Khulleek, Jogkey and Sivratore have been utterly abandoned by the Armenians, owing to the depredations of the people mentioned above. Paying scarcely anything to Government, and receiving hard coin from Damascus and Egyptian dealers for their sheep, they are now the only moneyed class; all the surplus cash of the provincial villagers has by degrees come into their hands. They are in consequence the usurers of the country. There is hardly one Christian not indebted to them for sums it will be impossible for him to pay without sacrificing his all. The interest paid to the Koords is between 3 and 4 per cent. per month, with the additional obligation of keeping a cow for the lender during the winter months for every 1,000 piastres so advanced, or paying 100 piastres in lieu. The inhabitants still remaining in the few villages existing are therefore entirely at their mercy and dependant upon their forbearance for existence. A few of the wealthier Christians, whose position with respect to Government or means enable them to hold on to their estates — if they do not from their influence — suffer openly, constantly sustain serious damage and loss from their secret malice. Their hay and corn ricks are burnt at night or their outstanding crops devoured by the Koord's sheep. It is the aim and policy of those people to drive the industrious population out of the country, or by their system of usury to reduce them to the level of serfs, as then they think they will be able to secure the pasture grounds still remaining to them, and take possession of their fields, for lands forsaken during a certain term lapse to the State, which grants new titles on the payment of small sums for purchase and fees.

The Koords will thus, by a legal process, become the owners of lands their unceasing persecution has robbed from the real owners, at the expense ultimately of the State, which must suffer in consequence of the substitution of a mixed agricultural, pastoral ownership for one of purely sedentary agriculturists. Turks here, equally with Christians, suffer from similar causes, and their complaints were even louder than those of the Christians.

From Ikhlal I reached Erzeroom, via Boolarick⁽²⁹⁾, already noticed, and Khunnus.

On my way I stopped at the miserable village of Pirran, on the Boolanik Lake, containing only fourteen houses, or rather hovels, although a few years back it had a population of 500 souls, owning amongst them more

than 1,000 head of horned cattle; now I had the greatest difficulty in obtaining the necessary milk for tea.

The evening before, a Koord in the service of the Boolanik Kaïmakam, a notorious character, only lately released from prison, aided by six other miscreants of his tribe, the Hassananlee, had broken into the house of the village priest, and after beating him and his son so as to leave them half dead, abducted the young bride of the latter. She was recovered some ten days after, and delivered up to her friends, but in a most pitiable state. It proves the abject terror the Koords have drilled into the Christians by the system they pursue towards them, that, although this assault and abduction took place at an early hour, and the villagers heard the cries of the victims, none of them ventured to their rescue.

The districts I have been treating of, that is, the Vilayets of Erzeroum and Diarbekr, are comprised in an area of five degrees of latitude and the same of longitude.

It is scarcely necessary to allude to the geographical features of this extensive tract. They have been described in former reports, and are otherwise too well known to call for any more detailed accounts here. It will be sufficient then to state that, generally speaking, the country is crossed by high mountain ridges, running from south-west to north-east, throwing off rectangular spurs, inclosing between them vast and fertile plains, watered by large or smaller streams, all rising in the snowy heights of Armenia. The most famous rivers are the Tigris, Euphrates, Arsanius⁽³⁰⁾, Cyrus, Araxes, Harpasus⁽³¹⁾, Acampsis⁽³²⁾, Halys⁽³³⁾ and Lycus⁽³⁴⁾ — known at present among the natives as the Dijleh, Kara Su, Murad Su, and after its junction with the former as the Frat, — Koor, Arras, Arpa Chai, Tchouk Su, Kizzil İrmak, and Kalkyt Su. Every variety of temperature and climate exists in those regions, from excessive cold to burning heat; the natural vegetable products and cereals being also as various as the ranges of temperature, or positions where they grow.

With the exception of a few mountain passes, the natural tracks existing everywhere are easily traversable by caravans, while a little outlay, considering the solid benefits that would certainly ensue, would render them serviceable for other means of transport and conveyance that would materially develop the trade and other resources of this rich country.

The races inhabiting these countries, amounting to 2,314,200 souls, show in their origin and creeds the same diversity as exhibited in the features, climate, and natural productions of their present home. They are divided as follows:—

	Erzeroom.	Diarbekr.	Kharpoot.
Turks	272,500	30,000	140,000
Koords	357,000	391,000	100,000
Christians	411,000	108,000	130,000
Jews	1,200	1,000	Nil.
Yezids	2,000	8,000	Nil.
Kizzilbash	158,000	12,500	30,000
Terrek Imam	29,000	Nil.	Nil.
Arabs	Nil.	118,000	Nil.
Tchetchens	Nil.	15,000	Nil.
Total	1,230,700	683,500	400,000

The four principal races, the Turks, Koords, Christians, and Kizzilbash in this Consulate respectively number:—

Souls.	
Turks	442,500
Koords	848,000
Christians	649,000
Kizzilbash	200,500

It will thus be seen in the Erzeroom Vilayet that while the Christians exceed the Koords, and the latter the Turks, they surpass the former also in numbers in the Diarbekr Vilayet. Each of these classes are capable of numerous subdivisions, the result of immigration from the southern Turkish provinces, different origin, dogma, and pursuits, which have stamped them with unmistakable peculiarities of different people, although subject to one Government, and inhabiting for so many centuries the same countries.

It may be useful to give a short account of those sections, to show how far, in consequence of their present feelings towards the Government, they might be disposed to favour or resist Russian intrigues in this quarter; for I believe that, which personal observation has demonstrated, a large and influential party of nearly all classes and creeds, if not openly, secretly incline to Russia.

With regard to the observations respecting Moslem Koords further on, they must be taken to apply to those living near the border, rather than to the whole class inhabiting Armenia and Koordistan.

Turks and Osmanlees.— In former times all classes of sedentary Moslems were known under the common name of Turks, but since the decline of Ottoman power, and abolition, in Sultan Mahmood II's reign, of that system under which the great majority of lands, such as timars and ziams, were held, another class sprung up, known, *par excellence*, as the Osmanlee. This title is not to be taken in the same sense as we in Europe invariably take it, namely, as signifying any sedentary Moslem subject of the Sultan, for now it is applied to natives of Smyrna, Constantinople, and Roumelia

only, whose education, mode of life, or contact with civilization, have imbued them with advanced and enlarged ideas; or to other provincials, whose long residence at the capital has induced similar feelings, and inspired them with desires of comfort, luxury, and dissipation, for the most part unknown to and uncared for by the families from whom they sprung.

With the decline of the local Beys and others who held the large timars and supplied the greater part of the troops in time of war this new class made its appearance; for its original members being deprived of employment in the provinces, owing to want of necessary influence at the capital, from whence only, in consequence of the exaggerated system of centralisation prevailing, all appointments issued, resorted thither, and never again, although steadily amassing wealth and power, visited their native province.

This system of voluntary expatriation is the characteristic of all provincial placemen in Turkey, and indeed of all others. Their highest ambition, in the decline of life, is the possession of a yali on the Bosphorus, where they lose sight of and forget all old provincial friends and relatives, whom, in fact, they despise.

In consequence of the assiduous court paid by these people to influential patrons at Constantinople and by other means, most of the higher offices of the State, and majority of the inferior posts, both in the capital and provinces, are occupied by the Osmanlees, the Turks being employed only in a few local subordinate Governments, or as Imams or priests. This species of favouritism that threw all Government emoluments into the hands of a few to the exclusion of provincials generally has naturally produced an estrangement amounting to positive dislike between the two sections; for, while the Osmanlee, puffed up with official importance, looks down upon the Turk for his exclusiveness and antiquated notions, the latter, actuated by and recognizing his political importance, detests the former as having imbibed Frankish and other customs they deem detrimental to their country and religion. Thus the common epithet for a dissipated member of their set is «Osmanlee»; while the Osmanlees express contempt for a boorish ignorant man by calling him a Turk. The Turks, as of old, are reticent, abstemious, and fanatical; while the Osmanlees, having lost most of the characteristics of their race, are chatty, more or less dissipated, and affect infidelity. A majority of the members of this latter class, particularly among the military, led away by the crude writings of the «Mukhbir» and «Hurriyet», which, professing liberalism, are, in fact, more ultra-fanatic and conservative than the whole body of the Ulema, now begin to fancy themselves liberals, but their opinions consist in nothing more than the most empty denunciations of Aalee and Fuad Pashas and expressions of disloyalty towards the Sultan. It is possible, then, that the Osmanlees, should the opportunity arise, may, under the name of patriotism, encourage revolution, but the Turks, blindly submissive to fate, as long as their religion is respected, will certainly resign themselves to any dominant power for the time being.

Koords.— The Koords, inhabiting the Erzerroom districts, with the exception of the Hakkaree, were originally immigrants from the vicinity of Diarbekr, and there is only one tribe, the Mamakanlee, said to be descended from the Armenian Mamagonians⁽³⁵⁾, who are natives of the soil. I except the town Koords of Bitlis, Van, and other places, all totally distinct from the great mass of other Koords, who, having merged into Turks, claim no interests in common with the former. The immigration alluded to was partly the result of measures pursued by Edrisi — himself a Koord of Bitlis — to weaken the Koordish element, then even dangerous in the central provinces. This able Minister of the first Selim divided the Koordish provinces around Diarbekr, recently acquired by the Sultan from the Persians, into eight sandjaks, and forced a greater part of the nomade Koords, who then, as now, preyed to a great extent upon the peaceable agricultural population and villages, to emigrate to the southern portions of the Georgian districts, about Erivan, Azerbaijan, and Northern Armenia, which, with other possessions, fell to the Turks, consequent upon Selim's victory over Shah Ismail es'Soofee in the plain of Tchaldaran.

To utilize the forced emigration, to render it palatable and easy, Edrisi at the same time assured the Koords perpetual immunity from taxation, conditionally on their acting as militia for the constant protection of the vast frontier they were located on.

Sultan Murad still further strengthened the Koordish element, by sending additional families, from the south, to the same districts; at the same time, he fully guaranteed them the privileges originally granted by Selim.

The gradual progress of Russia to the south, whereby she has now extended the limit of her Asiatic territory to the banks of the Arras and Harpasus, has had the effect of dividing the allegiance of those immigrant tribes, inhabiting the northern parts of this Pashalik; some portions remaining in what is now Russian territory, principally about Erivan and Bayezid. In this manner it is that three-fourths of the most considerable Koordish frontier tribes — the Zelanlee and its septs — are at present Russian subjects; while the remainder retain their original nationality, although, as far as caste customs are concerned, the two sections remain united under the Chief, sometimes a Turkish, at other times a Russian subject. In the latter case, he resides for the time being in Turkey; but far from renouncing his Russian nationality, avails himself of it whenever it suits his purpose. The nationality of the Chief influences of course his dependants, and I might with greater propriety class the whole Zelanlee, and their offshoots, as Russians rather than Turks. The Chiefship of the largest section of the tribe is hereditary in the Silwanlee branch, upon which the still larger tribes of Jelalee and Haideranlee are more or less dependant, inasmuch as they follow his politics.

The head of the house at present is Mehemed Pasha Surmelee, mentioned further back, who, however, having been appointed Member of the

Shourai' i Douleh⁽³⁰⁾, now resides at Constantinople, his power meantime being delegated to his sons. This man exercises an unbounded influence over all Koords about the Russian and Persian frontiers; and as a large portion of the Silwanee reside near Diarbekr, his wishes and counsels are equally attended to there as here.

Formerly, he lived as much in the Russian territory — where he has numerous relatives — as in Alashgerd, and he has received numerous decorations from successive Governors-General of the Caucasus. He has all the sly shrewd cunning of his race, but is ignorant and unscrupulous. During the late war, although fighting ostensibly on the Turkish side, it is reported he did not abstain from receiving Russian gold. I used to meet him constantly, when he resided here, at the Russian Consulate and at the house of the Russian Commissioners for the Tchetchens, where and at other places I had good opportunities of judging his Russian proclivities. Yet the Government, although two years ago it had ordered his and his families exile, has now honoured him with its confidence, simply because, as it is said, he had a large debt against it, it was not convenient to discharge.

It would be wrong, however, to suppose that all the Koord frontier tribes are cordially united in sentiment with respect to each other; for, as is to be observed among all such families, clan quarrels, blood affairs, and disputes about pasturage, commenced years ago, keep up old animosities and the estrangement they first created.

These causes must for ever bar any combined action on their account for their aggrandisement, and must, apart from other obvious reasons, always frustrate, contrary to Mr. Consul Palgrave's prediction, a union tending to promote the rise of a new Asian power in Armenia or Anatolia. But what I maintain is that, as a whole, the Koords are united in their partiality for Russia rather than for Turkey, and that, therefore, their existence in such debateable land as they occupy is dangerous to the State.

The reasons for such partiality seem clear.

Irrespective of the influence their Russian relatives must necessarily exercise over them, direct home causes have done, perhaps, more to induce this feeling. Amongst the most prominent are the evasion by the Porte of the conditions upon which they first settled here, and the knowledge they have of the weakness of their masters, as compared with the power of Russia. Independant of their long continued unpunished contumacy, the consequence of feeble administrations, and unaware of the interest taken by the Western Powers in the welfare of Turkey, they have been witnesses to the constant progress of the Russian arms, unchecked as it seems to them, for so many years, and have had to regret an absorption of territory that, already inclosing large portions of their old lands, threatens sooner or later to cross the Arras and engulf their present possessions also. How, then, can these boors, believing their dynasty to be on the decline, fail to be biassed by the fair promises of their powerful neighbours, or be influenced by their intri-

gues. Contrasting, too, their position in Turkey with that of their brethren on the other side of the border, increases that bias, for they find the latter, paying simply 3 roubles (10s.) for each tent as taxes per annum, living in quiet and security, having good and regular markets for their produce and free from the conscription, while they, although paying much less to the Turks than their means would warrant, are in perpetual alarm from domestic enemies, *corvée*, general insecurity and fear, the Turks may be at length aroused from their apathy and force them to discharge past and future obligations, for recruits and taxes, in full.

M. Jabo, late Russian Consul here for many years, states — I quote Sir R. Dalryell's report of March 25, 1865 — that the Koords inhabiting the frontier line of Russia, Persia, and Turkey, amount to more than 112,000 souls. His great experience and long residence entitle his information to respect, but my own experience would enhance those numbers greatly, particularly Koords resident in Russia. Taking, however, his numbers as comparatively exact, 87,000 of them reside now in Russia, and 40,000 in Turkey. They are all well armed, and possess a small hardy breed of horses, which enables them to turn out a numerous, though at present vagabond, cavalry, at a short notice. Their pursuits, like all Koords, are predatory and pastoral, with nomadic habits; though during the depth of winter, the severe cold of their regions compells them to inhabit miserable villages. Their general character, particularly as shown throughout the late war, is marked by cowardice, duplicity, and selfishness. At that time of national distress when their common faith was threatened, so long as their sheep were safe they cared little for Turkey; and the Chiefs of powerful numerous bodies of cavalry, immeasurably useful for disturbing the enemy's communications or cutting off his supplies, degenerated into salesmen, and, eager for gain, provisioned the Russian commissariats as long as they remained in Turkey.

Colonel Ushakoff, of the Russian Guard, the narrator of Marshal Paskewich's campaign, mentions the aid the Russians received from the Koords, and their desire to help them, not only in this neighbourhood, but also on their further march to Diarbekr and the interior. During the last campaign they were equally serviceable; and no doubt any future hostilities between Turkey and Russia will find them, if not actually allied with the latter, at least affording her secret sympathy and aid.

Yezids.— Amongst the Koords noticed above, also inhabiting the frontier line, a Yezid Koord tribe, the Sippikanlee, are included. They amount to 5,000 souls; but 2,000 only reside in Turkey, the rest in Russia. From their peculiar doctrines they are detested by Moslems, and consequently lean more to Russia than even other Koords.

The Terrek Imam.— The Terrek Imam — not to be confounded with Turcomans, who, with the exception of 200 souls near Ardahan, do not exist in this vilayet — 29,000 in number, are all agriculturists inhabiting the country between Tchyldir, Kaghizman, and Diadeen. They occupy 155 vil-

lages, none of them more than thirty miles from the frontier. The great body of these people still reside in the southern Caucasian Provinces of Russia; and from their faith, costume, and type, seem to be descendants of Persians, natives of northern Azerbaijan, who immigrated from Persia when that portion of the present Russian territory was conquered by Shah Abbas.

The particular number of these people of whom I am now treating, possess at present the villages and lands formerly occupied by Armenians who followed Marshal Paskewich's army into Russia. They are all Shiah in faith, and therefore opposed to the Turks and Koords, who are Sunnis. With them, as with the Zelanlee Koords, families are divided, some living in Russia, others in Turkey. The latter are constantly going between the two countries, as they sell the greater portion of their produce at Akherkellek and Akkhalsik, both in Russia.

These people do not disguise their Russian and Persian predilections, and, indeed, during the late war, aided the enemy materially in procuring supplies and information, at the same time they took that opportunity of indulging their sectarian revenge against the Sunnis.

The name Terrek Imam is applied to them here because they left their native, or rather, adopted country, for one whose ruler, government, and inhabitants profess religious opinions hateful to the Shiah. They are also known here, as in Persia, by the name of Kara Papaks, from their wearing the large, round, black sheep-skin cap of Azerbaijan. Their original reason for leaving Georgia was that the lands at their disposal were too limited for their increasing numbers.

The real head of the tribe, or Eel Khan⁽³⁸⁾, lives in the north of Persia, and all the Terrek Imam, whether in Russia or Persia, are under his influence, implicitly obey his wishes and render him clan allegiance. As such the Persian Consul here arrogates to himself the right of interference on their behalf at the Serai.

Christians.— The different sects into which the Christians are divided in the Erzeroom Vilayet are:—

	Souls.
Gregorian Armenians	287,700
Nestorians	110,000
Armenian Catholics	8,000
Orthodox Greeks	4,000
Protestants (natives)	1,300
Total	411,000

Armenians.— The advice and ostentations leaning towards Russia of the Armenian clergy in my district, headed by the Catholicos⁽³⁹⁾ residing at Etchmiadzin in Russia, and his bishops in these parts, have naturally enough inclined the more ignorant members of their flocks — rich and poor — to adopt the same views; and considering also that a whole Christian household of ten souls in Russia pays only, for all taxes, 9 roubles (*fl. 10s.*) annually

as against three times the sum here, if there has not been a general emigration, it is simply owing to the fact that disposable arable lands in Russian Armenia are scarce, while the reverse prevails in Turkey.

Everywhere throughout these districts I found the Armenians bitter in their complaints against the Turkish Government, at the same time that they were unreserved in their praises of Russia, openly avowing their determination to emigrate. This bias is owing, as already stated, to the constant hostile teaching of their clergy; at the same time, ample cause for discontent, as has already been shown further back, is afforded by the really wretched system of Turkish provincial administration, the unequal imposition of taxes, scandalous method of levying them and the tithes, persistent denial or miscarriage of justice, and practical disavowal of the Christians' claim to be treated with the same consideration and respect as their equals among Moslems. But experience has taught me that which candour and strict impartiality compel me to state, that the subordinate officers of the local Government are aided and abetted in their disgraceful proceedings or encouraged in persistent indifference to crying wrongs, as well by the criminal assistance as wilful apathy or silence of the Armenian Medjliss members, ostensibly elected by the suffrages of their co-religionists to guard their interests. Unfortunately then, as the evil lies as much with the Christians as the Turks, under existing regulations there is no remedy for it, and there can be none till the local authorities really see for themselves that the Porte's orders are really carried out and to open the way for the introduction of a higher class of people for such employments. As it is, no man of wealth, influence, or character will accept a seat in any one of the Councils; he will not waste time in attending to official duties in a place where he has to put up with the costumely and impertinent insults of the Moslem members, all which are patiently borne by the fawning and obsequious Christians whose living depends upon these appointments. And even were a man of character and ability to accept a nomination at the hands of his community, the Pasha, with whom in fact the fate of such elections lie, as he has the power of rejection, would always prefer a needy, pliant member to one whose riches and position would place him beyond the reach of his menaces or influence. The interests of the community are consequently intrusted to speculators, accustomed to the atmosphere of the Serai in their capacity of revenue farmers or Serails⁽⁴⁰⁾, who in such positions have, in addition to their own disgusting servility, all the chicanery and vices of Turkish officials — acquired a dangerous influence, either as the partners or creditors of the chief provincial officers. Such an influence might be meritorious and useful if exercised in the interests of justice and duty, but it becomes a downright evil when practised, as it always is, for their own benefit or that of their partners in corruption, and scarcely ever for their brethren. The claims of the poor are either neglected or betrayed, and those of the rich depend upon the amount of their presents or degree of their sycophancy. The Armenian

clergy and head men, on their part, purposely ignoring the villainous conduct of their Medjliss members representing their repeated failures of justice that inevitably result as due to the fanaticism or imbecility of a Government determined to ignore all just claims, exaggerate actual facts; the more readily to induce their dependants to adopt the disloyal views they propagate. As they pursue such intrigues, apparently unchecked and with the secret approval of Russian agents, wavering members, formerly content with or resigned to their lot, openly express disaffection or traitorous ideas.

Some of the reasons educated Armenians give to account for this Russian feeling among their countrymen are well expressed in a letter I lately received from one of the most intelligent Armenians in the capital. I am obliged to state that, as far as my experience goes, his views are not groundless. Whils English and French Agents support by all legitimate means the efforts of their missionaries and complaints of proselytes, the Armenians are left to fight their battles through the interested elders or corrupt Medjliss members of their creed, and are thus perforce driven to seek protection from a Power that does everything to gain their sympathy. The inhabitants of the Erzeroom Vilayet, as being closer to and more in contact with Russia, more especially the borderers, partake in a greater degree of this feeling than those living in the remote districts of Diarbekr and Kharpoot, where it is comparatively confined to the Armenian agriculturists; but, here in Erzeroom, I do not believe that one of the members of the higher moneyed classes does not in a greater or lesser degree heartily share such sentiments, while most of them, though Turkish subjects, are supplied with Russian passports. The traffic in such documents, carried on as secretly as possible, is well known and widely disseminated; no large town in my district being free from these pseudo-Russians.

The exaggerated pretensions, overbearing conduct, and ostentatious display of the Russian Consul in his relations with the local authorities, in which it is needless to say other Consuls do not indulge, coupled with the unaccountable servility of the Turkish officials in their intercourse with him, tends, among an ignorant people, to give a false value to his particular importance or rather to that of the country he represents, which by still further strengthening their belief that no other Power than Russia is so able or willing to help them, makes them eager to apply to him in their differences and to acquire documents that to them appear claims to the interference of a foreign Power in their behalf. That the intriguing meddling conduct of the Russian Consul is approved, I may state that, although in disfavour with the Embassy at Constantinople, he is supported by the authorities in the Caucasus, to whose diplomatic Chancery at Tiflis he is directly subordinate. It is the policy of the Russian Government, and, therefore, of its Agents, to encourage such ideas, as also to exaggerate real existing evils, or trump to imaginary complaints, in order to keep up that chronic disaffection so suitable to the line of conduct it has always pursued in limitrophe

Eastern countries. As suited to its interests, such conduct perhaps is excusable; but what can excuse the forbearing attitude of the Turks here, who by their indifference, indulgence, or fear permit a foreign Agent to address them officially in the insulting manner he does, and conduct himself otherwise in a manner towards them that only serves to convince the Rayas of the weakness of their rules and inability, in consequence of the overwhelming influence of Russia, to prevent such conduct.

I have ventured thus far to intrude my opinions of what I believe to be the predominant feeling among the Armenians in this province, because they form in their numbers, position, and occupations the most influential class, and as being the one most favourable under present circumstances to Russian interests, the most dangerous in an underhand way to the State. The only efficient panacea for such hostile feeling rests entirely with the Government. Were it to take efficient measures to insure the content of the people by radically redressing their wrongs, inflicting severe and impartial justice on their oppressors, remodel its system of tithe assessment, that under which at present the other taxes are divided and collected, and really carry out the spirit of its numerous Firmans⁽⁴¹⁾ in favour of Christians, it would, I am confident, remove existing disaffection and promote the present and progressive loyalty of its subjects. Without such a programme they will be forced into bankruptcy; that sooner or later must give rise to emigration or open downright rebellion. I cannot exaggerate the gravity of the situation, nor urge too emphatically that the measure alluded to be recommended to the authorities.

The Armenians of whom I have been treating occupy, with the Koords, the whole frontier line between Kars and Bayezid; they form also the majority in the rich plains and valleys, not including, however, the comparatively limited Deyrsim⁽⁴²⁾ Kizzilbash district, throughout the whole length and breadth of the land between the frontier and true Euphrates. Throughout that extensive tract they may be said to engross all agriculture and trades, while in the towns three-fourths of capital and commerce are in their hands. With the Armenians, as with the Nestorians, it would be politic and just to confide the smaller subordinate Governments or Mudirliks to intelligent members of their creed, but strangers of the capital or elsewhere, instead of to local Turks and Koords. Impartial justice and security would thus be secured to all creeds, and dangers evitated which under the present system may possibly ensue.

Nestorians.— The Nestorians, next to the Armenians, form the most important class of the Christian community; but such importance is not due to wealth or intelligence, but to their position in a mountainous country close to the Persian frontier, their numbers and martial spirit when necessity evokes it, and their practically independent state. They are divided into two parties, the Ashiret⁽⁴³⁾ and Raya⁽⁴⁴⁾. The former are semi-independent; living in secluded valleys or on inaccessible mountains, they take advantage

of their position to evade the natural obligations of subjects, either wholly or in part. From the nature of the country, they engage but little in agriculture, their wants being supplied by the produce of their cattle and sheep.

The collective Ashiret can furnish 13,000 able-bodied men, all armed with good muskets. The knowledge of their strength, their poverty, and the non-fulfilment of lavish promises made to them by the Turks subsequent to Bedr Khan Beg's massacre of the Nestorians, together with constant skirmishes with the Moslem Koords, keep up the martial spirit, unfavourable to entire submission, inclining them in consequence to warlike rather than peaceful pursuits. The Rayas, on the contrary, living in the plains, are essentially an industrious, agricultural class, perfectly submissive to Government.

The following Table, distinguishing the Ashiret from the Raya, gives their collective numbers in the Van Muttasurruflik:—

	Houses.	Souls.
Ashiret Nestorians —		
Tiyari	2,500	15,000
Jeylo	2,000	12,000
Diz	2,400	14,400
Tekhooba	1,500	9,000
Baz	1,700	10,200
Walto	650	3,000
Total		76,500
Raya Nestorians —		
Leyone	600	3,600
Pinyanish	300	1,800
Gevver	600	3,600
Shemdino	45	370
Mar Beesho	1,200	7,200
Deyree	60	360
Gevver Pinyanish	300	1,800
Doskee	20	120
Oromaree	200	1,200
Kharawatta	7	40
Elbek	720	4,320
Van District	700	4,200
Mahmoodieh	500	3,000
Norduz	500	3,000
Total		34,510
Ashiret		76,500
Total Nestorians		111,010

In former reports and despatches I have described the pitiful condition in which they live under the Koords and Turks; their persistent attempts to gain a foreign protection, even at the sacrifice of creed and country; and the overtures of their Patriarch, Mar Shamoon, to the Russian Government. I will not, therefore, enlarge upon the subject here, but remark simply that, although at present such intrigues will not avail them or hurt the Government, yet it will be far different in the event of any future rupture between Turkey and Russia, or Turkey and Persia, for, as stated in my Report to Earl Russell of the 22nd August, 1864, certain Koordish tribes in the Hak-karee side with the Nestorians, either from fear or mutual interest, as all are eager for any pretext to withhold taxes, and equally greedy for gold, no matter whence it comes. Aided by such auxiliaries, or even having their sympathies, any Russian force operating by Van, with a view of penetrating from that side to Moosh and Diarbekr, would derive immense advantage, not so much from actual assistance as from the occupation their certain revolt would afford the Turkish troops to the south, about Mosul and Diarbekr.

Roman Catholics and Greeks.— Neither of these sects in this Consular district have at present any political importance with respect to probable Russian movements, excepting the Greeks, whose paucity of numbers renders their undisguised sympathy with the Russians of little account.

Protestants.— Although not bearing upon the subject, it may be interesting to give the following notice, condensed from the Annual Report of the American Board for Foreign Missions for 1868, respecting the Protestants in my district:—

Bitlis, Diarbekr, Erzeroom, Kharput, and Mardin are missionary stations, occupied by Americans. They have eighty-six out-stations, supervised by native helpers. The whole is collectively known as the Eastern Turkey Mission. The establishment consists of —

Missionaries	14
Female assistant ditto	21
Native Pastors	17
Licensed Preachers	16
Native Teachers	47
Native helpers	68

who have under their charge —

Churches	22
Persons received on profession of faith in 1867	97
Present number of members	697
Preaching places	80
Average Sabbath congregation	3,981
Sabbath Schools	35
Sabbath School pupils	2,566

The actual Protestant community and ordinary schools, with their inmates, are —

Number of Males	2,794
Number of Tax-Payers	1,462
Registered Protestants	4,796
Common Schools	92
Male Pupils	1,492
Female Pupils	677
Total Pupils	2,169
Pupils in the Theological School	48
Pupils in Female Boarding Schools	59
Other Adults under Instruction	624
Whole number under Instruction	2,900

The community contributed during the year to various objects of Christian benevolence — including pastors' salaries, education, and general charities — 6,776 dollars, in gold, an advance of 1,000 dollars on 1867.

The sale of 1,400 volumes of Scriptures, and of more than 8,000 volumes of other books, is one of the best evidences of the awakened interest of the people, when one considers the above sales were all effected in one year, and amongst a class who has only lately been taught to read.

Amongst the Nestorians, in addition, there are twelve out-stations, occupied by twenty-four native preachers, teachers, and catechists. They are under the superintendence of the American missionaries stationed at Oorooniva⁽⁶⁵⁾, in Persia. The Patriarch — Mar Shamoon — through the British Vice-Consul at Mosul — Mr. Rassam — and some of the Nestorian Bishops, lately sent a Petition to the late Archbishop of Canterbury, in which they profess to be left in great spiritual destitution, oppression, and ignorance, despite the efforts of the American missionaries, and implore the aid of the High Church party. This movement has distracted the minds of the people, and is devoid of sincerity, being simply a clap-trap to secure pecuniary aid or relief through foreign interference from political oppression. As such, I would emphatically endorse the words of the American Report that «no aid or encouragement be given to a movement thus likely to distract and embarrass the Christian work in progress.»

The most interesting feature connected with the progress of Protestantism, and a proof of the sincerity of its members, consists in the efforts made by the different communities to become self-supporting and independent entirely of extraneous aid. Such efforts are the more meritorious as

the Protestant is the poorest community in the country, while its taxes, from the sectarian revenge of the creeds its members have seceded from, are heavier than those paid by any other.

Kizzilbash Koords.— I have also on former occasions pointed out the unsatisfactory relations of the Kizzilbash Koords with respect to Government, and the means then taken by Edhem Pasha to control them. Since, however, Derveesh Pasha assumed the chief command of the 4th army corps at Erzingan, his predecessor's well-digested measures have not been pursued, and, consequently, dissatisfaction among them is stronger than ever.

In alluding to the Kizzilbash here, I do not do so to swell the list of those people I consider Russianized, but to note that, from my own observations and conversations with them, their strange religion, position, and habits, they are essentially hostile to the Turks, which would render them disposed to support any movement likely, in their opinion, to ensure them a continuance of their present insubordination or future separation from the governing class they detest.

Although I have scrupulously endeavoured to record impartially all I saw or that was brought to my notice, for good or for evil, during my tour, the tenor of this Report would make it appear, I have confined myself to reciting Christian wrongs without at the same time noticing improvements in their condition, consequent upon late Firmans or orders. I have certainly dwelt principally upon the serious oppression the Christians suffer from the Koords, not because, however, I would make it be believed they are the only sufferers, or that I purposely shut my eyes to the grave injuries sustained also by the agricultural Turks; for personal observation showed me all industrious Moslems, having the misfortune to live in localities partly inhabited by Koords, are under their influence, and, therefore, losers, accordingly; but because the Christians, in addition to deprivation of property, daily jeopardise their lives, and what is more terrible, the honour of their females, in daily struggles for existence; trials from which the Moslems are exempt.

*Agricultural Turks, too, in these northern districts form both in numbers and industry an insignificant class as compared with the Christians. Other means of subsistence closed to the latter are open to them. They are therefore rapidly decreasing there, retiring into the vicinity of towns, where Koords have no opportunity of exercising their depredations. And with respect to other injuries, arising from the vicious system of tithe-farming, substitution of the *Temetta*⁴⁶ for *Vergoo*⁴⁷, and requisition for forced labour, there seems to be no exceptions in favour of particular creeds; all suffer and complain alike. The incidence of taxation falls heaviest on those least able to bear it, and it is increased as the people think unreasonably, for Govern-*

ment has undertaken no outlay or material improvement that can satisfy the people. They are in some measure reimbursed for the large sums they are called upon yearly to contribute. Personal security at the same time is unknown. Many of the local Mudirs and Kaimakams — generally local Koords or Turks — either from fear, relationship, or pecuniary motives, siding with the robbers, and sharing their spoil; and the miserable police, employed for the public protection, being the worst characters in the place, are far more frequently the partners than deterrers of criminals. It is not wonderful, under the circumstances, in these interior provinces, that the population generally is decreasing. No inferences can be drawn with respect to that decrease in them by any person acquainted with the activity of most of the sea-ports of Turkey, its capital, or European provinces, as it is notorious emigration to those places has been and is now still constantly taking place.

Other reasons also, apart from those stated, and the detestable vice common to Eastern countries tending to demoralize a people and curtail increase, or rather in favour of decrease, are to be found in the facts that, previously, no private soldier was allowed to marry, and that in every town or large village morals are so depraved that forced abortion and infanticide are daily crimes. Taking Erzeroom, Diarbekr, Kharpoot, or Van as examples, I do not in the least exaggerate when I state that 1,000 such cases recur yearly in each of those towns, the crime being aggravated by criminals in many cases, not being necessarily unfaithful to their husbands, and therefore anxious to conceal the consequences of illicit love, but that they stifle birth at their instigation, in order to ensure a longer duration of beauty, or to avoid the cares and trials incidental to a numerous offspring. There is no law touching such miscreants, or if there be one, it is so little applied as to be utterly useless to prevent or check these frequent crimes.

It is lamentable, in such a rich country, so close to the sea-board, to witness such, and other impediments to progress, and the restrictions clogging trade and industry in all its branches. A grain country, capable of supplying, even under the present lazy system of agriculture, more than 500,000 quarters of grain for export after all local wants have been satisfied, finds it a losing operation to send any considerable part of its surplus to Trebizonde, 180 miles off, which consequently imports from Russia; and native manufacturers, at one time an important item of domestic industry and trade, are now nearly universally replaced by European imitations.

The fact cannot be too often repeated that it is the want of roads that has paralyzed the resources of this province, and contributed so much to the gradual bankruptcy of the people. Government, I am glad to say, is now making some exertion towards remedying this evil, and has appropriated

20,000l. Turkish per annum for three years, from the provincial revenue, towards completing a metalled highway between Erzeroom and Trebizonde. This, when completed, will at once raise the dimes 100 per cent, besides enhancing the value of all other produce, real property, and trade. The Turkish engineers are sanguine enough to predict its completion in two years from this. If so, and although the Persian transit be lost to this country, the produce of the plains in this vilayet will amply make up any loss sustained in consequence, by competing favourably with the cereals of Southern Russia in the European markets, that will prove a source of wealth to Turkey she has not experienced since the establishment of her rule.

(Signed) J. G. TAYLOR

Erzeroom, March 18, 1869.

NOTES

1. Suleywan - Silvan.
2. Farkeyn - Farghin.
3. Fellahs - Peasants.
4. Murtasurruflik - Mutesaruflik - Canton.
5. Ikhlal - Aklat.
6. Jibraulee - Jibrantee.
7. Kochers - Kochars.
8. Giaours - Kefirs - non-Moslems, Christians, especially Armenians.
9. Murcees - Mursheeds - guides; those who point the right way; spiritual leaders who reveal the mystic secrets of the Moslem religion.
10. Medjliss - town or city council.
11. Boors - Alludingly the Armenian peasants.
12. Kassan Agha - Hassan Aga.
13. Tchoruk Su - Djorokh river.
14. Pennek - Panak or Pana river, tributary to the Djorokh. The plain too where Pennek flows is called after it.
15. Akkhalsik, Akherkellek - Akhaltzikh, Akhalkalak.
16. Ardanutsch - Ardanoosh.
17. Ordahan - Ardahan.
18. Karslees - Karsiots; natives of the city of Kars.
19. Shiraj - Shiraz.
20. Timariots - Turkish landowners, land being given them by the Sultan as compensation to the military service done.
21. Danir Kapoo - Demir Kapoo.
22. Murad Su - Aradzani.
23. Toprak Kalla Kuzzan - Toprak Kale Kaza - The district of Toprak Kale.
24. Tchukoorlee - Chookoorlee.
25. Julamerk - Julamerik.
26. Albek - Aghpag.
27. Ardh el Jivaz - Adeljivaz.
28. Gevver - Kiavar.
29. Boolarick - Boolanik.
30. Arsanias - Aradzani.
31. Harpasus - Arpa Chai.
32. Acampsis - Djorokh river.
33. Hallys - Kizil Irmak.
34. Lycus - Kalkyt Su - Kayl river.
35. Mamagonians - Mamigonians.
36. Shoorā i Douleh - Shoorā-i Dawleh - National Assembly.
37. Arras - Araz - Arax.
38. ov Eel Khan - or Il-Khan.
39. Catholicos - Catholicos - Head of the Armenian Church.
40. Seraff - Sarrafs - money-lenders; bankers.
41. Firman - Imperial edict.
42. Deyrsim - Dersim.
43. Ashiret - Tribe.
44. Raya - Subdued, sedantary and agricultural people.
45. Oorooniva - Oormiya.
46. Tumetta - Temettu - Income tax.
47. Vergoo - Vergee - Tax, contribution.