

ARMENIANS, KOORDS, AND TURKS

James Creagh

**Late Captain of 1st Royals,
Author of "Over the Borders of Christendom and Eslamiah", etc.**

**A man is killed in Paris it is a murder. The throats of fifty thousand people are cut
in the East, and it is a question." – Victor Hugo**

In two Volumes.

Vol. I.

London: Samuel Tinsley & Co., 1880.

INTRODUCTION.

Having frequently visited Asia Minor, and having resided in Armenia for nearly a year, the condition of their inhabitants is to my mind a subject of the most interesting contemplation.

In this opinion I have considered that it was worth while publishing the following volumes, as perhaps they may assist in throwing some light on a question each day attracting more and more attention; and in the future likely to become a problem of vital importance.

Anyone is capable of forming notions about subjects the discussion of which he is constantly listening to; and as I have eyes and ears and no prejudices; and as -resulting from a residence among them of many years - I have some knowledge of Orientals: of their religions: of their prejudices; and of their peculiar modes of thought so different from ours: I am induced to offer these pages to the public.

The Armenians are a high-bred race of the purest Caucasian type; and as blood always tells in men as well as in animals, they still survive, and not only survive, but display symptoms of a steadily-increasing vitality, which is altogether marvelous when we consider the frightful vicissitudes through which they have passed; the long-continued oppression under which they have groaned for centuries; and the cruel persecutions by which they have been driven to the most distant parts of the earth.

The fables of remote antiquity, as well as both ancient and modern history, point to Armenia as the battlefield of the world. Never has a country been more often or more completely devastated; and the names of all the great conquerors or scourges of mankind are associated with it.

Most of the mongrel tribes - who, at different periods, annihilated ancient forms of government and civilisation in these fertile provinces have merged with other races,

become improved, or been lost; but the melancholy and hook-nosed Armenian is unaltered and uncontaminated.

The fine breed - like that of the patient and intellectual Jew - is, perhaps by the direct interposition of an all-seeing Providence, miraculously preserved; and this ancient and classical people, inhabiting a beloved fatherland, toward which the eyes of their countrymen from every part of the world are turned with a hopefulness, generosity, and sympathy equally sublime and touching, at length believe that a crisis in their misfortunes has arrived.

Although much has been written about the Armenians, till quite recently at least they were altogether unknown to the great majority of Englishmen. For that reason, and in the hope that my labours may not be found altogether uninteresting, I have been induced to attempt an historical sketch of those people.

Some knowledge of their antiquity, well as of their connection with the Romans and other conquering races, will add, I believe, to the interest at present growing up with regard to their actual condition; and in this opinion I have consulted all the works treating of Armenia (whether by native authors or not) on which I could lay hands.

Sometimes in support of an opinion, and sometimes with a view to give a clear idea to the reader, I have made quotations from books not always very easily procurable.

The rapidly-declining power of the Ottoman Turks is at the present hour causing alarm and uneasiness on the one hand, and encouraging ambition and fostering intrigues on the other. Both Turkey and Persia are doomed to fall; and neither of them, except as vassal or protected states, can last much longer.

Only three hundred years ago, the Ottoman Turks appeared on the point of becoming altogether irresistible; for Europe at that period was not in a condition to have defended itself against such a naval and military power as would most probably have been possessed by the Ottomans, had the adventurous and extensive plans of Soliman the Magnificent been carried into execution.

Few people have either time or inclination to read through Von Hammer's seventeen volumes of the "History of the Ottoman Turks." Their career, however, is closely bound up with the Armenian question; and as to understand the one, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the other - I have briefly traced the policy of the Ottoman Turks from the time of their first appearance when they seem to have closely resembled a horde of Koords at the present day, till their mature growth into a great military power, so sagaciously founded as in a comparatively short time to grind all its subjects under one of the most fanatical and illiberal despotisms that was ever invented.

Their military institutions were so perfect, and contrast so favourably with the tactics and discipline of European armies, that this undoubted superiority was acknowledged and lamented by every military writer of that period acquainted with Turkish troops.

All the maxims of Turkish policy inculcated a blind and implicit obedience to authority; and as everything bowed before it, individuality was completely crushed out of the nation. The effects of this cruel discipline formed the national character, which even now presents the good as well as the evil qualities of such severity.

It makes the Turks, when properly dealt with and fairly treated, the finest soldiers in the world. Docile, good-tempered, sober, and heroic, there are no officers who have commanded them who do not love them.

General Jomini, in his "Art of War," recommends the commander to use as much as he can the religious enthusiasm of his men. The Turkish Government know as well as General Jomini that it is a powerful agent, and they accordingly seldom fail to work upon it. When his fanaticism is raised, the Turk is as barbarous as his ancestors under Timour the Tartar; and there is no atrocity, of which he is not capable.

He freely massacres the wounded. Even the death of the misbeliever does not satisfy him; and he loves to hack up his corpse or to chop the head off. On the other hand, when held in proper control, the Turk in the hour of victory can be as quiet as an Irishman after a faction fight.

If in the army everything depends upon the disposition of its commanders, the temper and strength of the Turkish Government entirely influences the conduct of its Mahomedan subjects, whose fanaticism can be either allayed, or, if necessary, worked into blind and ferocious enthusiasm.

If the Turk is intolerant and fanatical, he is certainly not more so than his Christian neighbours; and both one and the other have been equally unrelenting and cruel.

In the following volumes I have not thought it misplaced to give a sketch of the history of the Crusaders, their folly, bigotry, and deceit. The ignorant and unthinking masses were worked into religious fury; but diplomacy, while encouraging this fanaticism, equally ridiculous and criminal, cared not so much about the Holy Sepulchre as about territorial aggrandisement.

Are there still among us men as fanatical as the Crusaders? If purely philanthropical sentiments animated the wrath with which so many right-reverend and wrong-reverend gentlemen railed against the Turks, where, oh! where was their humanity when the unhappy Mussulmans were being slaughtered without mercy, and their women outraged, under the supervision of reverend gentlemen of the Bulgarian nationality?

Since the time of the Crusaders down to the present hour, the Turks have every reason to hate the Christians, who, whether by force or intrigue, have always tried to injure them. In the middle ages, the Christians have been better treated by the Turks than ever the latter were by the former when they were strong enough to ill-use them; and the Mussulman religion, in practice, has often been more tolerant than ours.

The animosities of centuries cannot be cooled in a day; but the Turks, and it is quite natural that they should do so, both detest and fear their Christian neighbours. All Christian interference in their affairs, no matter how well-intentioned, is hated and suspected.

The Turks loathe the Christians by tradition, and, so to say, by nature; but they are well aware that these hostile sentiments are returned; and that the pretended protection of Christians is the cause of all Russian interference in the affairs of their country.

To soften, or at least to take the sting out of this rancour, would be the solution of the Eastern Question; for such a settlement of the difficulty would put a stop to Russian intrigues.

The Turkish Government being weak and corrupt, contains all the necessary ingredients for its final and irretrievable ruin. It fears the Christians; and consequently its maxim has ever been, for the sake of its own preservation, to keep them down.

Nothing, except actual compulsion, will ever force the Turks to change this illiberal policy; and whenever they appear to make alterations in it, by such reforms as have been promised at the time of Baker Pasha's recent appointment for instance, we may be quite sure that they have no meaning, and that if any ameliorations are made in the condition of the Armenians, that they will only be carried out in a half-hearted manner, almost tantamount to leaving things as they are.

Whether the new states on the Lower Danube can stand alone or not is very doubtful; but as they have been finally cut loose from both Turkish rule and Russian intrigue, they must, if incapable of governing themselves, fall into the grasp of Austria.

The creation of Armenia into an independent kingdom is an Eutopia which even the Armenians themselves would not be foolish enough to propose.

The Armenian Question must nevertheless be considered; and that important problem consists in whether the Turks are to be forced by England - for unless forced by England they will never do it - to place their Armenian and Mussulman subjects on a footing of perfect equality, or whether the territories inhabited by those people are to fall into the hands of Russia.

Before long the question must be solved in one way or the other.

It is a question, notwithstanding the apathy with which it is generally regarded, of great importance to England; for these countries lie on the road to India, and if allowed to fall under the rule of Russia, will exercise a powerful influence on the inevitable collision sooner or later to take place between the Cossack and the Sepoy.

Having travelled in Bulgaria, as well as in Armenia, I am of opinion that no comparison can be made between the inhabitants of those countries. The Bulgarians, a stupid and heavy race, *had nothing much* to complain of; while on the contrary, the devastation of the plains of Alishkird, mentioned in the following volumes, is no more than an episode in Armenian life.

Although far removed from the seat of war, similar horrors were being enacted both at Moush and at Van, as well as in other parts of Armenia, at the same time.

The reports of missionaries; of consuls; as well as those of travellers who have passed any time in the country; all show even up to the most recent reports sent home to us from those provinces, that the condition of the Armenians is absolutely intolerable;

and that all progress, well-being, or security is perfectly out of the question, until a check is put upon the license, rapacity, and violence of the lawless and brutal Koords.

In Armenia there is neither security for life nor property. Whole districts of excellent land lie completely uncultivated; and so great is the tyranny exercised upon the inhabitant, that they long for any kind of government under which they may hope for security and peace.

Who is to bring them these blessings? It is a question which must be answered.

ARMY AND NAVY CLUB,
February, 1880.

CHAPTER I.

ANCIENT ARMENIA.

Purity and Antiquity of the Armenian Race.- The Ancient Language.- Its Difference from the Modern Tongue.- Armenian Mythology.-Literature.-Ancient Worship.- Its Extent in Ancient Times.- Armenian Kings.- Pompey.-Mark Antony.- Armenia the Battlefield of the World.- Moses of Khorene.- Greek and Syrian Histories.

CHAPTER I.

ANCIENT ARMENIA.

The Armenians pretend to be the oldest type of the human species; and their large eyes and mouths, long noses and dark olive complexions - peculiarities which, like the Jews, they have retained with stubborn constancy, and in spite of the terrible vicissitudes, dispersions, or persecutions they have undergone - stamp them as a distinct and high-bred race.

Their country was once powerful and glorious. Solitary ruins, silent and deserted, speak of past greatness; and the wonderful remains of the dead city of Ani, in the plain of Kars, is an imperishable monument of the wealth, address, and enterprise of fallen grandeur, as well as of the instability of human institutions.

They have two languages: the ancient and modern Armenian tongues, which differ so completely that, a person well versed in the one would be entirely ignorant of the other; and perhaps it may be taken as some proof of the great antiquity of the race that the language of no other people in the world - not even that of the Greeks - is equally dissimilar from that of their ancestors.

The ancient Armenian is richer than the Greek of the same period; and it is so pliable and applicable to every kind of translation, that if, for instance, the "Anabasis" of Xenophon was lost, it might be almost exactly restored again to the Greek from the Armenian rendering.

Armenia is connected with the primeval history of man, and the legends of mythology, as well as the Bible, declare it to be the spot from which the great modern nations originally wandered. Like all ancient histories, those of the Armenians are hardly worthy of serious attention. They declare that the present inhabitants of the country are descended from a certain Haik, who was a grandson of Japhet, the son of Noah, and that for that reason the country was called the land of Haik. The modern name of Armenia was given to it by foreigners, from that of a certain King Aram, who was of course, according to these fairy tales, the terror of the world.

No people in the East have given so much attention to history as the Armenians; and although on the introduction into the country of Christianity all Armenian books were burned, the monastery of Echmiadzin was found to contain a series of documents dating from the very earliest times. Here had been buried for centuries upwards of fifty chronicles and histories; and although the greater part of them have never been translated, the labours of Messrs. Langlois and St. Martin give very succinct accounts of the Persian and Mogul invasions, and throw a new light on the state of the East during the middle ages.

Mar Apas Catina, a Syrian by birth, was, under instructions received from the Armenian kings, sent to Nineveh, in order to search for records of the Armenian race. So successful were his endeavours that he at last found a very ancient work bearing the inscription: "This book was, by order of Alexander the Macedonian, translated from Chaldean into Greek, and contains the history of the first ancestors." From this celebrated manuscript, Mar Apas Catina only extracted the records of Armenia; but, says he, "the history of our satraps is prolonged in the book as far back as Sardanapalus of the Chaldeans, and even longer".

As this historian mentions the tyranny exercised by the Couchans in Armenia, it shows the great age of the composition from which he gleaned the sources of his information, because, according to the Biblical account, as well as according to the statements of the most ancient Parsee writings, there existed on the 'banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, and in a prehistoric time, a non-Semitic people called Coushans or Coushites.

Mar Apas Catina gives a very circumstantial account of the building of the remarkable town of Van, as well as of those marvellous works in its neighbourhood, which, although carried out by the orders of Semiramis, are still, in their ruined condition, an object of wonder and curiosity to the modern traveller. The celebrated Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned, and the account given of the fate of the sons of Senacherib corroborates not only the Bible, but also the fragments of Berosus as they have been preserved in Eusebius.

Previous to the introduction of Christianity the Armenians adored - in common with the Medes and the Persians - some of those vile gods so often alluded to in the books of the Old Testament. Every abomination that the depraved appetites and enervated passions of the priesthood could suggest was practised at these shrines, and even the blushing virgin, terrified at her imaginary sins, sacrificed her virtue for the propitiation of these beastly divinities.

With his usual anxiety to doubt everything which appears contrary to our ideas of the laws of nature, Voltaire refuses to credit the possibility of the existence of such turpitudes, and in that lively vein of humour with which he knew so well how to throw ridicule on still graver subjects, wittily declares that the *valet de place* of Herodotus brought him round disorderly houses, and assured him that their occupants had come from the most distant parts of the empire, to be initiated in the mysteries of the goddess

Tanais, Anaitis, or Melita, as she was called at Babylon.

In ancient times Armenia was washed by the waters of the Mediterranean, of the Caspian, and of the Black Seas; but the last really independent king of that extensive and powerful country having formed an alliance with Darius against Alexander the Great, perished upwards of three hundred years before Christ, fighting against that conqueror.

Armenia was reduced to servitude. At Alexander's death the Armenians aimed at regaining their independence; but the Seleucidae obliged them to accept governors appointed by the Greeks. During the reign of Antiochus the Great, whose kingdom extended to the Hindoo Koosh, two men, whom he had appointed governors of Armenia, proclaimed themselves kings of the provinces to which they had been sent as satraps. The success of their rebellion was so unexpected, that these vassals were encouraged to extend their conquests, and invading with a large army the countries of the Medes, of the Iberians, and of the Chalybians, they added so many new provinces to their dominions that Justin considers Armenia, as it existed during his time, second only to Parthia in wealth, power, and extent.

These successful rebels divided their conquests into two kingdoms, called, respectively, Armenia the Greater and the Minor.

The endeavour of Antiochus to recover his lost provinces ended in so complete a failure, that he was compelled to make peace with his revolted subjects, who, to secure themselves and their posterity in the provinces they had won, entered into an alliance with the Romans.

Previous to the reign of Tigranes the Great, there is a chasm of about seventy years in the history of Armenia. Tigranes, however, about one hundred years before Christ, was induced to enter into an alliance with Mithridates Eupator against the Romans, whose power gave great jealousy to all the Asiatic princes.

In the meantime the Syrians, tired of the eternal intestine quarrels of the Seleucidae, induced Tigranes to take possession of that country, to drive out Antiochus Pius, and thus to extend his dominion from the Euphrates to the sea. For eighteen years Tigranes governed Syria, till it was reduced to a Roman province by the arms of Pompey. The former reduced Armenia Minor, led his victorious army against the Asiatic Greeks, and compelled all the neighbouring provinces and tribes to acknowledge him as their sovereign.

Assuming the title of King of Kings, he believed himself invincible; employed crowned heads to wait upon him as menial servants; and never rode out unless accompanied by four kings running after him in the garb of footmen.

With only two legions and three thousand horse, Lucullus, having previously boasted at Ephesus of the victory which he was about to gain, 'marched boldly into Armenia. "If these men," said Tigranes, on first seeing the Romans, "come as ambassadors, their number is sufficient; but if they come as enemies, they make but a very indifferent appearance." This day was marked in the calendar as unlucky, "it is

therefore," remarked Lucullus, "more incumbent upon us to behave ourselves with more gallantry, that so dismal a day may henceforth become a day of joy and mirth for the people of Rome."

The superiority of the European over the Asiatic was never so wonderfully displayed as on this occasion. The army of Tigranes was utterly routed, a hundred thousand of the infantry were slaughtered, none of the cavalry escaped, and the Romans lamented only five men killed and a hundred wounded.

"Instead of standing to receive the Romans," says Plutarch, "they set up a cry of fear and most despicably fled without striking a blow." Antiochus the philosopher declares, that the sun never saw such a battle; Livy, that with such inferior numbers the Romans never engaged such a multitude; and Strabo, that the Romans laughed at the notion of using weapons against such vile slaves.

It was in vain that Tigranes endeavoured to incite the Parthians and neighbouring princes against Lucullus. "The Romans," says he, (according to the fragment of the Fourth Book of Sallust's History)," are at war with all mankind. They pillage kingdoms, sell their inhabitants for slaves, plunder the temples of the gods, acknowledging no other law than their own arbitrary will and pleasure." A mutiny among the soldiers of Lucullus caused the latter to be succeeded in his command by Pompey, to whom Tigranes surrendered himself as a prisoner, but was allowed to retain his kingdom as a tributary of Rome.

Mark Antony plundered Armenia about forty years before Christ, and returning to Alexandria laden; with booty, placed the son whom he had by Cleopatra on its throne. During the reign of Nero the Romans were shamefully driven out of Armenia by Vologeses, the King of Parthia, but the former drawing together all their forces, reduced the whole country to subjection. Tiradates was crowned King of Armenia at Rome, where, falling at the feet of Nero, the latter placed the crown upon his head. He was succeeded by several kings, who held their authority as mere vassals of the Roman Empire, till Trajan, adding Mesopotamia to his dominions, reduced the ancient state to the condition of a mere province.

Armenia has ever been the battlefield on which the greatest conquerors of antiquity struggled for the sovereignty of the world. Bel, Nimrod, Semiramis, and Sesostris forced their way through it. The Assyrians and the Medes, the Medes and the Persians, Darius, Xerxes, and Alexander the Great, as well as the Romans and the Parthians, fought in Armenia for the dominion of Asia.

The fall of Mithridates the Great removed the barrier against Rome, but as Armenia lay on the direct road to Parthia, it was devastated and laid waste by cruel and bloody wars. When the Roman army occupied the kingdom of Bosphorus, it was brought so close to the Persians that Armenia suffered from the almost continual wars waged between those rival powers, and the whole country was plundered alternately by the soldiers of Theodosius or of the Shah Shapar.

Its ephemeral independence trembled under the authority of Byzantium or of Iran;

and although it was ruled by kings, or satraps, or governors of Armenian birth, they existed only as the slaves of foreign masters. The long-continued state of anarchy under which they lived had a marked effect on the character of the people; and twelve hundred years ago the Armenians are thus described by their own great historian, Moses of Khorene: "Doctors, ignorant and pretentious; monks, hypocritical and vain; ecclesiastics, full of presumption, enemies of science, and performers of buffooneries; people, insolent and idle; soldiers, brutal and boasters; princes, associates of thieves; judges, false and anxious for presents; all sentiment of shame or charity disappeared."

Although many historians of the earliest Armenian periods were either Greeks or Syrians whose works have been preserved in Armenian translations, Moses of Khorene was an Armenian by birth, and his history is of the deepest interest, not only on account of his picture of the state of society in which he lived, but also on account of his quotations from Berosus, Abydenus, Manethon, Cephalion, and several other ancient writers whose works perished in the Alexandrian Library.

CHAPTER II

THE VICISSITUDES OF ARMENIA.

Armenians the First Christiana among the Gentilea.- Theology.-The Kalifs.- The Roupenian Dynasty in Annenia.- The Crusaders.- Visit of Leon, the Last King of Armenia, to London.- Timour the Tartar in Armenia.- His Cruelties.- The Armenian Historian Thomas of Medzoph.- His Pathetic Account of what he saw.- The Armenian Historian Chamchian.- His Love of Russia.

CHAPTER II.

THE VICISSITUDES OF ARMENIA.

The Armenians are celebrated in ecclesiastical history as the first people, outside the limits of the Roman Empire, who embraced Christianity. In the year 302, King Tiradates was baptised by St. Gregory the illuminator, and this circumstance being in the eyes of his subjects incontrovertible proof of the truth and sanctity of the new doctrine, they all became Christians in a mass.

To this day they are the pure disciples of Eutyches, and still believe that the body of Christ existed of a divine and incorruptible substance. Centuries of cruelty, of oppression, and of the most odious tyranny, have failed to shake the faith of the poor Armenians; and, although their country has been depopulated by the most ruthless massacres of which history makes mention, and although by the infamous policy of their conquerors they have been driven like hunted animals to seek refuge in the most distant parts of the earth, they have always "preferred the crown of martyrdom to the white turban of Mahommed."

The rise of the religion of Mahommed caused Armenia to cling for safety to the Greek Emperor Heraclius, who gave her native-born governors called Curopalates; but the Kalifs or successors of the Prophet, by the force of their irresistible arms, brought the whole country under the dominion of Mussulman rulers called Osdigans. Till the middle of the ninth century the country was a prey to constant revolutions caused by the fanaticism of the Mussulmans, as well as, it is said, by the pride of the ancient Armenian nobility.

The Kalif acknowledged Ashod, an Armenian, together with his successors, as governors of the country; yet, although this dynasty arrogated to itself the pompous title of King of Kings, and attempted to resist the growing power of the Seljukian Turks, they were trampled beneath the hoofs of the invading hordes.

The extirpation, in the thirteenth century, of the Seljukian Turks by the Moguls of Genghis Khan was followed by the complete servitude of the Armenians; for although

within the ancient limits of the kingdom of Haïstan, or Armenia, a remnant of that nation still formed a kind of independent kingdom, sheltered among the valleys and fastnesses of Mount Taurus, the vast majority of the race groaned in Persian or Tartar slavery.

The contemptible dynasty of the Roupenians lasted for about three centuries; and King Leo, who established very friendly relations with the Lusignans, was styled royal by the crusaders. As he adopted the Catholic religion, he separated, himself by an impassable barrier from his orthodox countrymen; but the titles of barons affected by his nobility, as well as the number of French words used in the Armenian manuscript of his contemporary historian Sempad, are proofs of his close connection with Europeans.

The Roupenian Armenians fought bravely and successfully against both the Greeks and the Turks; but, notwithstanding their alliance with the Moguls, they were totally extirpated by the Egyptian Mamelukes.

Leon VI., the last King of Armenia, was redeemed from his captivity in Egypt by John of Castille; and after wandering about Europe as a mendicant, and even visiting London in the reign of Richard II., died in Paris during the year 1391. The name of Armenia was thus blotted out of history. For five hundred years the annals of a people broken under the Persian yoke or the Turkish sabre contain no memorable events; for "the history of Christians submitted to Mussulman laws," says Von Hammer, "is only an uninterrupted scene of violence and tyranny."

In every war which has desolated Armenia, the wretched inhabitants, without having any interest in the quarrel, have been ruthlessly put to the sword. When Timour the Tartar, at the head of his fiendish hordes, swept over Asia Minor, destroyed, like a flight of locusts the fairest regions of the earth, conquered the Turks at the celebrated battle of Angora, and massacred the last remnant of the crusaders at Smyrna, his historian Sherrefeddin celebrates as pious works the indiscriminate slaughter of the Armenian Christians; but Thomas of Medzoph, an Armenian, who witnessed these atrocities, thus wrote of them in the year 1424:

"A crowd of Christians, reduced to wander here and there among the hills and mountains, perished in the torments of hunger.

"I am able neither to enumerate the dead nor to express the groans, the tears, the shrieks, and the ruin of our nation.

"The Kurd Paghesch ... pillaged, killed, and cut the throats of many of our families ... he completely exterminated the Armenian nation. The troops of Skandar ... took towns and villages, monasteries and hamlets: everywhere they pillaged and destroyed.

"They left neither bread nor grass ... They devastated the country in a horrible manner ... For fear of the enemy, we wished that the sea would swallow us up; while we listened without ceasing to the shrieks and wails of women and children ... In truth, the enemy overwhelms everyone with blows, and gives the bastionade."

Multitudes of Armenians having hid themselves in caverns and among rocks, "the enemy advanced round the mountain from all sides, like the eagle which pursues the bird of heaven; they shouted and vociferated with all their might.

"They filled with terror the hearts of men and women, which makes one tremble with as much horror as if the day of judgment had come. They massacred the rich, and went so far as to circumcise some of them and to tear them from their fate. They separated the women and children from the fathers of the family, and carried them into captivity. The mother called her son and the son his mother.

'Oh my mother,' said he, 'who will take me to see thee again!' The mother answered: 'Cursed be the day of thy birth! O child, thou must walk upon a sea of grief!'

"Such was this state of unheard-of calamity that it is impossible to describe it in a written composition; but we want to give those who come after us some knowledge of these things, so that you may weep bitterly over the ruin of the Armenian nation, for we ourselves have been in person in the midst of these events.

"The enemy took possession of much booty, and seized our unfortunate children to an incalculable number, as well in the towns as in the villages. They took an innumerable crowd of" women and children. Alas! Misery upon us, desolation upon us, from that day till now, and still on in the future.

"Behold, for seven years we are exposed to a terrible chastisement. In fact, the sword has broken, famine has killed, captivity has decimated, and the wild beasts have devoured man; birds have devastated the harvests, and toads and rats have destroyed the fields. It is a greater punishment than that of the Babylonians in the days of Abraham, arid much more cruel than the plagues which struck down the Hebrews and Egyptians.

"They reduced to captivity the wives and children of these innocent men, and oppressed the Armenian population in tormenting the men with fire and iron, as well as by inexpressible tortures ... Making even the women carry loads, they drove them through the snow, in which they perished by thousands ... One day was so frightful, in consequence of the Cruel and sanguinary race of Kurds, that it was altogether similar to the day of judgment.

"In all the extent of our territory, our country was filled with servitude and tears, with groans and sighs." The inhabitants "dispersed into Egypt, Khorassan, into the country of Bagdad, into Daghestan, and into an infinity of countries. The infidels said, 'Where, then, is Jesus their God? Let Him come and save those who believe in Him.'

"We cry and we bemoan our ruin with the liveliest grief, with lamentations and sighs; for innocent children; holy lambs and flocks redeemed by the blood of Christ; and chaste spouses delivered into the hands of the impious and thrown amongst an innumerable number of unbelievers: have been lost for ever."

The wretched Armenians, without ties and without land, have been wanderers, sometimes in single families and sometimes in colonies, over the face of the whole earth, and from the nature of their existence became traffickers and merchants between Europe and Asia. After the time of the Mogul invasion they followed those hordes to Astrakan, Kazan, the Crimea and the Ukraine.

Under the government of the Ottoman Turks large numbers settled in Constantinople. The Persians, perceiving the utility to their dominions of the establishment in it of such a thrifty, peaceable and industrious race, forcibly transplanted myriads of them into the suburbs of Teheran, from where they emigrated to different parts of Hindustan. Others settled in Russia, Poland, Venice, France, and even England.

"In consequence," says the Armenian Chamchian in his history of his own country, published over fifty years ago-"in consequence of the tyranny which the Mahommedans exercise over the Christians whom they have subjected to their power, Armenia is almost depopulated. The inhabitants seize every opportunity that occurs in order to leave their wretched country and settle in places under milder government. Russia being the nearest Christian power, multitudes have migrated thither, and have been uniformly treated by the Czars with as much kindness as their own native subjects. There are many thousands of Armenians naturalized in that vast empire, who have risen to opulence by their industry, and not a few who have been elevated to high offices of trust by the late Emperor: Alexander; a proof as well of the great esteem which he entertained for the nation, as of his liberality of sentiment in regarding them equally eligible for eminent positions as his own: native-born subjects."

CHAPTER X.

THE ARMENIANS.

The English Protectorate of Asia Minor popular with all Classes. - Echmiadzin. - Tolerance of the Armenians. The Patriarch. - The Nonsense written about Armenia in England.- Narses. - The Bishop of Baibourt. - Interest attaching to the Armenians. - Their Dispersions. - The Armenians a Nation. - The Lever they give to Russian Diplomacy. - Protection of Russia hailed with Delight. - Russian Officialism detested. - Strong National Feeling among the Armenians. - Mr. Bryce. - The Patriarch's View of Russia. - European Accounts of Armenia. - Difficulty of getting Information. - Examples. - General Loris Melikoff. - Reasons why the Armenians hate both the Russians and the Turks. - Their Fear of talking freely to Strangers. - Amusing Characteristics on the Capture of Hassan Kalé by the Russians. - Joy of the Armenians at that Event. - Russian Intrigues in Armenia. - Prince Joseph Dolgorouki made Head of the Armenian Church. - Apathy with which the Turks and Persians regarded this Appointment. - Armenians capable of the highest Civilisation. - Russian Meddlesomeness. - Real Liberty to the Armenians will stop Russian Intrigues. - Turkish Government fears Emancipation of Armenians. - Armenians the "smartest men" in the World. - Turks ever mistrustful of the Christians.

CHAPTER X.

THE ARMENIANS.

Political writers have passed the most severe strictures on the English protectorate of Asia Minor; yet it has struck me as very remarkable that long before such a sagacious project was mooted, or perhaps even thought of, a similar scheme was mentioned by the Armenian Bishop of Baibourt, whose ideas on that subject seemed to coincide with those frequently expressed both by Christians, Catholics (as they like to be called), and Turks, in every part of the country where I had opportunities of hearing their notions on the absurdity and inequality of the Sultan's rule.

This opinion was unanimous; and as the people concerned appear capable of forming clear ideas on the system most suitable to their wants, the benevolent designs of the English Government for the guidance and protection of Turkey, as well as for the support and care which it is hoped will be extended equally to all men without distinction of creed, may succeed in effecting a vast amelioration in the social condition of those benighted provinces.

It is true that the free institutions of the West appear unsuitable to the East; and if, by means of an European constitution, the Biblical inhabitants of Asia Minor are civilised and reformed, it will contradict the experience of millions of men during thousands of

years.

The convent and cathedral of Echmiadzin built in the year of our Lord three hundred and five, on the site of a heathen temple,- although frequently sacked and destroyed, has ever been restored by the piety of the Armenians; who as before remarked, come hither from the different parts of the earth, to which - in consequence of the fearful vicissitudes of fortune by which they have been so long overwhelmed and crushed down - they have been driven or scattered.

The Patriarchs of Echmiadzin, who are really the sole chiefs of the whole Armenian nation, have constantly resided here for upwards of four hundred years.

Among all the Eastern Christians, none are so tolerant as the poor Armenians; for, although they hate the Catholics on account of their interference in the affairs of their Church, as well as on account of the gross libels with which they have frequently been assailed by unscrupulous Jesuits, they acknowledge as Christians and co-religionists the baptised of all persuasions.

In the cathedral is built a monument to Mr. Macdonald, an English Ambassador to Persia, who, dying in the neighbourhood, was interred within its walls; and the burial of a heretic in such a sacred place is a clear proof of the kindness and indulgence, towards even Protestants, on the part of the highest Gregorian ecclesiastics.

The Pope is so far acknowledged by the Armenian Church, that he is allowed to be the first Patriarch of Christendom; but the Patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople, as well of course as the great Patriarch of Echmiadzin, are in every way his equals.

In reality, however, the Patriarchs of Jerusalem and of Constantinople have no greater claim to authority than those of either Lisbon or Venice, because any of them can be deposed by the Catholicos of Echmiadzin, as he is called; while he, being anointed, sits upon his spiritual, and indeed, so to say, temporal throne as securely as the Pope himself.

Nobody can depose him.

For centuries no separate Armenian history can be said to exist, because that unhappy people, subjected to either the Turks or the Persians, have lived only as slaves.

The Armenians do not look to the Russians?

The simplest answer to such a question was given five-and-thirty years ago by the Patriarch Narses to the enlightened and far seeing traveller, Baron Haxthausen of Berlin. "For two hundred years," said he, "we have been looking to Russia, and hoping for salvation from her. I could see safety nowhere but in alliance with Russia."

"Tell me," said the Armenian Bishop of Baibourt, "why you wise and sagacious English people read and write such absurd nonsense about Armenia and the Armenians in your honourable newspapers?"

Why indeed! Because such information is not intended to enable men at a distance to form clear notions on subjects concerning which they are entirely dependent

on the reports of others; but it is, on the contrary, meant for the advancement of so-called party interests.

Armenia must ever be one of the most interesting countries on the face of the earth; because from here has spread out the legends and religions of the world; because here, since the prehistoric days of Nimrod, Semiramis, and Sesostris - since the more modern wars of the Assyrians, the Medes, and the Persians; of Darius, of Xerxes, of Alexander the Great; of the Romans, of the Parthians, of the Arabs; of Genghis Khan, as well as those of the devastating hordes of Timour the Tartar - the peoples and nations of the world have struggled for the dominion of Asia.

It was in these pastures that the Sooni and Shiah sects fought together for centuries; and now Christianity and Mahomedanism, apparently in accordance with those eternal laws of fate constantly directing the affairs of the universe, are preparing for their final struggle on ground which may be called the lists of the world; and which seems destined by nature as an artery for the transmission of the riches of the earth.

How is it possible not to feel compassion and sympathy with a classical people who, like trembling willows overwhelmed by the forces of tremendous floods, have nevertheless not been entirely swept away; but who have, on the contrary, and notwithstanding the smallness of their numbers, ever preserved their patriotism, their language, and their religion.

The majority of the nation is scattered over the face of the earth, where they exist, like the Jews, in separate colonies or communities; but the nationality has never been dissolved.

The old language of the fatherland has never been corrupted nor forgotten; separation from their kindred seems only to increase their pathetic attachment to ancient customs, habits, and the cradle of their race; and to-day, after centuries of fierce persecutions, they seem destined as the agents by which Asia Minor may become again civilised.

The dispersion of the Armenians has been compared to that of the Jews; but, unlike the latter, the former are a nation with a home, towards which their eyes are constantly turned, in which their centre of political and religious life is nourished, and of which Echmiadzin is the capital, and the Patriarch or Catholicos the king.

At his call, the Armenians living beyond the frontier of Armenia, and especially those of India, subscribe freely enormous sums of money for the support of their national church - and for the advancement of learning and culture in their dearly loved and elegant native tongue.

According to the traditions of the Armenians - Echmiadzin is built on the site of the Garden of Eden; and the angel with the flaming sword was the neighbouring Mount Ararat, at one time, without doubt, a burning volcano.

Russian diplomacy saw, in the discontented Armenian population of Turkey and Persia, a means by which their hold or pretensions on Asia Minor might be strengthened; and by degrees Muscovite influence began to be felt, not only in the

election of the Patriarch, but in the interior administration and economy of the Armenian Church - which may, in the absence of any other kind of autonomy, be called the Armenian Government.

The protection of Russia was hailed with delight; and says the calm and impartial Haxthausen: "The Russian occupation of their country was regarded by them not as a conquest, but a deliverance. They are the only people in countries south of the Caucasus really faithful to the Czar; a fact too little regarded by Russian officials."

Notwithstanding the great benefits to the Armenians, consequent on the substitution of the Government of the Czar for that of either the Sultan or the Shah, in the provinces which they inhabit - the unnecessary, impertinent and overbearing interference of Russian officials with regard to education, as well as to internal government, causes them to contrast such meddlesomeness with the indifference of the Turks.

Of all subject Asiatic races, the Armenians are the most national; and as they love their language as well as their country, nothing is more detestable to their minds than a process of Russification, which they believe will eventually absorb them into a people for whom they have no other affection than such as a weak and timid man has for the policeman.

Mr. Bryce's opinions upon the subject tally so exactly with what I have myself heard from Armenian priests, peasants, and merchants in several different parts of Armenia, that I am induced to quote a passage from his work, in which, with I think very even impartiality - he sums up in a manner equally lucid and natural. "Seeing," says he, "is like nothing else. Seeing with one's own eyes, and hearing people on the spot talk - people who are themselves so to speak, part of the problem - brings home to one certain facts and principles with a force and clearness which no amount of reading can give. Life and property," in the words of this accomplished and unprejudiced traveller, "are secure under the Government of the Czar. Antagonisms of race and religion are far less fierce than in Turkey, and Mahommedan races live contentedly under a Christian Government. When foreign armies enter Armenia, they are welcomed as deliverers by the subject population; and when they retreat, it is upon these unhappy subjects that the inhuman vengeance of the Turkish soldiery is wreaked. In Armenia at this moment (1877), a timid and inoffensive people, who have never meditated insurrection, who are not accused of anything more than sympathy with the invaders, are being slaughtered by thousands in their blazing villages. I dare say the generals in command have not ordered or approved these massacres and torturings. That they are the spontaneous acts of irregular soldiers perpetrated on their own unarmed fellow-subjects, makes them even a more dreadful evidence of the condition of the Turkish Empire. Russia, although her Government is mainly military, does not neglect her duties to the people; and by creating security, has made it possible for foreign capital and enterprise to flow into the country. The laws are equal and mild for all subjects; and as there is no disaffection, I do not think," continues Mr. Bryce, "that there can be much oppression. In Turkey, the

police are inefficient, the irregulars cannot be kept in order, the Koords systematically defy all authority, and indeed, although living within the bounds of the empire, have never been properly its subjects. No amount of supervision and reporting will ever get over this fatal defect of weakness. Annexation to Russia would of course be a boon to the Armenians, as compared with their present position; but in itself not a good thing for either the annexed provinces or for Russia itself."

"At Echmiadzin," says the Patriarch Narses, "the centre of my Church, I conceived the idea of founding a great academy for all the Armenians scattered throughout the world, with a college for the higher kind of spiritual and secular education. This institution, I hoped, would found a bond of union. The number of students was to have been two thousand. All preliminaries were ready, the locality was determined, and the intellectual plans were designed. The Armenians are animated by an intense desire to advance their national culture, and are ready for any sacrifice to attain this end. Although but a poor monk, I am the head of that national Church which the Armenians prize above everything, and hence am richer than, many kings. It only required a summons from me, for millions to be collected for such an object. I had even then received offers to an enormous amount, especially from India. I was able to assure the Russian Government that I sought nothing more than its sanction: the funds I could myself provide, and the institutions of the school at Tiflis would show how readily I could obtain pecuniary means for larger enterprises. But intrigues and suspicion arose; the permission was refused, and I was sent into a kind of exile as Archbishop of Kischenau in Bessarabia.

"The efforts of my whole life had been devoted to the liberation of my people from the bodily and spiritual slavery under which they everywhere groan. The head-quarters of our Church appeared to me the most natural starting-point where, *owing to the conquest and protection of Russia, the chains of slavery have been already broken.*

"I am a native," continued he, "of Armenia, and have seen and heard much; and have often wondered at the accounts given by Europeans who have travelled there - who, without any complete knowledge, touch upon everything; who by their fictions astound some, while to others they convey a totally false impression."

All this agrees exactly with what I have heard, and with what Mr. Bryce has written. Certainly, the Bishop of Baibourt might ask why it is that the wise and sagacious English people read and write such absurd nonsense about Armenia and the Armenians in their honourable newspapers: and reviews, he might have added, if he had read a recent article in a celebrated periodical.

Nothing is more common than the errors of a traveller who takes an individual's opinion for the views on the same subject of the general public, or who accepts an isolated fact as an established custom. An English gentleman in Italy, perceiving from the window of his carriage, when he drew up the blind, a red haired woman fighting in the street, wrote in his book that the population were very quarrelsome and all freckled.

Nowhere, in the world do such blunders occur more' frequently than in Turkey,

where every European journeying for his amusement or instruction is looked upon as a newsmonger, or muckbeer, as they call it; whose notions it is considered both prudent and advisable to tamper with.

For this purpose, very ingeniously concocted impediments to his obtaining clear ideas concerning the mode of government, the administration of the provinces, the collection of the taxes, the condition of the Christian population, or whatever other subject may form the motive of his researches, are placed in his way; and it frequently happens that the most intelligent and fact-investigating philosophers are completely deceived by the very people whose interests would be, to all appearance, advanced if they told only the truth.

A certain Armenian was introduced by the Pasha to an English gentleman who was travelling through the country, with a view to obtaining such accurate information concerning the Christian subjects of the Porte inhabiting those little-known and little-thought-about provinces, as might enlighten people at home about affairs which they had just commenced, though in a very vague and confused manner, to perceive had some connection with their own welfare.

The Armenian in question answered the queries of his curious interlocutor, whether they were leading or not, or whether they were put to him either in public or in private, exactly as if the replies had been dictated by his so-called Excellency himself.

He was afraid to tell the truth. He was afraid that if he expressed the aspirations, the wishes, or the sympathies of the Armenian nation, it might be repeated to his masters; and, being a calculating person, he very naturally reflected that such a course would certainly not do the said Armenian nation the least good, while it would, on the contrary, be quite sure to do him a great deal of harm.

His evidence was therefore similar to the evidence of such people everywhere else, and, as he bore witness, he thought only of himself.

After a long acquaintance with this wily Armenian, who was a very intelligent man, and who, although never out of his native country, spoke the French language with great fluency and emphasis - I discovered by degrees that he *disliked* the Russians because he was an Armenian, and did not want to be Russified; but that he *hated* the Turks, because, although a man in every way superior to any Mussulman, from the Pasha downwards, in point of knowledge, accomplishments, and education, he felt the social contempt under which he existed, and it touched him to the quick and galled him.

If these disgusting disabilities were removed, and if the Armenians enjoyed the same social equality as they do in Russia, there can be little doubt that they would give neither encouragement, sympathy, nor support to Muscovite aggression.

A single fact will show the hopeless condition of the Armenians under the Turks, compared with the state of the same people under the Russians. "In 1828," said an Armenian to me, "the father of General Loris Melikof, living in a small village near Erzerum, left that neighbourhood; and, like thousands of the population of the same districts, fearing the revenge of the Turks for the joy and gladness with which they

hailed the conquering Paskievitch on his triumphal entry into the capital, settled in Russian territory.

"About fifty years afterwards, General Loris Melikof came back to Erzerum as the Commander in Chief of His Imperial Majesty's forces.

"If," said the Armenian who told me this story, "Melikof had remained in Turkey, how different would have been his lot; and is it therefore in any way probable that we should prefer the government under which we are degraded to the condition of despised and contemptible slaves, to the one under which we live on terms of complete equality with our rulers?"

I confessed that I thought it extremely unlikely that any sensible man could give the preference to the first; and he assured me that I was quite right.

On the direct road between Erzerum and Bayazid, I frequently stopped with a rich Armenian family, because - like Mr. Hamilton, secretary to the Geographical Society, who travelled in these countries more than forty years ago - I "always preferred a Greek or Armenian house, in which we were less exposed to the inconvenient and sometimes impertinent curiosity of the host."

In one of my visits to this town, at a time when it appeared to superficial observers that the Russian invasion of Armenia had entirely failed, and that there was a much greater probability of the Ottomans besieging Alexandropol than of the Muscovites marching on Erzerum - a Turk, who had previously received me with demonstrations of politeness, absolutely refusing to let me in, recommended me to the house of a Ghiour as a more suitable resting-place for a good Christian man.

I accordingly claimed the hospitality of the Armenian, who, waiting on me himself, expressed with apparent sincerity the pleasure he felt at my visit.

In the course of conversation, he assured me that he, as well as all his fellow-countrymen in the town, hailed the repulse of the Russians with great glee.

The reasons that he gave for sentiments so hostile to people professing only to act for the emancipation of the Armenian nation, appeared certainly plausible enough; and are, in fact, all that can be urged, and there is much in them in favour of a continuance of Ottoman rule.

"We know the Turks," said he, "and under their administration we enjoy a self-government which leaves our language, the education of our children, and our national customs, so perfectly untrammelled and free from any official interference, that we have no wish to change it for the rule of a people who steadily endeavour, by means of carefully devised regulations affecting even our indoor family life, to absorb us altogether, to force their tongue on us, and in fact to alter us from Armenians into Russians.

"In fifty years the Muscovites have done more towards the moral annihilation of the Armenians, as a separate nation, than has been effected by the Turks in several centuries.

"For these reasons we have no sympathy with the Russians and wish only to be

left alone. Besides, we can trade with greater freedom in Turkey than in Russia; so that many Turkish Armenians become exceeding rich, and enjoy a monopoly of the commerce of the whole country.

"These are great advantages; and, notwithstanding some grievances against our masters, we do not want to swap them against certain extensions of liberty, which, although very plausible at first sight,- appear, on a closer examination, to be in no way compensated for by the several very troublesome and annoying Muscovite bureaucratic and centralising regulations to be weighed against them."

It is almost certain that a traveller in either Turkish or Persian Armenia, even if he spoke the Armenian language as well as Moses of Khorene, or Thomas of Medzop himself,- would hear expressions of opinion so exactly similar, that when he returned to Europe he would carry with him convictions about the feelings of the people, founded on evidence so indisputable, that nobody would be impertinent enough to question for a moment their perfect accuracy.

"If you honourable English folk," said the Bishop of Baibourt," really want to understand the kind of liberty and the amount of happiness we enjoy under the Turkish Government, why do you not send some of your countrymen, not to ride post through the country, not to stop with your Consuls in the large towns where our people are protected by the neighbourhood of Europeans; but to reside in some of our villages in different parts of Armenia for a few months?

"If you do so, we shall no longer laugh or cry at the truly absurd nonsense about us translated from your honourable newspapers into ours.

"Have you remarked the Armenians," continued he, "as you rode along the road? Had you never even heard of their existence before, would not their cringing manners and frightened looks cause you to notice a great difference between them and the haughty Osmanli or Koord, who, armed with knives and pistols, must ever feel a contempt for the poor defenceless Christian, no more capable of defending himself than an old woman?

"Must not unarmed people, living among warriors, be ever at their mercy?

"Would not these facts alone and in them selves cause an observant mind to make deductions more consonant with probability and reason than the mendacious accounts gathered either from Pashas, or from Armenians in their service and dependent upon them for bread?

"A cunning and sagacious traveller using his eyes alone, and without placing any dependence whatever on his ears,- might learn to suspect that after all the lot of a Christian in Asia Minor is such that people in England have but little idea of its social degradation.

"The warlike aspect and fine and independent manners of the martial Osmanli contrast so remarkably with the gentle and inoffensive air of the most unsoldierlike Armenian,- that those circumstances taken by themselves display two extremes of military pride and civilian subservi.ency."

Several visits to the Armenian whom I have mentioned in the preceding page, caused our acquaintance to ripen into confidence.

Considering me at length a person who might be trusted, and who would not go and repeat what he said to a Pasha, with a view to having his grievances redressed,- he told me exactly what I have always heard from every Armenian with whom I have been the least intimate.

"When I go to Tiflis or Erivan," said he, "I feel as I walk about the streets that I am a man; in this town, my native lace, I am constantly addressed as a disbelieving dog.

"Such insults I am accustomed to. I dare not redress them, because here, were a Christian slave - for we are slaves and nothing else - were a Christian slave, then, I say, to assault what men hereabout call a true believer, he would either be beaten to a jelly, or perhaps slain outright.

"God grant that the Russians may come here; we should hail them as deliverers."

Naturally astonished at what appeared to me such a sudden change of sentiments in a man who only a very short time previously had expressed wishes so entirely opposed to the hopes to which he now gave vent with every appearance of sincerity and truth,- I asked him the reasons for this wonderful modification of ideas.

"I have not changed; but what I told you first," said he, "is what I thought would be most pleasing to your ears, because you English I know hate the Russians, but you love the Turks."

And indeed the affection of the English for the Turk is so incomprehensible to the ordinary Armenian, that a young peasant in the mountains above Ghumish Hana, once asked me if we too were not Mussulmans like the Osmanlis.

I happened to be in the town in which my Armenian friend lived, when it was taken by the Russians at the end of October, 1877; and no sooner had the Turks been driven out at the points of the Cossack lances,- than a wonderful and interesting change was operated in the social aspects of the place.

An acquaintance of mine, whom I had often met in my Armenian friend's house - the High-Priest of the town, in fact - and whose timidity and shyness had always impressed me with feelings of pity, was suddenly promoted to the rank of a kind of civil governor.

It is the positions in which men are placed, rather than their natural dispositions and character, that causes the enormous differences to be observed between them.

The good priest, no longer adopting a mean or cringing attitude, nor walking, as he was in the habit of doing, very close to the wall for fear of being pushed out of the way by a swaggering Turk, strutted bravely, and with lofty paces, in the very middle of the street.

So far from saluting me as a brother in Christ, with the respect and humility which on previous occasions had invariably accompanied his civilities, he accosted me jauntily and with the air of Mister the Prefect on the Emperor's Feast, thinking, no doubt, that it was rather my place to salute him, than his to acknowledge me.

The impertinent and dignified old Turk who refused to let me in because I was a Ghiour, had quite lost the composure with which he was in the habit of insulting Christians; and such is the bent of the Oriental mind, ever ready to accept cheerfully and without a murmur whatever cannot be avoided, nobody in the town bowed lower to the recently inflated ecclesiastic than he did.

It was now the turn of the priest to speak contemptuously of unbelievers; so going to his church, he got up on a very high place in order that everyone might hear him better, and forcing his voice into a savage roar, cried out, "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered."

The whole Christian population of the town received the Russians with every demonstration of delight and joy; and, as there were many Armenian soldiers and officers in the regiments of occupation, their now happy countrymen and countrywomen crowding round, looked at them with honest pride, and no doubt sung songs of burthens somewhat similar to that of "See the conquering hero comes!"¹

Many an old grudge was perhaps paid for in hard words; but the Turks were not ill-treated, and perfect order was preserved in the place.

It was impossible, however, to witness the Russian occupation without feeling and seeing beyond a shadow of doubt that the Armenians regarded it as a delivery from the thralldom of their tyrants, and blessed the day on which they marched in.

The whole population of Erzerum turned out with tears of joy to greet the soldiers of Paskievitch, in 1828. Women and girls, singing hymns and psalms, threw flowers in the way; and so ardent was the wish of its inhabitants to be delivered from Turkish bondage, that great crowds of Armenians, selling all they had at the vilest prices, followed the retreating Russians across the frontier, and settled under the protection of the Czar.

The arrival of the Muscovites in the same place at the end of the year 1877 was equally pleasant to the Armenian people, who, with a view to expressing their satisfaction and pleasing the invading hordes - worked cheerfully, and like menial servants for the soldiers.

There was nevertheless an exception to this general jubilee; for although the orthodox or Gregorian Armenians are, as I believe I have shown, favourable to the Muscovites,- the Roman Catholic Armenians fear the supremacy of their heretical countrymen, or that of their protecting and sympathetic Russian friends.

They far prefer (at least, so I have always been told by their priests) the government of the Sultan to that of the Czar. The Pope has told them to hate the Russians more than the Turks, and they do so.

In a manner somewhat similar to that in which they claim a kind of protectorate over the Greek subjects of Turkey,- Russian influence has long been silently at work upon the conduct of the affairs of the Armenians; and no sooner had the power of the

¹ What I saw on this occasion only confirms the testimony of the Patriarch Narses, of Mr. Bryce, of Baron Haxthausen and of every impartial writer who knows anything about the subject of which he treats.

Czars been consolidated in their newly-acquired Caucasian provinces,- than their interference, threats, and expostulations protected, in a way, those unhappy and persecuted Christians against the tyranny of both their Persian and Turkish masters.

More than a hundred years ago the Patriarch actually obtained the sanction of Russia previously to his elevation to the patriarchal throne; and in the beginning of this century a thoroughly Russified Armenian, one Prince Joseph Dolgorouki, became head of the Armenian Church.

Both Turkey and Persia, with that carelessness and apathy so remarkable in the action of Oriental governments, - quite abandoned their right to a voice in the appointment of candidates for these dignities; and so it came to pass that the Patriarchs have been entirely chosen by Russian action.

For this reason the people have been educated so as to look to Russia for support; and in 1828, when Paskievitch quietly took possession of Echmiadzin, *the focus and centre of Armenian opinion and nationality*, - Russian influence extended throughout the whole country.

The Armenians are capable of receiving the highest European civilisation; and if Russia, instead of trying to drill them into mediocrity only suitable to their own peasants, would allow the free action of the national institutions,- the people would display such a knowledge for the management of their own affairs, as might in a few years astonish their numerous traducers.

Certain sentiments, such as a knowledge of right and wrong, for instance, are, it is said, innate in mankind, as a result of the original construction of the mental faculties. An additional sentiment or faculty is innate in the Russian official. It is called, for want of a better word, red-tape. This Russian red-tape can leave nothing alone. It has been even introduced into the Armenian Church: where the bishops, priests, and deacons are all obliged to write confidential reports on a variety of subjects to their superiors.

The parochial government of the Armenians, in consequence of the consecration of centuries, so dear to their hearts,- is changed by the Muscovites into a system of centralisation which must eventually absorb the nation.

The Government schools force the children to learn Russian, whether they like it or not; and it is the object of the St. Petersburg Government, in stamping out their language, to deal with the Armenians as they dealt with the Poles.

Those Armenians, who have been carefully educated in Russia with a view to being officials and officers in the service of the Government,- are so well drilled and disciplined for the duties required of them, that they become even more imbued with the red-tape system than the Russians themselves.

It is for these reasons that the people dislike the Muscovites; although for the sake of the security enjoyed under their rule,- they prefer them to the Turks. No man is so patriotic as to prefer his country to his own wife and children. Under the Turks the integrity of the nation is safe enough, but the family is in continual dread of being outraged.

If the English protectorate of Asia Minor gives the Armenians real liberty, protects their persons and their property, and places those people on a perfect footing of equality with their Mussulman neighbours,- there can be no doubt that any further Russian intrigues among them would fall on very barren ground.

The Turkish Government, often keenly alive to what concerns their own interests,- look upon the thorough emancipation of the Armenians, notwithstanding their comparatively small numbers, - with feelings of great alarm.

Scattered throughout the whole of Turkey, the Armenians, whose energies till now have been entirely devoted to trading, higgling, and peddling,- have possession of a great part of the commerce of Asia Minor; and, like any people who have paid extreme attention to one particular subject,- they are unrivalled in the useful arts of cheating and lying.

Nowhere in the world will be found such exceedingly (to use an American expression)" smart" men, whose ideas of business consist in trying to make others buy experience at great prices.

"As the active powers of the human mind, when roused to vigorous exertion in one line, are most capable of operating with force in other directions," it is almost certain that the Armenians, from enterprising merchants, thinking alone of the pursuit of gain, would, if a fair field was opened to them, turn their talents to good accounts as politicians.

Were the country once really freed from the oppression by which it has been weighed down for centuries, and were all its inhabitants, whether Christian, Jew, Turk, Devil-worshipper, Candle-extinguisher, or Gipsy, placed on a footing of perfect civil and religious equality,- many highly cultivated Armenians, living very far away, would bring back to their native land all the ingredients necessary for the thorough civilisation, good administration, and complete development of the vast resources of the country.

This is exactly what a far-seeing and enlightened Turk is afraid of; and consequently it is a duty that he owes to posterity to prevent a movement which would take a large share, if not the whole government of the country,- out of its hands.

If in every community governed according to modern ideas, mind and culture must sooner or later come to the surface,- it is quite certain that the germ of the Minor Asiatic civilisation can only be effected through the Armenians.

A smattering of French stamps the ordinary Pasha as a very enlightened man in the eyes of the pattern traveller; or rather of the pattern tourist, as the rapidity with which men push along nowadays causes a great difference between the two: but there is hardly a single Turk in Armenia who is what would be called an educated man in any European society.

The Turk wonders at our liberty, our customs, our institutions, our manners, and our curiosity in inquiring how the people in other countries get on; but he has not the least admiration for all these things; while he has such a, thorough hatred and suspicion of every innovation, - that the most insignificant alteration in anything to which he has become quite accustomed, is regarded by him as the thin edge of a wedge, preparatory

to something a great deal worse.

Since the days of the Crusaders, Europeans have been the deadly enemies of the Turks; for in the times when they were religious, they endeavoured to force their creeds on them, in the same manner as at present, when religion and politics are entirely separated, they try their best to force their civilization on them.

The Ottomans never wanted either one or the other; and although I have frequently heard Turks abuse their own absurd Government, and draw very unfavourable comparisons between it and that of the Russians, they are so afraid of the Christians, whose superiority to themselves in everything but brute force they are obliged to confess, - that it is one of the principal maxims of their policy to keep them down.