



SUPPLEMENT

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Report by Mr. Baring on the Atrocities Committed upon the
Christians in Bulgaria.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.

My Lord,

Therapia, September 5, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of Mr. Baring's very full Report of his inquiries into the atrocities committed upon the Christians in Bulgaria, which it is unnecessary for me to accompany with many observations of my own.

It establishes only too clearly that the cruelties had been carried on on a scale fully sufficient to justify the indignation that they have called forth, although the number of victims given at one time at 60,000, and afterwards at 30,000, are fortunately shown to be vastly exaggerated.

Your Lordship will observe that although the accounts that were circulated of the brutal manner in which the insurrection was suppressed have been generally borne out, many of the especially sensational incidents reported, have been shown to be disproved, or very much over-coloured.

The worst case reported on by Mr. Baring is that of Batak, which equals or exceeds in horror any that had been alleged; but it had scarcely been heard of till discovered by him.

Your Lordship will be satisfied that Mr. Baring has performed his duties with the impartiality and conscientiousness that were to be expected of him.

I take also this opportunity of transmitting to your Lordship the copy of a letter which the United States' Minister has been good enough to communicate to me from Mr. Schuyler, the American Secretary of Legation and Consul-General, who was sent to make inquiries similar to those of Mr. Baring's.

He accompanied several newspaper correspondents, but I am told that none of the party had the advantage possessed by Mr. Baring of understanding Turkish, which most of the Bulgarians can speak, and they were necessarily a good deal at the mercy of the Bulgarian interpreter whom they took with them.

The inclosed Report of Chakir Bey, who had been sent by the Porte to make an inquiry in the vilayet of the Danube, is as unsatisfactory a document as could well be seen.

The Report of the Extraordinary Tribunal at Philippopolis is likewise inclosed.

In it will be found the programme of the insurgents, which the Turks affirm, and Mr. Baring believes, to be an authentic document.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1.

Report by Mr. Baring on the Bulgarian Insurrection of 1876.

Origin and Outbreak.

ABOUT fourteen years ago the Bulgarian Committee was established at Bucharest for the purpose of fomenting insurrection in Bulgaria, and of wresting that rich province from the hands of the Turks, to add it to the great South Slavic Empire which schemers in Moscow and elsewhere have decided shall be built up on the ruins of the Austrian and Ottoman Empires.

Revolutionary ideas were not, however, at first received with enthusiasm by the Bulgarian people, who are a peaceful race, and who were, moreover, comparatively well treated by the Turkish authorities, who purposely fostered dissensions between them and the Greeks, fearing lest a too good understanding between the great sections of Rayahs might be fraught with danger for the peace of the Empire.

It was not, therefore, till 1867, during the Cretan insurrection, that the Bucharest Committee thought that the time had arrived for action; emissaries were despatched to find out the temper of the people, and to excite them, if possible, to rise; but the mission of these agitators failed signally, and they had to return to those that sent them, with the news that the Bulgarians were not yet fit to be admitted into the bosom of the Panslavic family.

From this period to the spring of 1875, the Slav propaganda was carried on steadily throughout the province by agitators and emissaries of every sort, and though, I am positively assured, the Turkish Government was perfectly well aware of the presence of these men, with that *insouciance* for passing events, which is one of the chief characteristics of the Sublime Porte, they never made the smallest attempt to arrest them, or to counteract the effect of the revolutionary ideas they were instilling into the minds of the people.

In the spring of 1875, the insurrection broke out in the Herzegovina. This was an opportunity not to be lost, and the emissaries made great efforts to get up a revolt, and actually succeeded in making a slight disturbance at Eski Zaghra in the month of October.

This revolution, or rather riot, ended in a miserable failure; all who had a hand in it vied with each other in betraying their neighbours, and the outbreak was quelled without the smallest difficulty.

It is somewhat curious to note that at that time certain mysterious "hodjas" who constantly frequented the mosques of Eski Jaghra and other towns, were loud in their denunciations of the authorities for showing what they declared to be a culpable leniency towards infidels, whose intention it evidently was to destroy the Mussulman faith, and they called upon all good Moslems to rise and massacre the unbelievers. One of these apostles becoming objectionably demonstrative at Slimnia, was arrested, and upon being submitted to personal examination, was found to be no Moslem at all. This incident speaks for itself, as it is not difficult to devise from what quarter this pretended "hodja" had his instructions.

When the Andrassy Note was presented to the Porte a petition was drawn up in Bulgaria and sent to the Grand Vizier. It demanded for the Bulgarians—

The right of serving in the army instead of paying "bedel askerieh."

That half of the Government employés in the Province should be Bulgarians.

General Reduction of Taxation.

During 1875 it was evident to the Bucharest Committee that the position of the Ottoman Government was becoming critical, and also that heavy taxation had produced deep discontent among the Bulgarians; accordingly, on the ^{20th February} ~~3rd March~~ last, twenty fresh emissaries were sent into the country to make another attempt to bring about an insurrection. A man of the name of Benkowsky was to take the Sandjak of Philippopolis, while one Vankoff was to proceed to Eski-Zaghra. Their instructions were to appoint sub-Committees of ten in each of the towns and of four in the villages, a condition being made as regards the latter that the priest and schoolmaster should be *ex officio* members. This will explain the active part taken by these two classes of men in the late rising.

The schoolmasters are men who have many of them been educated in Russia, and are a strong example of the truth of the adage that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." They have returned to their homes with a smattering of education and a mass of ideas respecting Panslavism in their heads; these ideas they have endeavoured to propagate, and the unfortunate people have now to thank them and their spiritual pastors for a large share of the miseries which have befallen them.

When the sub-Committees were formed they set about collecting money, and up to the ^{19th} ~~21st~~ March 1,450 Turkish pounds had been collected. On the ^{10th} ~~22nd~~ March an emissary was arrested at Sofia, but did not reveal the plans of his comrades. Money was sent to Constantinople and Bucharest for the purchase of arms, but for different reasons the orders were not executed, and the Committee had to content themselves with such old-fashioned and inferior weapons as they could collect in the Province.

On the ^{19th} ~~21st~~ March a meeting of eighty agitators took place at Otlou-keui, and the date of the general rising, which the Bucharest Committee had fixed for ^{18th April} ~~1st May~~, was postponed till after ^{1st} ~~13th~~ May.

The plan of action decided on was shortly as follows:—

To destroy as much of the railway as possible, including the bridge at Ouzoun Keupni.

To burn the rolling stock at Sarenbey.

To set fire to Adrianople in a hundred and to Philippopolis in sixty places, and also to burn Sofia, Tatar-Bazardjik, Tchtiman, Isladi, and a number of villages.

To attack the Turkish and mixed villages, and to kill all Mussulmans who resisted and take their property.

To occupy certain important points, such as Avrat-Alan, Kalofer, Tchoukourlou, &c. Bazardjik to be attacked with 3,000 men, and the Government stores seized.

The rising to be general and simultaneous.

Such Bulgarians as refused to join the insurrection to be forced into it, and their villages burnt.

On the ^{18th April} ~~1st May~~ another meeting was held at Metzka, when Benkowsky informed his comrades that their plans had been betrayed by one Nenko, and that the rising must consequently be precipitated. Accordingly obedient to his orders the people of Avrat-Alan and Otlou-keui rose and killed such Mussulmans as they could lay hands on, and erected some rough fortifications; other villages, such as Yeni-keui, &c., were visited by small bands of men with flags, who told the peasants they must leave their homes or otherwise the Turks would massacre them, and that a large Russian army was ready to cross the Balkan. At Zindjirli the priest, the schoolmaster, and some other men actually drove the inhabitants out and forced them to set fire to the village. In the neighbourhood of Otlou-keui four small Turkish villages forming what is known as the Yourouk-Mahallin were burnt, as was also the mixed village of Streldja, and a considerable number of Bulgarians from the neighbouring villages, repaired to Avrat-Alan and Otlou-keui. At the same time some slight preparation for resistance were made at Bratzigovo, Prasadum Dervent, and also apparently at Peroustitza, though what really took place in the latter village is involved in considerable mystery.

Benkowsky, leaving the neighbourhood of Otloukeui, went to Bellova, where he incited the people to rise, telling them that 1,500 men were to come from Batak, 2,000 from Bratzigovo, 1,000 from Teshtera, and 8,000 from Otloukeui, for the purpose of attacking Tatar-Bazardjik, and that they consequently need not fear their Turkish neighbours. He recommended all the peasants who came to him to burn their houses, as they would afterwards be rebuilt of marble. At Bellova there were seven zaptiehs, six at the railway station, and one employed in the "établissement des bois." Benkowsky gave orders that these men should be disarmed, and a body of insurgents

proceeded to the station for the purpose, vowing vengeance, however, against an Arab zaptieh who had apparently ill-treated some of them. The zaptiehs resisted, the station was set on fire, and the six men were shot as they came out, the story about their having been smeared with petroleum and burnt being a simple invention. The other zaptieh was persuaded by some Europeans to offer no resistance, and, on his being taken into the presence of Benkowsky, the latter paid him the sum of 12*l.* 10*s.* Turkish for his horse, arms, and accoutrements, which were seized for the benefit of the Bulgarian insurgents.

These details were given to me by a gentleman who had business at Bellova, and who conversed with Benkowsky upon several occasions.

At Vetren, a village on the high road between Bazardjik and Sofia, the insurgents cut the telegraph wires, burnt the guard-house and small Turkish village of Palanka, and fired on the post and on some zaptiehs who were escorting Hassan Pasha's harem.

It is now necessary to glance at the measures taken by the Turks to suppress the insurrection.

Some of the village mudirs had reported to head-quarters that they thought a rising probable, but their warnings were unfortunately allowed to pass unheeded; accordingly, when the insurrection did break out, it found the authorities utterly unprepared.

On the ^{19th April}_{1st May}, Aziz Pasha, the Mutessarif of Philippopolis, proceeded to Bazardjik, where he stayed a day or two to procure information. He then left for Otloukeui with a few of the notables and about 100 guards.

This alarmed the population, and when, somewhat later in the day, a report was spread that the Pasha was surrounded, a general panic ensued; shops were shut, village people who had come with their bullock carts to the market fled, leaving everything behind them, and Mussulman women rushed about the streets crying "Giaour Guelmisch," "Moscow Guelmisch." The Turks immediately flew to arms, and the position of the Christians was most critical. The Kaimakam lost his head completely, and hid himself.

In the meantime, a train arrived with 400 regular troops, and Hafiz Pasha went about the town endeavouring to reassure the people, and prevented the Mussulmans from doing any mischief. In the evening some wounded gipsies arrived, saying that the Bulgarians were rising all over the country, which naturally increased the terror of the Mussulmans.

Aziz Pasha, who had not been surrounded, but who had been turned back by the alarming reports he had heard on the road, now returned to Bazardjik and told the Turkish notables, who went to remonstrate with him for his being too favourable to the Bulgarians, that had he but four battalions of regulars he could suppress the insurrection at once. This was most undoubtedly true, but, unfortunately, these four battalions were not forthcoming at that moment.

Aziz Pasha then went back to Philippopolis, and the Medjliss of Bazardjik got some 400 armed Turks in from the surrounding country for their protection, and sent orders to Achmet Agha, of Dospat, to march against Batak, where some Mussulmans had been killed, and the people were reported to be rising; which order he executed by utterly destroying the village on the 9th of May.

At Philippopoli there was also a considerable panic, but, perhaps, not such a one as at Bazardjik. The Vali of Adrianople, on being applied to by the Mussulmans, telegraphed that they must arm and defend themselves, and sent Raschid Pasha to command them. At first, every man only had such arms as he happened to possess, but subsequently the Government distributed arms among the volunteers. The inhabitants of the Mussulman villages received orders to defend themselves in case of need, and some 2,000 irregulars were brought from Hasskeui.

The fact is that the country was for a moment in a complete state of anarchy, and everybody gave orders to everybody else respecting the arming of this village or the attacking of that one. The responsibility of calling out the Bashi-Bazouks must, however, I think, rest with the Vali of Adrianople, who in reply to the question asked from Philippopolis, replied by ordering a general arming of the Mussulmans. His orders were, however, no doubt anticipated by some of the Mussulman Beys, particularly by those of Tatar-Bazardjik, who are notorious for their fanaticism.

At this time Aziz Pasha, who had not been favourable to the general arming, was recalled from Philippopolis, and was replaced by Hamid Pasha, to whose firmness and impartiality the Christians of that town undoubtedly owe their safety. By protecting them, however, he incurred the serious displeasure of the fanatical section of the Mussulmans, who have more than once petitioned for his recall.

At last the Government at Constantinople having become alive to the fact that there was an insurrection in Bulgaria, despatched some troops from the capital, while others under Hassan Pasha came down from Nisch. On the 7th May the latter entered Vetren, burnt 130 houses out of 400, and arrested a certain number of men. He then went through Bazardjik to Bratzigovo, the inhabitants of which had been fighting against the Bashi-Bazouks for about a week, during which time 50 houses were burnt, and called upon them to surrender. The villagers accordingly laid down their arms, and Hassan Pasha made 50 prisoners. The Bashi-Bazouks, as usual, wanted to burn and pillage the village, but this the Pasha refused to allow, threatening to fire upon them if they attempted anything of the sort. Unfortunately, after Hassan Pasha left, a certain Mehmet Ali Bey, a fanatical notable of Bazardjik, returned to Bratzigovo with a number of Bashi-Bazouks and plundered it, cartloads of stolen property being taken away.

Other troops under Hafiz Pasha marched upon Otlou-Keui and Avrat-Alan, and, arriving at the former village on the 12th of May, without the smallest difficulty reduced the insurgents to obedience.

Raschid Pasha went from Philippopolis to Peroustitza, and, after encountering some resistance, entered the village and burnt it to the ground on the 13th of May.

No sooner did the regular troops appear on the scene than the insurrection was at an end, and much bloodshed and useless destruction of property would have been spared had they only been despatched somewhat earlier.

In this imperfect sketch of the outbreak I have not entered upon the subject of atrocities committed, or said to have been committed, as it will be necessary hereafter to give a more detailed account of what took place in each of the principal villages.

I have stated above that the insurrection was suppressed; it is now necessary to examine the manner in which this was done.

The most appalling stories were spread abroad respecting the atrocities committed on the Bulgarians, and, finding their way into the English papers, naturally created a feeling of intense indignation against the perpetrators.

It was said that cartloads of heads had been paraded about the streets of different towns.

That women and children had been publicly sold in the streets of Philippopolis and Tatar Bazardjik.

That horrible tortures had been practised upon the prisoners.

That forty young girls had been ravished and then burnt alive in a barn.

That at least 25,000 perfectly innocent persons had been massacred.

That a large number of villages, differently stated as being between 60 and 100, had been burnt.

It is utterly untrue that cartloads of heads were ever paraded in the streets of any town; but I think I can trace the origin of the story, which was telegraphed to England from Servia. During the insurrection about 150 insurgents crossed over from Roumania in the "Radetzky," and were encountered and defeated by Bashi-Bazouks to the north of Sofia. Some of the dead were decapitated by the conquerors, who brought the heads into Sofia on bayonets and poles, and took them to the konak, where the Pasha told them that he wanted not dead men's heads, but live prisoners, from whom he could obtain evidence.

It is not true that women or children have been publicly sold in the streets under the very eyes of the authorities at Philippopolis or Tatar Bazardjik.

During the terrific confusion that followed the insurrection there is no doubt that many children were lost; some of these have been taken into the houses of charitable persons, and others have now been recovered by their parents. Some may be in the houses of Mussulmans, but I have not heard one single properly authenticated case of sale. In fact respectable Bulgarians themselves at Philippopolis and elsewhere have told me that these stories of sales are only fabrications.

As regards young women, a certain number have no doubt been carried off from different villages by the Bashi-Bazouks, who keep them in their harems; *e.g.* after the awful massacre of Batak about 80 young women and girls were taken to the Mussulman villages of Nevrokop, Inipliza, Alanjevo, Kara Boulak, Yeni-Mahalle, Rekitvo, Dorkovo, Bania, Corsova, Babiak, Kozak, and Fotentzi, where they still are.

One man of Batak who knew his wife was in the house of a Turk named Alihko of Bania, applied to the authorities at Tatar Bazardjik, and a zaptieh was sent to look

after her, as, however, he came back saying he could not find her, the man was told that if he wanted his wife, he must get her himself.

Of course what took place at Batak may also have taken place elsewhere, though I only heard myself one more case, viz. of a woman of Prasadum Derwent, who said her daughter was in the house of a Turk belonging to a neighbouring village.

The question of the tortures said to have been inflicted on the prisoners is one most difficult to decide, the evidence on the subject being so very conflicting. The Bulgarians in Philippopolis absolutely assert that the greater portion of the evidence given at the trials was extracted by torture; the Turks as absolutely deny that anything of the sort has taken place.

During my journey I saw two men who declared to me that they had been tortured.

One of these, a native of Philippopolis, was arrested and imprisoned for seventy-eight days, nineteen of which he passed in what is known as the "Polizza," a dark damp little dungeon, in which there is only just room for a man to lie down. He said he was taken out at night and asked by two zaptiehs about one Tzocow and other notables of the town, and also whether he had taken arms to Peroustitza; on his declaring that he had no information to give, an iron ring was fastened round his neck which was attached to a chain passed through another ring in the ceiling, and he was then gradually drawn up till his toes only just touched the ground, and kept in that position till he fainted. He was never examined before the Court, and at the end of seventy-eight days was released.

This is the man's story as I heard it from his own lips, but of course I have no means of proving its correctness or incorrectness; only it appears somewhat strange to me that this man should have been tortured by two common zaptiehs without any superior official being present to take down what might be extorted from him.

The other man I saw was a priest who said that, having been arrested, he was sent to Bazardjik, and on the way was brutally beaten by the zaptiehs and Bashi-Bazouks who escorted him, till, to save himself, he signed a paper implicating certain persons. He was then sent to Philippopolis, where he was confined for thirty-five days, during part of which time he was chained to the bars of a window and iron hooks placed in his mouth.

The medical man attached to the prison at Philippopolis, Dr. Vlado, a Greek gentleman, with whom I conversed on the subject, declared that he utterly disbelieved these stories of torture. At any rate, though the prisoners had not been behindhand in complaining of other things, not one of them had said he had been tortured; he had free access to the prisons, and if torture had been used it is more than probable that some one would have made a complaint to him. A priest had complained of having been beaten on the road and showed his bruises. Confinement in the "Polizza," he said, though no doubt extremely disagreeable, could not be regarded as actual torture.*

Though I am unable positively to decide whether prisoners were or were not tortured for the purpose of extracting evidence, there is no doubt that, while they were being conveyed to Philippopolis from the places where they were captured, they were in many cases most brutally ill-treated. This was especially the case with 400 men, who were marched heavily chained from Bazardjik to Philippopolis, and who, on their entry into the latter place, were mercilessly beaten by their escort, and pelted and insulted by the Mussulman mob.

Again, eighty prisoners were sent from Philippopolis to Sofia; five of them died on the road.

Immediately after the suppression of the insurrection, when the feeling against the Bulgarians was strongest, the zaptiehs even beat the prisoners while escorting them from the prison to the place of trial.

When the great mass of prisoners came in from the surrounding country, there is no doubt that the overcrowding in the prisons at Philippopolis was terrific; 265 men were confined for four days in a bath, in which there was not the smallest attempt at drainage, the stench becoming so fearful that the guards could not even sit in the ante-room, but had to stay in the street. One prisoner died here of typhus fever, and, it being represented to the authorities that a pestilence might break out in the town, they had the prisoners removed to a khan.

* Since writing the above I have seen another priest, who declares he was confined for seven days in a privy, during three of which he had neither food nor water, and for twenty-one days in the "polizza," from whence he was only released the day I visited the prison.

I have no doubt that at the commencement the treatment of the prisoners was harsh in the extreme; a gaoler would give a blow where a word would have sufficed; and, moreover, petty annoyances were practised on Bulgarians which showed a mean and contemptible spirit of revenge; e.g., a Turkish official, Nami Effendi, 1st Secretary to the Government, going one day to the khans which served as prisons, found the doors of the rooms open on account of the heat. He ordered them to be shut, and his orders were obeyed. On another occasion the "Tahkkik Midjlissi" tried to serve out mouldy bread unfit for food to the prisoners, but the plan was thwarted by Dr. Vlado. It is possible, however, that peculation rather than the infliction of pain was the object of this unfeeling action.

The prisoners receive daily 300 drams of bread (not quite 34 oz.) but no other provisions; it must, however, be remembered that the Turkish troops on their way to the seat of war receive no rations but bread between Constantinople and Nisch.

When I visited the prisons on the 21st of July they were not overcrowded, but then a large number of prisoners had been released; they also appeared to me to be tolerably clean.

I now come to the story of the burning of the forty girls, who are supposed to have been refugees from Selo Yenikeui, a village in the vilayet of Towna, the deed having been said to have been committed in a barn near Kalofer, a place situated on the southern side of the Balkans, some six hours from Yenikeui.

The only person who could tell me anything about this story declared that the barn was within half-an-hour's distance of Kalofer, but on inquiring at that place I found that no one had ever heard tell of it. Later on I was able to go to Yenikeui itself, and there the villagers positively denied that anything of the sort had taken place.

On my return to Philippopolis from Tatar Bazardjik I heard that a Turk had been found who, in a café, had boasted of having been present when this deed was committed.

I made an unsuccessful attempt to find this man, but on inquiry I discovered that the story of his existence rested on the assertion of a man named Eski Petro, of Sopot, whom I know, by personal experience, to be remarkable for his mendacity.

The question of the number of persons who perished in the late outbreak is the one that perhaps presents the greatest difficulty to anyone wishing to draw up a fair and impartial report of what took place. During my journey I have heard the number of killed differently estimated at anything between 200,000 and 1,830, the latter being the Turkish official estimate, and the former the calculation of a Bulgarian gentleman whom I happened to meet.

The greatest loss of life undoubtedly took place at Batak, and there are certainly not more than 1,500 people belonging to that village left alive. Discover the number of inhabitants previous to the insurrection, and you can immediately ascertain the number of killed. But here arises the difficulty; the population is reckoned at anything between the 1,441 "âmes" of Edib Effendi's Report and 9,000. The former calculation is evidently far below the mark, as the official returns give the number of houses as 494, so that Edib Effendi's figures would give not quite three inhabitants to a house, which calculation is obviously erroneous.

From Edib Effendi's Report one would gather that there were 1,441 souls in Batak, whereas those are the very figures given me by the Mutessarif of Philippopolis as the official return of males "noufouz" paying the "bedeli askerieh."

On the other hand, those who accept the highest estimate of 9,000 place the number of houses at 900, which I think is above the mark.

I am informed on good authority that too great reliance cannot be placed on the official "noufouz," as the population is invariably understated in it, the inhabitants sending in false returns in order to escape taxation.

Persons who know Bulgarian villages well tell me that one may fairly calculate ten inhabitants to a house, as married sons usually live in their fathers' houses. Adopt this calculation for Batak, put the number of houses at 650, the figures given me by a person who knows the place well, and the result will be 6,500 inhabitants. Of these 1,500 remain, 5,000 must therefore have perished in the massacre!

This calculation of ten people to a house may not be correct in all villages. At Peroustitza the average is not quite six, but at Batak the houses are said to have been crowded, and I therefore have less hesitation in applying these figures to that village than to any other.

I have given my calculation, and have stated the means by which I have arrived at it. Some may object that it is mere guesswork. In a country where reliable statistics are unprocurable, one can but guess at the amount of the population. All an enquirer can do is to get the best information he can from the most impartial sources and draw his own conclusions.

Should the Turkish authorities be able to prove my estimate to be incorrect, I will willingly acknowledge my error.

Again, take Peroustitza, a village of 350 houses, and of about 2,000 inhabitants, the Turkish official returns place the number of killed at 300,* while the Bulgarians say 1,000 people perished. The truth, of course, lies between these two estimates; but from all I could discover I should say that the Bulgarians were in this instance nearer the truth than the Turks. During the fighting that took place there 450 people escaped to Yustina, and afterwards about 500 men, women, and children were taken to Philippopolis. It is difficult to imagine that the whole of the remaining population could have been killed; so that I think the loss of life should not be stated at above 750.

The only place in this province I visited where the inhabitants had made out anything like a detailed list of killed was at Otlou-keui, where a regular statement, made by the Bulgarians themselves, was shown to me of the losses of the different quarters, the result being as follows:—

Men ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	262
Women	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	284
Children	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	217
								<hr/> 763

At the time of the outbreak of the insurrection a large number of people from the surrounding villages flocked to Otlou-keui, and when Hafiz Pasha arrived, according to the Bulgarian estimate, there were 12,000 strangers present. A considerable number of these were no doubt killed,—my informants said 1,000 or 1,200, but they did not pretend to be able to answer for the accuracy of their estimate.

In the Caza of Philippopolis, eighteen villages were partially or totally destroyed, but I have only been able to obtain reliable statistics of persons killed from eight of these, viz.:—

Dervent	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	250
Zindjivli	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	70
Peroustitza	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	750
Strebitchko	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	40
Boriovo	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Dedovo	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Pastoutcha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	17
Leshnik	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	20
								<hr/> 1,162

Four of these villages, viz., the first three and the last, I have visited myself; the statistics of the others I procured from a reliable Bulgarian source at Philippopolis.

In the Caza of Tatar Bazardjik 33 Christian villages were destroyed, but I can only offer statistics of the loss of life in 8 of them, viz.:—

Batak	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	(about)	5,000
Radilovo	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	25
Sert Harmanly	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	30
Caramousal	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	50
Lesitchovo	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Otlou-keui	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	763
Yeni-keui	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	60

The inhabitants say that 60 actually known to have been killed; others missing: cannot say how many.

Bratzigovo	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	52
45 killed when village was taken by Hassan Pasha, and 7 men who had been released from prison at Peshteva murdered on the road.									

(about) 5,983

To these must be added 130 persons killed at Avrat-Alan, and 6 men belonging to Peshtera, one of whom was murdered near his own village, and 5 who perished at Batak, to which place they had gone on business,—thus raising the total to 6,119.

* The official report says most of these committed suicide; the fact being that one man did.

I have visited all the above-mentioned villages except Sert-Harmanly and Bratzigovo, but I have my information respecting these latter from a good source. As regards Bratzigovo the figures given me by a Bulgarian native tally exactly with those I received from Hafiz Nouri Effendi, a highly respectable Turk of Philippopolis.

It will be seen from what I have stated above that I put the loss of life at 7,145, but unfortunately it cannot be inferred from this that the total number of Bulgarians killed in the sandjak of Philippopolis is represented by these figures.

Where the Bashi-Bazouks went at the early part of the insurrection, they killed any villagers they laid hands on, and though the majority of the inhabitants of many villages, either at the instigation of the revolutionists or from fear of the Bashi-Bazouks, left their homes and took to the mountains, some, being either unable or unwilling to fly, remained behind and were ruthlessly butchered.

Taking all these circumstances into consideration, I think I cannot be accused of exaggeration, nor of wishing to paint things blacker than they really are, if I maintain the estimate I previously made, viz., that about 12,000 persons perished in the sandjak of Philippopolis.

My figures are open to correction. I have said, and I repeat, that the difficulty of obtaining a really reliable estimate is immense. Persons who talk about 25,000 and 30,000 lives lost draw their information almost entirely from their own fertile brains. On the other hand anybody who has had the misfortune to visit Batak, cannot read without indignation the report of the Turkish Commissioners published in the "Turquie" of 21st August, and which puts at 1,836 the number of Bulgarians killed in "fighting the Imperial troops and volunteers."

It is not much easier to discover the number of Mussulmans killed than it is to give a correct estimate of Christian lives lost, but the list I append I have received on good authority, and I think may be relied on:—

Name of Place.	Men.	Women and Children.	Total.
Tehanakdje	4	..	4
Otlou-keui.. .. .	12	2	14
Bratzigovo.. .. .	..	2	2
Avrat-Alan	71	1	72
Zindjivli and Yeni-keui	26	4	30
Guelvene.	6	3	9
Radilovo	2	..	2
Dervent	14	..	14
Peroustitza	3	..	3
Lesitchovo.. .. .	5	..	5
Batak	3	..	3
	146	12	158
Yourouk Mahalleli	5	..	..
	151	12	163

Giving a total of 163.

Some Mussulmans were also, I believe, killed at Stuldja, but I could not ascertain the number. At Okdjelar (Yourouk Mahalleri) which was burnt by the insurgents, a Mussulman is said to have been roasted. At Carlovo I heard a fearful story of a Turkish boy whose arms were flayed by the insurgents, who said they would make a "tchesskeri," or jacket, for him out of his own skin, but I cannot guarantee the truth of this tale.

The place where the Bulgarians shewed the greatest ferocity was at Avrat-Alan, for here they massacred 72 Mussulmans in cold blood, viz., the Mudir and his secretary, 3 zaptiehs, 64 gipsies, and one Turkish girl. It was said that the Mudir's wife had also been murdered, but it has now been plainly proved that she was not in the place at the time of the outbreak.

Altogether the number of Mussulmans killed in cold blood probably does not exceed 200 for the whole Sandjak of Philippopolis:

I have not heard an estimate given of the number of irregulars killed in fighting, but I should think from all I gather, that they might be counted by tens rather than by hundreds.

A certain number of zaptiehs, who were naturally scattered about the country, were killed; but I cannot discover that a single man of the regular army fell while fighting against the insurgents in this Sandjak.

The following is the list of the Bulgarian villages totally or partially burnt in the districts of Philippopolis and Tatar Bazardjik :—

DISTRICT OF PHILIPPOLIS.

Name of Village.	Houses.	
Teheumlik Yeni-keui (Novo Selo in Bulgarian) ..	300	Totally burnt by Turks of Ayvanli.
Zindjivli	177	Totally burnt; partly by inhabitants, partly by Turks.
Krastovo	100	Partially burnt.
Ouzoun Gheren	70	Totally burnt.
Ereli	200	Partially burnt.
Sare Gueul	45	Totally burnt.
Stretilehko	90	Ditto.
Leshnik	120	Ditto.
Saradja	?	Partially burnt.
Boicovo	59	All burnt but 4.
Dedovo	50	20 houses and 20 barns burnt.
Savastovo	40	Partially burnt.
Peroustitza	350	Totally burnt.
Prasadum Derwent (Klissoura)	800	Ditto.
Asakur	140	Ditto.
Kozarsko	110	Ditto.
Pastoutcha	20	Totally burnt; not clear whether by Turks or by people of Peroustitza.
Ayvandjik	50	Totally burnt.

In all, 18.

DISTRICT OF TATAR BAZARDJIK.

Name of Village.	Houses.	
Dink-keui	?	Totally burnt.
Tzerovo	180	80 houses burnt by Bulgarians; church by Circassians.
Caramousal	120	Totally burnt.
Lesitchovo	172	64 houses burnt.
Kalaglar	?	Partially burnt by people of Otlou-keui.
Guelvere	?	Totally burnt. This village called Kaloyero in Bulgarian.
Slavovitza	?	Partially burnt.
Doganovo	?	Totally burnt.
Djumaa	?	Ditto.
Sert Harmanly	120	60 houses burnt.
Dere Harman	27	All burnt, probably by Bulgarians, but not certain.
Shallar	61	Totally burnt.
Bega	?	Ditto.
Kouléh	?	Ditto.
Sterkovo	?	Ditto.
Bania	?	6 houses burnt by troops.
Medjka	100	30 houses left; 70 burnt.
Tetrich	?	Totally burnt.
Otlou-keui (Panagourishte)	2,000	Between 400 and 500 burnt.
Golak	?	Totally burnt.
Tekir	?	Ditto.
Kassapli	?	Ditto.
Eshekli	?	Ditto.
Eski Kasli	?	Ditto.
Keupeli	?	Ditto.
Ellidere	?	Ditto.
Radilovo	177	Ditto.
Batak	650	Ditto.
Ali Hodja	?	Ditto.
Bratzigovo	500	50 burnt.
Vetren	400	130 burnt.
Tobrend	?	Totally burnt.
Bellova	?	Partially burnt, including railway station, latter by insurgents.

In all, 33.

Besides these the insurgents burnt five small Turkish villages, viz., Okdjelar, Djafferli, Dohanhi, and Ouratchli, known collectively as the Yourouk Mahallin, and Palanka, as well as Strelidja, a mixed village of Mussulmans and Bulgarians.

The total number of villages burnt, therefore, in the Sandjak of Philippopolis, both Mussulman and Christian, amounts to fifty-eight.

Four monasteries have also been burnt and pillaged :—

Kritchma	..	..	The Virgin	..	..	Abbot killed; 1 monk missing.
Ditto	..	..	St. Kosma and Damian	..	..	Abbot and 3 monks missing.
Peroustitza	..	..	St. Theodore	..	..	No information.
Kaloyero	..	..	St. Nicholas	..	..	1 monk killed; 1 missing.

It is now necessary to give a short account of the circumstances which attended the destruction of some of the largest of these villages.

Prasadam Dervent, called in Bulgaria Klissoura.—This village situated at the foot of the Balkans, in the district of Philippopolis, was completely destroyed by Bashi-Bazouks under Tossoun Bey, a Turkish notable of Karlovo, on the 7th of May; but as I have already given some description of what took place there in a previous report, it will only be necessary to say a very words about it now. I find the number of Turks killed there amounts to thirteen and not to three, as I had previously stated. There cannot be the smallest doubt that the inhabitants of this village did revolt, otherwise why did they erect fortifications, which, though they are far from formidable, are conclusive evidence that resistance against an enemy was intended. The inhabitants themselves do not deny offering some slight resistance to Tossoun Bey's men, though, as I have said before, I totally disclaim the story of the Bashi-Bazouks having summoned the villagers to surrender. The burning and pillaging, however, were acts of wanton destruction and cruelty, as not only were 250 people killed, but the whole population is now condemned to misery and starvation during the approaching winter. The people are now huddled together in tents sent from Avrat Alan, but as far as I could judge only one house was being rebuilt.

When the Bashi-Bazouks entered a woman had just been confined; they went into the house where she lay helpless and murdered both her and the newly-born infant.

Dervent produced yearly 7,000 Turkish pounds worth of attar-of-roses; the revenue on this sum is now, of course, lost to Government.

I believe Tossoun Bey has received a decoration, but it is not true, as is stated in some quarters, that he has been made Mudir of Karlovo. This latter official I saw myself, and he is by no means ill-spoken of by the inhabitants; in fact, to him and to the "Mutevelli" of the Mosque the people of Karlowo owe their safety.

The village of Sopot saved itself from sharing the fate of Dervent by making Tossoun a present of 300 Turkish pounds.

At Kalofer, a large village to the east of Karlovo, 130 cattle and sheep had been taken by the Turkish villagers; during my first visit there the inhabitants complained that they dared not stir from the village, and also of the conduct of the Mudir towards them. On my return to Philippopolis I laid these and other complaints before the Mutessarif, and on passing through Kalofer for the second time, I was glad to find that the Mudir had been changed for a man who was better spoken of by the inhabitants than was his predecessor, and that there were 100 soldiers in the village.

Tcheunlek Yenikeui—called in Bulgaria Staro Novo Selo—a village of 300 houses, in the district of Philippopolis, was visited on the 22nd of April by one Basily, of Philippopolis, and others, who told the inhabitants the story repeated everywhere to these unfortunate peasants, viz., that the Turks were going to massacre them, and that their deliverers, the Russians, were just on the other side of the Balkans. The villagers accordingly killed some Turks of Ayvanli, who happened to be in the village, and fled to the mountains. About a week afterwards the Bashi-Bazouks came, burnt the village and carried off everything they could lay hands on. The inhabitants thinking themselves safe after this returned to their burnt houses; they were, however, again set upon by the Turks, who killed sixty of them.* Before the insurrection they had 500 yoke of oxen and 10,000 sheep, all the latter have been taken, and they have only 100 yoke of oxen left. The worst thing in the present condition of these villagers is that their neighbours of Ayvanli, whose violent enmity they have of course incurred, now leave them no peace. They engaged as kouroudji ("garde champêtre") a man named Shakir, of Ayvanli, to guard them, which he does by inflicting every species of forced labour on them, and a few days before my arrival he made some of them cart 300 loads of stone for him. Further, having found out that a woman had some money left, he went to her tent and forced her to give it to him. On my bringing this atrocious conduct before the Mutessarif he sent some zaptiehs to correct the man, but just before leaving Philippopolis I heard that

* Sixty killed in the village, others missing, but inhabitants cannot say how many.

though they had been to the village they had not carried out his Excellency's instructions.

Peroustitza.—District of Philippopolis, 350 houses. Perhaps more has been written and said about the destruction of this village than about that of all the other Bulgarian villages put together, and the evidence respecting what led to the destruction, how far the inhabitants really revolted, and the manner in which they addressed their demands to Philippopolis for aid, is most extremely conflicting.

Under the circumstances the best thing I can do is to transcribe the evidence of an Armenian woman and her daughter, which was given before me at Philippopolis.

Before Easter some of the people of *Peroustitza* began to dig holes to bury their valuables. When this became known and questions were asked in the village it was mooted about that some day the "Committee" would come, burn the place, and force the people to rise. One Vasily, a doctor, or perhaps rather a chemist (who was hung while I was at Philippopolis), was the person who chiefly made it his business to tell the people they must be prepared to revolt, or it would go hard with them. Two of the priests refused to act with Vasily, and even read a paper in the church exhorting the people to be quiet. One of these priests was killed and the other imprisoned.

Some neighbours advised the Armenians, as strangers, to leave the village, but the *Tchorbadji Wrangel*, one of the influential men of the place, objected, and said they must stay. Soon after this some villages were seen burning in the neighbourhood, and some said the "Committee" were coming, while others said the Turks were upon them, and they must defend themselves. The consequence of this alarm was a general arming.

Wrangel then goes to Philippopolis, and asks Aziz Pasha, then Mutessarif, for assistance, which the Pasha promises to send, adding that *Tumbrushli Achmet Agha*, "Kir Meemouri" of the district, who had been ordered to *Bazardjik*, had better return to *Peroustitza*. Accordingly Achmet Agha sends more of his men to *Peroustitza*, to say he will send 400 men to protect the village. This the inhabitants decline, and detain the Turks all that day, Sunday, 7th May, and towards evening take them out and kill them.

The next day the *Bashi-Bazouks* advanced towards the village, and Wrangel, going again to Philippopolis, returned with two *zaptiehs*, who, however, seeing the Bulgarians armed, left immediately. Wrangel then left again the same evening for Philippopolis, taking with him his daughter, whom he placed in the house of the Russian Vice-Consul. He was then arrested.

Wrangel's disappearance created excitement and alarm, and a good many people, including the Armenian woman, fled to *Yustina*, where they were protected. The daughter remained behind, and the place being attacked by *Bashi-Bazouks*, she and a number of others took refuge in the church, in the upper part of the village. Here they stayed from Tuesday till late on Thursday, when they fled to another church lower down. Here they remained till Saturday; fourteen cannon shots being fired by the troops, many of which, going in at the windows, killed a considerable number of people.

On Saturday morning the troops surrounded the church, and the girl wished to surrender, and, though the Bulgarians threatened her with guns, she managed to slip out and give herself up to a *zaptieh*. She then returned to the door, and advised others to do as she had done, and a few who followed her advice were unharmed; those, however, who remained, were, she supposes, all killed. She saw one man in the church kill his wife and two children, and then blow his own brains out. She declares that from the upper church the people could see the regular troops attacking them.

The villagers' story, as told me by them on the spot, is that the Turks of *Yustina* had been threatening them for some time past, that they sent to Aziz Pasha for troops, and were told by him that they must defend themselves, sending a note, which was said to be in the hands of a "tchorbadji" in prison at Philippopolis, enjoining on them the necessity of killing any rogue ("tchapken") who should come to annoy them; and on the strength of this paper they say they killed Achmet Agha's men. They say they surrendered as soon as they knew they had to do with the regular troops.

Now it is clearly established that the people shut themselves up in the upper church on Tuesday, May 9th, and remained there till Thursday, 11th May, late in the afternoon, on which day also the troops under Reschid Pasha arrived, but it was not till Saturday, the 13th, that all resistance was at an end. According to the

Armenian girl's evidence the troops were seen from the upper church, and they certainly made their presence known during Friday by firing cannon into the lower one.

I do not see, therefore, how the villagers' story of their not being aware of the presence of regulars can be maintained, though on the other hand it does not appear that Reschid Pasha ever sent them any summons to surrender.

The reasons given by the Turks for the arrest of Wrangel are as follows:—

When in Philippopolis he gave some information respecting a village which he said had been burnt: but his story being contradicted, men were sent after him to make him come to the konak to explain himself, and they, while looking for him, met two individuals carrying a quantity of powder, who, on being stopped and questioned, said they were taking it to Peroustitza by Wrangel's orders. He was therefore arrested.

I should add that a Commission composed of two Turks and a Bulgarian was sent to Yustina and Peroustitza, where matters were beginning to look serious, to try and allay the ill-feeling existing on both sides, and two men from Peroustitza were given as hostages to the people of Yustina, but unfortunately no really good result followed this mission.

From all the conflicting evidence I think one may fairly deduce that the spirit of revolt existed at Peroustitza; but on the other hand the punishment inflicted was severer than the crime merited. The burning of the village was neither necessary nor politic, and, of course, the wholesale plunder here or elsewhere cannot be excused for a moment.

Surely also Reschid Pasha might have advanced his troops right up to the town church on Friday instead of on Saturday, whereas he bombarded it for the whole of one day, although he must have known that it was full of women and children. There were certainly armed men in it who were resisting the Bashi-Bazouks with a certain amount of vigour, but the resistance that would have been offered to his regulars would probably not have been severe.

In the school which was burnt during the fighting two girls are said to have perished in the flames.

There is no doubt that when the prisoners were being taken to Philippopolis numbers of the women were violated on the road.

Peroustitza was a most flourishing village producing annually 2,000,000 okes of wine and a large quantity of silk and grain; of course the place is now completely ruined, and the surviving inhabitants are in the greatest misery.

I have given elsewhere my estimate of the number of killed, among whom there are many women and children.

Batak.—I have now to give an account of the most fearful tragedy that happened during the whole insurrection, and about which, till a very short time ago, little or nothing had been said.

The Medjliss of Tatar Bazardjik hearing that preparations for revolt were going on in this village ordered Achmet Agha of Dospat to attack it, and this individual having joined his forces with those of Mohammed Agha of Dorkovo, proceeded to carry out these orders. On arriving at the village he summoned the inhabitants to give up their arms which, as they mistrusted him, they refused to do, and a desultory fight succeeded which lasted two days, hardly any loss being inflicted on either side. On the 9th of May the inhabitants seeing that things were going badly with them, and that no aid came from without, had a parley with Achmet, who solemnly swore that if they only gave up their arms, not a hair of their heads should be touched. A certain number of the inhabitants, luckily for them, took advantage of this parley to make their escapes. The villagers believed Achmet's oath and surrendered their arms, but this demand was followed by one for all the money in the village, which of course had also to be acceded to.

No sooner was the money given up than the Bashi-Bazouks set upon the people and slaughtered them like sheep. A large number of people, probably about 1,000 or 1,200, took refuge in the church and churchyard, the latter being surrounded by a wall. The church itself is a solid building, and resisted all the attempts of the Bashi-Bazouks to burn it from the outside, they consequently fired in through the windows, and getting upon the roof, tore off the tiles and threw burning pieces of wood and rags dipped in petroleum among the mass of unhappy human beings inside. At last the door was forced in, the massacre completed, and the inside of the church burnt. Hardly any escaped out of these fatal walls. The only survivor I could find was one old woman who alone remained out of a family of seven. When the door

was broken in and she was expecting immediate death, a Turk took her by the hand, and saying "Come, old woman, I am not going to hurt you," led her away and saved her life.

The spectacle which the church and churchyard present must be seen to be described; hardly a corpse has been buried; where a man fell there he now lies, and it is with difficulty that one picks one's way to the door of the church, the entrance of which is barred by a ghastly corpse stretched across the threshold.

I visited this valley of the shadow of death on the 31st of July, more than two months and a half after the massacre, but still the stench was so overpowering that one could hardly force one's way into the churchyard. In the streets at every step lay human remains, rotting and sweltering in the summer sun—here a skull of an old woman, with the gray hair still attached to it—there the false tress of some unhappy girl, slashed in half by a yataghan, the head which it had adorned having been probably carried off to be devoured by some of the dogs, who up to this have been the only scavengers.

Just outside the village I counted more than sixty skulls in a little hollow, and it was evident from their appearance that nearly all of them had been severed from the bodies by axes and yataghans. From the remains of female wearing apparel scattered about, it is plain that many of the persons here massacred were women.

It is to be feared also that some of the richer villagers were subjected to cruel tortures before being put to death, in hopes that they would reveal the existence of hidden treasure. Thus Petro Triandaphyllos and Pope Necio were roasted, and Stoyan Stoychoff had his ears, nose, hands and feet cut off.

Enough, I think, has been said to show that to Achmet Agha and his men belongs the distinction of having committed perhaps the most heinous crime that has stained the history of the present century, Nana Sahib alone, I should say, having rivalled their deeds.

As regards the numbers of killed, I have before stated that about 5,000 is my estimate. I am aware that others place it higher, but be this as it may, whether the slain are to be counted by hundreds or by thousands does not lessen in the least degree the criminality of the slayers. The intention was to exterminate all except those few girls (probably about 80) whom they carried off to satisfy their lusts. Those that escaped owed their safety to their own good fortune, and not to the tender mercies of their neighbours.

For this exploit Achmet Agha has received the Order of the Medjidié.

I am, however, willing to a certain extent to believe that the Turkish authorities were not aware, before I visited Batak, of the horrors that had been committed there. The place lies in the mountains, eight hours' from Bazardjik, is somewhat difficult of access, and till I went there no one had gone who was likely to give the authorities a faithful account of what he saw. Had they really known that the place was a mass of putrefying corpses, would they not have taken some measures to clear them away before I reached the scene?

A Turk who accompanied me from Bazardjik, and who on the way had been loud in his denunciation of the rebels, changed his tone completely when he really saw what his countrymen had done, and was not less horror-stricken than I was.

Edib Effendi's report as regards Batak is not worth criticism. I am informed that he never went there. I should only like to ask him two questions—

1. Was the whole village, which is principally built of stone, burnt down by a few "bâtisses en bois" being set fire to near the church?

2. Were the women who were decapitated outside the village, and whose bones the dogs were quarrelling over when I saw them, killed in the "combat terrible" which is supposed to have taken place?

Batak was a flourishing village, and carried on an active trade in planks. The sawmills have all been burnt, and 30,000 okes of iron carried off or destroyed. The loss in cattle is also great—1,000 yoke of oxen, 2,000 cows, 5,000 sheep and goats, and 800 horses having been stolen.

The surviving inhabitants live in wooden huts constructed outside the village,* and are in great misery; they are stunned by this disaster, and do not even try to bury their dead. Some of the women I saw sitting on the ruins of their houses singing the most melancholy sort of dirge; others wandered about the churchyard among the corpses, while a few who seemed more than half bereft of reason rushed about tearing their hair, beating their brows, and uttering piercing shrieks.

* About 250 people were living in the village when I went. About 1,000 were said to be at Peshtera and elsewhere. A considerable number, principally women, took advantage of my visit to return to their village.

The facts of this tragedy are now in the possession of the Turkish Government, and it is their bounden duty, by making a striking example of Achmet Agha and Mohammed Agha, to prove to the world that it thoroughly disapproves of their infamous conduct.

On my way to Batak I passed through the burnt village of Radilovo, consisting of 177 houses. Here 25 men and women had been killed, and 150 yoke of oxen, 20 horses, and 3,000 sheep carried off. Through the intervention of the authorities, the villagers had recovered 30 yoke of oxen and 350 sheep. Some of their cattle they knew to be at Tchanahdji, but on going to claim it the Turks drove them off with pistol shots.

I also visited Peshtera, a mixed village. Here the Bulgarians said they had lost 200 head of cattle, and that there had been cases of plunder, but no ill-treatment. One man had been killed in the fields.

On the road between Tatar Bazardjik and Otlou-keui, I passed a number of villages totally or partially burnt, viz., the Bulgarian villages of Vetren, Dene-Harman, Tzerovo, Caramousal, Lesitchovo, and Bania; and the Mussulman villages of Palanka, Ouroutchli, and Djafferli.

Vetren was partially burnt by the troops of Hassan Pasha, the inhabitants having cut the telegraph wires, fired upon the post, and aided in burning the little Mussulman village and guard-house of Palanka. 130 houses, including the church, are burnt out of 400; the school is not burnt.

At *Dene-Harman* the villagers, having all taken to the mountains, were unable positively to say who burnt their village.

Tzerovo.—80 houses burnt out of 180. Part of these were burnt by the insurgents, but the Circassians who came afterwards burnt the church and carried off a quantity of cattle. Some of the oxen have been recovered at Sofia, but no sheep.

A Tchorbadje of this village wanted to massacre some gipsies, who were, however, saved by the intervention of one Nicola Kodouk, a Bulgarian. This man has been rewarded by being imprisoned at Philippopolis.

Caramousal.—120 houses was totally burnt by the Turks of Elenene, and 600 yoke of oxen carried off. 50 people were killed here and there on the hills.

Lesitchovo was evacuated by the inhabitants at the instigation of some rebels, and was then partially burnt, probably by the Turkish villagers.

Bania.—Hafiz Pasha burnt six houses here belonging to persons implicated in the revolution. Several women were violated. A boy watching cattle in the neighbourhood was shot through the leg by the troops or Bashi-Bazouks, who happened to pass by, a wanton act of cruelty.

Ouroutchli and *Djafferli*, purely Turkish villages, situated near one another, were burnt by the insurgents. In the former I saw the ruins of the mosque, but I cannot say whether there was one in the latter or not.

Otloukeui, in Bulgarian Panagurishti.—A large and wealthy village of 2,000 houses; may be looked upon as the centre of the insurrection. It was here that Benkowsky held meetings of insurgents, at which their plan of action was drawn up. Altogether, the inhabitants tell me, he stayed in the town nearly four months, telling everyone that the Turks were going to massacre the Christians, and promising Russian aid. When the rising really did take place, the people killed the "Multezim," a zaptieh, and some other Turks, and imprisoned the Mudir's Vekil and others, who, however, were not harmed. The newly-appointed Mudir was to occupy his post at the time, and was murdered outside the village.

Two Turkish women were also killed outside, though apparently one of them only met her fate after she had slashed an insurgent across the head with a knife.

While at Otloukeui I conversed with many of the villagers, and none of them denied that the Mudir was murdered outside; but some persons who wish to be more Bulgarian than the Bulgarians, and whose only object it is to make the Turks appear as odious as possible in the eyes of the world, so as to lead to the speedy dismemberment of their Empire, do not hesitate by a most unworthy piece of special pleading to acquit the people of Otloukeui of this murder.

They say the village had no Mudir, so how could he be killed in the village?

It is true he was killed not inside but outside, which, as far as he was concerned, makes no material difference.

The insurgents erected fortifications which are erected with greater care than any others I saw in the country, and prepared for resistance. When, however, Hafiz Pasha

and Adil Pasha arrived with troops and irregulars, the resistance they met with was very slight, and they entered the town and made it pay dearly for its attempts at revolution.

Both the churches, two schools, the whole of the market-place, and the best houses, in all between 400 and 500, were burnt, and the whole town pillaged from one end to the other. Nothing of the smallest value was left, and between 30,000 to 40,000 Turkish pounds' worth of property are said to have been carried off. Unfortunately the Turks did not confine themselves to pillage; over 700 people belonging to the village, among whom were many women and children, were killed, and a large number of strangers also perished. The number of these latter was stated to me by the inhabitants to have been about 1,000.

Great numbers of women were also no doubt ravished, but considering the natural unwillingness that, of course, exists among respectable people to give evidence respecting this class of crime, it is not very easy to obtain reliable information on the subject. One woman, however, did come forward, and declared that her daughter, fourteen years of age, had been violated, and then murdered in her presence.

Two little children were brought to me wounded, one in the foot and one in the thigh. A child is said to have been impaled on a standard, and paraded in the streets.

Other fearful horrors are spoken of as having been committed, but I am not in a position to prove or disprove them, and would, therefore, prefer to draw a veil over them.

I have, however, stated sufficient to prove that Hafiz Pasha suppressed the insurrection in this place with a severity not in the least called for. As a centre of what, no doubt, might have turned out eventually to be a serious rising, an example was called for; but a chastisement, sufficient to strike terror into the population, might have been inflicted without ravishing, pillaging, slaughtering women and children, and indulging in cruelties worthy of Red Indians.

The case is not improved by the fact that these deeds were committed not only by Bashi-Bazouks, but also by regulars, the Arab soldiers, in particular, distinguishing themselves by their licentiousness and ferocity.

Much has been said about the case of Raika Popova, school-mistress of Otlou-keui, and surnamed the "Queen of the Bulgarians." One day, at the beginning of the insurrection, this very young woman was taken by her fellow-townpeople, mounted on a horse, and paraded about the streets, while the crowd shouted, "Long live the Queen!" The whole affair appears to have been really nothing but a drunken frolic, yet the girl was imprisoned for some time at Philippopolis, and only released during my stay there.

She is said to have been violated by the Mudir of Otloukeui, in whose house she was at first confined, and also by other Turks; but though her female companions declare such to have been her fate, the girl herself stoutly denies it, and has even expressed her willingness to submit to medical examination. Perhaps natural modesty may cause her to shrink from speaking the truth, but I do not quite see how, in the face of her own positive denial, the Turkish Government can be called upon, as some seem to think they ought to be, to disprove her statement.

Avrat Alan.—A large village some four hours from Otlou-keui, also took an active part in the insurrection. Some zaptiehs who had gone there to effect some arrests were besieged in the Konak, but after twenty-four hours' resistance succeeded in cutting their way through the mob. The Mudir, his secretary, and three zaptiehs were killed, as also were sixty-six gipsies and one Turkish girl.

The village was not attacked by Hafiz Pasha till after he had been to Otlou-keui, and as the inhabitants made immediate submission, and even arrested some suspected persons, not a house was burnt. The place, however, was completely pillaged, and the inhabitants say 130 people, including strangers, were killed. Many of the houses were simply gutted, and in one that I saw the boards had been torn up in places and the divans ripped open in the search for valuables.

It is said that a boy of this village was so brutally outraged that he died.

On the whole, Avrat Alan, the most guilty village of all, suffered less than any of the others, and one is led to ask why the punishment which was considered sufficient here should have been considered insufficient elsewhere.

Sandjak of Slimnia.—The insurrection in this province seems to have been a most extremely insignificant affair, but Mussulman feeling had been a good deal excited by the occurrences at Eski-Zaghra in the autumn, and had it not been for the firmness and impartiality of Haydar Bey, Mutessarif of Slimnia, whose conduct it is impossible to praise too highly, the Christians would have fared badly.

Nothing appears to have happened till after the insurrection had been pretty well quelled in the Province of Philippopolis, when a few idle and worthless fellows from Slimnia betook themselves to the Balkans to join some bands which had been formed in the neighbouring vilayet.

The Bulgarians themselves gave information of this to the Mutessarif, a body of men went in pursuit of these rebels, and coming up with these dispersed them, killing several and brought a few heads into Slimnia.

Here the whole business might, and ought to, have ended, but the arrival of Shefket Pasha entirely altered the aspect of affairs.

The Vali of Adrianople had sent orders to the Mutessarif of Slimnia to call out the Bashi-Bazouks, but the latter, who was fully alive to the danger of such a course, did not at once obey. No sooner did Shefket Pasha arrive, however, than without consulting anybody, he sent orders right and left for the general arming of the Mussulmans. Many of these Bashi-Bazouks came to Slimnia, and they, and Shefket Pasha's troops, spread terror among the Christians. Three men were murdered in the streets, and a few others wounded, and had it not been for the admirable conduct of the Mutessarif, far worse things would undoubtedly have happened.

I will now endeavour to give some description of what Edib Effendi calls "*la défaite infligée aux insurgés à Boyadjikeui.*"

About the 24th or 25th of May some Turks of Korfale went to the village and extorted about 20*l.* Turkish from different villagers and ravished one man's wife and daughter. The inhabitants accordingly met together to consider what steps they could take to prevent the recurrence of these outrages. Upon this two or three Mussulmans who happened to be in the village sent to Slimnia and told the Mutessarif that Boyadjikeui was in a state of rebellion. The Mutessarif mistrusted their information, and told them plainly that they only wanted an excuse for plunder. They left him and went to Shefket Pasha, who, in his turn, went to the Mutessarif, and urged him to take measures to suppress this incipient rising.

The Mutessarif therefore telegraphed to Hachen Effendi, Kaimakam of Yamboli, which is two hours from Boyadjikeui, to go and inquire into what was going on.

This functionary went to the village, but the inhabitants having really no confidence in him, said they did not want his protection, and if only a single zaptieh were sent from Slimnia they would do anything they were ordered to do.

Hachen Effendi consequently sent off a messenger to Slimnia to say that the inhabitants of Boyadjikeui *had refused to admit him.*

This message somehow or other got into the hands of Shefket Pasha, who immediately ordered his troops out and marched to the village. On his approach the elders came out to meet and salute him, and to assure him of their loyalty. He entirely refused to listen to them, and drove them away with insulting language, and ordered the attack.

Out of 139 houses all but 20 were burnt; 143 men and 6 women were massacred; 5,500 oxen, cows, horses, &c., and 7,600 sheep were carried off, as well as quantities of other property. This happened on the 30th of May.

The villages of Mouslouk Hodja, Bouzoundjou, and Emirli were plundered, but not burnt, and Besch Tepe was only saved from destruction by the troops of Shefket Pash by the earnest intercession of the Bishop of Slimnia.

At Yamboli also the troops under Shefket Pasha behaved most disgracefully, they plundered many houses and ill-treated the Christians, though I could not discover that anybody had been killed.

I had been told that the daughter of one Hadji Elia had been violated and murdered before his eyes. I made inquiries and discovered that the man had but two daughters before these occurrences, who are both still alive. Whether, however, one of them was outraged or not is more than I can say. There is little doubt that Shefket Pasha intended to treat Yamboli as he had treated Boyadjikeui. The Kaimakam of the town ordered the people to give up their arms, which they were doing quietly enough, when Shefket Pasha interfered and said he must have all the arms that instant. The Kaimakam being bullied completely lost his head, and said the people would not give up their arms, upon this Shefket Pasha ordered his troops to take them; a great many houses were thus pillaged and the place was only saved from destruction by the interference of a Mussulman named Hafiz Effendi, a most noble and liberal minded man. Braving the opinion of his co-religionists he took as many Christian families as he could into his house, and going to Shefket insisted that the plundering should be stopped.

I am aware that as regards the killed at Boyadjikeui my figures do not tally with

those of others who have made inquiries on the spot as well as I have, but I can only give the estimate given to me both by the villagers themselves and by an Armenian gentleman who resides on the spot.

The remark, however, that I made about Batak applies equally here; what makes the act of Shefket Pasha so abominable is that there was not a semblance of revolt, the inhabitants were perfectly peaceable, and the attack on them was as cruel and wanton a deed as could well have been committed. Moreover, Shefket Pasha was not a mere Chief of Bashi-Bazouks, but a "Ferik," who had fought in the Herzegovina, and who ought not to have been inspired by a love of bloodshed or plunder like an Achmet Agha or a Mahmoud Agha.

For this heroic exploit Shefket Pasha has received a high place at the palace. It is worthy of note that when the Mutessarif of Slimnia was endeavouring to obtain the restoration of the cattle taken at Boyadjikeui, and which was in the possession of some of the so-called "Soultans," the latter replied that, as it was a gift from Shefket Pasha, they had a legitimate right to it.

The following is the official list of prisoners tried, condemned, or released by the Special Tribunal (Mekhiemeifevh-el-ade) of Philippopolis up to August 5th:—

	No.
Condemned to hard labour	60
Condemned to death, but not executed	2
Executed	25
Released	1,400
Sent to Adrianople or elsewhere, on account of non-competence of Tribunal ..	150
Died of a natural death	25
Remain in prison	294
	<hr/> 1,956

I have no official return for the Tribunal of Adrianople, but I believe about 1,200 people were imprisoned there; eleven were hung for being implicated in this year's insurrection, and seven for being implicated in the rising at Eski-Zaghra last October.

Prisoners condemned to death were executed in the different towns of the Province.

Since this list was given me, the amnesty to certain classes of prisoners has been published, and it is not probable that there are many men still in confinement.

The persons implicated in the rising were tried before Mixed Tribunals, composed of Turkish, Bulgarian, Greek, Armenian, and Jewish members, established at Philippopolis, Adrianople, and Tournova. The former was presided over by Selim Effendi, and when the Tribunal of Tournova had finished its labours, Ali Shefik Bey, its President, came to Philippopolis to assist him. All parties agree in their praise of Ali Bey's character. As regards Selim Effendi, opinions are more conflicting. My own idea is that he is not an unjust or an unmerciful man; one batch of prisoners was, I know, saved from the gallows by his casting-vote, on an occasion when all the other Mussulman members of the Tribunal had voted for the extreme penalty of the law. Selim Effendi had been previously employed at Eski Zaghra, in investigating the circumstances connected with the outbreak there last year.

He has also been, and still is, a member of the Criminal Court of Cassation, one of the sections of the High Court of Justice.

The member of the Tribunal of Philippopolis who enjoyed the most unenviable reputation was Mehmet Ali Hodjizude, who is accused of many corrupt practices.

The prisoners were first examined before the Tribunal of First Instance, where their depositions were taken, and then before the Special Commission. When before the latter they were defended by a Christian; but on the only occasion I attended at the Court, it was hard to say whether the prisoners or their Counsel displayed the most abject signs of terror.

It is, however, but fair to say that the four men I saw tried, one and all made confessions which rendered their defence no easy matter.

The depositions they had made were read over to them, and signed by them. Not one of them denied the truth of what he had previously stated, or declared that his confessions had been extorted from him by unfair means.

Surely, if these men had been intimidated or tortured, at the last moment, feeling the rope almost round their necks, they would have taken advantage of the presence of Europeans to declare their innocence.

Anyhow, they could be hung but once, and their case could not be made worse by a protest of this nature,

Of course, I am only speaking of what I actually saw, as it was naturally impossible for me to attend many sittings of the Court.

It has been said that the prisoners do not understand the language in which the proceedings are carried on; the four men I heard tried spoke Turkish fluently and correctly, and the style used in the depositions was by no means a difficult one.

Sandjak of Tournova, Vilayet of Touna.—The head-quarters of the insurgents in this province were at Rakovitza, near Tournova, and here a meeting of them was surprised by zaptiehs.

Immediately after this a band of about 400 men, principally from Rakovitza, after showing some slight resistance to the troops in the open, shut themselves up in the monastery of Dranova, ^{April 29}
^{May 11.}

The Bashi-Bazouks who had been called out hung round the place for about ten days without doing anything, except plunder in the neighbourhood, the village of Dranova itself luckily escaping being pillaged by the firmness of a "bimbashi."

Fasli Pasha then arrived from Schumla, bombarded the monastery, took it, burnt and pillaged it; 120 of its defenders were killed, five were taken, one of whom was hanged, the rest escaped.

Before Fasli Pasha got his artillery up he called upon the insurgents several times to surrender; but they asked for terms which the Pasha refused to grant.

The Turks only lost one man killed.

The destruction of this monastery, which was 200 years old, and contained valuable manuscripts, &c., is certainly a matter of regret, but still it cannot be called an unjustifiable act.

A few other bands of insurgents, with flags, made their appearance in the mountains near Gabrova, and one of them attacked the zaptiehs, who were escorting the post, killing one and wounding one.

Another zaptieh was also killed in the neighbourhood of Boyintze.

In the Caza of Seloï there were also some signs of revolt, and a man named Philo, of Gabrova, going to the village of Seloï-Yenikeui (Novo Selo), succeeded—by telling the usual amount of falsehoods—in making the people prepare for resistance.

Circassians and other irregulars, under the leadership of Sadoullah Effendi and Deli Nedjib Effendi, Kaimakam of Plevna, soon arrived on the scene, and the insurrection was stamped out without any difficulty.

Numerous arrests were made, and a considerable number of innocent people were no doubt imprisoned.

During my tour in this province I saw no village *totally* burnt, nor, indeed, did I hear of any that had been so utterly destroyed as those I had just left on the other side of the Balkans. This partial immunity may be accounted for in the following way:—

All the houses of these villages do not lie close together, but are scattered about in groups of from 10 to 100, sometimes more than a mile apart. It is in this way that many small quarters escaped the attention of the Bashi-Bazouks.

The largest village partially destroyed is Seloï-Yenikeui (not to be confounded with Tcheumlek-Yenikeui in the district of Philippopolis), which consisted of 1,200 houses, 710 of which are now burnt. I have already mentioned the visit of Philo.

When the Bashi-Bazouks arrived under Sadoullah Effendi, a sort of feeble engagement was kept up for two days. There were not more than 100 guns in the whole village, most of the people being only armed with spades and hoes. As soon as the Bashi-Bazouks decided on entering the village the inhabitants fled. It was then that Deli Nedjib arrived with his Circassians, and general pillage commenced.

Yenikeui possessed a convent containing thirty-three nuns, which has been totally destroyed. When the Circassians came these women took refuge in the church, which was broken open, and seven of them murdered, besides one priest and five other men.

How the rest escaped is a perfect marvel. One old nun, who gave an extremely clear account of what passed, told me that during the carnage she managed to slip out of the door and get into the fields. Here she was met by some Bashi-Bazouks, who beat her and tried to get money from her; finding she had none they let her go, and she climbed up a low tree, where she passed the night.

Another nun lay all night hid in a sewer.

Fourteen of these nuns are known to be alive and in places of safety; seven, I have said, were killed in the church; twelve others remain to be accounted for.

Villagers, priests, and nuns all declared to me that these latter had not been killed, though no one could say what had become of them.

As regards the loss of life in the village, a statement drawn up by the villagers shows that 120 men, 20 women, and 10 children were killed, making a total of 150, including those killed near Kalofer, on the other side of the mountains.

It is from this village that the forty girls, who were said to have been burnt in a barn, are supposed to have come; the villagers positively denied the truth of this story, though they said that many women had been ravished, often in the presence of their relations.

The loss in cattle here seems to have been considerable, viz., 4,500 horses, oxen, and cows, 8,400 sheep, 1,500 goats, and 6,500 lambs.

Batoschovo, a village of 600 houses, near Yenikeui. The Bashi-Bazouks burnt 180 houses, killed 44 men, women, and children, and carried off 150 oxen, 950 buffaloes, 140 horses, and 3,300 sheep and goats.

The monastery, which takes its name from this village, has also been partially burnt, and totally pillaged. The church has not been burnt, but plundered and damaged.

Gabina—30 houses burnt, out of 1,200, and 200 completely pillaged; 20 men and 1 woman killed. The insurgents passed through this village, and three gipsies were killed, but the inhabitants did not take to the mountains. Nedjib Effendi wanted to destroy the whole place, but the headmen gave him a paper undertaking to arrest any insurgents who might pass this way, and he desisted; twenty men, however, were arrested and taken to Selvi, being badly beaten on the way; one man died from the effects of a blow from the butt-end of a gun.

Spavnik—180 houses burnt out of 280; church also burnt; 50 men and 23 women killed.

Stokit—3 houses burnt.

Guendjofsi—15 houses burnt and many others pillaged.

Khandik Mahallin—partially plundered by fifteen soldiers, who, while marching through, broke the ranks and pillaged.

The man who comes out worst in this affair is Nedjib Effendi, who has been decorated. When he arrived at Yenikeui all resistance was at an end; and he, as a Government officer, should certainly not have allowed his men to pillage and burn.

Orders have been sent from Tournova to distribute rations of flour among the destitute people of Yenikeui. This order is not, however, properly carried out, for the Turkish official and the Bulgarian Tchorbadi charged with the distribution demand 2 piastres an oke from the people which, of course, they are utterly unable to pay.

I heard another instance of official oppression there. The people are told to transport the Government grain, but all their sacks have been burnt or carried off. The reply is: "Never mind, it is your duty to transport the Government grain, and transport it you must."

In the Caza of Gabrova twelve houses were burnt in the village of Yeni-Mahalle, and eight in the village of Guendjilar, by order of Fasli Pasha. Besides this a number of isolated khans on the northern side of the mountains, on the road between Shipka and Gabrova, were burnt.

The man who took the leading part in organizing the disturbances in this district was one Hariton, a native of Gabrova, who had, however, lived several years in Servia.

The reason assigned by Fasli Pasha for burning the houses at Yeni-Mahalle was that insurgents had held a meeting in the school there.

When he went to the village he was accompanied by Abdoullah Effendi, the "Emlakdji," who gratified private vengeance by pointing out to the troops the houses of the richest people for them to burn and plunder.

Fasli Pasha seems to have behaved in a high-handed and tyrannical way at Gabrova. On his way there he arrested two men of Bojintzi who were totally unconnected with the revolution, and brought them to Gabrova; he then indulged freely in his favourite vice of drinking, and when under the influence of "raki," ordered the prisoners to be hung immediately.

The "Tabour Aghace" who received this order, to his credit, refused to carry it out unless the Pasha gave it him in writing, upon which he was put under arrest; another officer, less troubled by conscientious scruples, was called up, and the two men were hung. The next morning, it is said, the Pasha asked to have the prisoners brought up before him.

One hundred and sixty-nine persons were arrested at Gabrova, many without apparent cause, and sent to Tournova to be tried.

One native of Gabrova, Tzanko, who had received the uncomplimentary sobriquet of "dustaban" (the flat-footed), a man of notoriously bad character, took an active part in the insurrection, and was arrested by the Bulgarians themselves. On being condemned to death he declared that all the well-to-do men of Gabrova were implicated in the rising, but on being pressed, he positively stated that five men had instigated him to join the insurgents. One of these, Yekim Tchanko, was hanged, and the four sentenced to hard labour. The inhabitants of Gabrova declare that Tzanko's statement was merely prompted by a spirit of revenge, and a petition to the Grand Vizier, praying for the release of these men, was being got up when I was in the place.

Koroleff, a school-master of Gabrova was imprisoned for twenty-eight days on very slight suspicion.

In the neighbourhood of Tournova no villages were totally burnt, but at Isinga, Koryaka, Elentse, Zoya, Tsarova, Livada, and Sokolya, acts of violence and plunder were committed, while at Gantchovitz some khans were burnt.

At Kadikeui, also, there were cases of rape and pillage.

At Gonvancha, the Multezim, Rassim Effendi, wanted the inhabitants to transport the Government tithes; this they refused to do, and he accordingly drew up a paper asking the authorities to send troops on account of the presence of rebels. This paper he showed to the "Tcherbadjis," but, being in Turkish, they could not read it; and Rassim Effendi representing it to be about some matter of no importance, they affixed their seals to it. The consequence was the troops came and committed acts of pillage and ravished numbers of women.

It appears that a good deal of fanaticism was displayed by Réouf Pasha, Mutessarif of Tournova, and had he been left to himself, the number of executions would have been at least tripled; but fortunately the President of the Special Commission, Ali Shefik Bey, was a just man, who always, when it was possible, leaned to the side of mercy.

The following is the official list of condemned, &c., by the Special Tribunal of Tournova:—

Imprisoned, 472									
Released	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	430
Executed	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	22
Condemned to different terms of imprisonment	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	20
									472
Of these were hung at—									
Tournova	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	16
Seloi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Lenitz	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Add to these the two hung at Gabrova by Fasli Pasha.									

As regards the loss of life in these districts, it is extremely difficult for me to form a correct estimate. The greatest number of people were killed at Yenikeui, where, as I have said, the numbers amount to 150. In the other villages in that neighbourhood which I visited, or about which I could obtain reliable information, it appears that about another 150 people were killed. I thus can account for about 300 people, and I do not imagine that in the Mutessariflik of Tournova more than 600 people perished, including those who were killed at the taking of the Dranova Monastery.

On the other hand very few Mussulmans were killed; all I could hear of were three gipsies, two zaptiehs, and one soldier.

Having thus far reviewed the circumstances which attended the outbreak and suppression of the Bulgarian insurrection, it is now necessary to consider briefly the present condition of the country.

The revenue derived by Government from the Sandjak of Philippopolis has, in former years, been estimated at 800,000 Turkish pounds; this will now be diminished by at least one-third, and it will require many years of tranquillity and good Government before things return to their proper condition; e.g., the destruction of Batak has ruined the trade in sawn planks. The destruction of Dervent and general insecurity of the valley between Sopot and Kezanlik reduces by one-half the export of attar-of-roses, while the burning of Peroustitza and the partial destruction of Vetren will greatly injure the trade in wine and silk.

In some places, I regret to say, the Government officials are endeavouring to screw the taxes out of the people whose villages have been destroyed. This proceeding is unwise, to say the least of it; what is the use of endeavouring to extract money from people who are nearly entirely ruined? If you take from them what little they

have left, you deprive them of the means of regaining what they have lost. The Government should consider this, as, instead of losing their revenue for a time, it will be lost to them for ever.

Again, here is a case of Government injustice as regards forced labour. The people of Bellova had 400 oxen, they have now 60; five yoke are working at the reconstruction of the blockhouse destroyed by insurgents. A Government order comes for 40 arabas (80 oxen) to transport stores, only half this number is, of course, forthcoming, and the soldiers on their arrival beat the people.

It is no doubt hard to expect that the Porte, with its present financial difficulties pressing on it, and with a war for the breaking out of which it is in no way to blame raging on its frontier, can make any pecuniary sacrifices; but still, in its own interests, it should come forward to help the unfortunate people who are now homeless. Certainly some assistance should be given them towards rebuilding their houses; otherwise, if winter comes on and still finds them huddled together in tents and straw huts, insufficiently clad (for, in many instances, their clothes had been stolen), and badly fed, the mortality among them will be frightful, and I cannot imagine that it is in the interests of the Porte or of any Government to allow any portion of its subjects to die by hundreds of starvation.

In the Province of Slimnia the Mutessarif has done something at Boyadjikeui towards helping the inhabitants to rebuild their houses. He visited the place himself, made inquiries, and did his best to mend matters.

If his example had been followed by other officials in the country, beneficial results would have followed.

If the Porte, owing to its financial condition, cannot absolutely give aid in money, let it at any rate perform the duties of a Government and make life and property secure.

At present the Christians are afraid to go about the country, and the peasants dare not even work in the fields at any distance from the villages.

When at Avrat Alan, the Mudir told me that a few days before, a girl of twelve years old had been violated in the fields by Turks of Ayvanli, and complained that, with the force at his disposal, he was powerless to prevent such outrages.

Take, for instance, Gabrova, which has a large trade in shayak (coarse cloth) and gaytan (a sort of braid). In the interests of their business these traders have to travel about a good deal, but now without an escort they cannot move from their town.

The only way to put an end to this deplorable state of things is for the Government to impress upon the Mussulmans that they must leave their Christian neighbours in peace, and nothing but a few striking examples will really make the former believe that the authorities are serious in their intentions.

The next thing to do is to disarm the Turks, and above all the Circassians. The latter have lived by robbery ever since they have been in the country, and henceforth, what with the insurrection and what with the war, they will become ten times worse than they were before.

I am aware that it is easier to talk about this general disarming than to put it into execution; it would require a larger force than the authorities of Philippopolis at any rate have at their disposal, but when the war is over, and the regulars are on their way home, the Government should take the opportunity of their presence to disarm every Mussulman in the country. As long as the latter walk about armed as they do now, while the Christians are quite defenceless, so long will deeds of violence take place.

For the present, what is most wanted is a regiment of cavalry, which could do patrol work, and would perhaps make the roads more secure than they now are. At the request of the Mutessarif of Philippopolis, some men were sent for this purpose, but they were almost immediately ordered off to the seat of war, and they have not been replaced by others.

A loss that presses heavily upon the villagers is that of their cattle, without their oxen their fields are useless to them, they can neither gather their harvests, plough, nor do anything else.

A great number of beasts fell into the hands of the authorities at Philippopolis and elsewhere, who, I really believe, were desirous of giving them up to their owners, but, unfortunately, in this, as in everything else in this country between the superior authorities and the peasant, there comes the subordinate official who, unless he is properly propitiated, raises every sort of difficulty.

However, while I was at Philippopolis a certain quantity of cattle was given up, and Kiani Pasha proposed a plan which I have reported elsewhere, but the working of which I am unable to speak about.

The Government must not stop here, it must compel the Pomaks, Circassians, and others who have cattle and other stolen property in their possession to give them up. I know this is no easy matter, as the Circassians, in particular, when called upon to give up what they have carried off reply that it is their legitimate property, having been taken in open war.

In many cases when the authorities have sent a zaptieh with villagers who know that their cattle is in the possession of some Turks, the latter have treated the official mazbata with derision.

One man at Seloi Yenikeui recognised his horse in the possession of a Turk, he complained to the Kaimakam who made the latter give it up. The Turk, however, waylaid the Bulgarian outside the town of Seloi, and beat him within an inch of his life. The consequence, of course, is that the villagers are afraid to claim their property.

In the neighbourhood of Yeni Zaghra and Yamboli the inhabitants suffer considerably from the oppression of men known as the "Soultans," the direct lineal descendants of Tartars who had large grants of land given them some three centuries ago.

Successive Governments have confiscated portions of this land and the "Soultans" have recouped themselves by taking that of their neighbours. They also impose forced labour on the Rayahs, and otherwise annoy them.

What is wanted to restore tranquillity is a strong hand and a master mind. There is now blood between the Christian and Moslem, and each one regards the other with bitter animosity. To allay this, and to cause things again to flow in their natural channel, requires a man of no ordinary capabilities, who with powers enlarged beyond those of an ordinary Governor, and action unhampered by too many orders and counter-orders from the central Government, would deal out justice unflinchingly and impartially to Mussulmans and Rayahs. No half-measures will be of any avail, they would only irritate the Mussulmans, and not satisfy the Christians.

The course the Porte ought to adopt is self-evident, but it must decide for itself whether Bulgaria is to continue in a state of anarchy, or whether it is little by little to resume its old tranquil conditions.

As regards the question which has of late so profoundly agitated public opinion, viz., the atrocities committed in the suppression of the insurrection, no one looks upon them with greater abhorrence than I do, or wishes less to palliate them, as I think any impartial person can easily see who peruses this report. However, it appears to me that those who first brought the matter forward have too studiously ignored the fact that there ever was an insurrection at all.

The idea that a person, totally unacquainted with the facts of the case, would gather from their statements would be, that the Mussulmans, without the smallest provocation, had simply fallen on the Christians and massacred them; in fact, that what really did take place at Boyadjikeui took place at every village throughout Bulgaria.*

I do not suppose that anybody will come forward and deny that the Bulgarians committed the first overt acts of rebellion, and that they shed the first blood. What could be more cold-blooded than the murder of the gipsies and other Mussulmans at Avrat-Alan? It is said the gipsies were going to plunder the villages, but there is not a jot of evidence to prove this intention, and, moreover, it is likely that about 100 men could sack a large and populous place like Avrat-Alan?

It has been denied that a single Mussulman village was burnt or a single mosque destroyed, when with my own eyes I have seen the ruins of both.

The Mussulmans of Strelja are also undergoing considerable misery.

The fact is that when the revolution declared itself the most indescribable panic seized upon the Mussulmans; they expected an invasion of Servians and Russians, they knew themselves to be in an immense minority, they credited the Bulgarians with courage and fighting power which they certainly never possessed, and they thought that immediate massacre would be their fate. When, therefore, they found that their foes were not so formidable as they thought they would be, they revenged themselves most cruelly for the panic into which they had been thrown.

The Province was denuded of troops, the police force was and still is extremely small, and many of its members were wretchedly armed with flint carbines and long Albanian guns which might have been made in the last century.

The provincial authorities sent urgent appeals to Constantinople for troops, but unfortunately Mahmoud Pasha, who is generally credited in Bulgaria with having

* When I talk of an insurrection, I wish it to be understood that I do not apply that term to what took place in the province of Slinnia, where the attacks of the Turks were really unprovoked.

given ear to those baneful counsels which have brought his country to the brink of ruin, delayed sending the aid asked for. It was then that Aziz Pasha had recourse to the dangerous expedient of calling an ignorant and fanatical population to arms.

Aziz Pasha actually issued this fatal order, but Mahmoud Pasha stands none the less plainly convicted of culpable negligence for not having sent troops the moment they were asked for, and the enemies of Turkey may have the satisfaction of knowing that the neglect of that one man has done her more real harm than twelve months unsuppressed insurrection in the Herzegovina and Bosnia.

As regards the importance of the insurrection, it was neither so formidable as the Turks in their first panic thought it was, nor so utterly insignificant as many people wish to make it out to be.

The principal instigators came entirely from abroad; and without foreign intrigue no revolution would have broken out; but it is not easy to say really to what degree they succeeded in indoctrinating the people with their revolutionary and Panslavistic ideas.

The Bulgarian as a rule is not made of the stuff which produces a revolutionist; he is rather conservative, hard working, thrifty, somewhat apathetic, and far from courageous. The priests and schoolmasters were probably those who lent the most ready ear to revolutionary teachings, and some of the "tchorbadjis" were also drawn into the affair, but I believe the majority of the respectable Bulgarians took no real part in it.

Had the province been peopled by Greeks, the scenes of the Cretan insurrection would have been repeated, and the rule of the Mahomedans would have been placed in serious jeopardy.

Wherever there is Turkish rule, there, owing to its inherent faults, there will be Christian discontent. Last spring this was naturally heightened by the total failure of Mahmoud Pasha's high-sounding firman of reforms, by the deaf ear turned by the Porte to petitions from Bulgaria, and by the heavy pressure of taxation. Add to this the difficulties in which the Turkish Government was involved, and latterly, also, the fear of some outbreak of Mussulman fanaticism, which prevailed more or less throughout Turkey.

The foreign agitators and those natives whom they had succeeded in seducing seized upon this apparently favourable opportunity to strike a blow: the peasants were deluded into leaving their villages by being told that the Turks were going to massacre them, and the population of the small towns was induced to take part in the insurrection by threats and by the most extravagant promises of foreign aid.

The revolution was well planned, but miserably executed. The heart of the people was evidently not in it; and many of them apparently thought that all that was necessary for success was a green flag, with a lion rampant, and "Liberty or death" embroidered on it.

The insurgents put themselves in the wrong by killing defenceless Turks and committing other acts of insurrection, but the resistance they made when actually attacked was hardly worthy of the name.

The Turks gained an easy victory, and abused it most shamefully, the innocent being made to suffer for the guilty in a manner too horrible to think of. Moreover, unscrupulous persons did not hesitate to gratify private vengeance on this occasion, and many a debtor got rid of an importunate creditor by denouncing, or threatening to denounce, him as a "Committee dji."

A thousand regulars sent to Otlou-keui, Avrat-Alan, and Bratzigovo, and a few more to Bellova, where the presence of Benkowsky gave the insurrection rather more importance, would in a few days have stamped out every vestige of revolution. The really guilty might have been punished, and a suitable example made, and the world would not have been horrified by the accounts of massacres of women and children and of wholesale burning and pillaging.

The Porte has, moreover, given a powerful handle to its enemies and detractors by the way it has treated those who took an active part in the suppression of the insurrection. Those who have committed atrocities have been rewarded; while those who have endeavoured to protect the Christians from the fury of the Bashi-Bazouks and others have been passed over with contempt; *e.g.*,

Shefket Pasha holds high office in the Palace.

Hafiz Pasha has a command in Servia.

Achmet Agha has been decorated; so have Tossoun Bey and Nedjib Effendi, Kaimakam of Plevna.

On the other hand, has any reward been given to Hafiz Effendi, who saved

Yamboli; to the Mutevelli of Karlovo; to Husni Effendi, Commander of the troops at Yamboli, who saved those places; to Rustem Effendi, Yuzbashi at Tournova, who having fought against insurgents really in arms, saved the prisoners from the fury of the mob; or to Haydar Effendi, Mutessarif of Slimnia?*

It will, perhaps, be said that in this report I have made but slight mention of that of Edib Effendi. I do not look upon that document as of very great importance.

The first part of it, which treats of the origin of the insurrection, is pretty correct, and I believe that the paper said to have been found upon Benkowsky, containing the insurgent plan of action, to be genuine. It is worthy of note that this document distinctly says that those Mussulmans who offer no resistance are to be spared.

What Edib Effendi says about the way the insurrection was suppressed may be dismissed without much comment, his account of Batak and Boyadjikeui being sufficient to condemn that part of his report.

In speaking of the present state of the country he remarks pathetically that "the Christians are not yet completely convinced of the pacific attitude of the Mussulmans." Perhaps after all that has happened this is scarcely to be wondered at.

What he says about the restitution of the cattle is not in accordance with fact. Certainly not more than one-third of the stolen property has been restored, and it is only with the greatest difficulty that the peasants have recovered what little they now have.

The report of Chakir Bey on the Vilayet of the Danube, though imperfect, is fairer than Edib Effendi's, as he does not deny that Circassians and others committed acts of pillage, which he does not justify.

This already too long report may be brought to a close with the following remarks:—

There was undoubtedly a revolution which had to be suppressed by armed force.

A small minority of the population committed reprehensible acts which merited punishment.

The Government of Mahmoud Pasha is to blame for the calling out of the Bashi-Bazouks, for had it sent troops earlier this disastrous measure would never have been necessary.

It is also to blame for allowing revolutionary agents to circulate under its very eyes, without taking measures to counteract the spread of their pernicious doctrines.

The manner in which the rising was suppressed was inhuman in the last degree, fifty innocent persons suffering for every guilty one.

The deeds of blood I have spoken of, and the misery I have witnessed, must rouse just indignation in every mind; but the infamous conduct of those agitators who, to serve the selfish ends of States, whose only object is territorial aggrandizement, have not shrunk from exciting poor, ignorant peasants to revolt, thus desolating thousands of homes, and leaving to a fine, rich province, a legacy of tears, should not be allowed to escape without their share of public execration.

In this report, full as it doubtlessly is of faults and shortcomings, I have striven, to the best of my poor abilities, to lay before Her Majesty's Government a fair and unbiassed account of the result of my inquiries and observations during the mission entrusted to me.

I have naturally not been able to visit every burnt village nor investigate every individual case of suffering, and no doubt many things have escaped my notice, but I trust I have been able to give a generally correct idea of what took place.

My information I have gathered from all sources, Bulgarian, Turkish, Greek, Armenian, Servian, &c.

I have not considered it part of my duty, as some seem to think I ought to have, to reject as utterly unworthy of credence, and without examination, every jot and tittle of evidence that came to me from a Turkish source, and swallow with avidity, and without the smallest attempt at enquiry, every story told by a Bulgarian, simply because he was a Bulgarian.

Putting aside official statements, which in cases like the present must always be looked upon with some distrust, the word of a Turk is in all probability worth that of a Bulgarian, particularly among the lower classes.

* Hassan Pasha refused to allow Bashi-Bazouks to burn Bratzigovo, for which act he was violently abused by the Turks of Bazardjik.

It is, therefore, the duty of a person conducting an inquiry, such as the one I have lately been engaged in, to collect all the evidence he can from every possible source, and then carefully sift it, rejecting all improbabilities, from whatever side they may come.

I can honestly state that I started with no preconceived ideas, though in the eyes of certain persons this was reprehensible in the last degree, and that it has been throughout my earnest wish neither to palliate nor to exaggerate the acts of Turks or Bulgarians.

Before closing, I think it my duty to bear witness to the extreme courtesy shown to me by the Turkish authorities and people wherever I went, while engaged on a mission which could not possibly be very flattering to their national pride; and I state without the smallest hesitation that not once did the authorities endeavour to place obstacles in my way, or try to prevent my visiting particular localities, or holding perfectly free communication with the natives.

(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Therapia, September 1, 1876.

Inclosure 2.

Report by Mr. Schuyler on the Bulgarian Atrocities.

Mr. Schuyler to the Hon. Horace Maynard.

Sir,

Philippopoli, August 10, 1876.

IN reference to the atrocities and massacres committed by the Turks in Bulgaria, I have the honour to inform you that I have visited the towns of Adrianople, Philippopoli, and Tatar-Bazardjik, and the villiages of Stenimakho, Kadi-keui, Kritshma, Peroustitsa, Peshtera, Radilovo, Batak, Kalaglari, Panagurishta (Otlouk-keui), Koprishitza (Avrat-Alan), and Klissura (Persiden or Dervent), in the districts of Philippopoli and Bazardjik.

From what I have personally seen, and from the inquiries I have made and the information I have received, I have ascertained the following facts:—

During the last winter and spring Agents of the Bulgarian Committee at Bucharest made an agitation in Bulgaria for an insurrection against the Turkish Government, and met with considerable encouragement among the younger part of the population. Owing to the betrayal of the plot the insurrection broke out prematurely on the 1st and 2nd of May in the villages of Klissura, Koprishitza, Panagurishta, Avro-Selo, Bellova, and perhaps one or two others. There was great alarm, and even a panic at Tatar-Bazardjik and Philippopoli. Numerous telegrams were sent to the Porte for regular troops which, after some delay, were refused.

The Beys of Philippopoli and Adrianople practically seized on the Government and armed the Mussulman inhabitants of the towns and of the country, arms being sent for that purpose from Adrianople and Constantinople. These armed Mussulmans, called irregular troops or Bashi-Bazouks, were then, together with the few regular troops at hand, sent into a campaign against the Bulgarian villages for the purpose of putting down the insurrection, and of disarming the Christian population. But few Circassians seem to have been employed at this time. Their settlements are east of Adrianople. It was a "levée en masse" of the Mussulman villages against their Christian neighbours.

The insurgent villages made little or no resistance. In many cases they surrendered their arms on the first demand. Nearly all the villages which were attacked by the Bashi-Bazouks were burnt and pillaged, as were also all those which had been abandoned by the terrified inhabitants. The inhabitants of some villages were massacred after exhibitions of the most ferocious cruelty, and the violation not only of women and girls, but even of persons of the other sex. The crimes were committed by the regular troops as well as by the Bashi-Bazouks.

The number of villages which were burnt in whole or in part in the districts of Philippopoli and Tatar Bazardjik, is at least sixty-five, of which the names are as follows:—

District of Philippopoli.

Sindjirli, 200 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Staro-Novo, Selo, 300 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Yeleshnitza, 90 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Krastovo, 100 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Uzun Geren, 70 houses.

Erili, 200 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Sary-Gul, 45 houses.

Aivadjik, 50 houses.

Pashtusha, 20 houses, 1 church.

Zdrebetehka, 90 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Yasy-koria, 140 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Kozarsko, 110 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Tsaratsovo.

Perushtitsa, 400 houses, 2 churches, 2 schools.

Uzun-Jak-Kirish.

Lishka.

Saradja.

Stribnitsa.

Pega.

Yunjular.

Kavak-tiré.

Aarisa-keui.

District of Koptchus.

Poikovo, 60 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Diedovo, 20 houses burnt.

Sotir.

Sitovo, plundered, but not burnt.

District of Tatar Bazardjik.

Klissura (Persiden Dervent), 700 houses, 1 church, 2 schools.

Koprishtitza (Avrat Alan), plundered, not burnt.

Batak, 900 houses, 1 church, 3 schools.

Victrona, 600 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Stultcha (mixed), 440 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Popintsa, 1 church, 1 school.

Radulovo, 160 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Kara-Musal, 1 church, 1 school.

Slavovitsa, 1 church, 1 school.

Akandjivo, 1 church, 1 school.

Tchanaktchievo, 1 church, 1 school.

Doganovo.

Ilshitsa, 1 church, 1 school.

Kalaglari (mixed), 160 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Jumaya, 1 church, 1 school.

Keruli.

Golaka.

Deri-Orman.

Syrt-Orman, 1 church, 1 school.

Tikyra.

Novo-Selo.

Bega, 60 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Oldjulan, 1 church, 1 school.

Ellf-diré, 1 church, 1 school.

Eshi-Kashli, 80 houses.

Lianovo.

Shiakhlari, 1 church, 1 school.

Kulata, 1 church, 1 school.

Kasapli.

Tserovo, 150 houses, 1 church, 1 school.

Hadjili.

Dinkata, 1 church, 1 school.

Karisli.

Zlakatchin, 1 church, 1 school.

Stcherkovo, 1 church, 1 school.

Kaloyerovo.

Lusitchovo, 1 church, 1 school.

Mitchka, 1 church, 1 school.

Petritsch.

Lishnitzo.

Paniagurishta (Otluk-keui), 3,000 houses, 2 churches, 3 schools.

This list may not be entirely correct, as many towns have both Turkish and Bulgarian names, and they may be repeated in one or two instances. Some villages, too, are probably omitted. Owing to the absence of statistics it is impossible exactly to ascertain the population of each village, and in many cases I have not been able to learn the number of houses. In general as long as the patriarch, or father of a family, is alive his married sons live with him, so that there are frequently families of 15, 20, and even of 39 persons. The population of a village would be, therefore, larger than for the same number of houses in other countries. In the larger villages the lower stories of the houses are of stone, the roofs are tiled, the streets are paved, and there is a general air of comfort and well-being. Particular attention was given by the troops to the churches and schools, which in some cases were destroyed with petroleum and gunpowder. The altars were overturned, the pictures painted on the walls scratched and pierced, and the holy places defiled and desecrated.

Besides the villages four monasteries were burnt: St. Teodor, near Perushtitsa, the Penagia, and the Bezsrabrinitsa, near Kretshma, and St. Nicholas, near Kaloyerovo.

The Turks allege that many of these villages were burnt by the insurgents for the purpose of compelling the Bulgarian inhabitants to join them. I am unable to find that such was the case in more than two or three instances, and even here the proof is very weak. At Bellova the insurgents burnt the railway station in which some *zaptiehs* had taken refuge.

It is very difficult to estimate the number of Bulgarians who were killed during the few days that the disturbances lasted, but I am inclined to put 15,000 as the lowest for the districts I have named.

The manner in which the troops did their work will be seen from a few details gathered on the spot from persons who escaped from the massacre.

Perushtitsa, a town of 400 houses, and between 3,000 and 4,000 inhabitants, took no active part in the insurrection. Becoming alarmed at the attitude of the Turks in the neighbouring villages, the inhabitants sent a deputation to Aziz Pasha, the Mutessarif of Philippopoli, for regular troops to defend them. He returned them a written message that he had no troops to send, and that they must defend themselves.

When the *Bashi-Bazouks* appeared before the town, they, therefore, refused to surrender, entrenched themselves in a church, retreating, finally, to another, and held out for five days, until they saw the regular troops under Raschid Pasha, when the remainder gave themselves up. Many of the inhabitants escaped at the beginning of the struggle, but many were shot down. The church was bombarded, and about 1,000 in all were killed, many of them women and children. The town was pillaged and completely burnt, not a single house being now standing. Many women were violated. The floor of the church, the church-yard, and many of the gardens were dug up afterwards in search for buried treasure. The *Bashi-Bazouks* here were commanded by Ahmed Aga of Tamrysh, who was subsequently rewarded with a silver medal.

Klissura was nearly twice the size of *Perushtitsa*, and proportionately richer, as many of the inhabitants were engaged in the manufacture of attar-of-roses, and many were merchants travelling through the country. The insurrectionary movement began here on the 2nd of May, but it was not until the 12th that the *Bashi-Bazouks*, under the command of Tussum Bey of Karlovo, attacked the place. A few shots were fired when the villagers surrendered and fled to *Koprishtitsa* and to the mountains. More than 250 Bulgarians were killed, chiefly women and children. The Turks claim that 14 Mussulmans, in part gypsies, were killed before and during the fight. As soon as the *Bashi-Bazouks* entered the town they pillaged it and burnt it. Among other things 450 copper stills used in making attar-of-roses were carried away to the Turkish villages. Subsequent parties carried off all that was left, even to the nails from the doors and the tiles from the roofs. The church was desecrated and blown up. Tussum Bey for this exploit was decorated with the *Medjidié*.

Koprishitsa (Avrat Alan), although one of the first villages to rebel, was one of the last to be attacked. Warned by the fate of Klussura and Panagurishta, the leading inhabitants themselves arrested the ringleaders of the insurrection, and sent to Philippopoli for regular troops. In spite of this the bearers of submission were fired on, and one, the priest Dorcho, was killed, the town was several times pillaged, many of the women were violated, and about 30 persons were killed. The town was not burnt, and a general massacre was avoided by large presents of money paid by the leading inhabitants to the Turkish Commanders. Three shots were, however, fired at the church, but did little damage. The villagers admit having killed 10 Turks and 40 gypsies, the latter being suspected of an intention to plunder the town. The Turks claim a total loss of 71.

Panagurishta (Otlut Keui) was attacked by a force of regular troops, together with Bashi-Bazouks, on the 11th of May. Apparently no message to surrender was sent. After a slight opposition on the part of the insurgents the town was taken. Many of the inhabitants fled, but about 3,000 were massacred, the most of them being women and children. Of these about 400 belonged to the town of Panagurishta, and the others to nine neighbouring villages, the inhabitants of which had taken refuge there. 400 buildings, including the bazaars and the largest and best houses, were burnt. Both churches were completely destroyed, and almost levelled to the ground. In one an old man was violated on the altar, and afterwards burnt alive. Two of the schools were burnt, the third, looking like a private house, escaped.

From the numerous statements made to me, hardly a woman in the town escaped violation and brutal treatment. The ruffians attacked children of eight and old women of eighty, sparing neither age nor sex. Old men had their eyes torn out and their limbs cut off, and were thus left to die, unless some more charitably-disposed man gave them the final thrust. Pregnant women were ripped open, and the unborn babes carried triumphantly on the points of bayonets and sabres, while little children were made to bear the dripping heads of their comrades.

This scene of rapine, lust, and murder was continued for three days, when the survivors were made to bury the bodies of the dead. The perpetrators of these atrocities were chiefly regular troops, commanded by Hafiz Pasha. The Turks claim, and the villagers admit, the death of fourteen Mussulmans, two of whom were women, who were killed with arms in their hands, during a conflict with a party that refused to surrender to the insurgents.

While pillage reigned supreme at Kuprishtitsa and lust at Panagurishta, at Batak, the Turks seemed to have no stronger passion than the thirst for blood. This village surrendered without firing a shot, after a promise of safety, to the Bashi-Bazouks under the command of Ahmed Aga, of Burutina, a Chief of the rural police. Despite his promise, the few arms once surrendered, Ahmed Aga ordered the destruction of the village and the indiscriminate slaughter of the inhabitants, about 100 of the young girls being reserved to satisfy the lusts of the conqueror before they too should be killed. I saw their bones, some with the flesh still clinging to them, in a hollow on the hill side, where the dogs were gnawing them. Not a house is now standing in the midst of this lovely valley; the saw-mills (for the town had a large trade in timber and sawn boards) which lined the rapid little river are all burnt, and of the 8,000 inhabitants not 2,000 are known to survive. Fully 5,000 persons—a very large proportion of them women and children—perished here, and their bones whiten the ruins, or their putrid bodies infect the air. The sight of Batak is enough to verify all that has been said about the acts of the Turks in repressing the Bulgarian insurrection, and yet I saw it three months after the massacre. On every side were human bones, skulls, ribs, and even complete skeletons, heads of girls still adorned with braids of long hair, bones of children, skeletons still encased in clothing. Here was a house the floor of which was white with the ashes and charred bones of thirty persons burnt alive there. Here was the spot where the village notable Trandafil was spitted on a pike and then roasted, and where he is now buried. Here was a foul hole full of decomposing bodies; here a mill-dam full of swollen corpses; here the school-house where 200 women and children, who had taken refuge there, were burnt alive; and here the church and churchyard where fully 1,000 half-decayed forms were still to be seen, filling the inclosures in a heap several feet high; arms, feet and heads protruding from the stones which had vainly been thrown there to hide them, and poisoning all the air.

Since my visit, by order of the Mutessarif, the Kaimakam of Tatar Bazardjik was sent to Batak with some lime to aid in the decomposition of the bodies and to prevent a pestilence.

Ahmed Aga, who commanded at this massacre, has been decorated and promoted to the rank of Guz-Bashi.

These atrocities were clearly unnecessary for the suppression of the insurrection, for it was an insignificant rebellion at the best, and the villagers generally surrendered at the first summons; nor can they be justified by the state of panic, which was over before the troops set out on the campaign.

An attempt however has been made—and not by Turks alone—to defend and to palliate them on the ground of the previous atrocities, which, it is alleged, were committed by the Bulgarians.

I have carefully investigated this point, and am unable to find that the Bulgarians committed any outrages or atrocities, or any acts that deserve that name. I have vainly tried to obtain from the Turkish officials a list of such outrages, but have heard nothing but vague statements. I was told by Kiany Pasha that the insurgents killed the wife and daughter of the Mudir of Koprishitsa; but this Mudir had recently gone there, and had left his wife at Eski Saara, where she still resides, and he had no daughter. I was also told of the slaughter of the Mudir of Panagurishta; but at the time mentioned that village had no Mudir. I was referred for information to Hafez Nuri Effendi, a leading Turk of Philippopolis. In a very careful statement made by him, he sets the number of Mussulmans (including gypsies) killed during the troubles at 155, of whom 12 are women and children; the word children taken to mean any one under 20 years of age. I have been able to obtain proof of the death of only two of these women—at Panagurishta—who certainly were not intentionally killed. No Turkish women or children were killed in cold blood. No Mussulman women were violated. No Mussulmans were tortured. No purely Turkish village was attacked or burnt. No Mussulman's house was pillaged. No Mosque was desecrated or destroyed.

The report of the Turkish Special Commissioner, Edib Effendi, contains statements on this point, as on many others, which are utterly unfounded on fact, and the whole report may be characterized as a tissue of falsehoods.

I am, &c.

(Signed) EUGENE SCHUYLER.

Inclosure 3.

Rapport présenté à la Sublime Porte par Chakir Bey, Commissaire Impérial, envoyé dans le Vilayet du Danube pour procéder à une Enquête sur les Troubles dont cette Province a été le théâtre.

(Traduction.)

JE suis arrivé à Roustchouk, muni d'instructions spéciales, en passant par Varna, Prayadi et Choumla, et après m'être concerté avec le Gouverneur-Général je me suis dirigé vers Tirnova pour faire une tournée d'inspection dans les districts.

Ayant visité en personne toutes les localités sises au nord des Balkans qui se trouvaient encore sous l'émotion des derniers événements, j'y ai procédé à une enquête minutieuse, et j'ai été assez heureux pour calmer la méfiance et l'animosité qui s'étaient déclarées entre les Musulmans et les Chrétiens.

L'objet de ma mission consistait principalement à ramener la confiance dans l'esprit des Musulmans envers les Chrétiens qui s'étaient révoltés et à rassurer ces derniers sur les intentions des Musulmans qui avaient pris les armes pour se défendre. Je devais m'enquérir, en outre, des circonstances qui ont précédé, accompagné et suivi l'insurrection. Aussi, dès mon départ de Varna jusqu'à mon retour de Soulina, me suis-je attaché à atteindre ce double but en donnant dans certaines localités des conseils de modération et en procédant dans d'autres à des investigations minutieuses.

Des actes subversifs s'étaient produits à Tirnova, Servi, Rahova et Ivradja. Les villages de Loftcha, Pelina, Zichtor et Nikboli y avaient pris part et se trouvaient en proie à une certaine effervescence. J'ai donc cru devoir mander séparément auprès de moi les Musulmans et les Chrétiens de ces localités.

J'ai adressé aux premiers des paroles rassurantes. Je leur ai fait entendre que le désir du Gouvernement Impérial est que les Musulmans et les Chrétiens agissent en commun pour la défense de la mère-patrie; que c'étaient là, d'ailleurs, une condition du bien-être de tous; qu'ils devaient ensevelir dans un profond oubli les tristes épreuves du passé et gagner les sympathies des Chrétiens en s'abstenant de toute attaque et de toute récrimination contre eux.

Quant aux Chrétiens, je me suis efforcé de leur faire comprendre que les instigations étrangères auxquelles ils obéissaient visaient à mettre le pays en danger, que cet état de choses leur serait également funeste puisqu'ils étaient tous enfants de la même patrie et qu'ils constituaient eux-mêmes un de ses premiers éléments de grandeur et de prospérité. Je les ai engagés à ne pas céder à ces coupables insinuations et à vivre en bonne harmonie avec leurs compatriotes Musulmans. J'ai ajouté qu'il était de leur intérêt commun de soustraire les Musulmans, et de se soustraire eux-mêmes à cette mutuelle méfiance qui s'était emparée d'eux.

Ces conseils et les arguments sur lesquels ils s'appuyaient ont semblé produire l'effet que j'en attendais.

A Matchin, à Issaktha et à Baba, où il régnait également une certaine agitation dans les esprits, j'ai tenu à peu près le même langage.

L'enquête à laquelle je me suis livré a démontré que ce sont les comités insurrectionnels siégeant en Serbie et à l'étranger qui ont répandu parmi les Bulgares des idées révolutionnaires et qui les ont encouragés à profiter de la révolte de la Bosnie et de l'Herzégovine et à ne pas laisser échapper cette occasion qu'ils appelaient favorable. Quelques individus du bas peuple, nourris de ces illusions, se joignirent à ces comités, et se mirent activement à l'œuvre. Il fut décidé de faire éclater simultanément l'insurrection à Aysaridji, à Bassiticha (situés aux environs de Tirnova), à Eslimié, à Avrat-Allan et dans une partie du Balkan Dosbati, au moyen d'émissaires spéciaux qui y avaient été précédemment envoyés. Ces gens sans aveu se sont portés à des actes de nature à dévoiler, même aux Musulmans, leurs coupables desseins et à jeter le trouble et l'inquiétude dans l'esprit de ces populations. Les habitants de Rossititcha et de Yéni-keuy, dépendants du Caza de Servi, ont les premiers levé l'étendard de la rébellion. Ceux de Yéni-keuy, ayant attaqué les Musulmans des villages avoisinants, et commis des violences et des déprédations aux environs de Servi, une lutte s'ensuivit bientôt. A Ratichitcha une autre bande d'insurgés se dirigea vers Diranowa en laissant partout sur son passage des traces d'incendie et de sang, et prit possession du fameux monastère qui devint le siège de l'insurrection.

Fazli Pacha, Commandant du second corps d'armée, marcha à la rencontre des rebelles avec le petit nombre de soldats dont il disposait. Mais, vu l'importance de ce mouvement et la difficulté d'organiser sur le champ des corps de troupes régulières, il fut forcé de former et d'expédier, à la hâte, sur les lieux, un détachement de Bachibouzouks et de Tcherkess, détaché du corps créé il y a huit ou dix ans sous le nom de troupes de réserve. C'est ainsi que l'insurrection a pu être localisée et étouffée. Aussitôt après, des actes d'hostilité éclatèrent au nord des Balkans, ce qui donna dès lors au mouvement insurrectionnel un caractère général.

La population Musulmane apprit, non sans appréhension, que des bandes d'insurgés, organisées par les comités, avaient débarqué à Radeski, à Zaporinti et à Couzloudi, et se dirigeaient vers Ivantcha en brûlant les villages et en massacrant les Musulmans qu'ils rencontraient, ainsi que les bergers Tcherkess, presque tous des jeunes gens.

En proie à la plus grande surexcitation et perdant toute confiance, même envers les Chrétiens avec lesquels ils entretenaient de bonnes relations, les Musulmans se sont tous armés.

Si la nouvelle des violences commises sur des femmes Musulmanes au-delà des Balkans, nouvelle mise en circulation par les auteurs des troubles eux-mêmes, dans le but ostensible de donner plus d'extension à la révolte, se fût répandue de l'autre côté des Balkans, elle aurait eu, assurément, de graves conséquences.

Bien que les autorités locales aient, en présence de ces événements, fait preuve d'une grande énergie et d'un grand courage, et qu'elles aient activement travaillé à circonscrire l'insurrection, quelques employés subalternes, voyant dans cette rébellion une agression spécialement dirigée contre les Musulmans, se sont naturellement laissés gagner par la méfiance et ont traité avec une certaine indulgence quelques Tcherkess et quelques individus de la population indigène, en armes, qui se sont livrés à des actes de pillage.

C'est ainsi que les Circassiens et les Musulmans, en poursuivant les habitants du village de Yéni-keuy, centre de la révolte, se sont emparés des bestiaux abandonnés comme d'un butin de guerre. Ce mauvais exemple porta la populace à d'autres actes semblables. Les Circassiens réunis des villages Assaich et Tcheruta, dépendants du district de Sichtow, avec quelques autres individus, ont enlevé les bestiaux du village Murad Bey, près de Tirnova, dont les habitants n'avaient pas encore pris part à la révolte et étaient restés dans l'obéissance.

Ces actes isolés prirent bientôt le caractère du pillage et les individus qui s'en rendirent coupables se répandirent dans un ou deux autres villages, où ils enlevèrent

également des bestiaux. Les Bulgares qui, par leur rébellion, se sentaient coupables vis-à-vis de l'autorité, n'osaient cependant formuler aucune plainte. Les villageois qui étaient restés soumis ont, en effet, été victimes de spoliations de ce genre. La panique gagna également le district de Servi, où, à mon arrivée, toutes les boutiques étaient fermées. Ce n'est qu'à force de conseils et d'assurances que j'ai pu ramener les habitants à la confiance et leur faire ouvrir leurs magasins. En même temps j'ai licencié les troupes auxiliaires et, d'accord avec Fazli Pacha, dont le quartier-général était alors à Plona, j'ai procédé au désarmement des Circassiens et de la population indigène. En outre, Fazli Pacha forma des détachements de troupes régulières dont la présence contribua à mettre fin à ces actes coupables et regrettables à tant de titres.

Les agents du Gouvernement furent en même temps chargés de rechercher et de remettre aux propriétaires ou, à défaut, à leurs parents, le bétail appartenant non-seulement à la population paisible, mais encore aux habitants des villages insurgés, tels que Yeni-keuy et autres localités voisines. De la sorte, le bétail enlevé put être retrouvé et restitué à qui de droit.

L'insurrection, qui tout d'abord fit explosion dans le sud des Balkans, pris tout-à-coup de la consistance.

Dans le Vilayet du Danube, ce mouvement éclata plus tard et fut bientôt réprimé. Les Musulmans et les Chrétiens ont eu très peu de morts. Les pertes des Musulmans consistent en quelques enfants et quelques pâtres tués par les Bulgares aux environs de Yeni-keuy et quelques personnes frappées en combattant.

Parmi les Bulgares, les individus qui s'étaient enfermés et fortifiés dans le monastère de Diranowa, ceux qui avaient débarqué à Rahova en bateau à vapeur, et quelques fuyards des combats de Yeni-keuy, ont seuls trouvé la mort. Les renseignements exagérés communiqués par le Directeur des Agences Commerciales à Braïla au Caïmacam de Matchin, et l'inquiétude non-justifiée de ce Caïmacam, ont provoqué la méfiance des Musulmans à l'égard des Chrétiens des villages de Yeni-keuy et de Tchernia, dépendants du district de Matchin. La population, ayant commencé à désarmer les Bulgares, les Chrétiens des villages environnants donnèrent à cet acte une autre interprétation et de graves événements en seraient résultés sans un certain Mahmoud Yazidji, notable de Matchin, qui se rendit dans ce village et réussit, avec le concours d'Elias Effendi, fermier, à empêcher tout acte d'hostilité. Ces deux personnes sont dignes de récompense.

Dans les autres Cazas de Toultscha et dans les Sandjaks de Varna en général, aucun acte répréhensible n'a été commis et aucun village ne s'est révolté. La conduite du Gouverneur de Varna, du Caïmacam de Soulina et de ceux de Kustendjé et de Baba-Dagh, mérite également d'être récompensée.

Tel est, en résumé, le résultat de la mission qui m'a été confiée dans le Vilayet du Danube.

Le 2 Juillet, 1876.

Inclosure 4.

Rapport présenté à la Sublime Porte par le Tribunal Extraordinaire institué à Philippopoli, pour juger les individus impliqués dans les événements qui se sont passés en Bulgarie.

(Traduction.)

L'INSURRECTION Bulgare qui avait éclaté dans le district de Philippopoli et dans le каза de Bazardjik a été promptement réprimée par les armées Impériales. Les insurgés avaient combiné leur plan et organisé leurs forces de telle sorte qu'ils avaient foi dans les conséquences et les éventualités probables de la rébellion. Heureusement, cette rébellion a été écrasée, dès son début; l'enquête a établi tous les projets coupables qu'elle avait en vue et qu'elle n'a pu exécuter. Il est prouvé que ces adversaires de la nation et du pays avaient tout mis en œuvre pour organiser le soulèvement dans ses moindres détails.

Ces ennemis redoutables de l'existence de l'Empire, qui avaient entraîné les populations Bulgares dans une aventure aussi périlleuse, en dépit de tous les bienfaits dont celles-ci jouissaient sous le rapport du bien-être et de la prospérité, ont été si complètement déçus dans leurs espérances qu'ils ont essayé, en désespoir de cause, de masquer leurs actes, dont les Bulgares eux-mêmes ont été les premières victimes, tout en les déplorant profondément. Aussi, ces hommes criminels se sont-ils, dès lors, appliqués à égarer l'opinion publique à l'étranger en représentant, sous les couleurs les plus

abominables, les événements qui se sont passés en Bulgarie. C'est pourquoi nous allons établir ici la vérité sur l'origine de l'insurrection et sur ses développements ultérieurs.

Les Comités révolutionnaires formés en Moldo-Valachie et en Serbie ne cessaient depuis longtemps d'attirer le feu de la révolte parmi les Bulgares de la Roumélie et de faire, dans ce but, des sacrifices de toute nature. Ils avaient tenté plusieurs fois de provoquer un commencement d'exécution de leurs projets. Plusieurs tentatives sans succès avaient eu lieu naguère dans le vilayet du Danube et dans d'autres localités. Mais, il y a trois ans, sur l'avis de la police secrète, vingt-cinq individus furent arrêtés sous la prévention d'avoir participé au complot ourdi par un certain Ouzounoff, qui avait cherché à faire de la propagande révolutionnaire dans les villes et les villages Bulgares. Ces individus furent alors traduits devant la justice et condamnés à l'exil.

Les événements dont la ville d'Eski-Zaghra a été la théâtre, l'année passée, n'ont été que le prologue du drame sinistre, qui devait plus tard prendre de si larges proportions, grâce aux encouragements secrets qui étaient prodigués à l'œuvre de la rébellion.

En même temps, le mouvement insurrectionnel trouvait des adhérents tout prêts parmi les nombreux popes et maîtres d'école en Serbie et en Russie. Ce mouvement, préparé de si longue main, s'est déclaré tout-à-coup par des actes de violence et de cruauté que l'humanité et la civilisation réprouvent avec horreur. La dernière instruction est la triste preuve des excès que l'esprit de rébellion peut atteindre parmi ces populations primitives, alors qu'elles sont en proie aux excitations des ennemis venus de l'extérieur.

L'instruction poursuivie par le Tribunal *ad hoc*, formé à Philippopoli par ordre de la Sublime Porte, pour juger les insurgés arrêtés, ne laisse subsister aucun doute sur les moyens employés pour préparer le mouvement et sur les encouragements qui ont été prodigués pour troubler l'esprit des populations. C'est un point qui mérite d'être traité avec tous les développements qu'il comporte.

Nous avons déjà parlé du complot d'Ouzounoff et des événements d'Eski-Zaghra. L'idée insurrectionnelle, qui avait reçu cette première impulsion, gagnait tous les jours du terrain parmi les populations crédules et ignorantes que les promesses fallacieuses des émissaires venus de Moldo-Valachie et de Serbie, ainsi que les popes et les maîtres d'école, travaillaient sans relâche. Depuis quelque temps, des armes et des munitions étaient introduites clandestinement, et l'action devait bientôt éclater.

Certes, ce ne sont pas les instigations qui manquaient.

Deux ou trois mois avant le jour fixé pour le soulèvement, les comités avaient expédié plusieurs émissaires en Roumélie. Ghorgui Nikofski, Petri Vancoff et Ghorgui Economoff étaient désignés pour le district de Philippopoli. Arrivés dans le pays, ces individus avaient choisi, comme foyers insurrectionnels, les villages de Avrat-Alan, Persedam et Perouchtindja, dans le district de Philippopoli, et les villages d'Otlouk-keuy, Bratchkova et Batak, dans le caza de Bazardjik. Tous ces villages sont situés le long des Balkans et peuplés exclusivement de Bulgares. Ces émissaires trouvaient là des populations déjà préparées à la révolte et qui se sont ralliées, sans difficulté, au mot d'ordre.

Après avoir formé un comité central, chargé de diriger le mouvement, ces agents se sont rendus successivement dans les autres villages Bulgares, où ils ont institué des sous-comités. Ils leur ont communiqué le programme revêtu du sceau du comité central, qui indiquait le rôle de chacun, et représentait l'insurrection comme une entreprise qui revêtissait le caractère sacré. Ce programme ne visait à rien moins qu'à une révolution ayant pour but l'indépendance de la Bulgarie, sous un Gouvernement nouveau. Les insurgés avaient pour instruction de massacrer la population Musulmane, d'incendier les villes et les villages, et après avoir jeté ainsi la terreur dans l'esprit des Musulmans, d'opposer une résistance énergique aux troupes expédiées contre eux. Il leur était prescrit de suivre strictement les ordres des agents insurrectionnels. On leur assurait que des armes et des munitions, ainsi que des renforts ne tarderaient pas à leur parvenir de la Serbie et d'autres pays encore; on les invitait enfin à s'unir avec les légions qu'on disait prêtes à marcher à leurs secours, et à faire tous leurs efforts pour préparer l'insurrection et la mettre en œuvre jusqu'à l'arrivée de ces secours.

C'est ainsi que l'on était parvenu à étendre les ramifications du mouvement et à convaincre les populations. Les popes faisaient des prédications incendiaires, priaient pour le succès des armes de la rébellion et exhortaient les paysans à ne reculer devant aucun sacrifice pour une régénération nationale.

Les adhérents de la révolte étaient assermentés, et il leur était dit que des caisses d'or seraient expédiées de Russie pour les indemniser de l'incendie de leurs maisons, de la perte de leurs bestiaux et de leurs biens. C'est au moyen de ces promesses que les chefs sont arrivés à connaître le nombre des combattants et qu'ils se sont fait délivrer des tableaux statistiques indiquant le chiffre des habitants et des maisons de chaque village. Après les efforts de toute sorte tentés pour préparer et organiser la rébellion, voici dans quelles circonstances elle s'est produite.

Il avait été décidé, ainsi qu'il ressort des publications faites et des résolutions adoptées par les organisateurs du mouvement, que l'insurrection éclaterait le 1^{er} Mai, à une heure désignée et sur tous les points à la fois ; mais l'enquête préliminaire faite a démontré depuis que le mouvement éclata quelques jours avant la date fixée, c'est-à-dire le 20 Avril.

Quant aux mesures prises par les autorités, il résulte également de l'enquête que, dans la quinzaine qui a précédé le commencement des hostilités, les instigateurs du mouvement, dans le but évident de jeter les dernières bases de la rébellion et de procéder à son organisation finale, avaient tenu un conseil présidé par les chefs et composé de plus de 300 membres, parmi lesquels se trouvaient des prêtres, des maîtres d'école, des hommes lettrés ou sachant lire et écrire, qui étaient venus des villes et des villages et qui depuis prirent une part active à l'insurrection.

Ce conseil fut tenu à Matchka-Déressi, dans le voisinage d'Otlouk-keuy, et les résolutions qui furent adoptées furent consignées dans un acte ou procès-verbal rédigé séance tenante et contenant 36 articles ou propositions indiquant, d'une part, le programme à suivre, et contenant, d'autre part, les engagements pris des conjurés.

Cet acte, qui est revêtu de la signature des Chefs, et dont la traduction est annexée à ce Rapport, frappe l'attention par le langage incendiaire et l'esprit subversif qui se dégage de chaque expression. On constate ce même esprit dans des documents analogues trouvés depuis et que l'on est occupé à traduire, ainsi que dans des livres, des brochures, et d'autres imprimés de cette nature.

A ce Conseil assistait le nommé Tetko, rapporteur fidèle, qui pour se soustraire aux dangers d'une situation périlleuse, avait signé de sa main l'acte précité, mais qui se hâta, une fois le Conseil terminé, d'accourir à Bazardjik, où il rapporta les choses telles qu'elles s'étaient passées. L'autorité, prévenue par cet homme, s'empressa d'envoyer à Otlouk-keuy l'officier de police Ahmed Agha, accompagné de quelques hommes, et ordonna en même temps à Nedjib Agha, autre officier de gendarmerie, de se rendre à Avrat Alan. Ces deux officiers étaient chargés de s'enquérir minutieusement de ce qui se passait dans ces localités et de surveiller les faits et gestes des habitants.

Arrivé à Avrat Alan, Nedjib Agha ne tarda pas à s'apercevoir des préparatifs qui s'y faisaient et des dispositions manifestes de la population de troubler l'ordre et la paix. Il fit aussitôt arrêter et emprisonner les nommés Dochtessaly Téodor et Thosson Yorghli ; mais à peine avait-il commencé leur interrogatoire, que leurs complices, voyant que leurs desseins avaient été divulgués aux autorités et que celles-ci ne tarderaient pas à prendre des mesures pour comprimer le mouvement et l'empêcher d'éclater, jugeant d'ailleurs que tout ajournement était devenu impossible, se démasquèrent complètement en arborant les premiers le drapeau de la rébellion.

On vit alors les révoltés se grouper autour de leur Chef le nommé Théodore Kapakhof, et se rendre en armes auprès des autorités exigeant de Nedjib Agha l'élargissement immédiat des deux individus qu'il avait arrêtés, et, tandis que quelques-uns d'entr'eux attaquaient les hommes de Nedjib Agha, celui-ci se fraya bravement un chemin à travers cette foule ameutée et parvint à se sauver.

Les révoltés attaquèrent aussitôt le Mudir, qu'ils massacrèrent avec quelques zaptiés.

Ces événements douloureux se passaient le 20 Avril, jour qui a marqué le commencement de l'insurrection en Bulgarie.

Les meneurs d'Otlouk-keuy, de leur côté, étaient aussitôt informés par leurs espions de la mission d'Agha Ahmed et ne tardaient pas à être instruits des faits dont Avrat-Alan a été le théâtre.

Tout ce qui venait de se passer et les renseignements fournis par Tetko ne laissaient plus subsister aucun doute sur les projets des rebelles ; les autorités du district donnèrent avis de ces faits à celles du vilayet qui, entr'autres dispositions, avaient dirigé en toute hâte sur Bazardjik deux escouades de gendarmes à cheval venant du côté de Zaghra, ainsi qu'un petit détachement d'infanterie, pris parmi les Rédifs préposés à la garde du dépôt de Philoppopoli.

Les habitants d'Otlouk-keuy comprirent alors que le Gouvernement était, en effet,

instruit de leur complot et qu'il prenait déjà des mesures énergiques à leur égard ; ils se soulevèrent en masse et se livrèrent au massacre du remplaçant du Mudir qui était absent, de quelques zaptiés, du fermier Chérif Effendi, de Philippopoli, et de tous les Musulmans qui leur tombèrent sous la main.

C'est ainsi que l'insurrection éclata le même jour sur deux points différents et que les Chefs rebelles de six autres localités insurgées purent, à raison des facilités qu'offre la topographie des lieux, se réunir la nuit suivante et parcourir en personne les campagnes avoisinantes pour soulever la population, en leur annonçant de vive voix ou par des messagers, les faits qui s'étaient produits et en les appelant aux armes.

L'insurrection se propagea, dès lors, comme un incendie et les villageois, d'ordinaire si indifférents et si paisibles, abandonnaient leurs maisons et leurs foyers et accouraient, en armes et pourvus de munitions, à l'appel des chefs de l'insurrection.

Ils marchaient par groupes et se dirigeaient vers les endroits qui leur avaient été désignés comme point de ralliement.

Tous ces faits ressortent clairement des dépositions et des aveux que les détenus ont faits, et qui se trouvent consignés dans leurs interrogatoires.

Pour ce qui est des événements douloureux qui se sont passés sur le théâtre de la révolte, les rebelles des campagnes, réunis, ainsi qu'il est dit plus haut, dans les six différents centres de l'insurrection, à savoir : les villages d'Avrat-Alan, de Perasudum-Derbend, de Pruchtendja, d'Otlouk-keuy, de Bratchkova et de Batak élevèrent, en vue de se défendre contre les attaques éventuelles des troupes Impériales, des redoutes et des barricades, et les firent garder par des factionnaires. Ils comptaient s'y réfugier dans le cas où il seraient serrés de près, avant l'arrivée des forces qui viendraient à leur secours de la Serbie et d'autre part. Ils se mirent à traduire en faits les instructions qu'ils avaient reçues itérativement. D'abord, une bande d'insurgés, recrutée à Kloura (Bazardjik) et dans les villages voisins, détruisit deux ou trois grands ponts sur la chaussée qui conduit à Sofia et une grande partie des fils télégraphiques. Une autre bande, formée dans les environs de Bellova, attaqua la station du chemin de fer de Bellova, mit le feu à la gare et la brûla, ainsi que quelques gardes Musulmans et deux gendarmes. Elle détruisit également un grand pont sur le chemin de fer et marqua par ces dévastations barbares ses débuts dans le mouvement.

Du côté d'Avrat-Alan, les insurgés s'emparèrent du Mudir, de cinq gendarmes et ensuite du Secrétaire du Mudir, du préposé de la Douane, des tziganes Musulmans qui se trouvaient dans ces parages et des paysans Musulmans, au nombre d'environ une centaine. Il les conduisirent par bandes au lieu du supplice et les égorgèrent, un à un, avec les derniers raffinements de la cruauté. Ils se distribuèrent entr'eux les morceaux mutilés de ces victimes et se livrèrent à des démonstrations de joie à Bratchkova. Parmi ceux qui tombèrent sous les coups de ces effrénés, les uns furent passés par les armes, les autres tués à coups de couteau et quelques-uns furent d'abord mutilés d'une façon horrible, puis embrochés et rôtis. Ils procédèrent de la même manière avec les femmes.

Ils les exposèrent d'abord aux yeux des rebelles, dépourvues de leurs vêtements et les livrèrent ensuite à la mort en leur faisant subir des tortures tellement avilissantes que l'imagination humaine se refuse à les croire. Ils se livrèrent encore à différents crimes, les uns plus odieux que les autres, particulièrement à Otlouk-keuy comme ailleurs, pendant l'exaltation du premier moment. Les insurgés des villages de Yéni-keuy, de Zindjirli et de Kloura, durant leur marche sur ces points de ralliement, ont commis les dernières atrocités. Ils ont tué et mis en pièces tout ce qu'ils ont rencontré d'hommes, de femmes et d'enfants Musulmans. Ce sont là des faits constatés par les aveux mêmes des auteurs de ces cruautés.

Nous allons maintenant passer en revue la nature des mesures que les autorités Impériales ont été contraintes d'adopter en présence de ces faits criminels.

Le Gouvernement s'est d'abord parfaitement rendu compte du but que poursuivaient les insurgés en se livrant à ces actes de violence. On verra par les instructions consignées dans le programme insurrectionnel, dont ci-jointe la copie en traduction, comment l'incendie devait être allumé dans un grand nombre de villes et de bourgs, à commencer par Philippopoli et Bazardjik, afin de donner partout ainsi le signal de la révolte et de profiter de la confusion pour procéder à une attaque générale.

Ce plan avait déjà reçu un commencement d'exécution à Philippopoli. En effet, tandis que les nouvelles du soulèvement, de la concentration des rebelles sur différents points et des violences auxquelles ils se livraient aux portes mêmes des villes parvenaient aux habitants paisibles et que ceux-ci s'occupaient de la défense à organiser

pour sauver leurs foyers, leurs biens et leur vie, tout-à-coup, vers une heure de la nuit le feu se déclare simultanément dans les ateliers du Sieur Dimitri, fabricant Bulgare de bougies, et du cordonnier Coutcho, tous les deux établis dans le centre même de la ville de Philippopoli.

Il a été bien constaté que cet incendie avait été allumé à dessein, tant par l'interrogatoire auquel a été soumis le dit Dimitri que par la conduite et la fin tragique du cordonnier Coutcho. Celui-ci s'était réfugié parmi les insurgés de Prouchtentza qui ont résisté pendant quelques jours aux troupes Impériales, mais, voyant que tout moyen d'échapper à la juste punition qu'il méritait devenait impossible, il a égorgé sans pitié sa femme et ses enfants en bas âge, et il s'est donné ensuite la mort; les insurgés eux-mêmes ont confirmé ces détails abominables. Quant au double incendie allumé, il a été promptement maîtrisé par les efforts énergiques des autorités locales. Néanmoins, d'autres tentatives du même genre ont été faites dans les villages Musulmans et non-Musulmans de la campagne de Philippopoli, d'où on pouvait les apercevoir.

D'autre part, comme ces parages se trouvaient, à ce moment, dépourvues d'une force armée suffisante pour obliger les rebelles à battre en retraite et pour défendre les hameaux environnants, et que, ainsi qu'il arrive toujours, l'imagination populaire, après avoir donné carrière aux rumeurs les plus exagérées, avait fini par porter le chiffre des insurgés à 30,000 ou 40,000, et les lueurs de l'incendie venant à leur tour signaler l'existence des conjurés au sein même de la ville, la terreur et l'exaspération de la population ne connurent plus de bornes.

La nuit pendant laquelle éclataient ces incendies, on apprenait que les paysans des villages Bulgares des circonscriptions voisines de Philippopoli s'étaient avancés en grandes masses jusqu'à une lieue de distance de la ville; qu'à Bazardjik, aux environs du village de Kloura, à trois heures de cette localité, un rassemblement de révoltés, composé de 5,000 hommes, après avoir mis à mort tous les tziganes Musulmans qui s'y trouvaient, se dirigeait vers Bazardjik dans le but de se vouer au massacre général des Musulmans. Ces nouvelles qui se succédaient sans relâche, imposèrent aux autorités la nécessité absolue de prendre des mesures promptes et énergiques; ordre fut donné en conséquence d'armer, sans plus de retard, toute la population Musulmane valide qui se trouvait sur les deux points menacés et qui, avec le concours des gendarmes disponibles, devait former des détachements de milice improvisée, auxquels serait confiée la défense du pays. Ces dispositions, dictées par la prudence et la nécessité, ont eu immédiatement leur effet. Les séditions, qui s'apprétaient à attaquer les deux villes, renoncèrent à leur projet, aussitôt qu'ils eurent connaissance des mesures de défense qui avaient été prises, et ils rebroussèrent chemin vers leur point de départ, non sans commettre partout sur leur passage toute sorte d'excès et de crimes.

Des travaux pour la défense de ces deux villes furent aussitôt entrepris, dans la mesure du possible; mais les chefs insurgés, ayant appris que l'autorité ne disposait pas de troupes suffisantes pour les attaquer à son tour et les disperser, résolurent de mettre le feu aux maisons des Musulmans qui se trouvaient dans les villages environnants et les rebelles incendièrent ainsi une partie d'Isiltzé, dépendant de Bazardjik et habité par des populations mixtes. Les Musulmans de ce bourg se réfugièrent aussitôt avec leurs familles dans la mosquée, où ils furent cernés par les insurgés. Les rebelles d'Otlouk-keuy et d'Avrat-Alan qui apprirent ce fait, accoururent, et, pendant cinq jours, ils assaillirent la mosquée qui ne résista à leurs attaques que grâce à la solidité de sa construction. Une dizaine de Musulmans avaient déjà succombé et les autres continuaient à se défendre, lorsque le cinquième jour les Musulmans de Dorghoutli et de Ghraldiné vinrent à leur secours et attaquèrent les insurgés. Durant le combat, les assiégés parvinrent à s'échapper et à s'enfuir. Il en fut de même des villages de Borouk, dépendant de Bazardjik, et de Tchanakdjilar, de la circonscription de Philippopoli, ainsi que de plusieurs autres encore dont les habitants Musulmans, après avoir été attaqués et cernés par les insurgés, ont subi des pertes considérables.

Ainsi qu'il a été dit plus haut, la répression immédiate des actes de barbarie et de violence commis avait été jugée plus que nécessaire, attendu que si l'insurrection avait duré encore quelques jours, elle aurait pris des proportions considérables et se serait étendue de tous côtés, au point que l'on n'aurait pu s'en rendre maître, et qu'elle aurait amené, nul n'en doute, une grande et irréparable calamité.

Sur les ordres donnés par son Altesse le Grand Vézir, et en attendant l'arrivée des troupes régulières, des corps de volontaires en nombre suffisant furent formés dans le district, et placés sur différents points pour veiller à la sécurité publique. Lorsque

quelques bataillons de ligne furent envoyés, ces corps de volontaires se réunirent à ces troupes et prirent l'offensive.

Au premier moment, les insurgés se mirent en mesure de se défendre et ouvrirent le feu sur nos troupes avec leurs canons de bois, mais reconnaissant bientôt qu'ils ne pourraient pas résister aux attaques vigoureuses des troupes Impériales, qui tirèrent quelques coups de canon du côté des villages de Bratchkova et d'Avrat-Allan, ils demandèrent à faire leur soumission, qui fut aussitôt acceptée par les Commandants. Ces insurgés n'ont pas eu un seul mort et n'ont eu à souffrir d'aucun mauvais traitement de la part des troupes.

Il en est d'autres qui n'ont point voulu se rendre aux propositions réitérées de soumission qui leur furent faites par nos Commandants et qui persistèrent à lutter contre les troupes pendant plusieurs jours; mais ceux-là aussi demandèrent à mettre bas les armes, lorsque finalement l'armée Impériale se prépara à les attaquer plus vigoureusement.

Leurs soumission fut acceptée, et il ne leur fut fait aucun mal, malgré la punition que leurs atrocités avait méritée.

Après avoir opéré l'arrestation des assassins, des incendiaires, et des mauvais sujets qui se trouvaient parmi eux et qu'on dirigea vers le chef-lieu pour y être emprisonnés, les troupes Impériales prirent sous leur protection les enfants et les familles de ces derniers ainsi que les autres insurgés qui s'étaient soumis. On établit immédiatement des baraques, dans ceux de leurs villages qui avaient été détruits, pour leur donner un abri; on leur distribua des rations et on pourvut à tous leurs besoins.

En ce moment même, et d'après les ordres du Grand Vézir, on leur fait des avances d'argent qui diffèrent de 5,000 à 10,000 piastres et qui sont prélevées sur les caisses d'épargne.

Les autorités ayant reçu avis que les insurgés du village de Prestinitza, un des centres révolutionnaires de Philippopoli, avaient saisi trois Musulmans (Pomaks) qui s'étaient rendus dans ce village pour acheter du pain et les avaient mutilés d'une façon barbare, et qu'ils se préparaient à assaillir la population Musulmane du village voisin Ostona, envoyèrent sur les lieux Hadji Mehemed et Hadji Raschid Effendis, notables de Philippopoli, et Todoraki Agha, membre Bulgare de la Cour d'Appel, pour les exhorter et les engager, dans leur propre intérêt, à se désister de leurs coupables desseins et à rentrer dans la voie de l'obéissance. Ces délégués ont mandé quelques-uns des principaux habitants du dit village et ils s'efforcèrent de leur faire entendre la voix de la raison; en même temps ils transmirent aux insurgés des avis pressants pour les détourner de leur projet. Toutes ces démarches restèrent sans succès. Les rebelles persistant dans leurs intentions hostiles, des troupes et des volontaires furent envoyés contre eux sous les ordres du Général de Brigade Réchid Pacha. A l'arrivée de ces troupes, les insurgés les accueillirent par des décharges répétées de mousqueterie qui partaient d'abord de leurs barricades, et plus tard de meurtrières qu'ils avaient pratiquées dans les murs de leur église où ils s'étaient retranchés. Vingt-quatre volontaires et soldats sont tombés victimes de cette agression. Les insurgés, ayant enfin repoussé toutes les sommations d'avoir à se rendre dans l'espace de trois jours, malgré toutes les garanties qui leur étaient accordées, une répression par les armes était devenue inévitable. De 2,000 insurgés, indigènes et étrangers, qui s'étaient retranchés dans cette église, 300 environ ont péri; le reste, voyant que toute résistance était devenue impossible, a demandé grâce. Réchid Pacha les accueillit avec bonté, et après avoir retenu les assassins et les instigateurs, il renvoya les autres dans leurs foyers.

Il est à remarquer que, la plupart de ces 300 victimes sont tombées dans des circonstances que l'imagination humaine a peine à comprendre. Quelques-uns se sont donné la mort, après avoir préalablement tué leurs femmes et leurs enfants. D'autres se sont entretués en s'accusant réciproquement d'avoir été la cause de tout ce mal. Bien que ces insurgés eussent eu l'intention de massacrer toute la population Musulmane du village d'Ostona, néanmoins lors de la répression, 430 Bulgares se réfugièrent dans ce même village avec leurs enfants et furent généreusement accueillis pendant cinq jours par ceux qu'ils avaient résolu de faire périr sous leurs coups. Ils furent nourris et protégés contre toute attaque, et après avoir été traités d'après les préceptes sacrés de la religion Musulmane, ils furent remis sains et saufs entre les mains du commandant de la troupe.

Cette conduite humaine et généreuse dont il n'a été pourtant fait aucune mention par les narrateurs fantaisistes de tous ces tristes épisodes, est restée gravée dans la mémoire et la reconnaissance des Bulgares. L'opinion publique, ayant toujours une propension à exagérer le nombre des Musulmans qui ont été victimes des insurgés,

comme celui des Chrétiens qui sont tombés sous la coup de la répression ou de la vengeance, et que d'ailleurs plus d'un faux rapport a circulé sur la façon avec laquelle les villages ont été incendiés, nous croyons de notre devoir de placer ici les faits sous leur véritable jour, en donnant un exposé succinct des informations obtenues à la suite de l'enquête à laquelle nous nous sommes livrés à ce sujet.

Il est constaté, d'une manière positive, que les insurgés qui se trouvaient réunis dans les centres indiqués, ou qui étaient disséminés dans d'autres localités, en abandonnant leurs villages, qu'ils ont eux-mêmes incendiés, ont massacré en tout 530 Musulmans. Le nombre des Bulgares morts, dans les combats contre les troupes Impériales et les volontaires, s'élève, d'après le tableau existant, à 1,836 individus. Ainsi, dans le combat avec les insurgés de Prestinitza, un des plus sérieux qui aient été livrés, les insurgés après une résistance de trois jours n'ont eu que 303 morts, dont plusieurs, comme nous l'avons dit, se sont suicidés après avoir tué leurs femmes et leurs enfants, et d'autres se sont entretués. Ces chiffres sont établis par une liste authentique et nominative qui a été présentée par les habitants eux-mêmes de ce village.

Quant à l'incendie des villages insurgés, d'après les ordres données par les instigateurs du mouvement, chaque insurgé en se rendant avec tous ses biens et sa famille à l'endroit désigné pour la réunion des rebelles, était tenu d'évacuer entièrement sa demeure et d'y mettre le feu de sa propre main. Les insurgés de plusieurs villages ont obéi à ces ordres; mais il est, en outre, bien constaté, de l'aveu même des prisonniers, que lorsque quelques Bulgares abandonnaient leurs foyers sans y mettre le feu les chefs insurgés, tels que Todor Vilesko, natif d'Avrat-Alan, Kristo et Yorghui, fils de Vassil, épicier de Philippopoli, et d'autres encore qui parcouraient la campagne pour exciter la population à la révolte, suppléaient eux-mêmes à cette besogne. Il n'y a que trois villages qui aient brûlé à la suite d'un combat.

Quarante-neuf villages Musulmans et Chrétiens, contenant 11,453 maisons, ont été incendiés par les insurgés de la manière que nous avons dite. Parmi ces villages, sept sont exclusivement Musulmans, cinq mixtes, et trente-sept exclusivement Chrétiens. Le nombre des maisons incendiées dans ces villages s'élève à 6,358; les autres 5,095 maisons ont été épargnées par les flammes.

Un fait curieux à constater, c'est, qu'au moment où les habitants Chrétiens du village mixte de Sotir, dépendant du Sandjak de Philippopoli, abandonnaient leurs foyers pour se diriger vers les Balkans et se joindre aux insurgés, des Musulmans qui s'étaient aperçus que le feu avait éclaté dans une maison Chrétienne, se sont immédiatement rendus maîtres de l'incendie et ont pris soin des maisons et des petits objets abandonnés par les fuyards.

Lorsque ces derniers après leur soumission sont rentrés dans leurs foyers, tous ces objets leur ont été intégralement restitués. Les expressions de reconnaissance des Bulgares témoignent de cette conduite digne et honnête de leurs compatriotes Musulmans.

Avant les événements que nous venons de raconter, les Bulgares vivaient depuis des siècles en bonne harmonie avec leurs compatriotes Musulmans, sous l'égide des lois et la protection paternelle du pouvoir. Il a fallu que l'esprit malfaisant des ambitieux criminels, tels que certains prêtres et maîtres d'école, agents révolutionnaires de l'étranger, vint corrompre la simplicité et la bonté native de ces populations dociles, et les pousser à des actes de cruauté dont elles n'eussent jamais été capables sans les instigations sauvages de ces ennemis de la société.

Toutes les instigations qui ont été faites prouvent que le mouvement insurrectionnel devait éclater le 1^{er} Mai, et que ce mouvement devait s'étendre jusqu'à Andrinople, à Sofia et dans le vilayet du Danube.

Les mesures préventives et énergiques que les autorités ont prises ont seules déjoué les calculs des conspirateurs en précipitant l'action, ce qui a désorganisé leur plan, et en circonscrivant le mouvement dans les limites du sandjak de Philippopoli et de Tatar-Bazardjik.

Les données qui précèdent se rapportent à l'origine de la sédition et montrent de quelle manière et par quels moyens ont pu s'exercer les instigations et les encouragements apparents pour amener cet état de choses. Néanmoins, l'examen et le rapport, d'après les informations qui ont pu être recueillies, des véritables causes tant morales que matérielles qui ont donné le jour à ce mouvement nous paraissent offrir un plus grand intérêt.

En effet, les renseignements que nous possédons actuellement proviennent en grande partie des explications fournies jusqu'à un certain point par quelques-uns des affiliés, lors de leur interrogatoire. Il est regrettable cependant que les trois principaux

individus qui avaient été délégués, comme chefs et organisateurs du mouvement dans cette contrée aient pu, au moment de la défaite des leurs, s'échapper d'Otlouk-keuy. De ces trois individus, le premier Yorgi Nokofolski, a été découvert ensuite par des agents lancés aux trousses des fugitifs, dans les montagnes de Sofia où il faisait de l'espionnage ; il y a été tué en voulant se défendre. Les deux autres, Petri Vankoff et Yorgi Iconomoff, qui avaient à leur tour réussi à prendre la fuite, ont dans la suite, d'après les nouvelles qui nous sont parvenues, trouvé la mort en se noyant aux environs de Zichtova. De même, le nommé Thodori Kapesco, l'un des principaux chefs des insurgés d'Avrat-Alan, connu déjà depuis l'année passée par un long écrit dans lequel il développait ses principes subversifs, et auteur d'une autre épître séditieuse qui, tombée heureusement entre nos mains, mérite d'être signalée et dont nous joignons ici une traduction, avait été arrêté sur la montagne de Toriana près de Lofdja et ensuite amené à Tirnova. De là, sur la demande des autorités de Philippopoli, il fut dirigé vers cette ville. Arrivé à Gabrova, il fut déposé par négligence dans une pièce occupée par les gendarmes. Là, profitant d'un moment favorable, il s'empara d'une arme suspendue au mur et mit fin à ses jours.

Outre ceux-là, il y a aussi les deux fils de l'épicier Vassil de Philippopoli, dont l'un a été tué également dans les montagnes de Tourain en voulant opposer de la résistance aux agents de l'autorité chargés de l'arrêter et le second se trouve en fuite depuis longtemps. Cette disparition successive des principaux promoteurs de la révolte, de ceux-là mêmes qui s'étaient le plus compromis par leurs manœuvres occultes, a malheureusement restreint de beaucoup l'ensemble des renseignements que nous pouvions recueillir sur les mobiles mystérieux de ce soulèvement. Néanmoins, les livres, les brochures et autres écrits séditieux qui ont pu être rassemblés peuvent encore jeter un jour assez complet sur cette affaire et sont suffisants pour nous édifier sur ses points essentiels. Outre ceux de ces documents dont les traductions se trouvent jointes à ce Rapport, il y en a encore qui sont livrés à la traduction et qui doivent être présentés ultérieurement. Le plus remarquable de tous et celui qui attire le plus l'attention par la violence du langage et par l'esprit d'excitation à la révolte qui se retrouve dans chacune de ces pages, c'est incontestablement une brochure imprimée en caractères Russes à Moscou, l'année 1867, intitulée "Centres de Délibération." Ce factum n'ayant pu être traduit ici convenablement, nous nous contentons d'en citer en abrégé les principaux passages.

Les pages 372 et 373 de la brochure en question contiennent les faits et les actes suivants du Comité constitué sous la présidence du Prince Vladimir Alexandrovitch :

1. Le Comité aura des représentants dans chacune des succursales qu'il doit établir à l'Est de l'Empire Ottoman, en Autriche et en d'autres pays.

2. Les Représentants du Levant et de l'Autriche auront à examiner l'état passé et actuel de la nation Slave ; à rechercher les moyens de son développement en instruction, en richesse et en force, et à travailler à faire valoir tant la politique appuyée par le Président et la Russie que les buts du panslavisme, sous prétexte d'insurrection.

A la page 371, il est dit qu'un certain nombre de Bulgares instruits et érudits prennent part à ces délibérations et à ces projets.

Dans un passage de la page 373, il est encore dit qu'un poème a été composé, sous l'inspiration du fameux Bulgare Zindjikoff, pour solliciter le secours et la protection de la Russie dans le cas d'un prochain soulèvement qui aurait pour but d'arracher la nation Bulgare des griffes des Turcs sanguinaires, cruels et barbares, et de chasser ces derniers. Dans un refrain intitulé "Bulgare Zdiravitekasse" il est fait appel à l'union des Slaves, des Serbes, des Monténégrins, des Croates, des Tchèques, des Slovaques, des Bosniaques, et des Herzégoviniens.

Enfin, les conclusions de cette brochure sont l'union des Bulgares avec toutes les autres nations Slaves ; la création d'un Royaume Bulgare, s'étendant depuis le Vardar jusqu'au Danube. Des efforts collectifs et constants seront employés pour la réalisation de ce but ; on doit, en outre, travailler à obtenir la prépondérance des Slaves sur les autres nations et leur indépendance, et à subjuguier et à réduire à l'esclavage les autres nations. Cette brochure contient également des vœux pour la prospérité de la ville de Moscou, considérée la mère sainte des Bulgares, et pour le bonheur de la nation Russe qui sauvera la nation Slave.

Vu l'importance du mouvement insurrectionnel de cette contrée, qui a entièrement subi l'influence de toutes ces publications, les événements d'Islimia, de Tirnova, et de Sofia, ayant simultanément éclaté vers le commencement du mois de Mai, il est

aisé, après les faits ci-dessus mentionnés, de comprendre la source où l'insurrection a puisé son origine.

(Signé)

HALIL SIDKI.
MEHMED RAGUIB,
THODORAKI,
HATCHADOUR,
NOURI,
YORGUI CLITI,
HADJI MICHON,

} Membres du Tribunal Extraordinaire.

} Membres de la Commission d'Enquête.

(Signé)

GARABET, Secrétaire.
YAKOVAKI, Traducteur.

Le Conseil d'Administration a pris connaissance du rapport ci-dessus et le déclare en tous points conforme à la vérité des faits qui ont été relevés.

Le 13 Redjeb, 1299 (22 Juillet, 1292).

(Signé)

ABDUL HAMID, Gouverneur de Philippopoli.
EL SEID MEHMED TAHIB, Naïb.
EL SAID MAHSOULI, Membre.
NÉOPHITOS, Métropolitain de Philippopoli.
SULEIMAN SADI, Contrôleur.
NOUMAN NAIM, Secrétaire.
KÉVORK, Représentant du Chef Spirituel de la
Nation Arménienne.
MUSTAPHA ASSIM.
MAHMOUD.
MEHMED NOURI.
YORGUI CASSARA.

Instructions élaborées et arrêtées dans une réunion d'insurgés, tenue à Otlouk-Keuy, sous la Présidence du Voïvode Nikowski et trouvées sur ce dernier, après sa mort. Ces instructions ont trait à la conduite à tenir pendant l'insurrection.

1. D. Les Commissaires: Consentez-vous tous à lever l'étendard de la révolte le 1^{er} Mai?—R. Oui, seulement on doit nous en donner avis préalable dès le 25 Avril.

2. D. Faut-il incendier Andrinople, Philippopoli, et Bazardjik?—R. La Commission: Oui.

3. D. Faut-il détruire les voies ferrées et les fils télégraphiques?—R. Oui, il faudra les détruire.

4. D. Faut-il détruire Carlova, Isladi, et Ihtiman?—R. Oui.

5. D. Faut-il, oui ou non, incendier les villages?—R. Oui.

6. D. Faudra-t-il brûler tous les villages en général?—R. Non pas tous les villages.

7. D. Quels sont les villages qu'il faudra spécialement brûler?—R. Tout village dont l'existence peut nuire à la cause de l'insurrection doit être absolument détruit.

8. D. Quelle conduite faudra-t-il tenir à l'égard des Bulgares qui ne se soulèveront pas le jour convenu?—R. Il faudra les y forcer par tous les moyens.

9. D. Comment faut-il agir envers les villages mixtes? doit-on les soulever ou les abandonner à la merci des Musulmans?—R. Des bandes d'insurgés, organisées dans les villages exclusivement Bulgares et avoisinant les villages mixtes, devront se rendre dans ces dernières localités pour délivrer les Bulgares des mains des Turcs et les ramener au point de ralliement indiqué.

10. D. Quelle conduite faudra-t-il tenir à l'égard des Musulmans des villages mixtes qui s'opposeraient à nos desseins?—R. Les massacrer, piller leurs biens et incendier leurs habitations.

11. D. Que faut-il faire de la population des villages Musulmans?—R. Les insurgés doivent, sans perte de temps, les assaillir et les obliger, par le feu et le fer, à se soumettre.

12. D. Comment faudra-t-il traiter les Musulmans qui auront fait leur soumission?—R. Il faut saisir leurs armes, leurs munitions, leurs biens transportables

contre un "Ilm-ou haber" (récépissé) délivré par les chefs des insurgés. Ces biens devront être déposés dans les caisses Bulgares; on ne devra en aucun cas réquisitionner la population soumise.

13. *D.* Quelle conduite faudra-t-il tenir à l'égard des Turcs soumis?—*R.* On doit les confier à nos agents qui les conduiront au siège de l'insurrection. De là, ils seront dirigés, avec leurs familles et leurs vieillards vers les endroits qui servent actuellement de refuge à nos propres familles; ils devront vivre là en frères. Il est de notre devoir de veiller à leur bonheur, à leur vie et à leur religion, au même titre qu'à l'honneur et à la vie des nôtres. Les jeunes gens seront placés sous la surveillance de nos agents.

14. *D.* Que faut-il faire des maisons appartenant aux Musulmans soumis?—*R.* Il faut se conformer pour cela à ce qui a été dit dans l'Article 7.

15. *D.* Quels sont les bourgs qu'il faudra brûler? faudra-t-il agir en vertu de l'Article 2?—*R.* Il faudra choisir le mode qui sera choisi le plus convenable et brûler les bourgs si la position topographique et l'attitude de la population le rendent nécessaire.

16. *D.* Que faut-il faire à l'égard des Bulgares habitant les bourgs?—*R.* Il faudra les protéger.

17. *D.* Après avoir brûlé Philippopoli, que faudra-t-il faire pour en sauver les habitants Bulgares?—*R.* On leur viendra en aide de deux côtés. Il faut les réunir et les envoyer ailleurs avec toute la force dont on pourra disposer.

18. *D.* Que faut-il faire d'Andrinople?—*R. Les Commissaires:* Comme nous n'avons pas d'agents dans cette ville, nous ne pouvons prendre aucune décision à cet égard.

19. *D.* Après avoir brûlé Bazardjik, comment faudra-t-il faire pour sauver les populations Bulgares de cette ville?—*R.* Il faut leur renvoyer des renforts pour les protéger.

20. *D.* Comment doit-on les protéger et d'où des secours peuvent-ils leur être fournis du dehors?—*R.* Il est de notre devoir de rassembler autant de renforts qu'il sera possible des villages environnants, et de joindre ces renforts à la division d'Otlouk-keuy, placée sous le commandement de Benkofski, qui doit procéder à l'attaque. Quarante incendies doivent précéder l'entrée des insurgés dans le bourg; la population est donc tenue de mettre le feu partout. Avant d'entrer dans le bourg, celui d'entre les chefs Commissaires que le commandant supérieur appellera doit se rendre au bourg; les habitants eux-mêmes sont tenus de s'y rendre en même temps. Vingt individus ont été désignés par l'Assemblée Générale pour incendier Philippopolis, et dix pour Andrinople. Sokoloff, Délégué de Bazardjik, est chargé d'expédier les trente individus ci-dessus mentionnés aux localités désignées; aucune nouvelle décision ne sera prise avant que les mesures ci-dessus mentionnées n'aient été exécutées.

21. *D.* Comment devons-nous procéder à l'incendie d'Ihtiman, si nous n'avons pas d'agents dans cette localité?—*R.* La moitié des habitants des villages de Mouheva, Vassilitcha, et Dakral doit attaquer les villages Circassiens sis entre Mouheva et Vassilitcha, tandis que l'autre moitié assaillira Ihtiman, qu'elle livrera au pillage et à l'incendie. Ces actes de vengeance et de rapine accomplis, ils se rendront à Vétren pour couper les fils télégraphiques, et, de là, aux portes de Markova, dans le but de protéger ce passage. Un contingent de cinquante individus ira mettre le feu à Vétren et à tous les villages sis dans la plaine de Bazardjik; ces individus doivent retourner à Caliquérova pour garder le passage d'Otlouk-keuy.

22. *D.* Dans le cas où nous n'aurions pas d'agents à Isladi, quel parti doit-on prendre?—*R.* 100 individus du village d'Avrat-Alan, sous le commandement du Voïvode d'Ilo, 200 individus du village d'Otlouk-keuy, sous le commandement d'Ostoyan Dobrotcho, et 100 individus de Tepritch, sous celui du Voïvode Fraïtcho, avec le Voïvode indigène Nito Colotcha (le Voïvode d'Avrat-Alan), doivent préalablement marcher sur Perdouh et y laisser une cinquantaine d'hommes pour soulever la population Bulgare de l'endroit; une partie de ces bandes se dirigera vers Sofia. Les corps placés sous les ordres des Voïvodes étrangers doivent être préposés à la défense du passage de Tache-Kessen et le reste de la bande sera divisée en petites escouades, lesquelles envahiront les villages Musulmans sis dans la plaine et soulèveront les Bulgares d'Izladi, qu'ils conduiront à Petritch.

23. *D.* Qu'est-ce que nous devons faire d'Avrat-Alan et d'Otlouk-keuy?—*R.* Ils doivent être mis en état de défense pour servir de lieu de refuge aux villageois des localités environnantes.

24. *D.* Comment faudra-t-il agir à l'égard de Klissoura ou Derbend-keuy?—*R.* Les habitants de Klissoura doivent se réunir aux insurgés de Slatina et se partager

en deux corps; les hommes formant la moitié de ce corps seront désignés pour garder le passage d'Izladi du côté sud-ouest; ceux qui font partie de l'autre moitié iront avec 100 hommes ouvrir, à l'aide de bèches et de pioches, une tranchée sur la route d'Islatana; ceux-ci seront placés sous les ordres d'Eyoulaski Iconomoff; Picho aura le commandement de la première moitié des individus sus-mentionnés du côté de l'ouest, et si ce chef demande du renfort il lui en sera envoyé, ainsi que des armes pour cent personnes.

25. D. Qu'est-ce qu'on doit faire particulièrement des Koulis-Balkani?—R. Il est nécessaire de veiller à la défense des trois passes des villages de Kroucheudja, de Tchoukourli, et de Calofer. 300 hommes, après avoir détruit les villages de Pantchar, Timourdjiler, Zeitdjiler, Keusséldjé, Kissélerdjé, Dodoudj Madjar, Hildjé, Mahalleler, et Cara-Toprak, doivent protéger le passage de Tchokourli; 500 hommes ouvriront des tranchées à l'aide de bèches et de pioches sur ce passage, dont la garde est confiée à Volko de Kissélerdjé; ils doivent également défendre Balva, Sobodjilu, Cotchmarlar, et Beradjetki. Les habitants des villages de Marjarlar et de Boghaslar pénétreront dans les villages de Vezir Maghrouz et Calofer, et avec le concours des habitants des villageois garderont le passage de Calofer. Les habitants d'Araboda et de Medris Ova, après avoir exterminé les Musulmans de ces localités, conduiront les familles à Calofer. 500 hommes, sous la conduite d'Ostoban et d'Andon, et avec le concours du guide étranger, détruiront Tarlaler et Souboudan. Les paysans de Nébé et de Dibloudjova transporteront leurs familles et leurs enfants à Meradjiuk et à Calofer. Les bandes mentionnées se rendront maîtres des villages qui opposeraient de la résistance et les réduiront à l'obéissance. Les habitants des villages Shrnova, Tatar-Bazardjik, Ikanova, Tchénoua, Kissen-Mahallessi, Achiklar, Cara-Tcheul, Kourbar-Bekié, Islatanr, et Edhimeler, avec un détachement d'insurgés se rendront à Torbana et garderont ce passage. Ils iront même avec les habitants des six ou sept villages sis autour d'Irsati au village de Badjar et pour garder conjointement avec les habitants de Madjetki et de Calofer, les villages de Kanzanlim, de Zaghra, et de Tcherpan en se concentrant sur les montagnes dominants les plains.

26. D. Comment garantira-t-on la sécurité des familles et leur transport aux points de concentration?—R. Les villageois chargeront leurs familles ainsi que leurs enfants sur les chariots qui seront escortés durant le trajet par quatre gardiens. Ceux qui se trouveront en avant ou en arrière seront accompagnés par des troupes choisies de cavalerie, tandis que ceux qui se trouveront au milieu auront des fantassins pour escorte. Ces troupes conduiront ainsi la caravane en sûreté à sa destination. Un petit corps, suivant l'importance du village, restera pour veiller sur les biens laissés sans gardien jusqu'à ce qu'ils soient à leur tour transportés aux points de concentration. On brûlera le village, après l'avoir ainsi évacué. Les émigrés de Tcheradjén construiront 200 autres maisons pour ceux qui sont sans abri.

27. D. Où doit-on déposer en général les femmes, les enfants, et les provisions?—R. Le point de concentration en amont de Soter doit être Akhi-Tchélébi.

28. Tous les habitants du côté nord-ouest de la Maritza jusqu'à Prouchtentcha, Cochtentcha, et Venda devront être dirigés sur Dospot Balkan par Batak. Le point de concentration de Batak comprend douze villages sis dans le district de Razlova. C'est de ces villages que le commandement doit être donné.

29. Tous les villages de Tchartchan jusqu'à Coyoun-Tépé ou tous ceux se trouvant à une heure de distance de Philippopoli doivent venir s'assembler à Avrat-Alan.

30. Les villages Tartars de ce côté de la Maritza, d'Otlouk-keuy à Méhé et de Povayram jusqu'à Péetrovitza doivent être évacués et les habitants auront le choix de l'endroit où ils voudront s'établir.

31. L'évacuation doit s'effectuer suivant la teneur de l'Article 26.

32. D. Est-il nécessaire, oui ou non, de brûler Sofia?—R. Oui.

33. D. Comment doit-on s'y prendre?—R. Dix individus d'Otlouk-keuy, cinq de Prochtenitza, cinq de Bratchkova, et dix de Petridje, Matchka, et Povayram, en tout trente individus, munis de torchons imbibés de pétrole et d'autres matières incendiaires seront chargés de livrer Sofia aux flammes.

34. D. Est-il nécessaire de couper partout les fils télégraphiques?—R. Oui.

35. D. Comment doit être détruit le chemin de fer entre Bellova et Tetounitcha?—R. Il faut briser et détruire tous les ponts, les pompes et toutes les locomotives se trouvant en réserve à Sarembey; c'est Zahoria qui veillera à l'exécution de cette mesure.

36. D. Doit-on attendre le jour convenu pour se soulever?—R. On doit attendre tant que les circonstances le permettront.

Toutes les clauses ci-dessus ont été approuvées, à la majorité, par les trois

Délégués, par les Commissaires élus et par le Conseil Central Occidental de Roumélie.

Le 17 Avril, 1876.

(Signé)

PETECHKOFF, *Délégué de Bratchkova.*
 YOVAN SOKOLOFF, *Délégué de Bazardjik.*
 OSTOYANOFF, *Délégué d'Avrat-Alan.*
 SOKOLOFF, *Délégué de Prouhendja.*
 HOF, *Délégué de Derbend.*
 CHISTAKI ZRUI, *Délégué de Philippopoli.*
 GRONOFF.
 RANCO GRONOFF.
 MANQUET GOGOVI.
 MERDJOFF, *Délégué d'Otlouk-keuy.*
 PETRE VANKOFF.
 JORGHI BENKOFSKI, *Envoyé de Rouméli.*
 JORGHI ICONOMOFF.

Pour traduction conforme à l'original :

Le 20 Mai, 1876.

(Signé)

ALEXANDRE, *Traducteur.*
 MOUSTAPHA CHEVLAI, *Traducteur et Employé.*

Nous avons adopté et approuvé, dans l'Assemblée Générale tenue par nous à Otlouk-keuy et composée de douze personnes et de moi, les instructions ci-dessus contenant douze articles.

Le 11 Juillet, 1876.

Cette pièce en Turc est la traduction des dites instructions.

(Signé)

VASSIL SOKOLOSKI.

La copie des instructions ci-dessus a été reconnue conforme à l'original par Vassil Sokoloski, l'un des chefs du mouvement qui déclare avoir signé ce document.

Le 14¹⁴/₂₆ Juillet, 1876.

(Suit le sceau du Tribunal de Philippopoli.)

