THE

TURKISH ATROCITIES

IN

BULGARIA.

LETTERS OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSIONER OF THE "DAILY NEWS," J. A. MACGAHAN, ESQ.

With an Introduction

AND

MR. SCHUYLER'S PRELIMINARY REPORT.

"The first alarm respecting the Bulgarian outrages was, I believe, that sounded in the *Daily News* on the 23rd of June. I am sensible of the many services constantly rendered by free journalism to humanity, to freedom, and to justice. I do not undervalue the performances, on this occasion, of the *Times*, the *doyen* of the press in this country, and perhaps in the world, or of the *Daily Telegraph* and our other great organs. But of all these services, so far as my knowledge goes, that which has been rendered by the *Daily News* through its foreign correspondence on this occasion has been the most weighty, I may say, the most splendid. We are now informed (Parliamentary Papers, No. 5, p. 6) that the accounts received by the German Government confirm its report. It is even possible that but for the courage, determination, and ability of this single organ we might even at this moment have remained in darkness, and Bulgarian wretchedness might have been without its best and brightest hope."

From "Bulgarian Horrors, and the Question of the East," by the Right Hon. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.

LONDON:

BRADBURY, AGNEW, & CO., 8, 9, 10, BOUVERIE ST., E.C.

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876.

INTRODUCTION.

THE letters comprised in the following collection were written from Bulgaria by Mr. J. A. MacGahan, the gentleman who visited that province on behalf of the *Daily News* in July and August last, and made a special inquiry into the atrocities alleged to have been committed there by agents of the Turkish Government. As they have already been not only published in the *Daily News*, but re-published more extensively than any letters ever were before by the daily and weekly press; as they have stirred the public mind to its depths, and as, further, they, together with the letters of the Constantinople correspondent of the *Daily News*, have been acknowledged by the Government, not only to have made it aware of important facts of which, until their publication, it was ignorant, but to have changed the conditions under which its diplomacy must henceforth be exercised, it will not be necessary to describe in this place their character or contents. Now, however, that, to meet a want that has been expressed, these are brought together and re-published as a whole, it may be useful to give a very brief account of the circumstances under which the special inquiry was undertaken. Such a statement, which may not be without its use to the future historian of the press, will also serve to correct some current misapprehensions.

The Bulgarian atrocities are no longer spoken of as a "lucky find" on the part of the conductors of the *Daily News*, but the praise of "extraordinary enterprise," which, when fairly awarded, they do not decline, has been occasionally conceded to them in terms which ignore the peculiar relation in which they stood to the facts transmitted from

Bulgaria in the month of June, and of which enough was known to awaken painful misgivings on the part of the British public. If a simple recital should show that it was a Correspondent of the *Daily News* who, in the ordinary discharge of his duties at Constantinople, and without leaving his post, but by giving due heed to the information which came within his reach, first made known the facts which, as subsequently verified on the spot, have electrified the country, then the visit of an independent inquirer to Bulgaria to investigate the grounds of the terrible allegations made against the Turkish Government will not seem that gratuitous undertaking which it has been sometimes represented to be. The institution of such an inquiry was a task which the conductors of the *Daily News* had not contemplated; it was imposed upon them, as will be seen, by circumstances—especially by the default of official persons—which they could not have foreseen; but when once their duty was made clear, they did not hesitate for a moment to accept it.

It was on the 23rd of June, barely six weeks before the publication of its Special Commissioner's telegrams from Tatar Bazardjik, which startled England like a peal of thunder, that the *Daily News* published a letter from its Own Correspondent resident at Constantinople, of which the following are the opening sentences:—

"Dark rumours have been whispered about Constantinople during the last month of horrible atrocities committed in Bulgaria. The local newspapers have given mysterious hints about correspondence from the interior which they have been obliged to suppress. I have hitherto refrained from mentioning these rumours, or from stating what I have heard, but they are now gradually assuming definiteness and consistency, and cruelties are being revealed which place those committed in Herzegovina and Bosnia altogether in the background."

In the same letter the names were given of thirty-four villages that had been destroyed, of a party of Bulgarian girls burnt, and of a hundred more killed in a village school. During the next fortnight other letters of the same Corre-

spondent were published, amplifying details of the atrocities and extending their area. In the same correspondence were incorporated several columns of letters from towns and villages in Bulgaria, describing murders and the vilest outrages with a most impressive distinctness.

It may be affirmed without hesitation that no letters dealing with facts of a painful character were ever published which bore such evident marks of the scrupulous care of their author, and his anxiety in deciding between vague reports and ascertained facts. But while these letters arrested the attention of the public, and excited a desire for fuller information, in official quarters they met with a far different reception. That the statements contained in them should be encountered with a certain degree of scepticism is a fact creditable to humanity, and if it had been objected to them that they were such as could not be received without corroboration, there would have been nothing to complain of. But counter-statements were made professing to be based upon more accurate knowledge. The Turkish Government met the case boldly, and by its foreign ministers denounced the Constantinople correspondence of the *Daily News* as monstrous exaggerations. The English Government, which ought to have been in possession of authentic information from Constantinople, could only say that the reports of the *Daily News* were without official confirmation, while by a certain portion of the press the disclosures of Turkish atrocities were described as sensational and unworthy of notice.

It was in these circumstances that a further and wholly independent inquiry into the events in Bulgaria was deemed necessary, if the light which had been kindled by the Correspondent of the *Daily News* at Constantinople was not to be suffered to be extinguished. The special inquiry conducted by Mr. MacGahan, and of which the following letters are the result, was rendered necessary by the evident want of information on the part of the English Government. The first time that Sir Henry Elliot mentioned the atrocities in Bulgaria in his correspondence with the Foreign Office, appears to have been on the 19th of

June, three days after the letter of the Constantinople Correspondent above quoted, and in it he speaks of "the cruelties with which the suppression of the Bulgarian insurrection has been accompanied," and he adds, with reference to Consul Reade's report, "the accounts from other sources are still more distressing." For weeks the Turkish capital had been full of reports of these occurrences, and it seems extraordinary that an Ambassador, residing within twenty-four hours' journey of Bulgaria, should have taken no pains to inform himself respecting them.

Mr. MacGahan reached Philippopolis, the centre of the district in which the atrocities were perpetrated, on the 23d of July, and at once commenced his inquiries, in company with Mr. Eugene Schuyler, American Consul-General for Turkey. It will appear sufficiently, in the course of the following letters, how much the Special Commissioner of the *Daily News* was indebted to Mr. Schuyler for assistance in the course of his inquiry under circumstances the difficulty of which must be obvious. The inquiry was independent. It owed nothing either to the British Embassy at Constantinople or to the Turkish Government. That evident independence opened to the Commission sources of information which would have remained closed to persons suspected by the injured population. The people came forward, and showed the sad evidence of their wrongs, but they were not the only witnesses. Foreign consuls, Greek residents, Germans in the employ of the Turkish Government, and Americans occupied in the work of education in Bulgaria, besides Turks themselves, testified freely, and to one and the same effect. The result is before the world. It has been said by the principal organ of Ministerialist Conservatism, that the "enterprise of searching out and dwelling upon atrocities has itself become an atrocity of a most disgusting kind."* But Ministers themselves have not endorsed the opinion. On the 11th of August, Mr. Bourke, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said in the House of Commons—"He felt bound

* *Standard*, Aug. 31, 1876.

to admit that the Government really had no idea of the events which had been going on in Bulgaria, until attention was called to them in the House, and he gladly took that opportunity of saying that the Government and the country were very much indebted to the newspaper correspondents through whom these events had become known." The public has abundantly confirmed the judgment of Mr. Bourke on these letters; and it now only remains for the conductors of the *Daily News* to acknowledge, as they do with the utmost pleasure, the great service rendered by their Constantinople Correspondent as well as the courage and perseverance of Mr. MacGahan in the prosecution of his arduous task; and to express the hope that the publication of these letters may hasten the redemption of the Christian races of South-eastern Europe from the degrading tyranny by which they have so long been oppressed.

September 6, 1876.

THE

BULGARIAN ATROCITIES:

"DAILY NEWS" SPECIAL INQUIRY.

PHILIPPOPOLIS, *July* 28.

I ARRIVED here three days ago on a mission of investigation. Philippopolis, it may be mentioned, is the principal town in that part of Bulgaria which was the scene of the exploits of the Bashi-Bazouks, and is therefore the best or rather the only point at which trustworthy information can be obtained respecting the atrocities now exciting so much indignation in Europe. I found that Mr. Baring had already arrived and commenced the work of investigation. Mr. Schuyler, the American Consul-General, likewise arrived, partly on a similar errand, partly to inquire into the advisability of establishing a vice-consulate, or taking other measures for the protection of a few American missionary families established throughout the country. The other consuls, I find, made reports to their respective Governments some time ago, and are now engaged in collecting further information relating to the insurrection.

It is a curious fact that while the Austrian, Greek, Russian, and French Governments all have consuls in this place, who give minute and detailed reports of everything that happens here, the English Government, which one would think equally interested in receiving prompt and correct information, should have no agent at all. There is an English consul at Adrianople, a very worthy gentleman, but his health is so shattered that he is utterly unfit for service of any kind. It is therefore scarcely astonishing that the English Government should know less of what is passing in Turkey than other Governments, and far less than well-informed newspapers.

When Lord Derby made the statement in the House of Lords

that the Government had reeeived no information from the consuls at Scutari, Belgrade, and Galatz about the atroeities of the Bashi-Bazouks, was he indulging in fun at the expense of his noble auditors? If he had said that the Government had reeeived no information from the consuls at St. Petersburg, Berlin, and Vienna respecting the Dublin riots, he would not have made a more irrelevant statement. As far as the difficulty of communication is eoncerned, and the time required for the transmission of a letter, Galatz and Belgrade are further away from Philippopolis and the scene of the atroeities attributed to the Bashi-Bazouks than Vienna or St. Petersburg are from Dublin. The consuls in Belgrade and Galatz know absolutely no more of what is passing here than do the eonsuls in Bordeaux or Lyons. It is therefore to be fairly presumed that until Mr. Baring was sent out, the Government had absolutely no means of obtaining news, except through the papers, and that they will have obtained no direct information until Mr. Baring shall have made his report.

As before stated, I also came with the mission of investigating and making a report. I think I eame in a fair and impartial frame of mind. I had determined to see for myself wherever it was possible; to make inquiries, to weigh and compare statements, to carefully sift evidenee and get at the plain unvarnished truth, and not allow my mind to be influenced by unsupported assertions on either side. I had looked at the question first from the Christian and then from the Turkish point of view. I had heard the violent assertions of the one party, and the soft-worded apologies of the other, with equal coolness and impartiality, and had especially made a large allowanee for the "gross exaggerations of the Christians." I had, in truth, listened to both sides with such equal impartiality that I had grown somewhat sceptieal, a state of mind, I take it, peeuliarly adapted to the spirit of scientific inquiry. I had besides resolved to keep up this frame of mind to the end. It is generally easy enough to bear the ills of other people, and to be calm and judicial where others' woes are concerned. I am now obliged to confess that I had miscalculated the circumstanees.

I have scarcely more than begun the investigation, and the frame of mind I had resolved to maintain at any hazard has already passed away. I fear I am no longer impartial, and I eertainly am no longer cool. There are certain things that

cannot be investigated in a judicial frame of mind. There are facts which when perceived send the blood through the veins with an angry rush, and cause the muscles to contract in sudden anger. There are things too horrible to allow anything like calm inquiry; things, the vileness of which the eye refuses to look upon, and which the mind refuses to contemplate. There are facts which repel and revolt; facts which, when you go about among them, fly in your face. Such is the nature of the facts I came to investigate. I have already investigated enough to feel convinced that, except from a purely statistical point of view, further investigation would be unnecessary. Mr. Baring and Mr. Schuyler will probably give us enough statistics, and I shall be ready to accept their figures. The atrocities admitted on all hands by those friendly to the Turks, and by the Turks themselves, are enough, and more than enough. I do not care to go on heaping up the mournful count. When you are met in the outset of your investigation with the admission that 60 or 70 villages have been burned, that some 15,000 people have been slaughtered, of whom a large part were women and children, you begin to feel that it is useless to go any further. When, in addition to this, you have the horrid details of the vilest outrages committed upon women; the hacking to pieces of helpless children and spitting them upon bayonets; and when you have these details repeated you by the hundred, not by Bulgarians, but by the different consuls at Philippopolis and the German officials on the railway, as well as Greeks, Armenians, priests, missionaries, and even Turks themselves, you begin to feel that any further investigation is superfluous.

Mr. Baring, I am informed, will report that in the districts about Philippopolis and Tatar Bazardjik alone there have been about fifty villages burnt, without counting those that have been only pillaged, and that nearly 15,000 people have been slaughtered. This is the lowest estimate, and it does not include the districts about Sofia and those north of the Balkan. The French and Russian Consuls and the railway officials give much higher figures, and would put the number of villages burned at over a hundred, and the killed at 25,000 to 40,000. There are people who put the number of killed at 100,000. For my own part, once the enormous number of 15,000 killed in four days is admitted, I do not care to inquire further. The French Consul and the German railway officials may be right

or they may be wrong. Fifteen thousand is enough; for no mere increase in a statement of round numbers can add to the horror of the thing. It is only in the recital of the details accompanying the butchery that the mind can grasp and understand the fearful atrocity of the business. The Greek Consul, who is not friendly to the Bulgarians, tells me of 12,000 wretched women and children marched into Tatar Bazardjik, nearly all of whom suffered the vilest outrages. He tells me of Bulgarian fathers who killed their wives and children in order to put them out of reach of the ferocity of the Bashi-Bazouks. The German officials tell me of the bodies of men cut up and flung to the dogs in villages near their own railway stations; of little children of both sexes maltreated and brutalised until they died; of a priest, whose wife and children were outraged and slaughtered before his eyes, and who was then put to death, after the most fearful torture, the details of which are too abominable to be re-told. I have the story of a young and beautiful girl, who having found means to obtain the rudiments of an education, opened a school in her native village, and tried to do something for the education of the poor people about her, who is now lying in prison here sick and broken-hearted, whose story is too sad for recital. The French Consul tells me of Bashi-Bazouks relating to circles of admiring listeners how they cut off the heads of little children, and how the dismembered trunks would leap and roll about like those of chickens; and I shut my ears and say, "This is enough; I do not want to hear any more; I do not care to investigate any further." It does not matter to me that a few more or less have been committed. You cannot increase or diminish the horror of the thing by mere statements of round numbers. I shall leave the statistics to Mr. Schuyler and Mr. Baring, and shall be quite willing to accept their estimates.

It has been said that these acts were committed by irregular troops, over whom the Government had no control, for whom the Turkish authorities were in no way responsible, and that the latter would, on the contrary, have been very glad to restrain them. Unfortunately, there are many facts connected with the business which show that this view of the case is altogether erroneous. Had the Government really been in earnest in making these protestations, it would have seized some of the principal leaders of the Bashi-Bazouks, some of

those who had particularly distinguished themselves by their ferocity, and punished them summarily. Chefket Pacha, for instanee, who burned the village of Bazardjik, and slaughtered nearly all of its inhabitants under more than usually revolting cireumstanees, should have been one of the first to feel the strong arm of the law. But having done all this, he has been promoted to a high position in the Palace of the Sultan at Constantinople. Again, there is the case of Achmet Aga, a captain of a company of Bashi-Bazouks, who likewise distinguished himself by his ferocity. He wished to burn Philippopolis, and was only withheld from doing so by the energetic action of the governor, who has since been removed, and who threatened to attack him with the regular troops. It was he who slaughtered 8,000 people at Batak, and burned 200 women and children alive in the school. He is a low, ignorant brute, who can neither read nor write, and yet he has been promoted to the rank of Pacha, and with that exquisite mockery of European demands for justice, for whieh the Oriental is so distinguished, he has been named a member of the commission appointed to prosecute and punish the Bashi-Bazouks. The reason is clear and simple. These men earried out the wishes and intentions of the Government, if not the positive orders. They did their duty, and have been rewarded.

But it has been said that the Bulgarians set the example of committing atrocities, and even Lord Derby, upon the authority of Sir Henry Elliot, made the statement before the House that both sides had been equally guilty in this respect. It might be interesting to learn where Sir Henry Elliot obtained his information. As I have already explained, the English Government had no agent here capable of sending information until the arrival of Mr. Baring. He could not have obtained it from other Governments, for the reason that the various consuls here, with all of whom I have talked, never reported any atrocities on the part of the Bulgarians to their respective Governments. He could not have obtained it from the Turkish Government, for the reason that even the Turkish authorities here do not elaim more than 500 Turks killed altogether, of whom the greater part, they admit, were killed in battle, with arms in their hands; and further, because while they claim some thirty women killed, they have not so far given Mr. Sehuyler proof that a single woman or child was killed or outraged. Kiani Paeha told him

that the Mudir of the village of Avrat-alan had been killed with his wife and daughter. Mr. Schuyler found, upon inquiry, that the wife of the Mudir was absent in a different part of the country when the fight occurred, and that the report of her death was therefore untrue; while as to the daughter, he learned that the Mudir never had a daughter. But supposing that proof may yet be forthcoming of thirty Turkish women killed—as they may have been in the street fighting—it is very evident that at the time Lord Derby spoke, he had no proof of such a fact, nor the slightest reason for the sweeping assertion that the Bulgarians had shown themselves equal in barbarity to the Turks. The only inference is that he made a perfectly reckless statement, in support of which he had not the slightest particle of evidence; and this at the moment when Mr. Disraeli was accusing well-informed newspapers, that had taken pains to obtain correct information, of giving credence to exaggerated and unfounded rumours.

It is said that the Bulgarians had no business to rise, that they made an insurrection which was put down with a strong hand, and that they must take the consequences. The best answer to this is the manifesto published by the new Government, after the deposition of the late Sultan, in which it was shown that the misrule and oppression of the late Government had passed the limit of endurance. The extortions and mismanagement of the Government had produced such a degree of misery among the peasantry, that without a change their existence was no longer possible. This, indeed, was the reason for the revolution at Constantinople. And yet Midhat Pacha and his associates are still hanging and imprisoning these poor people for doing what they have shown the Bulgarians were perfectly justified in doing, and for what they themselves have done—revolting against the Sultan. The truth is, that no other people in the world but these Bulgarians would stand for a day the exactions, extortions, oppression, and tyranny to which they have been subjected for centuries. If it were attempted to introduce into England the system of taxation in use here, the people would rise as one man against the Government. Why, then, should we so blame these poor Bulgarians for doing that which we all would do under like circumstances; why sympathise with the strong against the weak, when the weak are so evidently in the right?

Mr. Baring went to Batak to-day, and has not yet returned. Mr. Schuyler goes to-morrow, and takes me with him.

PESTERA, *August* 1.

The task which has been set Mr. Baring and Mr. Schuyler is not an enviable one. They have both gone to work in the most earnest manner, and are visiting all the principal towns and villages that were burnt by the Bashi-Bazouks, in order to see with their own eyes the ruin that has been worked, and to hear with their own ears the stories of the villagers. This necessitates travelling from five to fifteen hours a day over roads the best of which are nearly impassable for carriages, beneath a burning sun, rendered almost insupportable by the close sultry atmosphere of August. Mr. Baring has already been ill twice, owing to over-exertion, hard work, and the overpowering heat; and even Mr. Schuyler, inured to the fatigue of this kind of work by his long journey through Turkestan, seemed to find it as much as he could stand.

But the hard work and the heat, and the wearisome round of investigation, of questions repeated over and over again, of listening to the same sort of stories told a hundred times over, of sifting and comparing evidence, would be nothing, and might be easily borne. It is the heart-rending cries of despair that shake you, the crowds of weeping women and children that meet and follow us everywhere—women and children, poor trembling creatures, who are homeless and starving—widows and orphans who are weeping for husbands and fathers slain, and who have not a roof to shelter them, nor bread for the morrow. It is this that makes the task that has been set Mr. Baring and Mr. Schuyler one which they will hardly care to ever undertake again.

We have just passed through the village of Raddovo on our way here, where we stop for the night before continuing to-morrow to Batak. Raddovo was apparently a very flourishing little place, and, to tell the truth, it has suffered less, perhaps, than the majority of the towns that were left to the tender care of the Bashi-Bazouks. It was a village of 160 houses, of which not one is left standing, and the inhabitants are now living under sheds of straw, constructed in nooks and corners of the black and crumbling walls. They gathered around us when we

stopped in the middle of the once flourishing place, and timidly told us their story. They had offered no resistance at all to the Bashi-Bazouks, but simply ran away when they heard the Turks were coming. Having received timely notice, they had nearly all escaped, and only twenty-two men had been killed in all. The women and children had all been saved. Of the twenty-two killed, eight had been arrested after the inhabitants returned to the village, and were brutally slaughtered in cold blood while being taken to Philippopolis to prison. We had heard that eight bodies were found one day on the road near Philippopolis long after the affair was over, and had been told by the Turks that these were bodies of people killed during the insurrection, which had been transported there by some unknown means. When the people returned to their smoking homes, they found themselves completely ruined. There was not a stick of furniture nor a cooking utensil left, and all their cattle, sheep, and horses had been driven off. Their harvests were still standing in the fields, and they are unable to gather and save them without their cattle, which the Turks refuse to restore. Each family had on an average two pairs of oxen, making about 320 pairs in the whole village. Of these only thirty-three pairs were returned, which are utterly inadequate for gathering and saving the harvest. They besides will have to rebuild their houses, and for this purpose it will be necessary to draw wood a long distance from the mountains, and it will be impossible for them to do this before winter. Unless the poor people can get back their cattle, gather their harvests, and rebuild their houses, they will be in a state of destitution by next winter fearful to think of. The Turkish authorities have informed Mr. Schuyler everywhere that the cattle were being restored to the burnt villages, and that help would be given the people to rebuild their houses, and everywhere the people tell him that the cattle are not restored, and that no help of any kind is given them. I am convinced that not the slightest reliance can be placed in the promises of the Turkish authorities, and that they have no intention of fulfilling their promises when they make them. They are simply made to throw dust in the eyes of Europe, for although they have not patriotism enough to know or care whether they themselves ruin the country or not, they have a very lively fear of a European intervention, and are ready to promise anything to avert it. As for the execution of these

promises they know that can be avoided. As though in very contempt for the promises and assurances given to Mr. Baring and Mr. Schuyler, they are everywhere sending out at this moment, and demanding the payment of taxes in the burnt and ruined villages, just as though nothing had happened. On this village of Raddovo, for instance, a tax of four hundred pounds has been levied, which it is utterly impossible for the poor people to pay. The pretext for the burning of this village was the killing of two zaptiehs, or rural policemen, here. The inhabitants flatly deny that any zaptieh was killed in or about the village, or that they ever raised a hand against the Turks. As in other villages where Turks have been killed, the people always confess it, I believe that here they tell the truth, and that there was no other cause for the attack than the desire for plunder on the part of the Turks. This is also, I believe, Mr. Schuyler's opinion. We walked through the village, which presented a sad spectacle of ruin.

Many of the people seemed to have returned, each family, to the blackened walls of their former homes, where they had constructed in the corner of the walls a sort of shelter with the aid of a few poles and a little straw. Some had a coverlet or two, others straw to sleep on, and many seemed to sleep on the bare ground. I saw one sick woman groaning with pain, lying with only a thin coverlet between her and the damp ground, while a little girl sat beside her and continually bathed her head with cold water. In some places the chimneys were still standing, and here were some cooking their meals, though God knows they had little enough to cook. Taking leave of the village, we continued our road to Pestera, where we had decided to pass the night, and after an hour's drive over a very bad road, and an upset in which one of our party narrowly escaped being killed, we arrived at the village. We were shown to the house of a Bulgarian, who offered us his hospitality, and in half an hour we received the visit of the Mudir of the village, accompanied by two officials from Tatar Bazardjik. After the interchange of various compliments, it turned out that one of these officials had been sent by the Kaimakam of Tatar Bazardjik to accompany us to Batak. To this Mr. Schuyler decidedly objected, and a long discussion ensued, at the end of which he informed them in the most peremptory manner that he would allow no official to accompany him, and this ended the matter. The

Bulgarian was delighted to entertain us and gave us an exeellent supper, to whieh we did ample justiee, but I eannot say so mueh for the sleeping aeeommodations he offered us. We all oeeupied the same room, and slept on divans extended around the walls, whieh were anything but downy; but the hospitality shown us was so hearty and eordial that we seareely thought of beds.

The poor people were only too glad to reeeive our party of five, and to offer us the best they had, for they looked to us, strangers as we were, for eneouragement and proteetion against their Mussulman rulers. As soon as the Mudir went away, what appeared to be the whole population of the town seemed to floek into the eourt-yard of our house, anxious to shake hands with us, or to tell us their tales of woe. The people who had these stories to tell us we soon found were not the people of the plaee, but of Batak, the town to whieh we were bound on the morrow, who had eome here to beg a little assistanee from their more lueky neighbours, and who now floeked around us with their plaints. They were mostly women who had lost their husbands, and in many eases their ehildren, whose houses had been burnt, and who, from a eondition of ease and independenee, had been redueed to starvation and widowhood. They were of all ages, from eighteen up to eighty; young mothers with ehildren in their arms and two or three hanging to their skirts; middle-aged women who had grown-up sons and daughters that had fallen under the sharp edge of the sword; old grandmothers with ehildren and grandehildren all swept away at one fell swoop. They all told their stories with sobs and tears, beating their heads and wringing their hands in despair. And they were starving and houseless. We eould not relieve their misery. We eould only listen to their stories with saddened faees, and tell them to hope for better times, and promise to do something for them, if possible, when we should return to Constantinople. Vain hopes, and, I fear, vainer promises.

TATAR BAZARDJIK, *August* 2.

Sinee my letter of yesterday I have supped full of horrors. Nothing has yet been said of the Turks that I do not now believe; nothing eould be said of them that I should not think probable and likely. There is, it would seem, a point in atroeity beyond whieh diserimination is impossible, when mere eom-

parison, calculation, measurement, are out of the question, and this point the Turks have already passed. You can follow them no further. The way is blocked up by mountains of hideous facts, beyond which you cannot see and do not care to go. You feel that it is superfluous to continue measuring these mountains and deciding whether they be a few feet higher or lower, and you do not care to go seeking for molehills among them. You feel that it is time to turn back; that you have seen enough.

But let me tell what we saw at Batak:—We had some difficulty in getting away from Pestera. The authorities were offended because Mr. Schuyler refused to take any Turkish official with him, and they ordered the inhabitants to tell us there were no horses, for we had here to leave our carriages and take to the saddle. But the people were so anxious we should go, that they furnished horses in spite of the prohibition, only bringing them first without saddles, by way of showing how reluctantly they did it. We asked them if they could not bring us some saddles also, and this they did with much alacrity, and some chuckling at the way in which the Mudir's orders were walked over. Finally we mounted and got off. We had been besieged all the morning by the same people who had blockaded us the night before, or who appeared to be the same, their stories were so much alike.

We could do nothing but listen in pity to a few of them—for it would have taken all day to hear each separate tale of misery and suffering—and gave vague promises that we would do all in our power to relieve their misery upon our return to Constantinople. But diplomatic help is, alas! very slow. While ambassadors are exchanging notes and compliments, inviting each other to dinner, making representations to the Porte, and obtaining promises which nobody believes in, these poor people are starving and dying. Many of them decided to seize this opportunity and accompany us to Batak, to visit their ruined homes, and others caught our bridle reins, determined to make us listen to their stories before we should start. One woman caught my horse, and held it until she could show me where a bullet had traversed her arm, completely disabling her from work, and this was only the least of her woes. Husband killed, and little children depending on that broken arm for bread; all of this told in a language so much like Russian that I could understand a great deal of it; so like Russian that I could

easily have fancied myself amongst peasants of the Volga, or the denizens of the Gostinoi-dvor, Moscow. The resemblance is striking, and it is no wonder the Russians sympathise with these people.

You observe the same sort of family likeness about the eyes, that may be always seen among brothers and sisters who are utterly unlike each other in features—tricks of countenance, movements of the hands, tones of the voice, even to that curious, uncertain expression of the face, which often in the Russian peasant makes it almost impossible to tell whether he is laughing or crying. A Russian, a Bulgarian, a Servian, a Montenegrin, and a Tchek may meet and talk, each in his own language, and all understand each other. You might as well expect the English north of the Thames not to sympathise with those south of it, in case the latter were under the domination of the Turks, as to try to prevent these Sclavonic races from helping each other, while groaning under a foreign despotism.

Batak is situated about thirty miles south of Tatar Bazardjik as the crow flies, high up in the spur of the Balkans that here sweeps around to the south from the main range. The road was only a steep mountain path that in places might have tried the agility of a goat. There was a better one, as we learned upon our return, but, with that perversity which distinguishes the Oriental mind, our guide took this one instead. We formed a curious but a somewhat lugubrious procession as we wound up the steep mountain side. First there were our two zaptiehs in their picturesque costumes, bristling with knives and pistols, our guide likewise armed to the teeth, then the five persons who composed our party, mounted on mules and horses decked out with nondescript saddles and trappings, followed by a procession of fifty or sixty women and children who had resolved to accompany us to Batak. Many of the women carried a small child, and a heavy burthen besides, comprising the provisions, clothing, cooking utensils, or harvesting implements, they had begged or borrowed in Pestera. Even children—little girls of nine and ten years—were trudging wearily up the steep mountain side under burthens too heavy for them; and they would be five or six hours in reaching their destination.

After three hours' climbing by paths so steep that we were obliged to dismount and walk half the time without then seeming quite safe from rolling down into some abyss, mounting

higher and higher until we seemed to have got among the clouds, we at last emerged from a thick wood into a delightful little valley that spread out a rich carpet of verdure before our eyes. A little stream came murmuring down through it, upon which there was built a miniature saw-mill. It appears that the people in Batak did a considerable trade in timber, which they worked up from the forests on the surrounding mountains, for we afterwards observed a great number of these little mills, and were even told there were over two hundred in and about the village.

The mill-wheels are silent now. This little valley, with its rich grassy slopes, ought to have been covered with herds of sheep and cattle. Not one was to be seen. The pretty little place was as lonely as a graveyard, or as though no living thing had trod its rich greensward for years. We ascended the slope to the right, and when we reached the top of the ridge which separated it from the next valley, we had a beautiful panorama spread out before us. The mountains here seemed to extend around in a circle, enclosing a tract of country some eight or ten miles in diameter, considerably lower down, which was cut up by a great number of deep hollows and ravines that traversed it in every direction, and seemed to cross and cut off each other without the slightest appearance of anything like reference to a watershed. It looked more like an enlarged photograph of the mountains of the moon than anything else I could think of.

Down in the bottom of one of these hollows we could make out a village, which our guide informed us it would still take us an hour and a half to reach, although it really seemed to be very near. This was the village of Batak, which we were in search of. The hillsides were covered with little fields of wheat and rye, that were golden with ripeness. But although the harvest was ripe, and over ripe, although in many places the well-filled ears had broken down the fast-decaying straw that could no longer hold them aloft, and were now lying flat, there was no sign of reapers trying to save them. The fields were as deserted as the little valley, and the harvest was rotting in the soil. In an hour we had neared the village.

As we approached our attention was directed to some dogs on a slope overlooking the town. We turned aside from the road, and, passing over the débris of two or three walls, and through several gardens, urged our horses up the ascent towards the

dogs. They barked at us in an angry manner, and then ran off into the adjoining fields. I observed nothing peculiar as we mounted, until my horse stumbled. When looking down I perceived he had stepped on a human skull partly hid among the grass. It was quite dry and hard, and might, to all appearances, have been there for two or three years, so well had the dogs done their work. A few steps further there was another, and beside it part of a skeleton, likewise white and dry. As we ascended, bones, skeletons, and skulls became more frequent, but here they had not been picked so clean, for there were fragments of half-dry, half-putrid flesh still clinging to them. At last we came to a kind of little plateau or shelf on the hillside, where the ground was nearly level, with the exception of a little indentation where the head of a hollow broke through. We rode towards this, with the intention of crossing it, but all suddenly drew rein with an exclamation of horror, for right before us, almost beneath our horses' feet, was a sight that made us shudder. It was a heap of skulls, intermingled with bones from all parts of the human body, skeletons, nearly entire, rotting, clothing, human hair, and putrid flesh lying there in one foul heap, around which the grass was growing luxuriantly. It emitted a sickening odour, like that of a dead horse, and it was here the dogs had been seeking a hasty repast when our untimely approach interrupted them.

In the midst of this heap I could distinguish one slight skeleton form still enclosed in a chemise, the skull wrapped about with a coloured handkerchief, and the bony ankles encased in the embroidered footless stockings worn by the Bulgarian girls. We looked about us. The ground was strewed with bones in every direction, where the dogs had carried them off to gnaw them at their leisure. At the distance of a hundred yards beneath us lay the town. As seen from our stand-point, it reminded one somewhat of the ruins of Herculaneum or Pompeii.

There was not a roof left, not a whole wall standing; all was a mass of ruins, from which arose, as we listened, a low plaintive wail, like the "keening" of the Irish over their dead, that filled the little valley and gave it voice. We had the explanation of this curious sound when we afterwards descended into the village. We looked again at the heap of skulls and skeletons before us, and we observed that they were all small, and that

the articles of clothing, intermingled with them and lying about, were all parts of women's apparel. These, then, were all women and girls. From my saddle I counted about a hundred skulls, not including those that were hidden beneath the others in the ghastly heap, nor those that were scattered far and wide through the fields. The skulls were nearly all separated from the rest of the bones, the skeletons were nearly all headless. These women had all been beheaded. We descended into the town. Within the shattered walls of the first house we came to was a woman sitting on a heap of rubbish, rocking herself to and fro, wailing a kind of monotonous chant, half sung, half sobbed, that was not without a wild discordant melody. In her lap she held a babe, and another child sat beside her patiently and silently, and looked at us as we passed with wondering eyes. She paid no attention to us; but we bent our ear to hear what she was saying, and our interpreter said it was as follows:— "My home, my home, my poor home, my sweet home; my husband, my husband, my poor husband, my dear husband; my home, my sweet home," and so on, repeating the same words over and over again a thousand times. In the next house were two, engaged in the same way; one old, the other young, repeating words nearly identical, "I had a home, and now I have none; I had a husband, and now I am a widow; I had a son, and now I have none; I had five children, and now I have one," while rocking themselves to and fro, beating their heads and wringing their hands. These were women who had escaped from the massacre, and had only just returned for the first time, having taken advantage of our visit or that of Mr. Baring to do so. They might have returned long ago, but their terror was so great that they had not dared, without the presence and protection of a foreigner, and now they would go on for hours in this way, "keening" this kind of funeral dirge over their ruined homes. This was the explanation of the curious sound we had heard when up on the hill. As we advanced there were more and more; some sitting on the heaps of stones that covered the floors of their houses; others walking up and down before their doors, wringing their hands and repeating the same despairing wail. There were few tears in this universal mourning. It was dry, hard, and despairing. The fountain of tears had been dried up weeks before, but the tide of sorrow and misery was as great as ever, and had to find vent without their aid. As we proceeded

most of them fell into line behind us, and they finally formed a procession of four or five hundred people, mostly women and children, who followed us about wherever we went with their mournful cries. Such a sound as their united voices sent up to heaven I hope never to hear again.

It may be well, before going further, to say something about Batak, so that the reader may form a better idea of what took place here. It was a place of nine hundred houses, and about 8,000 or 9,000 inhabitants. As there are no census statistics, nor, indeed, trustworthy statistics of any other kind in Turkey, it is impossible to tell exactly what the population of any place is or was. But the ordinary rule of calculating five persons to the house will not hold good in Bulgaria. The Bulgarians, like the Russian peasantry, adhere to the old patriarchal method, and fathers and married sons, with their children and children's children, live under the same roof until the grandfather dies. As each son in his turn gets married, a new room is added to the old building, until with the new generation there will often be twenty or thirty people living under the same roof, all paying obedience and respect to the head of the family. In estimating the population, therefore, by the number of houses, somewhere between eight and ten souls must be counted as the average. Edip Effendi, in his report, states that there were only about 1,400 inhabitants in the village, all told. A more impudent falsehood was never uttered, even by a Turk. Mr. Schuyler has obtained their tax-list for this year, and finds that there were 1,421 able-bodied men assessed to pay the military exemption tax. This number in any European country would indicate a population of about 15,000, but here it would not give more than from 8,000 to 10,000 souls, all told, and this is the figure at which the population of the place is estimated by the inhabitants, as well as by the people of Pestera.

I think people in England and Europe generally have a very imperfect idea of what these Bulgarians are. I have always heard them spoken of as mere savages, who were in reality not much more civilized than the American Indians; and I confess that I myself was not far from entertaining the same opinion not very long ago. I was astonished, as I believe most of my readers will be, to learn that there is scarcely a Bulgarian village without its school; that these schools are, where they

have not been burnt by the Turks, in a very flourishing condition; that they are supported by a voluntary tax levied by the Bulgarians on themselves, not only without being forced to do it by the Government, but in spite of all sorts of obstacles thrown in their way by the perversity of the Turkish authorities; that the instruction given in these schools is gratuitous, and that all profit alike by it, poor as well as rich; that there is scarcely a Bulgarian child that cannot read and write; and, finally, that the percentage of people who can read and write is as great in Bulgaria as in England and France. Do the people who speak of the Bulgarians as savages happen to be aware of these facts? Again, I had thought that the burning of a Bulgarian village meant the burning of a few mud huts that were in reality of little value, and that could be easily rebuilt. I was very much astonished to find that the majority of these villages are in reality well-built towns, with solid stone houses, and that there are in all of them a comparatively large number of people who have attained to something like comfort, and that some of the villages might stand a not very unfavourable comparison with an English or French village. The truth is that these Bulgarians, instead of the savages we have taken them for, are in reality a hardworking, industrious, honest, civilized, and peaceful people. Now, as regards the insurrection, there was a weak attempt at an insurrection in three or four villages, but none whatever in Batak, and it does not appear that a single Turk was killed here.

The Turkish authorities do not even pretend that there was any Turk killed here, or that the inhabitants offered any resistance whatever. When Achmet-Agha, who commanded the massacre, came with the Bashi-Bazouks and demanded the surrender of their arms, they at first refused, but offered to deliver them to the regular troops or to the Kaimakam at Tatar Bazardjik. This, however, Achmet-Agha refused to allow, and insisted upon their arms being delivered to him and his Bashi-Bazouks. After considerable hesitation and parleying this was done. It must not be supposed that these were arms that the inhabitants had especially prepared for an insurrection. They were simply the arms that everybody, Christians and Turks alike, carried and wore openly, as is the custom here. What followed the delivery of the arms will best be understood by the continuation of the recital of what we saw yesterday.

At the point where we deseended into the principal street of the place, the people who had gathered around us pointed to a heap of ashes by the roadside, among whieh could be distinguished a great number of ealeined bones. Here a heap of dead bodies had been burnt, and it would seem that the Turks had been making some futile and misdireeted attempts at cremation.

A little further on we eame to an objeet that filled us with pity and horror. It was the skeleton of a young girl not more than fifteen, lying by the roadside, and partly eovered with the débris of a fallen wall. It was still clothed in a ehemise; the ankles were enclosed in footless stoekings; but the little feet, from which the shoes had been taken, were naked, and owing to the fact that the flesh had dried instead of decomposing, were nearly perfect. There was a large gash in the skull, to whieh a mass of rich brown hair nearly a yard long still clung, trailing in the dust. It is to be remarked that all the skeletons of women found here were dressed in a chemise only, and this poor child had evidently been stripped to her chemise, partly in the search for money and jewels, partly out of mere brutality, then outraged, and afterwards killed. We have talked with many women who had passed through all parts of the ordeal but the last, and the procedure seems to have been as follows: They would seize a woman, strip her carefully to her chemise, laying aside articles of clothing that were valuable, with any ornaments and jewels she might have about her. Then as many of them as cared would violate her, and the last man would kill her or not as the humour took him.

At the next house a man stopped us to show where a blind little brother had been burnt alive, and the spot where he had found his caleined bones, and the rough, hard-visaged man sat down and sobbed like a ehild. The foolish fellow did not seem to understand that the poor blind boy was better off now, and that he ought really to have thanked the Turks instead of crying about it.

On the other side of the way were the skeletons of two ehildren lying side by side, partly covered with stones, and with frightful sabre cuts in their little skulls. The number of ehildren killed in these massacres is something enormous. They were often spitted on bayonets, and we have several stories from eye-witnesses who saw little babes earried about the streets, both

here and at Otluk-kui, on the point of bayonets. The reason is simple. When a Mahometan has killed a certain number of infidels, he is sure of Paradise, no matter what his sins may be. Mahomet probably intended that only armed men should count, but the ordinary Mussulman takes the precept in broader acceptation, and counts women and children as well. Here in Batak the Bashi-Bazouks, in order to swell the count, ripped open pregnant women, and killed the unborn infants. As we approached the middle of the town, bones, skeletons, and skulls became more numerous. There was not a house beneath the ruins of which we did not perceive human remains, and the street besides was strewn with them. Before many of the doorways women were walking up and down wailing their funeral chant. One of them caught me by the arm and led me inside of the walls, and there in one corner, half covered with stones and mortar, were the remains of another young girl, with her long hair flowing wildly about among the stones and dust. And the mother fairly shrieked with agony, and beat her head madly against the wall. I could only turn round and walk out sick at heart, leaving her alone with her skeleton. A few steps further on sat a woman on a doorstep, rocking herself to and fro, and uttering moans heartrending beyond anything I could have imagined. Her head was buried in her hands, while her fingers were unconsciously twisting and tearing her hair as she gazed into her lap, where lay three little skulls with the hair still clinging to them. How did the mother come to be saved, while the children were slaughtered? Who knows? Perhaps she was away from the village when the massacre occurred. Perhaps she had escaped with a babe in her arms, leaving these to be saved by the father; or perhaps, most fearful, most pitiful of all, she had been so terror-stricken that she had abandoned the three poor little ones to their fate and saved her own life by flight. If this be so, no wonder she is tearing her hair in that terribly unconscious way as she gazes at the three little heads lying in her lap.

And now we begin to approach the church and the schoolhouse. The ground is covered here with skeletons, to which are clinging articles of clothing and bits of putrid flesh; the air is heavy with a faint sickening odour, that grows stronger as we advance. It is beginning to be horrible. The school is on one side of the road, the church on the other. The schoolhouse, to

judge by the walls that are in part standing, was a fine large building, capable of accommodating two or three hundred children. Beneath the stones and rubbish that cover the floor to the height of several feet, are the bones and ashes of 200 women and children burnt alive between those four walls. Just beside the schoolhouse is a broad shallow pit. Here were buried a hundred bodies two weeks after the massacre. But the dogs uncovered them in part. The water flowed in, and now it lies there a horrid cesspool, with human remains floating about or lying half exposed in the mud. Near by, on the banks of the little stream that runs through the village, is a sawmill. The wheel-pit beneath is full of dead bodies floating in the water. The banks of this stream were at one time literally covered with corpses of men and women, young girls and children, that lay there festering in the sun, and eaten by dogs. But the pitiful sky rained down a torrent upon them, and the little stream swelled and rose up and carried the bodies away, and strewed them far down its grassy banks, through its narrow gorges and dark defiles beneath the thick underbrush and the shady woods as far as Pestera, and even Tatar Bazardjik, forty miles distant. We entered the churchyard, but the odour here became so bad that it was almost impossible to proceed. We took a handful of tobacco, and held it to our noses while we continued our investigations.

The church was not a very large one, and it was surrounded by a low stone wall, enclosing a small churchyard about fifty yards wide by seventy-five long. At first we perceive nothing in particular, and the stench is so great that we scarcely care to look about us, but we see that the place is heaped up with stones and rubbish to the height of five or six feet above the level of the street, and upon inspection we discover that what appeared to be a mass of stones and rubbish is in reality an immense heap of human bodies covered over with a thin layer of stones. The whole of the little churchyard is heaped up with them to the depth of three or four feet, and it is from here that the fearful odour comes. Some weeks after the massacre, orders were sent to bury the dead. But the stench at that time had become so deadly that it was impossible to execute the order, or even to remain in the neighbourhood of the village. The men sent to perform the work contented themselves with burying a few bodies, throwing a little earth over others as

they lay, and here in the churchyard they had tried to cover this immense heap of festering humanity by throwing in stones and rubbish over the walls, without daring to enter. They had only partially succeeded. The dogs had been at work there since, and now could be seen projecting from this monster grave, heads, arms, legs, feet, and hands, in horrid confusion. We were told there were three thousand people lying here in this little churchyard alone, and we could well believe it. It was a fearful sight —a sight to haunt one through life. There were little curly heads there in that festering mass, crushed down by heavy stones; little feet not as long as your finger on which the flesh was dried hard, by the ardent heat before it had time to decompose; little baby hands stretched out as if for help; babes that had died wondering at the bright gleam of sabres and the red hands of the fierce-eyed men who wielded them; children who had died shrinking with fright and terror; young girls who had died weeping and sobbing and begging for mercy; mothers who died trying to shield their little ones with their own weak bodies, all lying there together, festering in one horrid mass. They are silent enough now. There are no tears nor cries, no weeping, no shrieks of terror, nor prayers for mercy. The harvests are rotting in the fields, and the reapers are rotting here in the churchyard.

We looked into the church which had been blackened by the burning of the woodwork, but not destroyed, nor even much injured. It was a low building with a low roof, supported by heavy irregular arches, that as we looked in seemed scarcely high enough for a tall man to stand under. What we saw there was too frightful for more than a hasty glance. An immense number of bodies had been partly burnt there and the charred and blackened remains, that seemed to fill it half way up to the low dark arches and make them lower and darker still, were lying in a state of putrefaction too frightful to look upon. I had never imagined anything so horrible. We all turned away sick and faint, and staggered out of the fearful pest house glad to get into the street again. We walked about the place and saw the same things repeated over and over a hundred times. Skeletons of men with the clothing and flesh still hanging to and rotting together; skulls of women, with the hair dragging in the dust, bones of children and of infants everywhere. Here they show us a house where twenty people were

burned alive; there another where a dozen girls had taken refuge, and been slaughtered to the last one, as their bones amply testified. Everywhere horrors upon horrors.

There were no dogs in the place, as they had all been driven away when the inhabitants began to return, and only hung around the outskirts of the village; but I saw one or two cats, fat and sleek, that sat complacently upon the walls and watched us with sleepy eyes. It may be asked why the people who are in the village now do not bury these skeletons and these bones, instead of allowing them to be gnawed by the dogs and cats. Some of those who have been able to identify the bones of friends have made weak attempts at burying them. But they have no spades to dig graves with, and they are weak and starving. Besides, many of the survivors are women, who have made fruitless efforts to keep the bodies of loved ones covered with a little earth. We had ample proof that wherever bones could be identified, they were tenderly cared for. We saw many well-kept graves decorated with flowers. We saw others that had been uncovered by the rain or the dogs, leaving parts of the skeleton exposed, that were still decorated with flowers. We even saw skulls lying on the ground, within a doorway or a garden wall, with a bouquet of flowers lying upon them, as though some one was caring for them, and was yet loth to bury them away out of sight. I saw one half buried, with the face upward, and its hollow eyes gazing reproachfully up at the sunny sky, with a bouquet carefully placed in its mouth; but most of these skeletons and bones have nobody to look after them. Of the eight or nine thousand people who made up the population of the place, there are only twelve or fifteen hundred left, and they have neither tools to dig graves with nor strength to use spades if they had them. But why have the Turkish authorities not buried them out of sight? The Turkish authorities will tell you they have buried them, and that there were very few to bury.

Of all the cruel, brutal, ferocious things the Turks ever did, the massacre of Batak is among the worst! Of all the mad, foolish things they ever did, leaving these bodies to lie here rotting for three months unburied is probably the maddest and most foolish! But this village was in an isolated, out-of-the-way place, difficult of access, and they never thought Europeans would go poking their noses here, so they cynically said,

"These Christians are not even worth burial, let the dogs eat them."

We talked to many of the people, but we had not the heart to listen to many of their stories in detail, and we restricted ourselves to simply asking them the number lost in each family. No other method would probably give a better idea of the fearful character of the massacre, and the way in which whole families were swept out of existence. "How many were in your family?" we would ask. "Ten," the answer would be, perhaps. "How many remain?" "Two." "How many in yours?" "Eight." "How many remain?" "Three." "How many in yours?" "Fifteen." "How many remain?" "Five." And so on in families numbering from five to twenty, in which only remained from one to five persons. One old woman came to us, wringing her hands, and crying in that hard tearless manner of which I have already spoken, and when we could get her sufficiently calmed to tell us her story, she said she had three tall handsome sons, Ghiorghy, Ivantchu, and Stoyan, and they were all married to good and dutiful wives, Reika, Stoyanka, and Anka, and they had between them twelve beautiful children, Anghel and Tragan and Ghiorghy and Ivantchu, Letko, Assen, Boydan, Stoyan, Tonka, Gingka, Marika, and Reika, so that the family counted, all told, nineteen persons living under the same roof. Of all this large flourishing family, the tall handsome sons, the dutiful wives, and the twelve beautiful children, there remained only this poor old grandmother. They were all brutally slaughtered to the last one. Of this flourishing family tree there remained only this lifeless withered trunk, and the poor old woman sat down and beat her head, and fairly screamed out her despair. There was an old man who told us of his uncle, Blagoi Christostoff, a venerable patriarch of the grand old type. He had five sons married, who had among them twenty-seven children, thus making a family that with the wives counted up a sum total of thirty-nine persons living under the same roof. Of this enormous family there are only eight left.

We might have gone on for hours listening to these stories had we but time. There was another family of twenty-five, of whom seven were left; one of twenty, of whom eight were left; numbers of them of ten to fifteen, of whom one to five were left; and we heard besides of many families that had been completely annihilated, not one remaining. The people who committed

this wholesale slaughter were not Circassians, as has been supposed, but the Turks of the neighbouring villages, led by the Achmet-Agha already spoken of. The village of Batak was comparatively rich and prosperous; it had excited the envy and jealousy of its Turkish neighbours, and the opportunities of plunder offered a temptation to the Turks which, combined with their religious fanaticism and the pretext of an insurrection in another part of the country, was more than they could resist. The man Achmet-Agha, who commanded the slaughter, has not been punished, and will not be, but, on the contrary, he has been promoted to the rank of Yuz-bashi, and decorated.

We are told that any number of children and young girls had been carried off; that it was known in what Turkish villages they were kept, and that the Turks simply refused to restore them to their parents. Mr. Schuyler afterwards obtained a list, with the names and ages of eighty-seven girls and boys that had been carried off with the name of the village in which each was kept.

As to the present condition of the people who are here, it is simply fearful to think of. The Turkish authorities have built a few wooden sheds in the outskirts of the village in which they sleep, but they have nothing to live upon but what they can beg or borrow from their neighbours. And in addition to this the Turkish authorities, with that cool cynicism and utter disregard of European demands for which they are so distinguished, have ordered these people to pay their regular taxes and war contributions just as though nothing had happened. Ask the Porte about this at Constantinople, and it will be denied, with the most plausible protestations and the most reassuring promises that everything will be done to help the sufferers. But everywhere the people of the burnt villages come to Mr. Schuyler with the same story—that unless they pay their taxes and war contributions they are threatened with expulsion from the nooks and corners of the crumbling walls where they have found a temporary shelter. It is simply impossible for them to pay, and what will be the result of these demands it is not easy to foretell. But the Government needs money badly, and must have it. Each village must make up its ordinary quota of taxes, and the living must pay for the dead.

We asked about the skulls and bones we had seen up on the

hill upon first arriving in the village where the dogs had barked at us. These, we were told, were the bones of about 200 young girls, who had first been captured and particularly reserved for a worse fate than death. They had been kept till the last; they had been in the hands of their captors for several days—for the burning and the pillaging had not all been accomplished in a single day—and during this time they had suffered all it was possible that poor weak trembling girls could suffer at the hands of brutal savages. Then, when the town had been pillaged and burnt, when all their friends had been slaughtered, these poor young things, whose very wrongs should have insured them safety, whose very outrages should have insured them protection, were taken, in the broad light of day, beneath the smiling canopy of heaven, coolly beheaded, then thrown in a heap there, and left to rot.

Mr. Disraeli was right when he wittily remarked that the Turks usually terminated their connection with people who fell into their hands in a more expeditious manner than by imprisoning them. And so they do. Mr. Disraeli was right. At the time he made that very witty remark, these young girls had been lying there many days.

PHILIPPOPOLIS, *August* 10.

I had not been here a day when I heard of a personage whom the Turks jeeringly spoke of as the "Queen of the Bulgarians." This Queen, it appeared, was in prison, and was, I was given to understand, a very contemptible sort of person indeed. I learned that she had headed the insurrection, had been crowned Queen, had promenaded the streets of her native village on horseback, bearing a flag like another Jeanne d'Arc, besides committing a variety of other follies which seemed to form the subject of much merriment among the Turks here. Naturally I conceived a great desire to make the acquaintance of this fallen Queen, and see what sort of person it was who aspired to be the leader of a new Sclavonic Empire. I had no difficulty in accomplishing this, as Mr. Schuyler had no sooner heard of her than he demanded and obtained permission to see her, and kindly allowed me to accompany him. She was confined in the house of an Imam, or priest, with another Bulgarian woman from the same village, and these were the only two

women we found in prison upon our arrival here. We were conducted to the Imam's house by Dr. Vlados, a Greek physician, who has been charged with the task of looking after the health of the prisoners. After a long walk through the crooked, narrow, stony streets, we brought up before a low, rickety building, partly of wood, partly of rough unhewn stones, and found ourselves before a pair of low, double wooden doors opening outwards into the street. The doctor knocked, and after a prolonged colloquy with a voice inside, the door was opened about half an inch, and we caught sight of a harsh-looking, partly-veiled female face, that seemed to be regarding us with some suspicion. Apparently, this preliminary survey was satisfactory, for the door was thrown open a little wider, and a slight girlish figure stepped forward and stood in the doorway, followed by an elderly matron, tall and stalwart almost as a man, who stood behind and gazed at us over the girl's head with tearful eyes.

I was at first inclined to think it was the tall woman who must be the Queen, as she more nearly filled my ideas of what an Amazon should be, and I was surprised to learn that it was not she but the young girl who had been playing at "Kings and Queens" with such disastrous effect to herself. A slight, graceful form, only too plainly seen through her scanty, miserable clothing, large hazel eyes, an oval face, slightly browned by the sun, straight nose, and a veritable little rosebud of a mouth. She was thin and weak, and seemed scarcely able to stand, and the young girlish face wore a dejected, broken-hearted look that was sad to see. A handkerchief was thrown over her head, and she wore a coarse brown linsey-woolsey jacket and a short petticoat of the same material that scarcely reached below her knees, exposing a white delicate foot. She had no shoes and stockings, and this costume she afterwards told me was not her own, but was given her after she had been stripped of her own clothing. She told us her story in a few words, from which it appeared she had taken some part in the insurrection indirectly, but that the report of her having been crowned Queen of the Bulgarians was a pure fiction. The name "Queen of the Bulgarians" had been given her by the Turks in mockery, coupled with the vilest epithets and insults that a cowardly brutal soldiery could think of. She had been in prison two months, and during all this time had been given

nothing to eat but bread and water. It was no wonder she looked weak and ill. As she was evidently too weak to stand talking there long, Mr. Schuyler told her he would try to have her set at liberty as soon as possible, and then we took our leave.

This visit of Mr. Schuyler's and the interest he showed in her, resulted in her being released next day on bail, to be definitely set at liberty a few days later. I paid her a visit the day after in the khan or caravansary where she with her companion had found a temporary shelter, and obtained her story in detail. As it is intimately connected with these Bulgarian massacres, and will at the same time give an idea of the condition of the Bulgarian people, I may as well give it in full, as she gave it to me. Her name is "Raika," and she is the daughter of a priest in the village of Otluk-kui, or Panagurishti, about twenty miles from Tatar-Bazardjik. At the age of twelve she had been already remarked for her intelligence and beauty, and a kind of village literary club, which exists in the place, decided to send her to school and educate her. For this purpose a subscription was set afoot, and the requisite funds were soon raised. They decided to send her to Eski-Zara, where the American missionaries had established a school for girls, which they afterwards turned over to the Bulgarians, by whom it is now conducted.

It may not be amiss to remark here that the American and English missionaries have done an immense deal of good in Bulgaria by establishing schools throughout the country, educating teachers, and showing the Bulgarians how to organise and establish schools for themselves. In this they have succeeded so well that there is scarcely a village in Bulgaria without its school. Raika remained at this school four years, and acquired seemingly a very fair education; better, perhaps, than many an English girl gets in a better school. She had a particular fondness for needlework, and she acquired so much skill in all sorts of curious and tasteful embroidery that she became famous throughout all the country. When she returned to her native place, after four years' study in a boarding-school, she was looked upon as a veritable marvel by all the people around her. It was particularly the wonders she worked with her needle that astonished and pleased them, and this, with her wonderful education and her sweetness of character, made them begin to

look up to her as a being of a superior order. She was now sixteen, and there was a career already marked out for her—that of a teacher; and she entered upon it gladly. The schools in Otluk-kui, or Panagurishti, as it is called by the Bulgarians, were at that time in a very flourishing condition. Since hearing Raika's story I have been there, and I took pains to inquire into the matter. There were three schools in the place—one for girls and two for boys; and, to judge by the ruins which I saw, they were fine large buildings that no village of the same size, even in the civilised part of Europe, need have been ashamed of. There were six teachers in all—three male and three female; and the number of children that attended the schools was 680, of whom 500 were boys, and 180 girls. The teachers were well paid—better, I think, everything considered, than they are in England, France, and Germany. The three male teachers and Raika received each sixty pounds a year, a sum which, in this country, where living is cheap, where no great expenditure is required in the way of dress, and in a mountain village far away from railways and telegraphs, was really a very comfortable income. For a young girl like Raika especially, who had her home, it was a great deal of money. She applied half of it, however, to paying back to the literary society the money spent on her education. She soon became the head mistress of the girls' school, and as she was the only one of the teachers who was a native of the village, she was a great favourite of the people.

It should be remembered that the schools in Bulgaria are supported by a kind of tax which the Bulgarians voluntarily levy upon themselves; and the flourishing condition of the schools in one little place like this, and the way in which they were supported, will enable us to form an idea of what they are all over the country, and of the efforts these poor people are making to rise from the grovelling condition in which they have been held for so long. Raika's position as schoolmistress in a place like Panagurishti was by no means an unenviable one. A schoolmistress in a place like this is a different sort of personage, it should be remembered, from a schoolmistress in London. With her cleverness, her education, her good looks, the esteem and respect in which she was held by everybody, her position was a very pleasant one, and she was in reality a sort of village queen. I asked some of the people there if she had no sweet-

heart all this time, and what had become of him. They said there seemed to be nobody who aspired to her hand, for the reason that she was so far superior to the young men of the place, that they did not dare to hope for such a prize as she would have been. Poor girl; not one of the young men who then thought her so far above them would marry her now. Things went on pleasantly enough until the breaking out of the insurrection in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Raika was eighteen, she had been a teacher for two years, and had nearly paid her debt. Then there were signs of approaching trouble. Fresh upon the news of the war in Herzegovina came the tax-gatherer with demands for the year's taxes and those of the previous year, which had been remitted owing to the failure of the crops. Many were unable to meet these unlooked-for demands. Their property was instantly seized and sold at any priee it would bring. The cattle, the agrieultural implements of the peasants, were seized and sold without the slightest regard to future consequenees. Some were even thrown into prison, when nobody offered to buy the poor effects that were offered for sale. Naturally these acts resulted in a great deal of misery and dissatisfaetion.

The taxes upon the agricultural population are heavy enough, often amounting, as they do, to twenty and thirty per cent., aeeording to the tax farmer's capacity for extortion, without being suddenly doubled at a moment's notice. Hard upon this followed the demand for the taxes of 1876 in advance, which resulted in still more forced sales, extortions, quarrels with the tax-collectors, misery, and diseontent. The young men of the place began to hold secret meetings and to talk of throwing off the yoke of the Turks, and asserting their independenee, like their brothers of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Servia. I may as well state here that it was in this place that the insurreetion, if sueh a puny outbreak as oecurred here may be dignified by that name, broke out. There was, it seems, an Insurreetional Committee at Bucharest, eomposed of young Bulgarians, in the schools or in business there. They were natives of the villages in this part of the country, and not Russians, as stated by the Turks as well as our diplomatists, who see a Russian in every bush. "The insurrection was fomented from without," in the sense only that these young Bulgarians had their head-quarters at Bucharest, and there does not seem

to be the slightest evidence to show that there were any Russians or Servians in this part of the country, as is stated by the Turks, and believed by Sir Henry Elliot.

It does not appear that Raika had anything to do with fomenting the insurrection. She says that the first positive knowledge she had of anything brewing was in the spring, about Easter time. She was summoned one day to the house where the school committee were in the habit of meeting. She went, supposing it was for some business relating to the school, but was greatly surprised to find, not the school committee, but a number of young men of the village, who were listening to a fiery speech by a man named Bankovsky, urging them to revolt. We have not been able to find out who this Bankovsky was, nor what has become of him. It is supposed that he was killed near Sophia, but this is by no means certain. We have only been able to ascertain that his real name was not Bankovsky, and that he was a Bulgarian. I believe that many of the people know who he was and where he was from, but that they pretend to know little about him in order not to be forced to tell what they do know, and compromise his friends. Raika describes him as a tall, handsome man, with a blonde moustache, blue eyes, and a very fiery, eloquent manner of speaking. His words so worked upon them that they decided unanimously to rise as soon as Servia should declare war, which eventuality was looked upon as certain. They immediately commenced taking measures for carrying this resolution into effect, and it appeared that one of the first things they needed was a flag.

With a flag everything was possible, and this was why the young school-mistress had been summoned to the council. Her skill with the needle was famed throughout the country far and wide, and they had fixed upon her to embroider the standard of rebellion. Understanding the danger, she at first refused, and tried to dissuade them from their project, but they were resolved upon their line of action, and insisted upon her embroidering the flag for them. Urged partly by threats, partly by persuasion, and perhaps in the generous hope that the revolt might after all be successful, she finally consented; and it is sad to think that her skill in needlework, that most womanly of accomplishments, should have been the cause of so fearful a misfortune to her. In order to not compromise her

father and mother, however, she decided to do the work in the house of one of the insurgents. A vain precaution. It did not prevent her father from being slaughtered, with hundreds of others, in the church where he was officiating. We have seen the flag as it fell into the hands of the Turks, and is now used in evidence on the trials that are going on here. The poor rag, bespattered and torn, was prettily worked with a naïve design showing a huge yellow lion, with his paw on a crescent, with which he seemed greatly displeased, and the inscription, "Liberty or death," in Bulgarian.

By the first of May, the day fixed upon for the rising to take place, the banner was ready. But Servia had not declared war, and they had received almost certain information that they were betrayed to the Turkish authorities. They determined to go on, as they considered it now too late either to abandon the attempt or to postpone it. So having taken their arms, they formed in a body and marched to the church, sent for two priests, one of whom was Raika's father, declared their intention of rising, and asked them to bless the undertaking. This the priests did. Although several priests were killed at the time of the massacres, and several more hanged afterwards, it does not appear that any priest took a more active part in the insurrection than that of giving his blessing in one or two instances to the insurgents. Having obtained the blessing of the Church, the insurgents next called for Raika, and informed her that as she had made the flag she must carry it through the village at the head of a procession. She refused; but they seized her, put her upon a horse, put the flag in her hand, and marched through the streets shouting and singing in the most approved French manner. Having thus declared war, they proceeded to act. There was no *Mudir*, or Turkish governor, in the village at this time, so they had matters all to themselves, and nobody to interfere with them. They immediately proceeded to fortify the place, and they do not seem to have had any other plan for the insurrection than that of waiting quietly in the village, and defending it against all comers.

This seems to have been the plan adopted in the three or four villages where a rising really took place; and a more foolish one could hardly have been imagined. Instead of young men in each village forming themselves into flying bands, and traversing the country in every direction, destroying the railways,

cutting the telegraphs, surprising small posts of Turkish soldiers, and avoiding contact with large bodies of troops, each of these villages having thrown off the Turkish authority in the manner above described, adopted the mad plan of defending itself separately and singly against the regular troops. This, together with the fact that the rising only occurred in three or four places, and not simultaneously in these, would seem to indicate that the members of the Bucharest Committee were very raw hands at organizing an insurrection, and that their organization was very imperfect, if indeed there were anything like organization at all. They seem to have persuaded these three or four villages to rise, hoping that the rest of the country would follow the example, and that there would be a general insurrection as a matter of course. But the rest of the population, without leaders and without organization, remained inactive, and allowed themselves to be quietly slaughtered. There is little doubt, in my mind, that if the rising had been general, properly organized, and provided with leaders, the Turks would have been obliged to abandon the whole country north of the Balkans, and withdraw to Adrianople. They would never have been able to fight Servia and Montenegro, and at the same time to keep up their communications through a hostile country that was up in arms against them. This is, in my mind, the best evidence that there was no organized insurrection throughout the country; for if there had been, it would have succeeded.

All the people of Panagurishti seem to have finally engaged in the revolt, for Raika informed me that even the women had gone out and worked on the fortifications, so great was the enthusiasm, and that they worked at them nine or ten days. I afterwards had occasion to inspect those amateur fortifications when I went there with Mr. Schuyler. They consisted simply of slight embankments thrown up across two of the roads leading to the village on hills between one and two miles away. The ditch was about a foot or eighteen inches deep, and five or six feet wide, and the embankment, or loose earth, three or four feet high, and not more than four or five feet wide at the bottom, would not have stopped a three-pound shell. It would have afforded convenient cover for pickets or a skirmish line, but was utterly useless for anything else. It would have been equally useless had it been a well-constructed fort; for the village was so accessible from all sides, that infantry would not

be obliged to advance by the road, and the works would be turned.

The ten days during which they were throwing up this puny earthwork did not pass without some incidents. In the first place, two tax-collectors, who approached the place, were ordered to deliver up their arms, and upon their refusal to do so were fired upon and killed. These tax-collectors were not, properly speaking, officers of the Government, but rather agents of the tax farmer, who had excited the hatred of the people by their extortions. Shortly afterwards seven more Turks, who approached the village, were ordered to surrender, and did so at once. These were two zaptiehs, two tax-collectors, one clerk, and two pomaks or Mohammedan Bulgarians. They were all lodged in a Bulgarian house and well treated, except one of the zaptiehs or mounted police of the country, who had committed such acts of cruelty and barbarity that they decided he had merited death, and therefore sentenced and shot him. A day or two later some people in a closed carriage, approaching along the road towards the fortifications, were hailed and likewise ordered to surrender, and upon their attempting to escape were fired upon. The carriage was captured, and it was found there were two men and three women in it. The two men and one of the women had been killed by the fire; one of the remaining women seized a sabre and struck at one of the insurgents, whereupon she was killed. The other woman was captured and sent into the village, and well treated until the arrival of the Turks, when she was set at liberty. As far as we have been able to learn up to the present, those two women are the only ones that have been killed by the insurgents, and one of them, as I have just related, was shot accidentally. The Turkish authorities in Philippopolis state that there were twelve killed in all; but they have been unable to give Mr. Schuyler either the names of these women, or the names of the villages in which they were said to have been killed, and he therefore will not accept the statement until he finds further proof.

Kiani Pacha, who was sent here to inquire into the atrocities committed by the Bashi-Bazouks, told Mr. Schuyler, with the coolest assurance, that the wife and daughter of the Mudir of Avrat-alan had been killed. Mr. Schuyler found, upon investigation, that the wife of the Mudir had not been killed, and that he never had a daughter. It was said that the wife of the

Mudir here in Otluk-kui had likewise been killed. As I have already stated, there was no Mudir in this village at the time of the outbreak, and his wife could not therefore have been killed. Of the twelve eases of Turkish women killed, we have therefore investigated five, and found that three of them were without the slightest foundation. As we cannot learn the names of the villages where the seven other women were killed, we cannot investigate, and we therefore take the liberty of doubting. The story told by Edib Effendi, of a Turkish girl who was killed and then mutilated in so disgusting a manner, is a pure fiction. We have not been able to discover the least trace of it. Nobody, Turk or Christian, in Tatar-Bazardjik, near where it is said to have occurred, ever heard of it; nor did the different Consuls in Philippopolis, who received daily reports of every thing that was going on throughout the whole district from the beginning of the troubles, ever hear of it until they saw the report of Edib Effendi. The truth is that the story is an impudent falsehood, invented by Edib Effendi, which has not even the semblance of probability. This state of things continued in Panagurishti, or Otluk-kui, for nine or ten days, during which time nine Turks and two Turkish women were killed. All of these but the two women and the one zaptieh were killed with arms in their hands. Altogether during this time some twenty prisoners were taken, and these were well treated and cared for until the Turkish army came on and released them. It should be remembered that I am not giving the story of one person alone in making these statements, for since my conversation with the schoolmistress we have been to Panagurishti, have compared her story with the accounts received from other people, and find it corroborated in every particular. To tell the truth, it scarcely needed corroboration, for the Turks themselves, neither here nor at Philippopolis, do not claim more killed than the number above stated.

The rising occurred on the 2nd of May. On the 12th Hafiz Pacha arrived before the place with a regiment of regular troops, two or three pieces of artillery, and a great number of Bashi-Bazouks. It would seem that the insurgents only had about 250 men armed with muskets or rifles. The rest had only knives or pistols, such as before these troubles were worn by everybody. One hundred and fifty of the best armed men had gone out on one road towards Tatar-Bazardjik, to dispute the

way, and 100 on the other road, for it seems they did not send spies out to see by which way the army would come. When Hafiz Pacha arrived he found only 100 men to oppose him, and these, frightened at the great superiority of the force brought against them, ran away at the first fire. It does not even appear that they fired off their guns, for there was not a single Turk killed or wounded. The inhabitants, panic-stricken, had in the meantime attempted to fly, but the town had already been surrounded, and they were either driven back or cut down in the fields. I had forgotten to state that at the approach of the Bashi-Bazouks the inhabitants of eight or nine neighbouring villages, fear-stricken, had abandoned their homes and taken refuge here, to the number of five or six thousand, and they now filled the streets, crying and screaming with fright. As all resistance had now ceased, or rather, as none had really been offered, Hafiz Pacha had nothing to do but march into the town, arrest the leaders of the insurrection, and restore order. Instead of this, however, he brought up his artillery, and, without summoning the place to surrender, commenced a bombardment, ruthlessly throwing the bursting shells into these crowds of shrieking women and children. Until midnight the din of the bombardment resounded through the streets. Then the loud-mouthed dogs of war ceased their clamour; they had done their work; it was now the turn of the sabre.

During the night and the next morning the troops and the Bashi-Bazouks entered the place, and then began a scene of pillage, violence, and massacre, only equalled by that of Batak. Neither age nor sex was spared. The town was pillaged, then fired; about one-fourth of the houses were burnt, people were cut down in the streets, on their own doorsteps, on their own hearthstones. Old men and women begging for mercy, and children and infants screaming in terror, perished alike beneath the swift and certain sabre. It is thought that 3,000 people were killed in this place alone, of whom about 400 were inhabitants of the town, and the rest from the neighbouring villages who had taken refuge here. But we were not greeted here with the scenes of horror that awaited us at Batak. Hafiz Pacha, unlike Achmet Aga, had sense enough to have the bodies buried within the following three days, and thus to cover up his tracks.

It has been repeated again and again that these acts were

perpetrated by the Bashi-Bazouks only, and not by the regular troops; and a great deal is made of the statement as showing the massacres were committed without the consent of the authorities. If the statement were worth anything, the converse ought to be true—that if the massacres were committed by the regular troops then the authorities are responsible. Now, as it happens, wherever there were any regular troops to commit massacres, they rivalled the Bashi-Bazouks in atrocity. Here, as Mr. Schuyler will show in his report, regular and irregular troops were equally cruel, pitiless, and ferocious, and Hafiz Pacha is no less guilty than Achmet Aga. The reason is simple. They are all Turks alike, and there is nothing to choose between them. These massacres were committed by the order of the authorities, and that is why the men who committed them have been rewarded with decorations and promotions.

When we were in Panagurishti we were shown in the ruins of the church, before the place where the altar had stood, a black spot specked with calcined bones, on which lay a bouquet of flowers. This was the remains of a priest, Theodor Peoff, 85 years of age, who had been seized and tortured in the hopes of obtaining money, mutilated and maltreated in ways which only the foul imagination of a Turk could invent, then killed, and burnt here before the altar. In another place we were shown a black spot where an old blind man, Dondje Stregleyoff, was beaten half to death, and then thrown senseless on a heap of wood and burnt alive.

There was an old man here, Zwatko Boyadjieff by name, a public benefactor, a liberal contributor to the school fund, who in winter supported half the widows and orphans of the place, who was renowned for his charities to Christian and Turk alike. He was likewise seized, tortured, and maltreated. His eyes were put out, and, after undergoing the most fearful torments, he was thrown on a heap of wood fainting or dead, the people do not know which, and burnt. They seized the priest Nestor, and cut off his fingers one by one to extort money, and as the poor man had none to give them they continued by cutting off his hands, and finally his head. We were shown in the yard of a neat little cottage, embowered in trees, a grave, beside which a woman was kneeling as we passed. It was the grave of a young man of eighteen, who had just returned home from school when the troubles began, after an absence of two years,

and who had taken no part in the outbreak. They had seized him, and in mere sport cut off his hands one by one in the presence of his mother, then killed him.

What made these acts more terrible was, that many of them were committed in the presence of the weeping relatives—wife, mother, brothers, sisters of the victims. And they were repeated by the hundred. It would take a volume to tell all the stories that were related to us. But it was not only old and young men who suffered; women, young girls, children, infants, were ruthlessly slaughtered. These Turks have no pity, no compassion, no bowels. They have not even the pity of wild beasts. Even the tiger will not slay the young of its own species. But these Turks, these strong bearded men, picked infants up out of their cradles with their bayonets, tossed them in the air, caught them again, and flung them at the heads of the shrieking mothers. They carried little babes about the streets on the points of their bayonets, with the poor little heads and arms drooping around the barrels of their guns, and the blood streaming down over their hands. They cut off the heads of children, and compelled other children to carry the still bleeding heads about in their arms.

I would have the reader remember that I am relating facts that have been coldly and concisely noted down in my presence by Mr. Schuyler; facts that will appear in his report; facts that were told him by people who wept and moaned and wrung their hands, and fairly tore their hair at the bare remembrance of the scenes they were relating.

Hundreds of women came to us recounting what they had seen and what they had suffered. Not a woman in the place seemed to have escaped outrage. They all confessed it openly. In other places where these things occurred, the women have shown a hesitation to speak. In some cases they denied they had been outraged, and we afterwards learned they confessed to others that they had been. At Avrat-Alan a deputation of ladies called upon Mr. Schuyler to make their complaints, and he was somewhat astonished to find they had very little to say. Upon going away, however, they left him a letter, signed by them all, saying that scarcely a woman in the place had escaped outrage. They could not bring themselves to tell him *vivâ voce;* but thinking that as he was investigating here in an official capacity he ought to know, they had decided to write to

him. Here, however, they did not hesitate to speak out. Outrages were committed so publicly, so generally, that they feel it would be useless to try to hide their shame, and they avow it openly. These acts were committed not only in the houses, but in the streets, in the yards, in the courts, for the Turks have not even the decency which may accompany vice. They have not even the modesty of vileness; they have not even the shame of nature. Mothers were outraged in the presence of their daughters; young girls in the presence of their mothers, of their sisters and brothers. One woman told us, wringing her hands and crying, that she and her daughter, a girl of fifteen, had been violated in the same room, another that she was violated in the presence of her children. A girl of eighteen avowed, shuddering and bowing her face in her hands, that she had been outraged by ten soldiers. A woman, who came to us on crutches with a bullet still in her ankle, said she had been violated by three soldiers while lying wounded on the ground groaning in agony. Young, delicate, fragile little creatures, ten and twelve years old, were treated in the same brutal manner. A woman told us that her daughter, a tender, delicate little thing of twelve, had been seized and outraged by a Bashi-Bazouk, although she had offered all the money she had in the world—although she offered herself—if he would spare the child. Another told us of a poor little thing of ten violated in her presence, with a number of other girls. Still another told us how a dozen young girls, twelve or fifteen years old, had taken refuge in her house, hoping to escape detection; how they had been discovered; how two of them had been outraged, and killed, because they had resisted, and how the others then submitted to their fate, white, shivering, their teeth chattering with fright.

And yet Sir Henry Elliot and Mr. Disraeli will keep prating to us about exaggeration, forsooth! The crimes that were committed here are beyond the reach of exaggeration. There were stories related to us that are maddening in their atrocity, that cause the heart to swell in a burst of impotent rage that can only find vent in pitying, useless tears. We were told of a young girl of sixteen, outraged by three or four Bashi-Bazouks in the presence of her father, who was old and blind. Suddenly she saw one of them preparing in mere sport to kill the poor old man, and she sprang forward with a shriek, threw her arms around his neck,

weeping, and trying to shield him with her own delicate body. It was all in vain; the bullet sped on its course, and the father and daughter—the sweet young girl and the blind old man—fell dead in each other's arms. I should, perhaps, beg pardon of my readers for dwelling on these harrowing details. But I am not writing for children and young girls, but for men and women; and everywhere here I see the Turks looking upon the English as their friends and allies, counting upon us for help against their enemies, looking to us for aid and comfort, and believing—most exasperating thing of all—that they have our approval in everything they do.

If I tell what I have seen and heard it is because I want the people of England to understand what these Turks are, and if we are to go on bolstering up this tottering despotism; if we are to go on carrying this loathsome vice-stricken leper about on our shoulders, let us do it with open eyes and a knowledge of the facts; let us see the hideous thing we are carrying. Mr. Schuyler obtained ample evidence of other crimes too foul to be even named. I believe that Mr. Baring has obtained no information on this point, and does not believe in it. I scarcely wonder at this. There are crimes that repel investigation, that avoid the light; that, like those vile creeping loathsome things found under carrion or in the lowest depths of sewers, cling to the dark holes and corners and escape inspection. Mr. Schuyler has explored these dark depths to the bottom with the coolness of a surgeon probing a foul and festering ulcer. But I do not think he will be able to state the facts in his report. They are without the pale of the English language, and for my part I shall not again refer to them.

And the "Queen of the Bulgarians," the young school-mistress, what became of her? Alas! her fate was only that of hundreds of others. I could not ask her to relate all the story of her misfortunes. It was too plainly written in the pale, dejected, though still gentle and sympathetic face. But we saw a woman in Otluk-kui who was present when she fell into the hands of three or four Bashi-Bazouks. Yes, this educated, intelligent, sensitive young girl was seized and outraged, in the presence of half-a-dozen of her comrades and neighbours, by three or four brutes who still pollute the earth with their vile existence. Exaggerated, Sir Henry, indeed! And if your own daughter had been treated in the same way, would you still go on prating

about exaggeration? But this was not enough. Her father was shot down in his own house, and she and her mother dug his grave in their garden and buried him; and still the poor girl had not suffered enough. The Turkish authorities heard that she had embroidered the flag, and two weeks after the insurrection was completely crushed they ordered her arrest. A Mudir had been sent to the village in the meantime, and he seized and took her to his house at ten o'clock at night, with the woman at whose house the flag had been worked—the tall, stalwart woman of whom I have spoken in the beginning of this letter. She told us what occurred in the Mudir's house that night. The poor girl, in spite of tears and prayers, that might have moved a tiger to pity, was stripped naked, beaten, spat upon, and again outraged. It was then that she was nick-named "Queen of the Bulgarians," and the next day she and another woman, who had been likewise maltreated in even a more horrible way, were sent to Tatar-Bazardjik. Here she was surrounded by the Turkish population, hooted, jeered, pelted with mud, spat upon, and insulted with the foulest epithets that a Turkish mob could find. It mattered not that she was one poor weeping girl all alone among a crowd of enemies—fiends rather than men. There is no pity in the breasts of these savages. Then, fainting, insensible, she was thrown into a cart and sent off to Philippopolis, thrown into prison there, and kept on bread and water until the arrival of Mr. Schuyler. Then she was set at liberty, ill, shattered in health, and broken-hearted.

We saw this same Mudir of Otluk-kui when we were there. Mr. Baring spoke of him as the most filthy brute he ever saw. The very night Mr. Baring was there, the Mudir, as if in very contempt for his presence in the place, sent for two young married women, whose husbands had been killed in the massacre, to come to his house. They refused. The next night, when Mr. Schuyler was there, he again sent for them, and they again refused; but they came to Mr. Schuyler next day in despair, saying they felt sure that as soon as we left the village he would send his zaptiehs for them. When Mr. Schuyler spoke to the Governor of Philippopolis about this Mudir, he simply replied that he knew he was a bad man, but he had no better man to put in his place. This man will not be punished, nor will Achmet Aga, the destroyer of Batak, nor another Achmet Aga,

equally infamous, who destroyed Perustitza; nor Tossum Bey, who burnt Klissura; nor Chefket Pacha, who, beaten as a general in Bosnia and Herzegovina, wreaked his vengeance on the unresisting people of Bazardjik, where his generalship had full scope. These men have, on the contrary, been rewarded, decorated, and promoted. And we can do nothing; I am sure nothing will be done. Diplomacy is impotent. If Sir Henry Elliot remains in Constantinople he will make a few mild representations to the Porte, which the latter will receive with the best possible grace, and—that is all. How could it be otherwise? Sir Henry does not believe in the atrocities. How can he be expected to make strong representations on the subject? Or a strong man may be sent in Sir Henry's place, who will go so far as to make urgent representations to the Porte, or who may even go the length of making strong representations. The Porte will promise everything. It will give assurance of the most benevolent intentions, it will utter the most philanthropic protestations, the Government will issue more paper reforms, the diplomatists will be satisfied, and that will be the end of it.

It cannot be otherwise. There are not a dozen Turks in the empire who see the necessity of reform. There is nobody to carry out the reforms. The Mutlé-serif of Philippopolis told the simple truth when he said he had no better Mudir to send to Otluk-kui instead of the drunken beast who is there now. But they would not carry out reforms if they could. The Mutlé-serif of Philippopolis has the reputation of being too favourable to the Bulgarians, and when we were there the Turks were loudly demanding his recall. He seemed like a very honest, conscientious man, desirous of doing what was right. He entered into the question of the misery of the burnt-out people with Mr. Schuyler and Mr. Baring in an earnest serious way, that carried with it the conviction that he was really working hard to relieve their sufferings. He said money was to be given them, their cattle to be restored, their houses rebuilt, and every possible thing done for them. He was so earnest, so serious, so thoroughly convinced of the necessity of these measures, that you could not doubt his good intentions. And yet, not only are the cattle not restored, not only are the houses not rebuilt, but Mr. Schuyler has found that this same plausible, earnest, conscientious governor, at the very moment that he was making

these promises to him and Mr. Baring, was issuing the strict orders that the people of Batak, as well as of the other burnt villages, be forced to pay their regular taxes as though nothing had happened. And this is one of the good men—one who is so friendly to the Bulgarians that the Turks demand his recall.

Here is an example of Turkish ideas of reform. Until the last year the whole male Christian population, from infants one day old up to the age of a hundred, had to pay the military exemption tax. Last year, however, a great reform was ushered in with a loud flourish of trumpets. In future, only those capable of military service were to pay the exemption tax, and there were great rejoicings among the people. But when the tax came to be levied, what was the astonishment of everybody to find that each village was ordered to pay exactly the same sum as before. The tax was only redistributed. The round sum before paid on the whole population of the village now falls on the shoulders of those only capable of military duty. But the whole amount must be made up. This is the Turkish idea of reform, and the Turkish way of throwing dust in the eyes of Europe. And these are the people from whom we expect reforms! There will be no reforms. The thousands of helpless women and children, of babes and sucklings slaughtered in cold blood, whose bones and flesh are fattening the soil of Bulgaria, cry out against the hollow mockery, and give it the lie. And you say, oh statesmen of Europe, that the *status quo* must be maintained; that this must last. I tell you it will not last. You must find another solution for the Eastern question, or another solution will find you. It will not last, or civilization is a delusion, justice a mockery, and Christianity a farce and a failure.

The following letter reached the *Daily News* office without date.

PHILIPPOPOLIS.

A two hours' drive from Philippopolis over a very fair road that led through the rich and fertile valley of the Maritza, brought us to what had formerly been the village of Perustitza. This village was attacked and burnt by the Bashi-Bazouks, led by one Achmet-Aga, who must not be confounded with another

Achmet-Aga, still more infamous, who destroyed Batak. It was a prettily-situated little place, built, as it was, on a low hill that dominated the valley of the Maritza, and enabled its inhabitants to command a view over the rich and luxuriant valley, miles in extent. It was, however, like so many other places that we have seen, in ruins, not one house remaining standing. We found about a thousand people, of whom the greater part were women and children, who were living in the nooks and corners of the walls, where they had constructed temporary sheds of straw capable of sheltering them from the sun, but not from the rain. Their present means of existence were principally the new harvest, which they were gathering slowly and painfully, without the aid of their cattle, which had been driven off by their Turkish neighbours, and partly some assistance that was given them by the Governor of Philippopolis. This is the only case we have heard of where the Turkish authorities have given any assistance whatever to the burnt villages. The cattle of the people here were all in the village of Ustuna, not more than three miles distant. They had been there in the possession of the Turks ever since the middle of May. Not a single head had been restored to the owners, and yet the kind, plausible, earnest, conscientious Mutlé-Serif of Philippopolis, with whom we were to dine that night, had assured us only the day before that the cattle had been restored to their proper owners, that the houses were being rebuilt, and help distributed to the needy.

Nobody can understand the cool, plausible, conscientious way in which a Turk can lie until he has seen what I have seen during this trip through Bulgaria. I have travelled a good deal, and seen something of the world; but I am willing to confess that until I came here I had no idea of the extent to which human duplicity could be carried. The honest, straight-forward way in which these people will lie to you is simply past belief, and will impose upon the most incredulous and sceptical mind. There is an honesty, an earnestness, a seriousness in the tones of the voice, an evident knowledge of the necessities of the situation, which carries conviction with it, and convinces you that they see and know and feel about it exactly as you do. The right is so evident to their mind as well as yours, that it is impossible they should go wrong; and it is not until you see with your own eyes that they

have been coolly, deliberately, and with premeditation, lying to you in the most shameless manner, that you begin to fathom the depths of their duplicity. There are cases like the present, in which one finds out the truth; but generally you have no means of verifying what has been said to you, and of necessity you are obliged to believe. It requires a special habit and training of mind to be able to disbelieve every word which is said to you; a habit of mind which Europeans as a rule have not got, which they cannot get, unless brought up in it from infancy, and which is rarely obtained in Europe. This is why Europeans are continually deceived and overreached in their dealings with Orientals. The reader will say, perhaps, that I, the writer of these lines, seem to have learnt it pretty well already. Not at all. I know that the Mutlé-Serif of Philippopolis, or any other Turk, can make me believe any number of lies, unless I have ready to hand the means of disproving them. I feel I am a perfect child in their hands. I could no more have doubted Kiana Pacha and Edib Effendi when they said there was nobody killed at Batak than I could have doubted that the sun would rise to-morrow, had I not been to Batak and seen 6,000 or 7,000 bodies lying there. So far from returning the cattle to the destitute villagers, the Turks of Ustuna, hearing that we had been to Perustitza, and fearing we might make urgent representations on the subject, drove them all off to another part of the country, and sold them.

The troubles seem to have arisen here as follows; and I will only preface the relation of what occurred with the remark that the same atrocities and horrors, the same scenes of pillage, violence, and massacre occurred here as elsewhere. If I do not dwell upon them more in detail it is because I think I have already given the reader a sufficiently clear idea of what the pillage of a village and the massacre of its inhabitants really means, and it is useless to go on repeating these harrowing stories to infinitude. Perustitza was a place of 350 houses and from 2,000 to 2,500 inhabitants. It was nearly the only village where any real resistance was offered, the Bashi-Bazouks, and the people here defended themselves with far more vigour, unprepared as they were, than did the inhabitants of Otluk-kui, who had gone to the trouble of making fortifications. But, in spite of the assertions of the Turks, I do not think that Mr. Schuyler has obtained any evidence to show that there was

anything like a real insurrection here. All that can be made of the mass of conflicting evidence is that the country was in a state of great agitation and excitement owing to the circulation of rumours about the intended declaration of war by Servia; that the Christians and Mussulmans were about equally afraid of each other, and that the former especially were in a state of panic, only too well justified by subsequent events. The inhabitants of Perustitza deny that there was any insurgent committee in the village, or that any insurrection was organized here. The only proof the Turks offer of the contrary, was that many of the people had buried their valuable effects early in the spring, and had planted their crops over them so as to effectually hide them, thus giving evidence that they knew an insurrection was preparing weeks before it actually broke out. This is simply no proof at all. These Bulgarians are so accustomed to lawless acts of violence, to spoliation and robbery by Turkish officials, as by thieves and brigands, that they always keep whatever little money they may have put by buried in the ground, and upon the slightest alarm they bury everything valuable that they have no immediate use for and that will not spoil by being put in the earth. This fact is rather an evidence of Turkish misrule than of anything else, and only shows the general state of insecurity in which people live here. The people who live north of the Balkans, and who cross the mountains every year, and go south to help to get in the harvest, always bury their valuables before starting; and when the war broke out last year in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the whole population of Bulgaria buried their money, jewels, and other valuables immediately, to be ready for the worst. A custom which is really an evidence of Turkish misrule, and nothing more, is impudently offered by the Turks as an exceptional thing, and as evidence of a regularly organized revolt.

The people assert, and I have no reason to doubt their word, that until they heard of the massacres in other places, and saw from the hills above the town, the fires of other burning villages, there was no thought of insurrection or even of defence. When however, they saw these sinister tokens they immediately sent one of their head men to Philippopolis to the Governor, Aziz Pacha, to ask that some regular troops might be sent to protect them. To the first application they received no answer; and the next day they sent the same man back again to demand

protection. This is not denied even by the Turks. The only difference in the story as told by the Turks and Bulgarians is, that the former say that Aziz Pacha promised them protection, while the Bulgarians assert, in the most emphatic manner, that he wrote them a letter which was read to all the men of the village assembled together, telling them that he had no troops to send them, and that if they were attacked they must defend themselves. But he advised them to remain quietly at home, not leave the village for a few days, and allow nobody from any other village to come there. They all maintain so stoutly that such a letter was written them by Aziz Pacha that I cannot doubt it. We could not find the letter, because the man who had brought it—the same who had gone to ask for protection—had been arrested upon returning to Philippopolis a third time upon the same mission, and thrown into prison. He told us one of the head men of the place had possession of the letter when arrested, and the Turks had of course seized it. In the meantime, between the second and third appeals for help, Aziz Pacha sent two zaptiehs, or rural policemen. These zaptiehs, however, only remained a few hours, at the end of which time they said they would go to Ustuna and see what was going on there, borrowed two horses, went off, and never came back. Then there arrived two Bashi-Bazouks, with a message from Achmet-Aga, the chief of the Bashi-Bazouks, saying he was coming with 200 or 300 Bashi-Bazouks to protect them, as he had heard they had asked for protection. They, however, did not relish the protection of the Bashi-Bazouks, and told the two emissaries that they did not want to be protected, and that they were going to protect themselves. The two Bashi-Bazouks insisted, however, that Achmet-Aga should come and protect them and refused to take back the message. Whereupon there was an altercation, in the course of which the two Turks were seized and killed. These facts were related to me by an Armenian woman, whose husband kept a kind of *café* in the place, and in whose house the interview with the Turks took place. The Armenians and Jews, I may remark, are the only people here who may be considered really impartial, as they are neither Turk nor Bulgarian in language or religion, and both parties treat them as friends. She said there was evidently no ill-feeling towards the two Turks when they arrived, as the Bulgarians had given them coffee in her house

As Mr. Baring talked to this woman, I presume he will have obtained the facts from her very much as I give them.

There was not, so far as we can learn, any sufficient reason for killing these two Turks. It is true that they were Bashi-Bazouks, and that several villages had already been burnt by the Bashi-Bazouks, that they had come with what could only be regarded as a threatening message, but this was no excuse for killing them. It has been impossible to learn under exactly what circumstances they were killed, as it was not done in the village, and we do not know whether it occurred in a fight, or whether it was done in cold blood. What seems probable, however, is that they were asked to deliver up their arms, that they refused, and that they were then fired upon and killed. The villagers appeared to think they were simply carrying out the instructions of Aziz Pacha, who told them to allow nobody to come to their village; for it was after killing these two Bashi-Bazouks that they sent the third message to him asking for his protection, and informing him what they had done. But the Turks say that the messenger only delivered a part of the message, and said nothing about the killing of the two Bashi-Bazouks, and this is why he was arrested a day or two later, when the truth was known, for he had remained in Philippopolis and never returned to the village. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the villagers sent the message, for they made no secret of killing the two Bashi-Bazouks, and do not now. In the meantime the villagers, having received no answer to their third appeal for protection, and justly fearing the vengeance of the Bashi-Bazouks, of whose ravages in other villages they were receiving daily reports, began to prepare for defence. Some of them, however, decided to fly to Philippopolis and the other villages, and did so, leaving all their property behind. The rest determined to defend themselves to the last. They collected provisions for several days in one of the churches on a little eminence overlooking the town, a place very well suited for defence, as it was in a commanding position and surrounded by a good heavy stone wall. They made loopholes in this wall, put several barrels of water in the church, and made ready for a siege. It will be observed that they never went out of their own village, nor made the slightest attempt to molest their Mussulman neighbours. Finally, on Tuesday morning, the 29th of April (old style), corresponding to our May 11th, the

day before the massacre of Batak, the Bashi-Bazouks were reported to be coming from the direction of Ustuna. Everybody—women and children as well as men—immediately abandoned their houses and took refuge in the church. But some, whose courage failed them at the last moment, determined to go out and surrender. They did so, and after having given up their arms, were massacred. This did not, however, encourage the others to follow their example, and they resolved all the more sternly to resist to the last.

Among those who went out of the village at this time was a Frenchman, engaged in some commercial enterprise in Philippopolis, who, hearing of the troubles, had come home the day before in search of another Frenchman, a comrade who had been absent some days, and to whom he was afraid something had happened. He went with a number of the villagers to meet the Bashi-Bazouks, was received by Achmet-Aga, to whom he explained his business, as he spoke Turkish very well, at the same time telling him he was a Frenchman. There was in fact no need of an explanation, as he was well known all over the country. He was retained a prisoner for a while, and then killed, probably because they thought he had money about him. The comrade he was in search of had been already seized and killed before. The French Consul, having established the facts, has made a complaint, and the French Government has probably by this time made a demand for the payment of an indemnity to the families of the two men. This is an important fact bearing upon the affair of Perustitza, which cannot be overlooked, for it shows the murderous spirit which actuated the Bashi-Bazouks. Many of the people who had not sufficient confidence in the goodness of the Turks to go and surrender, and who nevertheless were not disposed to take their chances in the church, fled to the fields, and were pursued by the Bashi-Bazouks and killed wherever overtaken. Having thus terminated their connection with the people who fell into their hands, they proceeded to pillage the abandoned houses, to which they afterwards applied the match. They did not make any direct attack upon the church, further than firing upon it from a safe distance. They were brave enough when it was a question of fighting women and children, but as soon as they found armed men before them they were by no means so anxious to try their sabres.

During Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday they amused and enriched themselves by pillaging and burning the villages, occasionally firing at the people in the church at long range, while the poor villagers remained in the churchyard all this time and watched their burning houses with despairing eyes. They could do nothing. There does not seem to have been more than two hundred of them armed, while the Bashi-Bazouks numbered a thousand. I have talked with an Armenian girl, the daughter of the woman above referred to, who remained in the church throughout the siege. The story she tells is a most curious and interesting one. Her father and mother being Armenians thought they could risk leaving the village, and went to meet the Bashi-Bazouks with the others who went out to surrender. Their nationality and their poverty saved them, for they were not harmed. But they had not chosen to take their daughter with them, because, as she said, they feared she would be outraged if she fell into the hands of the Bashi-Bazouks, and they preferred to leave her behind with the people in the church, to take her chance of life and death in the impending fight. She says the women and children were all put in the church, which was as full as it would hold, and that the men remained outside the churchyard, sheltered behind the wall, watching the movements of the enemy, and occasionally firing through the loopholes when the occasion offered. She said the men showed themselves very cool and brave at this time, and did not seem to be in the least afraid of being able to make good their defence against the Bashi-Bazouks. There was nobody in particular who seemed to command them, or who appeared to direct the operations, but they gave out rations, posted sentries at night, and kept up a very bold front from Tuesday until Thursday. She relates a most curious fact with regard to the girls of the village. It was decided as soon as the people had assembled in the church, that all the girls over ten should be dressed in boys' clothes, so that in case the worst came to the worst they might have a better chance of escaping the brutality of the Bashi-Bazouks. Nearly all the young girls put on a suit of their brothers' clothing, cut off their long hair, and did their best to make-up as boys. She says they offered her a suit, but she was ashamed to put it on, and had gone through the siege in her own apparel. She says that these girls showed themselves very brave, and that many of them would have been

glad to handle a gun had there been any for them. But even the men were not all armed, and there were, of course, no weapons to spare for the women.

The reader will have much satisfaction in learning that such of these brave girls as escaped death during the siege likewise escaped outrage. Many of them were killed, as wherever they showed themselves they were taken for men and ruthlessly fired upon, but those who remained alive escaped dishonour, and among the crowd of three or four hundred people who gathered around us when we arrived in the village I saw many a bright pair of eyes that met our gaze as proudly and saucily as ever, in spite of the missing tresses. Many women were outraged here as elsewhere, but they were principally those who had given themselves up in the beginning, or had tried to escape into the fields on the approach of the Bashi-Bazouks. The Armenian girl describes the nights passed in the church here as something fearful. The continued alarm, the apprehensions of a night attack, the crying of children, the weeping and mourning of the women watching their burning homes and dreading what was yet to come, the firing and shouting, the crackling flames that lit up the night and rolled off great volumes of smoke which hung over them, and threw back the glare from on high, so that the people in the church could see to read their prayers, made up a scene of terror which, told in the energetic, interjectional, excited language of this peasant girl, was full of a thrilling interest. They were so closely packed that it was impossible for them to lie down, and those who slept did so sitting or standing. Indeed there was little inclination to sleep except among the children, the excitement and terror were too great. This continued until Thursday afternoon. Then there came a change; Achmet-Aga, who commanded the Bashi-Bazouks, had sent to Philippopolis to say that the village had risen in revolt, and that he was attacking it. These people would not come quietly out, deliver up their arms and be slaughtered as they had done at Batak. They were therefore insurgents, and must be dealt with accordingly. The fact is that this was a revolt of the Bashi-Bazouks, and not of the Christians, and in any other country in the world but Turkey it would have been regarded as such. Aziz Pacha, who was so friendly to the Bulgarians that he has since been removed, and who had paid no heed to the repeated demands of the people for protection, now that

they were attacked as they had foreseen they would be, instead of going to protect them, marched against them at the head of regular troops and a battery of artillery.

He arrived at the village on Thursday afternoon, and without summoning the place to surrender, opened a bombardment. The first intimation the people had of his presence was the roar of his cannon. I know the Turks assert that he sent a summons to them to surrender before opening fire. This, however, the villagers deny stoutly; and as the Turks themselves admit that the village had sent to Aziz Pacha three times demanding his protection, it does not seem probable; it is altogether past belief to suppose that they would have refused to surrender when he arrived at the head of regular troops. I know that Mr. Guarracino tried hard to get evidence to show that Aziz Pacha sent them a summons to surrender, and to show that they refused. I am convinced that he will have obtained no trustworthy evidence to confirm these assertions, because the facts that are acknowledged by the Turks themselves are against it. These facts are—first, that as soon as the artillery opened upon them the men, who up to that time had maintained a bold front, became panic-stricken and did not offer afterwards the slightest resistance. They immediately abandoned this church, which they had stored with provisions and prepared for defence, which was in an excellent position for defence, and all—men, women, and children—fled.

This one would think sufficient evidence for Mr. Guarracino that there was no resistance offered to the regular troops; but he tried hard to obtain proof that they resisted even after this. They took refuge in another church which was down in a little hollow on the other side of the village. No defence was possible in this church. We all went together—for it happened that Mr. Baring and Mr. Schuyler went to Perustitza the same day—and examined this church; indeed, the investigation was carried on for the most part in the churchyard. It was dominated on all sides by the rising ground around it at easy musket range. The churchyard was surrounded by a wall ten feet high, which indeed offered a shelter, but over which it was impossible for anybody inside to fire. No loopholes had been made in this wall; no scaffolding had been erected inside to enable the people to fire over it. The church was equally incapable of defence. There were only two windows from which shots might

have been fired. These were two round windows high up on the gable ends of the building, which was like all the Bulgarian churches, very low, with the floor sunk below the ground. We could not learn that any scaffolding had been constructed up to these windows to enable people to fire from them. It does not appear that there was a single shot fired from this church. The very fact that the people left a place like the other, capable of defence, and came and took refuge in a slaughter-pen like this, is sufficient evidence to show that they had abandoned the idea of resistance. Mr. Guarracino did not think so. He tried to get the people to say that Aziz Pacha had sent them a summons to surrender; that they had fired on the bearer of the summons, and continued the fight; and when they refused to admit this, he bullied and browbeat them, called them insurgents, and told them they had brought it on themselves. In addition to this, there was the evidence of the Armenian girl, who said that the majority of the men escaped over the walls the next night after coming here, and fled into the country, leaving only about fifty or sixty men in the place, with the women and children—very good proof that no defence was intended against the regular troops, and none really offered.

Now, what did Aziz Pacha do when the people fled here for shelter from his artillery? There is no evidence to show that he sent them a summons to surrender even then, for if he had done so they would have surrendered. He simply changed the position of his artillery, and on Friday morning opened upon this church as he had done on the other. When we were there the ground of the churchyard was ploughed up with shells, and there were marks where the shells had struck all over the walls of the church. The Armenian girl said that here, as before, the women and children were put in the church, and that it was packed so full that they could not lie down nor even sit. She said that three shells came into the church through the round windows in the gable ends and exploded among this packed mass of women and children. We ourselves saw the marks of two shells within a foot of one of these windows, showing that it had been the target aimed at. The people of the village said that five had come in, two at one end and three at the other. It may be that this girl was fainting when the two others came in, and that she did not know it, or it may be that only three really came in. But three are enough. Those who have seen

it know the effect of a shell exploding in the open air among armed, stern-faced men, who, carried away by the excitement of battle, scarcely heed it. But the effect of a shell coming in through one of these high gable windows, with its terrific thunder, and exploding among this mass of shrieking women and children—there were only women and children in the church—is beyond the power of imagination to conceive.

It is difficult to find out how the siege ended, or to get anything like a clear account of what took place on Saturday morning. The villagers say that all day Friday the Turks were around the place, and that everybody who showed himself at the gate was immediately cut down by the Bashi-Bazouks, who were waiting and watching outside, without daring to enter—for they are not brave, these Bashi-Bazouks. They do not care to attack people until they have, by fair promises, obtained their arms, and they simply stayed outside and waited for the people to come out one by one. On Saturday morning, however, it seems they were withdrawn, and replaced by regular troops.

The Armenian girl says that on Saturday morning she looked out of the church and saw the gate of the churchyard slightly open, with a soldier standing before it. She immediately ran out to him and begged him not to kill her. He told her not to be afraid, and to call to the others to come out, and that they would not be harmed. This she did, and they all followed her out, altogether about two hundred and fifty or three hundred people, principally women and children. They were conducted before Aziz Pacha, who was really only waiting to receive them with open arms. He praised the Armenian girl for having taken the lead and induced the others to follow, and he told them it was all their own perversity that they had not come out and surrendered sooner. He had only been waiting for this step on their part to raise the siege and stop the bombardment. He was astonished at the stubbornness of these women and children, who would insist upon being bombarded and shelled in this way, when all they had to do was to come out and throw themselves upon his merey. Really, the perversity of some people is beyond all calculation. It does not appear that anybody was killed after this surrender, and the Armenian girl says that none of the women who surrendered at this time were maltreated or violated. This is probably the reason why the

Turks demanded the removal of Aziz Pacha, as being too friendly to the Bulgarians, and made such efforts against him that they finally obtained his recall. As to the number of people killed here it is very difficult to form an estimate. There are no trustworthy census statistics. Each village makes up its own returns; they always understate the population, the number of houses, and families, in order to avoid increasing taxes, so that it is almost impossible to ascertain the exact population of any place before the massacres. The returns for this village, as I have already stated, showed the number of houses to have been three hundred and fifty, which at the very moderate calculation of six to the house would give a population of over two thousand. It would probably be found to have been somewhere between that and twenty-five hundred. The people estimate the number of those remaining at one thousand, which would show that between one thousand and fifteen hundred people had been killed here. Mr. Baring and Mr. Schuyler both, I believe, put it at a thousand.

BUCHAREST, *August* 22.

I have just arrived here after a few weeks' trip through Bulgaria, in company a part of the time with Mr. Schuyler, whom I left pursuing his investigations in the Balkans. Before continuing the recital of what we saw and heard, I wish to exchange a few remarks with Mr. Disraeli on the subject of "exaggerations;" to offer a few observations on the conduct of Sir Henry Elliot, and to give a short account of the present condition of the country.

I see that in Mr. Disraeli's last speech he still reiterates his assertion, that the accounts of these atrocities here have been grossly exaggerated, because Mr. Baring had not found any evidence that human heads had been carted through the streets of Philippopolis, nor any to show that forty young girls had been burnt alive at Novi-Selo. With regard to the first point, it strikes me as somewhat immaterial whether the heads were carted through the streets or not, once you admit, as Mr. Baring does, that the people who owned them had been killed. But at the time that Mr. Baring sent that telegram which Mr. Disraeli read with such a triumphant air, he had not yet been

to Tamboli. Had he been, and had he talked to the Italian Consul at Burgas, who has a commercial establishment at Tamboli, he would probably not have sent that telegram. For the Italian Consul would have told him, and probably has told him ere this, that sackfulls of heads were emptied in the street before his door. There was a steep descent there, leading down to the little river that runs through the town, and the heads rolled down this little hill, tumbling over each other in horrid confusion, as though trying to escape from the dogs that immediately pounced upon them. Exaggeration, indeed, Mr. Disraeli! It is very true that forty young girls were not burnt alive at Novi-Selo. This occurred at Batak, and there were not 40, but 200 girls, women, and children burnt alive.

The people who appear to be principally to blame in this business, are the newspaper correspondents. The great crime in the eyes of Mr. Disraeli and Sir Henry Elliot was not to have killed many thousands of innocent people, but to have said there were 30,000 killed when there were only 25,000. The grievous fault was not the slaughter of a thousand little children, but to have written there were a thousand killed, when in reality there were only nine hundred and ninety-nine. It was not much matter to have cut off the heads of a great many people; but to have said that these heads were carried through the streets of Philippopolis, when, in reality, they were carried in bags and rolled down a street before the house of the Italian Consul in a very different place, is a kind of crime that Mr Disraeli and Sir Henry Elliot cannot easily forgive.

It was on Friday that these shells were thrown, after the greater part of the men had run away. Many of these men who escaped on Thursday night were caught next day in the country and killed. The people still left in the church and churchyard were in despair. There were less than a hundred men, and there were four or five hundred women and children. They had already sent three or four old men and women to Aziz Pacha to ask for peace, and these had never returned. They had probably been killed by the Bashi-Bazouks before reaching the Pacha, for I am willing to give him the credit, if any credit there be in the supposition, that these messengers never reached him. It is enough that he should, after these people had appealed to him three times for protection, without asking them to submit, without waiting to hear what they had

to say in their defence, have bombarded the place and shelled this churchful of women and children. It is enough that he should have done this, that he should have gone on shelling these miserable beings after they had fled to this slaughter-pen and ceased the slightest effort at resistance, and it is scarcely worth our while to try to prove, as we might do, that he did refuse to listen, or would have refused to listen, to any prayers for mercy that might have reached him through the lines of Bashi-Bazouks. Mr. Guarracino made a great point of this fact, and he and his Turkish *protégés* are welcome to all the credit that may be derived from it. They take to themselves as much praise for the fact that these messengers never arrived as though they had never been sent, and as though the Turkish commander were not directly responsible for their non-arrival. We shall see presently how he protected the messengers who did reach him.

But the poor people determined to make one more effort to obtain a cessation of the firing before completely abandoning themselves to despair, and two of the richest women of the village volunteered to go and try to reach the Turkish general. The Armenian girl tells how they tried to arrange their dresses to look their best, and how they put on whatever poor articles of jewellery they had about them in order to look as rich and imposing as possible. The poor women actually hoped to overawe the Bashi-Bazouks by their magnificence. Perhaps their calculations were not altogether wrong, for they really succeeded in reaching the Turkish general. He instantly promised them that if the people would come out of the church and surrender they should not be harmed, and he sent back an old man who had been made prisoner to accompany them. But he does not seem to have given them a guard or escort of any kind. On the way back the two women were seized by the Bashi-Bazouks, stripped of their jewels and clothing, violated, and then killed. The old man continued his way, and delivered his message; but as he at the same time told them what had happened to the two women, the people in the church did not feel encouraged to come out, and they remained there all Friday night. Aziz Pacha threw several more shells at the church; the Bashi-Bazouks from the surrounding slopes kept up a fire of small arms, to which no answer was made. The condition of the people in the church was now fearful in the extreme. They

had been besieged for four days. The dead bodies of those who had been killed were still lying around them unburied; the wounded were groaning in the agony of undressed or improperly dressed wounds, for there was of course no doctor among them, and they were all besmeared with blood of their own or their slaughtered companions that had clotted and grown hard, and they were filthy, loathsome, and haggard as spectres. And still the small arms of the Bashi-Bazouks played upon the church from the low hills around, and the shells continued ploughing up the churchyard, or crashing against the walls.

The story of the Armenian girl regarding the events of Friday and Saturday is strangely incoherent and wild, and what she relates is simply incredible. I can only account for this part of her story on the supposition that she had by this time gone partially or quite mad. She relates that on Friday after the murder of the two women above related, the men remaining in the churchyard determined, upon the failure of this last attempt at negotiation, to kill themselves. She says that some of them were on the point of putting this resolution into effect when their wives interposed and begged to be killed likewise, whereupon ensued a scene of horror that we might well believe the coinage of this girl's own mad brain were a part of the story not corroborated by all the villagers. It seems that two of these men actually carried their resolution into effect. Two of them, after weeping, moaning, tearing their hair, beating their heads against the wall, actually killed their wives and children, and then killed themselves. This girl relates that these women asked to be killed, that they knelt down, gathered their little ones to their arms, weeping, sobbing, praying, while the husband and father shot or stabbed them one after the other. The girl's story with regard to these two is corroborated by the rest of the villagers, but she goes much further. She asserted, and persisted in the assertion, throughout a series of sharp cross-questions, that there were many more who killed themselves, or who were killed in this way; that fifty or sixty men killed their wives and children; that many young girls and married women, whose husbands had been killed or who had escaped on Thursday night, came forward and asked to be killed likewise, to avoid falling into the hands of the Bashi-Bazouks; and that their request was complied with. She thinks there were

fully two hundred people killed in this way. She says that they even asked her if she wished to be killed likewise, and that she declined.

The story is so thoroughly in keeping with the sad despondent character of the Sclaves that I should be inclined to believe it, were it not that it lacks confirmation. The truth seems to be that there were only these two, one of whom had two children, and the other, three. I can only account for this girl's story on the supposition that after four nights passed in this manner, nearly without sleep, surrounded by horrors, she had gone quite mad, and was subject to hallucinations. Awaking probably from a fainting fit, or a long state of insensibility, she beheld these two men, her near neighbours, killing their wives and little ones. She looked about her and saw the ground strewed with dead bodies lying in their blood. She says the floor of the church was ankle deep with blood, and she instantly jumped to the conclusion that all these people had been killed in the same way. But two are enough. That even two men should have decided to kill their wives and little ones, to plunge a knife, to fire a bullet, into the weak tender little beings that looked to them for love and protection, shows to what a state of despair the people were reduced by the senseless conduct of the Turkish commander. And Mr. Guarracino insisted that this all happened to them because they refused to surrender! The perversity of these people was such that he could not account for it. The Armenian girl says that at one time she wanted to be killed, and tried to go where the bullets could reach her, but the other women held her back. There was no romance about this girl. She was a mere peasant girl, with a dull, heavy, phlegmatic face, that was as far removed from the poetic and romantic as it is possible to imagine. I should have thought that nothing short of physical torture would have driven her to think of death as a relief.

Sir Henry Elliot is greatly to blame for his conduct throughout this whole business. His system of dealing with the Turks has been from the beginning radically foolish and wrong, considered even from his own point of view. If the English Ambassador at Constantinople is to be the friend and champion of the Turk, he should, one would think, give friendly advice, reprove, restrain, reprimand, and prevent the Sublime Porte from committing sublime acts of folly. It is only in this

way that the Turkish power can be maintained for even a short time longer in Europe. Sir Henry's policy has been diametrically opposed to this. He has always acted upon the absurd principle that, as Turkey is a free and independent Power, the Turkish Government must never be interfered with or restrained, no matter what mad project it may have in view. It must be encouraged, on the contrary, to carry out any act of folly, simply to show that it is free and independent. Owing to this absurd desire always to support the Turks, to aid and abet them in everything, to shut his eyes to their faults, and to consider everything said against them as mere Russian slanders, he is in a measure responsible for the Bulgarian massacres. He is to blame for not preventing the calling out of the Bashi-Bazouks, as a friend to Turkey should have done if necessary.

He is to blame for pretending not to believe the reports of the massacres, when they were pouring in upon him from all sides, and for not reporting to his Government. He had the most trustworthy evidence that these massacres were occurring daily. The Rev. Dr. Long, of Robert College, showed him a mass of letters he had received from the burnt districts, and he returned them, saying he could not act upon such information, because it was not official. By official information he meant, I presume, information received from the Turkish authorities. It is generally supposed that ambassadors and diplomatists prefer unofficial and private information when it is trustworthy to that received from official or officious sources. It is popularly believed that it is part of the business of an ambassador to keep his Government supplied with important information and facts, no matter from what source obtained; but Sir Henry Elliot understands his duties in a different way.

His duty was to defend the Turks through thick and thin, and to shut his eyes to their atrocities; and that is what he did. But there were still other sources of information. The French, German, Austrian, Greek, and Russian Consuls made accurate weekly reports of everything that happened, which Sir Henry might have seen—which, for anything I know to the contrary, he did see. There were the reports of the German railway officials living in the country in sight of the burning villages, near enough to smell the rotting bodies, whose reports he might likewise have seen. But Sir Henry believes the Greek, Austrian, German, and Russian Consuls, and the German

railway officials, and the American missionaries are all in the pay of Russia. Their reports were, therefore, utterly worthless. He even had a report or two from Mr. Dupuis, Consul at Adrianople, which, for unexplained reasons, he looks upon as exaggerated; and still he did not inform his Government. He did not even offer to investigate to see whether there might not be after all some grains of truth in all these reports. He sent his dragoman to the Porte, to inquire into the matter, and the dragoman came back with the assurance that the Turks were as gentle as sucking doves in their dealings with the Bulgarians, and that the latter were everywhere slaughtering the unresisting Mohammedans. And Sir Henry Elliot smiled benignantly, and said, "I knew it," and made no report. Sir Henry is to blame for asserting in the face of the mass of evidence that he had before him, that the reports of the newspapers were exaggerated. He is much to blame for making, without the slightest evidence, without a shadow of proof, the reckless, the shameless assertion that the Bulgarians had committed atrocities equal in number and heinousness to those of the Turks. And now, if Sir Henry Elliot, instead of expressing his indignation at these acts of atrocity in the severest terms he can command, can still go on talking about exaggerations with the bones of thousands of helpless women, of poor hapless little children, whitening the fields of Bulgaria, and crying aloud to Heaven for pity, he is much, very much, to blame. He is unworthy to be the Ambassador of a Christian Queen, the representative at the Porte, or anywhere else, of a great-hearted and generous people.

I see that Mr. Disraeli read in Parliament a telegram from Mr. Baring stating that he thought the number of villages burnt in the whole of Bulgaria was about sixty, and the number of people killed 12,000. I do not know, of course, how Mr. Baring made this statement, nor whether he gave it as a whole or a partial statement. But as he, at the time of making this report, had only visited the district of Philippopolis, and could have had very little information regarding what had happened north of the Balkans, I am inclined to think that what he gave as a partial statement for the district of Philippopolis alone, Mr. Disraeli gave the world as a complete statement for the whole of Bulgaria. This may not have been done intentionally, but I am of the opinion that it will be found to have been so.

Mr. Schuyler, when pursuing his investigations in the district of Philippopolis, estimated the number of people killed in that district alone at from twelve to fifteen thousand, and the number of villages burnt at from sixty to seventy. Since then, during his investigations north of the Balkans, he has obtained information that at least forty more villages have been burnt there, accompanied by the same acts of atrocity as south of the Balkans. I do not know what will be his estimate of the number of people killed there, and for my own part shall not hazard the statement of my own opinion, but I think I am safe in saying that Mr. Disraeli, unintentionally of course, gave to the world a partial statement as a complete one, and then, as usual, made assertions founded on this incomplete statement about the exaggerations of correspondents.

The past is past and beyond recall. The dead are dead, and without the pale of human aid and succour, as they are beyond the reach of sorrow and suffering. Turkish ferocity has done its worst for them, and they are perhaps not the most unfortunate to have escaped even at this cost. It is of the living we have now to think, and their condition is lamentable. There is no security for life or property in Bulgaria. The Turkish population is armed; the Christians have been disarmed, and the former do as they please. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, to restrain them, but their own consciences, and what a restraining power that is can be inferred from the horrors of Batak. The Bulgarians are unresistingly robbed and plundered daily by their Mussulman neighbours. They are forced to work for them without pay. They are in some places obliged to pay for the permission to gather their own harvests. Their cattle and horses are taken from them. If they complain, or make the slightest show of resistance, they are beaten and sabred. In addition to this, their women are seized and outraged in the most flagrant and open way. When we were at Kritchina we saw a number of people from the neighbouring village of Tchanaktchi, who had come there to beg or borrow money to enable them to rebuy their cattle from the Turks, who offered to restore them if they would pay a certain sum on each head. The poor people had not obtained any money then, and there did not seem to be much likelihood of their doing so. In another village near there, whose name I have forgotten, but which is known to Mr. Schuyler and Mr. Baring, the people

were only allowed to get in their harvests upon condition that half of the whole crop should be given to their Turkish neighbours. This was within ten miles of Philippopolis. At Perustitsa, which is still closer, the people who escaped the massacre and the pillage, after the burning of their houses, had still some cattle left in the fields. These were seized by the Turks of the neighbouring village of Ustuna, who still refused to restore them when we were there. After we left, fearing we might go to the governor and insist upon justice being done, they drove the cattle off into a distant part of the country and sold them. While Mr. Schuyler was at Avrat-Alan some Turks from a neighbouring village seized six horses at work in the fields not more than a mile away, and took them off. We spoke to the Mudir of Avrat-Alan about this, but he said he could do nothing. He had no authority over the Turks of the village where the horses had been taken, and if he sent his zaptiehs there they would be beaten and sent back. At Otluk-kui a man presented himself to us with a fresh sabre cut in his head. He had discovered where his cattle were, and had gone with an order from the Mudir authorising him to take them, and this was the result of his attempt. On the way from Klissura to Avrat-Alan we met three Turks driving about thirty head of cattle, which they offered to one of our servants for less than half price, and which had evidently been stolen. At Otluk-kui a woman among many others came to us, and said that only two days before she had been working in the fields near the village with a man and a boy, her neighbours, when the Turks came, seized and bound the man, and then all three violated her. They were Turks from the next village, and the neighbour who was working with her at the time knew them very well. At Philippopolis even two men and a boy came to Mr. Schuyler with fresh sabre cuts received only a few days before. One of these had eight gashes in his head and different parts of his body, At Slievena more people came to us with fresh sabre cuts, and at Turnova even the boy who brought us our dinner was seized and beaten by the zaptiehs, who of course did not know he was in our employ.

The night we were in Tamboli a boy was killed by some Turks under circumstances which we had no time to investigate. People came to us from Streletia, a burnt village, where the people had nothing left, and said not a day passed but some

women were violated by the Turks. Two men came to us from Mishka with the same story, that there was not a day that some act of violence was not committed, especially towards the women. Near Tatar Bazardjik we met a dozen men tied together in twos, under the guard of three or four zaptiehs, who were conducting them to Tatar Bazardjik, and at the latter place Mr. Schuyler obtained convincing proof that one Ali Bey, who had some sort of unrecognised occult authority in the place, arrests men of the well-to-do class upon a charge of having belonged to the Insurrectionary Committee, puts them in prison, and maltreats them in various ways until they are glad to ransom themselves at the rate of from fifteen to fifty pounds apiece. There were three beys in and about Tatar Bazardjik who were engaged in this profitable occupation, one of whom was Tassun Bey, the person who destroyed Klissura and who accompanied Mr. Baring when he went to that place. The same thing occurs at Sofia on a much larger scale. There the business is taken in hand by the Kaimakam, who often exacts as much as £500 ransom. At Tamboli the people are completely in the power of three or four beys, or Turkish notables, who virtually govern the place, and in whose presence the Kaimakam does not pretend to any authority. In our presence they gave orders which it was the business of the Kaimakam to give without even consulting him, and he stood by, silent and obsequious, without offering an observation. The people there were held in such a state of terrorism by these beys that very few dared to come to us, and those only after night, in the most secret manner.

If you speak to the authorities about the acts of lawlessness that are committed every day within their own jurisdiction, they will either deny that they have occurred at all, and tell you that the victims are liars, or they will avow flatly and openly that they are as powerless to redress these grievances as to prevent their recurrence. Or they will ask why these people come to us and complain instead of going to the proper authorities. The answer is simple. They do go and complain where they dare, but in most cases they are afraid. They know it would be not only useless but dangerous. What would be the good, for instance, of making a complaint against Galib Bey, of Tamboli, before the above-mentioned Kaimakam? The Kaimakam seems to be nearly as much afraid of Galib Bey as

the people are. In addition to all this, the people are kept in a state of terror by threats of more massacres, which are freely made by the Turks. Everywhere all over the country the people are in constant dread of the recurrence of the scenes that took place at Batak, Otluk-kui, and Bazardjik—a dread which is only too well justified by the conduct of the Turks. Then, besides this state of terrorism, which is kept up by continual acts of violence, there are thousands of people who have escaped from the massacres with their lives only, who have been pillaged and robbed, whose houses have been burnt, and who have not a roof to shelter them, nor bread for the morrow. The Turkish authorities, in spite of reiterated assurances that help was to be distributed, that the cattle were to be restored to their owners, and the burnt villages to be rebuilt, have done absolutely nothing, are doing nothing, and will do nothing. Take the village of Klissura, for instance, which was destroyed by Tassun Bey, and which was a very flourishing little place. There were 700 houses here, not one of which was left standing. The Mudir told us that there were not more than fifty families in a condition to rebuild their houses, or any substitutes for houses even, as they had absolutely no means to work with. They did not know what the people would do when winter came. The people here were principally engaged in the cultivation of the rose and the manufacture of attar of roses. There were from 130 to 150 small manufactories, with about 500 retorts, or copper boilers, for distilling the rose leaves. These retorts, worth each about £10, represented an aggregate capital of £5,000, all of which, together with everything of the least value, were carried off by their Turkish neighbours, under the command of the ubiquitous Tassum Bey. Not only did they carry off the furniture, and drive away their cattle, but they even carted off the tiles from the roofs; and after the village was reduced to ashes, they raked among the cinders for iron and nails, so thoroughly and systematically was the work of pillaging conducted.

In spite of repeated promises, neither the retorts nor the cattle have been restored. The Mutle-Serif, of Philippopolis, told Mr. Schuyler and Mr. Baring that a great many of the lost cattle from all over the country had been assembled at Philippopolis, and that the orders had been sent for the people to come in to identify their own and take them. A very just and

equitable arrangement. You had only to come—perhaps fifty, perhaps a hundred miles, and identify your eattle, prove they were yours to the satisfaetion of the Turks, and then you could have them. Mr. Sehuyler and Mr. Baring were delighted with the arrangement, it seemed so simple and so easy. I do not know but what Mr. Baring is still eonvineed of its beauty and efficaey. Mr. Sehuyler, who has a faculty for finding out hidden things, found, however, that striet orders had been issued that nobody be allowed to leave his village without a speeial passport. The people were quite free to eome to Philippopolis and elaim their eattle—nobody could be freer—only they must do it without leaving their own villages! Nothing eould better illustrate Turkish methods of meeting European demands for justiee and reform. At Klissura the people were not allowed to leave the crumbling ruins of their houses. They were not allowed to go and work for the people of other villages, to beg, to ask for help. They were not even allowed to pay a visit to a friend or neighbour in the next village. The Mudir found this a most oppressive and absurd regulation.. Many of the people here, besides being oecupied with the manufaeture of attar of roses, engaged in trade in a small way, and travelled during the winter as far as Constantinople, and even into Asia Minor. Had they been allowed to leave the village they might have begun with their eredit, and their aptitude for trading, to rebuild their ruined fortunes and homes. Instead of whieh they were obliged to remain doing nothing—rapidly consuming what they had gathered of the harvest before it was spoiled, with the prospeet of starvation and eold staring them in the face with the ineoming winter. The Mudir told us he had written three times for permission to allow those of the people who found it advantageous to leave the village to do so. He had received no answer. He had written thriee for authority to seize a number of eattle belonging to the village, that he knew to be in a neighbouring Turkish village, and he had reeeived no answer. When Mr. Sehuyler asked the Mutle-Serif, of Philippopolis, about this, he impudently asserted that there was no order forbidding the people to leave the village, and that the Mudir had full powers to seize eattle wherever he found them. Here in Klissura, as at Batak, several children and young girls had been carried off to the neighbouring Turkish villages and "eonverted," as the term is, to Mohammedanism. The parents of these ehildren and

girls had up to this time, that is after three months, been unable to get them back, and were in despair. There were many cases of the same kind at Tatar Bazardjik and Philippopolis. I can now, I think, form a very good idea of the kind of "conversion" that was worked on the young girl at Salonica, which resulted in the death of the German and French Consuls.

When we left Klissura two or three hundred miserable, haggard women, mostly with children in their arms, ran after us for a mile, crying and wailing in very despair at our having come and gone without bringing them any relief, or wrought any change in their miserable condition. It was the same at Otluk-kui. When we left, three or four hundred people set up a perfect wail of despair, saying that after we were gone they would be worse maltreated than ever. The state of things which I have described as existing in Otluk-kui, Batak, and Klissura is the same in more than a hundred Bulgarian villages. The misery is too fearful to think of with calmness. I am still under the impression of what I saw there. The cries and heart-broken sobs and lamentations of these miserable women and children are still ringing in my ears; their wretched, haggard, despairing faces are still before my eyes; they follow me day and night wherever I go, sleeping or waking, haunting me like so many spectres. Alas! they will soon be spectres indeed, unless something is done for them. Disease, hunger, famine, and cold will soon do for them what the sabre left undone.

To sum up. The country is in a state of complete anarchy. The Turkish authorities fail in the two great functions of government—the administration of justice and the maintenance of order. They flatly refuse to protect the Christian population against the Mohammedans, or frankly avow their inability to do so. The Kaimakams and Mudirs say their zaptiehs cannot execute their behests because the Turks everywhere resist them. The Mutle-Serif of Philippopolis says he can do nothing without cavalry to quell the Mussulman population. This may be only a pretext or it may be the truth; but I do not believe he would use cavalry, if he had it, to protect the Christians. The Turkish authorities will do nothing. They will, if possible, prevent anything from being done. At Philippopolis the people wished to get up a subscription for the sufferers. The Mutle-Serif refused permission, saying the Government was giving them all the help that was required. That is none at all. There is no counting,

no calculating with Turkish perversity; no foreseeing what it will or will not do. Why he should refuse to allow a subscription for these starving women and children nobody but a Turk could tell. Unless Europe takes the matter in hand, nothing will be done for these poor people. Unless the Christian Powers that hypocritically took these people under their protection, in order to turn them over bound hand and foot to the tender mercies of these barbarian Turks, now come forward and do something, these wretched women and children must die of disease, cold, and famine. Mr. Schuyler, who when he left Paris some three months ago was strongly Turkophile in his leanings, has been so deeply impressed by what he has witnessed here, the wide-spread ruin and desolation, the misery which is augmenting day by day, that he has determined, as I have already telegraphed you, to make an effort to bring about a foreign intervention, and the appointment of a Commission for the protection of the people. He will propose that this Commission see that the following measures are carried out:—First, the hanging of Achmet-Aga, the destroyer of Batak; of another Achmet-Aga, equally infamous, who distinguished himself at Perustitza; of Chefket Pacha, who has been promoted to a position in the palace of the Sultan; and of Tassum Bey, to whom I have had occasion to refer several times; second, the disarming of the Mussulman population; third, the rebuilding of the burned villages, and the indemnification of the people for their losses, at the expense of the Government.

There is no doubt that if these measures be not executed without delay there is imminent danger of another Mussulman rising any day that will far surpass anything that has yet happened. In case the Turkish arms should meet with a reverse in Servia, nobody doubts but there would be a general rising of the Mussulman population against the Christians, who are now without arms. I heard Mr. Guaraccino and Mr. Baring both remark that the Bulgarians ought to pray with heart and soul for the success of the Turkish arms, for that in case of defeat the whole Bulgarian population would be swept out of existence. Such an avowal from Mr. Guaraccino speaks volumes as to the present condition of the Bulgarians. Will Mr. Schuyler succeed in having these measures carried out? I do not think it. The comfortable old gentlemen who are directing the destinies of Europe are too well fed to care for these wretched women and

children, who are starving to death; they are too well housed themselves to think of weak, sickly little babes sleeping on the ground, with no roof to shelter them from the dews and the rains of Heaven. There is no danger of their houses being burnt over their heads; there is no danger of their wives and daughters being violated by bands of ruffians; there is no danger of their little ones dying of starvation. They can take an elevated and statesmanlike view of these miserable starving women and children, and they will not oppose the appointment of a Commission to protect them.

PHILIPPOPOLIS, *August* 16.

We arrived in Otluk-kui late at night, and had some difficulty in finding a house to put up at, as everybody had gone to bed. Finally, however, we met a man who conducted us to the house where Mr. Baring had stopped only the night before, and here we received a very hearty welcome. The people of the house had, however, very little to offer us in the way of sleeping accommodation, as they had been pillaged, and everything of the slightest value taken, even to the cooking utensils. I have already described what occurred at Otluk-kui, and need only add a few details here that were left out of my previous letter. There were about four hundred houses burnt out of the two thousand in the place, and, from a material point of view, the town suffered less in comparison than the other villages that were, for the most part, completely destroyed. The two churches and the bazaar were burnt, as were the two boys' schools. The girls' school escaped destruction only because it had not been pointed out to the incendiaries.

But the burning of schools and churches, and even of private dwellings, are acts which sink into comparative insignificance, and seem hardly worth mentioning in the presence of the fearful atrocities against humanity that were committed here. The story of the insurrection, in spite of its mournful character, is not without an amusing episode or two. There was a Jew pedler here when the affair broke out, who came to us and gave us an account of what had befallen him. The insurgents, suspecting he might go away from the village and relate what was going on, arrested him in order to prevent any such move-

ment, and they finally decided to ensure his silence and secrecy by forcing him to renounce Judaism. He says they put a Bulgarian cap on his head, and gave him the Christian name of "Ghiorghy," or George. It does not appear that they went so far as to baptise him, however; nor does it seem that they placed much confidence in his conversion, for they kept him in prison in a private house, and would not let him leave the village. This fear was not altogether unfounded, as it turned out; for when the Turks arrived and set him at liberty, he went about the town with the Bashi-Bazouks, and pointed out to them the rich people, and the fine houses where they would find the most booty. Apart from the violence they did his feelings in converting him, and giving him the name of "Ghiorghy," he acknowledges that the people were very kind, and gave him plenty to eat and drink during the week he was in their power. He was quite impartial in his relation of what he saw and heard, not seeming to care a fig which side won, and recounting what occurred in the most indifferent and cynical manner. He was a backslider, too, having gone back to Judaism, and he even expressed his willingness to change his religion again in case he found any advantage in doing so, thereby disclosing a want of principle that was shocking to contemplate.

There was nothing wanting to complete the horror of this affair of Otluk-kui. An old woman came to Mr. Schuyler, prostrating herself on the ground, and walking towards him on her knees, saying, "Oh, forgive me, most noble Sir, I am unworthy to appear before you; I am a very great sinner, a very great sinner, a very great sinner, a very great sinner, a very great sinner." There is no telling how long she would have gone on repeating this assertion had we not stopped her and compelled her to rise and tell her story. It was simply fiendish in its grotesqueness. She was a withered old woman, past sixty, with shrivelled face and limbs, with grey hair, and all the marks of age that claim respect and veneration. Well, this old woman was violated in the same room with a number of girls. We could not have believed it had we not heard of many other cases just as bad. It would seem that the devil had taken human form in order to mock, scoff, degrade poor humanity, and drag it through the mud and filth. There was displayed here a diabolical kind of impishness or demoniac mockery of

everything that man holds venerable and holy that was simply superhuman in its devilry.

It should be remembered that this old woman's was no exceptional case, for there does not appear to be a woman in the place, old or young, who escaped outrage. The most curious, and at the same time the most poignant, circumstance connected with these outrages is that these women and girls all, like this old woman, look upon themselves as very great sinners. The chastity of the Bulgarian women is well known, and it is the sin as well as the dishonour which crushes them, a sin for which they will do life-long penance and then not think themselves forgiven. Not one of these young girls ever expects to find a husband: not one but thinks herself unworthy of marriage. Nor do the young men of the place think differently. They will in future go to villages that have not been visited by Bashi-Bazouks to seek their wives.

The Mudir of the place called on us the next morning after our arrival: the same Mudir who so horribly maltreated the young schoolmistress. He was decidedly the most repulsive and filthy-looking brute I ever set eyes upon. Apparently Mr. Schuyler thought the same, for after the exchange of a few words in which there were no compliments, he retired to his room and left the Mudir to be entertained by the rest of us. But he had not done with him by any means, as we soon discovered, for the interview was prolonged though in a somewhat extraordinary manner.

Mr. Schuyler had with him two interpreters. One was a young Bulgarian from Robert College, who spoke the Turkish language in a very polite and distinguished manner, and whom he always employed when he had anything agreeable to say or any compliments to pass with the Turkish authorities; the other was a Greek, by the name of Antonio, employed in the legation, who spoke Turkish in a very harsh and emphatic manner, whom he usually called up when he had anything the reverse of agreeable to say. I was considerably amused now to see Antonio come out from Mr. Schuyler's room, and inform the Mudir, in a severe tone of voice, that the Consul Bashi was very much displeased at the state in which he had found the roads in this Mudirlik, and required to know why they were allowed to remain in that condition. The Mudir was considerably taken aback by this question and the way in which it was

put, but he replied with some trepidation that he had only been Mudir here for two or three months, and must not be held responsible for the condition of the roads. This answer was carried back by Antonio, who a moment later returned with the information that the Consul Bashi had observed that there was much misery existing among the people here, and he could not hear that the Mudir was trying to do anything to relieve it. To this the Mudir replied that they had brought the misery upon themselves and must endure it. Antonio carried this answer back, and returned with the information that the Consul considered it very wicked on the part of these women and little children to have brought it upon themselves, but that he believed his Majesty the Sultan, in his sublime goodness, thought these people had been sufficiently punished for their wickedness already, and wished the misery of the people to be relieved as rapidly as possible, further expressing his belief that the Sultan would now turn his attention to punishing bad Mudirs, of whom there were a great many. The conversation was carried on in this style by means of Antonio for half an hour, at the end of which time the Mudir was informed that the interview was at an end, and he withdrew, considerably overawed by this method of exchanging compliments. We never saw him again, as we did not return his call.

This is the worst Mudir we have seen or heard of. He is in the habit of getting drunk every night, in company with the zaptiehs, and he maltreats and persecutes the inhabitants in every possible way. I have already related how he sent for two women, whose husbands had been killed, to come to his house the nights that Mr. Baring and Mr. Schuyler were in the place. And this is the kind of man to whom is given almost unlimited power over a town of nearly 1,000 inhabitants, with no hope, as the Governor of Philippopolis told us of a better man being found to replace him. This village of Otluk-kui must have been a charming little place before its partial destruction. It is situated in a pretty little valley which is surrounded on all sides by mountains that seem to isolate it from the outside world. The houses, which are very comfortable and solidly constructed, are generally partly surrounded by gardens and fruit trees, whose luxuriant foliage hangs over the walls, and half-hiding the houses themselves give the place a charming freshness, on which the eye would rest with pleasure were it not for the

blackened ruins that greet you on every side, and continually remind you of the horrors that were enacted here. We took horses here to continue our journey to Avrat-Alan, or Kuprish-stitza in Bulgarian, situated a few miles to the north, still higher up in the mountains. The horses were brought to us about one o'clock, and we mounted amongst the crowd of people that had gathered around the door, and rode away, actually putting our fingers to our ears to shut out their mournful cries.

The horseback ride to Avrat-Alan proved to be a delightful change from the jerking and jolting of a Turkish carriage over a Turkish road. As we got up in the mountains the air became delightfully cool and fresh, and the woods which covered a great part of these mountains offered with their thick-set foliage a cool and inviting shade nearly the whole distance, under which we lazily loitered, glad to escape from human sound and suffering, and in no hurry to reach our destination. There was many a sparkling little stream that came leaping out from among the bushes and rocks like a laughing child flying into the arms of its mother; many a grassy little glade where our horses would stop and eat the rich green grass in spite of us, because we had not the moral courage necessary to take the food out of their mouths by spurring them on; and when we finally reached the summit of these mountains—really only the foothills of the Balkans—we looked back, and had such a view over the country below us as is rarely seen. For we had before us all that immense and beautiful plain, the valley of the Maritza, in which is situated Tatar Bazardjik, Philippopolis, and Adrianople, extending miles and miles away to the south, where it was bounded by that spur of the Balkans that sweeps around from the west in a grand and noble curve, and forms the watershed between the Maritza and the Ægean Sea.

A little further on we stopped to lunch in the middle of the forest, by the side of a spring called the "Brigands' Spring." I had observed a while after starting that our party had been augmented by the addition of a young man, riding a very lean horse, which he mounted on a pack-saddle. Upon inquiry, we found that this young man was from Otluk-kui, and was likewise on his way to Avrat-Alan, having joined our party for safety. Antonio, in a long and intimate conversation, drew from him an avowal of the object of his trip, which was no other than to see his sweetheart, who lived at Avrat-Alan,

whom he had not seen for three months—that is, since the troubles began. The poor fellow was extremely grateful for the permission to accompany us, and willingly took upon himself the office of guide, as neither of our two Zaptiehs seemed to be very certain of the way. He told us that at this spring only the year before he had been seized by the brigands, and robbed of the little money he had about him, and nearly all the clothing he had on. Going to see one's sweetheart any distance in this country is evidently a risky business. We counted up the shots our party could command in a fight at six shots to the revolver, and finding it was somewhere in the neighbourhood of a hundred, ate our cold chicken and mutton, slaked our thirst at the Brigands' Spring, smoked our cigarettes, and laughed the brigands to scorn. These brigands, by the way, complain greatly, it seems, of the present condition of the country, which scarcely furnishes them a living. Since the war all traffic is suspended, there are no travellers, and no merchandise passing backwards and forwards, and the result is that these people are deprived of their ordinary means of existence, the bread is taken out of their mouths, and they are gradually falling into a state of indigence pitiful to contemplate. These brigands are all Turks. Let our diplomacy look to it. Towards six o'clock in the evening we arrived at the brow of the mountain overlooking a very deep, narrow valley, or rather a hollow, in the bottom of which lay Avrat-Alan, seemingly almost beneath our feet.

Avrat-Alan was one of the three or four places south of the Balkans in which there was an attempt at insurrection. It may, in fact, be considered the principal offender, for although they made no fortifications here, the young men who took up arms committed the only really inexcusable acts that can be charged against the insurrection. This was the killing of forty Mohammedan gipsies who fell into their hands. These gipsies had been arming secretly, and it was suspected, but only suspected, that they were preparing to join the Bashi-Bazouks when seized, and on this suspicion they were killed. But neither here nor anywhere else were there any women or children killed or violated by the insurgents. This one fact gives the measure of difference between the Bulgarian and the Turk. The killing of armed men who have armed themselves, as you believe, with the intention of killing you, who you know

are quite capable of killing you if they get the chance, is a very different sort of thing from the killing of weak, helpless women and innocent little children, whom you have not the slightest reason to fear. The one may be a mistaken or even an unjustifiable act of self-defence, but it is nevertheless self-defence; the other is an act of pure ferocity, of which not even the wild beast—not even the tiger, is capable. These places—Otluk-kui, Avrat-Alan, and Klissura, with Strelcha and Kurlovo—were the only places in which there was any insurrection south of the Balkans. For the fault of these five villages, seventy innocent villages that had no hand nor part whatever in the rising were pillaged and burnt, and the inhabitants for the most part massacred.

Let us now see what the rebellion was here at its fountain head; let us see how much vigour it showed here where it was organised and where it took its rise, and we can then form a better idea of its real strength, and the kind of repression that was used to put it down.

Here, in Avrat-Alan, there was even less show of resistance than at Otluk-kui. The elder and more prudent part of the population had not taken part in the rising at all, nor had they encouraged it. It was only the young men, and they had engaged in it contrary to the advice of their elders, who do not appear to have had any confidence in the success of the attempt. When, at the approach of Hafiz Pacha towards Otluk-kui, a great part of the insurgents had gone out to reconnoitre, the rest of the people, fearing the vengeance of the Turks, and hoping by this means to appease them, rose and seized the insurgents who had remained in the village, confined them in the konak, and sent word to Hafiz Pacha, informing him what they had done. I will not go so far as to say that they would really have kept these young men until Hafiz arrived, and have delivered them over to be shot. They would probably have allowed them to escape before the arrival of the Turkish commander, even had their companions not returned and released them. But this fact shows that the majority of the people even here took no part in it, and hoped nothing from it. This is why, at the approach of the troops, the whole thing collapsed like a bubble. No defence was made, and no resistance offered. There was not a single Turk killed in suppressing the revolt south of the Balkans. This one fact alone gives the lie to all

the assertions about the dangerous character of the rebellion and the necessity the Turks were under, in the impossibility of bringing up regular troops, of calling out the Mussulman population. This one fact refutes all the assertions of the apologists and defenders of the Turk, and shows how weak and childish an affair the insurrection really was, how cruel, brutal, stupid, senseless, was this organised pillage and destruction of a whole province, this indiscriminate butchery of innocent people, this wholesale slaughter of weak, helpless women and children.

The history of the affair at Avrat-Alan seems to be as follows: Upon the day fixed for the outbreak the insurgents assembled in a body about two hundred strong, marched quietly to the konak, or house of the Mudir, surrounded it, and summoned the Mudir to surrender. There were at the konak at this time, besides the Mudir, five or six Zaptiehs and an officer, all well armed. They barricaded the doors and windows of the konak, and determined to stand a siege. They defended themselves very courageously for twenty-four hours, though it does not appear that up to this time anybody had been killed on either side, notwithstanding the considerable amount of firing. The besieged, perceiving, however, that they would probably be overpowered in the end, determined to make a sortie and endeavour to escape from the place. This resolution they carried out with great courage and spirit, and all succeeded in breaking through the insurgents, who were not looking for this sudden onslaught, and who were altogether taken by surprise. But in the running fight which ensued, the Mudir and one of the Zaptiehs were killed, while the others succeeded in effecting their escape. These were the only Turks who lost their lives here, except the gipsies already spoken of, who were killed afterwards. The insurgents now had complete possession of the village, and had everything their own way for the next few days. It does not appear, however, that they did anything but march through the streets in procession, singing and declaring themselves free and independent. They did not molest any of the Mussulman villages in the neighbourhood; they were quite satisfied with what they had done, and did not seem to perceive that anything more was required of them. They appeared to be quite ignorant of the fact that there were 5,000 regular troops in Philippopolis who would inevitably be down on them in a few days, and they gave themselves over unrestrainedly to

the enjoyment of their freedom. These enjoyments seem to consist principally in marching up and down the streets and singing the national Bulgarian airs. Only in one instance did they show themselves alive to the necessities of the situation. The Christians of the neighbouring village of Strelcha, finding that insurrection was such an easy and pleasant thing, likewise determined to rise. But as half the population of this village were Turks, who would probably object to this step, they sent to Otluk-kui and Avrat-Alan for aid. A number of the insurgents accordingly went to their assistance; a fight ensued between them and the Turkish population, during which the whole of the village was burnt. The Christians say it was the Turks who did it. And the Turks say it was the Christians. The probability is, that both parties have had a hand in the burning, and that the Turks burned the Christiau quarter and the Christians the Turkish quarter. This is the only case we heard of where the Turks were molested by the Christians, and being a mixed village, once a rising had been determined upon, a fight was of course inevitable. But even here the Turks do not complain that there was a single Turkish woman or child killed or violated. The women and children on both sides ran away into the fields and remained away until the fight was over. But as the Turks finally gained the upper hand, they wreaked a fearful vengeance on their Christian neighbours and upon their wives and children. I will not dwell upon this fact, however. The Turks of this village had at least a pretext for their acts of cruelty, and I am willing to make all allowance for their exasperation at the sight of their burning homes. It is the one case in which the Turkish population was molested by their Christian neighbours, and although they took a terrible vengeance, it was nevertheless a vengeance, and not like those cold-blooded, unprovoked, inexcusable acts of cruelty and ferocity that were committed everywhere else. After the massacre of Batak, and the unprovoked atrocities at Otluk-kui, a mere act of vengeance, however cruel and however unjustifiable, seems to sink into a venial offence. It is the one case in which the Turks had a shadow of a pretext for what they did, and I am willing to allow them all the credit to be derived from it. But the Turks of this village have been repaid their losses by the Turkish authorities; their houses are being rebuilt for them at the public expense; their cattle were never driven

away; there were not half-a-dozen of them killed in the fight, for the fighting in this country is not deadly—it is only when the Christians surrender their arms that there is any great loss of life. They have besides seized all the cattle and live stock of their Christian neighbours. They are better off from a worldly point of view than they were before. So we may spare any compassion we might otherwise have felt for them. They have in reality turned their Christian neighbours into slaves, forcing them to work for nothing, refusing them permission to gather their own harvests, except upon condition of sharing it half and half, and finally violating their women with impunity. This state of things exists at Strelcha at this moment, and there is no remedy for it.

To return to the story of events that occurred at Avrat-Alan. The young men here soon began to discover that an insurrection required, to make it a success, something more than marching up and down the streets singing Bulgarian airs. Hafiz Pacha marched upon Otluk-kui, took it without losing a man, and then marched upon Avrat-Alan. They immediately fled to the mountains, and left the village to take care of itself. Hafiz Pacha approached upon one side, and the Bashi-Bazouks upon the other. The people who had taken no part in the outbreak decided to send to Hafiz Pacha and tender their submission. They sent two priests, one to the Bashi-Bazouks, who was immediately killed, and the other to Hafiz himself. Hafiz had apparently satisfied his thirst for blood and his desire for amusement at Otluk-kui; he was now disposed to do a little stroke of business, and he consented to treat with the inhabitants. He ordered that all the men of the place should come outside of the town to his camp, in order to discuss the terms on which he would accept their submission. They were detained in the camp two days, and during this time the Bashi-Bazouks and many of the troops entered the town. They did not, however, commit the same excesses as at Otluk-kui. They did not burn the town, nor did they kill any women and children. Hafiz Pacha had probably given orders that this should not be done, and his orders were obeyed, just as they were at Otluk-kui. They besides had also, perhaps, glutted their thirst for blood at the latter place, and were now satiated. But they pillaged every house, and they violated nearly every woman and girl in the town.

There were many well-to-do and comparatively rich people here. They have all more or less education and refinement; the houses were well and solidly built, with many appliances of comfort, and even what might in this country be considered luxury. The women we observed were generally comely, and even pretty. They dressed well, and made some pretensions to elegance in their poor way, giving many evidences of refinement and culture. And these gentle, sensitive, modest women were seized and violated by brutes whose hands were still red from the slaughter of Otluk-kui, whose clothes were still reeking with the blood of young girls and children whom they had outraged and slain. The women were stripped naked, and in the presence of each other submitted to every species of degradation and infamy that the foul and debased imagination of a savage could invent. Nay, more. A simple savage, with all the untamed ferocity of a savage state, still keeps within the bounds of Nature. He has not yet learned to overstep the limits which Nature has fixed. These Turks, on the contrary, seem to combine all the degrading vices of an artificial state with the unbridled lust of a barbarous race. And these gentle, virtuous women and girls were left in the hands of these beasts for two days, subjected to revolting, brutal, debasing treatment, that must leave its blot and its stain through life. Many of these women came to Mr. Schuyler to relate their woes. They would generally begin talking very quietly, and you could see that they had schooled themselves to calmness beforehand. They had a great idea of the dignity and importance of a Secretary of Legation, and it was touching to see their efforts to conduct themselves with proper decorum and to maintain a becoming composure. But the merest glance sufficed to show that this calmness was all assumed, that they were trembling with emotion. There was a paleness in the face, a nervous twitching of the features, and a tremor in the voice, threatening at every moment to break into a sob that showed only too well the feelings with which they were struggling. Then, as the story went on, they would suddenly stop, break down in the middle of it, bury their faces in their hands, and with a storm of sobs and tears that were strangely contagious avow that they could go no further.

God knows, they had generally gone far enough before this breakdown would come. They had bravely confessed dishonour

with only a tremor of the voice, but there was worse yet. A woman, it seems, can suffer more than mere dishonour at the hands of a Turk. She can be stained, defiled, degraded, until she looks upon herself with horror and loathing. And many of these women were not weeping for themselves alone, but for their daughters as well—young, innocent, tender girls of twelve and fifteen; nay, even children, often maltreated in the same brutal manner. It may be asked why these women should thus come forward and avow their shame and their dishonour? Who can tell? A burden of injustice too great for endurance; wrongs too foul, too dreadful to be borne in silence; the poor wounded spirit impelled by some invisible power to shriek them out, that Heaven may hear if it cannot see, and the feeble, the forlorn hope, perhaps, that some time they may yet be avenged, and justice yet be done. It would be useless for me to go on repeating the stories that were told us. I do not wish to be accused of dwelling needlessly upon these revolting details. Some of these stories are enough to drive one mad. You cannot listen to them without a feeling of almost ungovernable rage, all the more intense because it is utterly impotent and powerless, for you can do nothing. There is no justice for these people; there is no redress for the wrongs of these young girls. They must carry this stain and this dishonour through life; they must carry these wrongs to the grave. There is no punishment for the perpetrators of these crimes, absolutely none. As far as all human probabilities go, these men will die in their beds in the odour of sanctity, calling upon the God of Islam, and not even conscious of their crimes. Besides those who came singly to tell their woes, a delegation of ladies called upon Mr. Schuyler, but they had comparatively little to say. They seemingly could not bring themselves to speak in each other's presence of what they had suffered, and it was not until they went away that we perceived the real object of their visit. For, upon going, they handed Mr. Schuyler a letter signed by them all, in which they gave a short but comprehensive account of what had happened. If Mr. Schuyler is at liberty to give this curious document to the world, he will probably do so in his report, but I am under the impression that they requested him not to publish it.

While these things were occurring, Hafiz Pacha was secretly negotiating with the men whom he retained prisoners in the

camp the terms of the ransom of the village. They were agreed upon, the money, after much difficulty, was finally raised, and the men were set at liberty and allowed to return to their ravaged homes. Mr. Schuyler has, I believe, obtained all the facts of this transaction, though with much difficulty. The people are yet fearful of the vengeance of Hafiz, and should he ever discover the persons who told about him he would probably soon find means to pay them out; for this money was not levied upon behalf of the Government, but for Hafiz Pacha's own private exchequer, and the Government, needing money as badly as it does, may even yet ask him to pay it into the treasury. The number of people killed here was, I believe, between 200 and 300, among whom there were comparatively very few women and children. They were principally those who attempted to fly from the village, and were overtaken by the Bashi-Bazouks and killed in the country.

MR. SCHUYLER'S PRELIMINARY REPORT

ON THE

MOSLEM ATROCITIES.

THE following is the *preliminary* report of Mr. Schuyler, the American Consul-General, to the Hon. Horace Maynard, the American Minister, resident in Constantinople. At the date of its appearance, Mr. Schuyler was still in the ravaged district pursuing his inquiries.

PHILIPPOPOLIS, *August* 10, 1876.

SIR,—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, Philippopolis, and Tatar-Bazardjik, and the villages of Stenimakho, Kadi-Keni, Kritshma, Perustitsa, Peshtera, Radulovo, Batak, Kalaglari, Panagurishta (Otluk-kui), Koprishtitsa (Avrat-Alan), and Klissura (Persiden or Dervent), in the districts of Philippopolis 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, Koprishtitsa, Panagurishta, Novo Selo, Bellova, and, perhaps, one or two others. There was great alarm, and even a panic, at Tatar-Bazardjik and Philippopolis; numerous telegrams were sent to the Porte for regular troops, which after some delay were refused. The Beys of Philippopolis and Adrianople practically seized on the government, and armed the Mussulman inhabitants of the town 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 resistanee. In many instanees they surrendered their arms upon the first demand. Nearly all the villages whieh were attaeked by the Bashi-Bazouks were burned and pillaged, as were also all those whieh had been abandoned by the terrified inhabitants. The inhabitants of some villages were massaered after exhibitions of the most ferocious eruelty, and the violation not only of women and girls, but even of persons of the other sex. These erimes were eommitted by the regular troops as well as by the Bashi-Bazouks.

The number of villages whieh were burned in whole or in part in the distriets of Philippopolis, Roptchus, and Tatar-Bazardjik is at least sixty-five, of whieh the names are as follow:

DISTRICT OF PHILIPPOPOLIS.

Names of Villages.	Houses.	Churches.	Schools.
Sindjerli	200	1	1
Staro Novo-Selo	300	1	1
Yuleshintsa	90	1	1
Krastovo	100	1	1
Uzun-geren	70	—	—
Ereli	200	1	1
Sary-Gul	45	—	—
Aivadjik	50	—	—
Pashtusha	20	1	—
Zdrebrtehka	90	1	1
Yasy-Koria	140	1	1
Kozarsko	110	1	1
Tsaratsovo	—	—	—
Perustitsa	400	2	2
Uzunjak-Kiresh	—	—	—
Leshka	—	—	—
Savadja	—	—	—
Stubnitsa	—	—	—
Rega	—	—	—
Yünjülar	—	—	—
Kavak-tiré	—	—	—
Narisa-Keui	—	—	—

DISTRICT OF ROPTCHUS.

Boikovo	60	1	1
Dudovo	20 houses burned.		
Sitovo	plundered, but not burned.		

DISTRICT OF TATAR BAZARDJIK.

Klissura (Persiden or Dervent)	700	1	2
Koprishtitsa (Avrat-Alan)	plundered, not burned.		
Batak	900	1	3
Vietrona	600	1	1
Streleha (mixed)	440	1	1
Popintsa	—	1	1
Radulovo	160	1	1
Kara-musab	—	1	1
Slavovitsa	—	1	1
Akandjeivo	—	1	1
Tehanakteheieivo	—	1	1
Doganovo	—	—	—

DISTRICT OF TATAR BAZARDJIK—(*continued*).

Names of Villages.	Houses.	Churches.	Schools.
Ilshitsa	—	1	1
Kalaglari (mixed)	160	1	1
Jumaya	—	1	1
Keneli	—	—	—
Galaka	—	—	—
Dere-orman	—	—	—
Syrt-orman	—	1	1
Tskyra	—	—	—
Novo-Selo	—	—	—
Bega	60	1	1
Oldjulan	—	1	1
Ellidere	—	1	1
Eshi-Kashli	80	—	—
Liamovo	—	—	—
Shiakhlaré	—	1	1
Kulata	—	1	1
Kasapli	—	—	—
Tserovo	150	1	1
Hadjili	—	—	—
Dinkata	—	1	1
Karesli	—	—	—
Zlakatchen	—	1	1
Slchukovo	—	1	1
Kaloyerovo	—	1	1
Lusitchovo	—	1	1
Metchka	—	1	1
Petritch	—	—	—
Leshnitso	—	—	—
Panagurishta (Otluk-kui)	3000	2	3

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 30 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 burned—St. Teodor, near Perustitsa; the Panagia and the Bezsrabrinitsa, near Kritshma; and St. Nicolas, near Kaloyerovo.

The Turks allege that many of these villages were burned 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 burned 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.

PERUSTITSA, 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 Pacha, the Mutessarif of Philippopolis, 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 Rashid Pacha, 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 burned; not a single house being now standing. Many women were violated. The floor of the church, the churchyard, 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 Perustitsa 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 fourteen Mussulmans (in part gipsies) were killed before and during the fight. As soon as the Bashi-Bazouks entered the town they pillaged it and burned 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.

KOPRISHTITSA (Avrat-Alan), although one of the first villages to rebel, was one of the last to be attacked. Warned by the fate of Klissura and Panagurishta, the leading inhabitants themselves arrested the ringleaders of the insurrection, and sent to Philippopolis for regular troops. In spite of this the bearers of submission were fired on, and one, the priest Dontcho, was killed, the town was several times pillaged, many of the women were violated, and about thirty persons were killed. The town was not burned, 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 ten Turks and forty gipsies, the latter being suspected of an intention to plunder the town. The Turks claim a total loss of seventy-one.

PANAGURISHTA (Otluk-kui) 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 inha-

bitants of which had taken refuge there. Four hundred buildings, including the bazaar and the largest and best houses, were burned. Both churches were completely destroyed, and almost levelled to the ground. In one an old man was violated on the altar, and afterwards burned alive. Two of the schools were burned, 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 then 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 Pacha. 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 Koprishtitsa, 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 a hundred young girls being reserved to satisfy the lust of the conqueror before they too should be killed. I saw their bones, some with the flesh still clinging to them, in the 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 burned, 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 burned 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; there was a foul hole full of decomposing bodies, here a mill dam filled with swollen corpses; here the school house, where 200 women and children who had taken refuge there were burned alive, and here the church and churchyard, where fully a thousand half-decayed forms were still to be seen, filling the enclosure 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 orders 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 the massacre, has been decorated and promoted to the rank of Yuz-bashi.

These atrocities were clearly unnecessary for the suppression of the insurrec-

tion, 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 which 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 Kiani Pacha that the insurgents killed the wife and daughter of the Mudir of Koprishtitsa; but this Mudir had recently gone there, and had left his wife at Eski Saara, where she still resides, and had no daughter. I was also told of the slaughter of the wife of the Mudir of Panagurishta, but at the time mentioned that village had no Mudir. I was referred for information to Hafiz Nuri Effendi, a leading Turk of Philippopolis. In a very careful statement made by him, he sets the number of Mussulmans (including gipsies) killed during the troubles at 155, of whom twelve are women and children—the word children taken to mean any one under twenty 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 burned. No Mussulman house was pillaged. No mosque was desecrated or destroyed. The report of the special Turkish Commissioner, Edib Effendi, contains statements on this point, as on every other, which are utterly unfounded in fact, and the whole report may be characterised as a tissue of falsehoods.

I am, Sir,

Yours very truly,

EUGENE SCHUYLER.

The Honourable Horace Maynard, &c.

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