

The Insurrection by Laydie
in the public press.

940-542/INS

940-542
INS





THE

INSURRECTION IN CANDIA

AND THE

PUBLIC PRESS.

TURKEY IN EUROPE.

"'Tis the clime of the East, 'tis the land of the Sun."—BYRON.

THE insurrection in the island of Candia appears to have taken the Public Press of this country, with but few exceptions,* by surprise. Impressed with the belief that the Crimean War had fully established the security of the Turkish Empire, that the reforms conceded through the pressure of the Western Powers in the Hati Houmayoun, but never carried out, would have quieted the demands of the oppressed Christians in the East, the Public Press of this country little apprehended that any further danger might arise to the Turkish Empire, or that some of the subjects of the Sultan would themselves rise in arms to throw off the yoke imposed on them. The insurrection in Candia is a proof of the erroneous views of these writers. Their

* The *Daily News*, *Morning Star*, and lately the *Daily Telegraph*, with its excellent correspondence from Candia.

dreams seem to vanish, and the truth to be at length understood, that all the money spent and the blood shed by this country to prop up the Turkish Empire in Europe have been sacrificed in vain.

The insurrectionary movement in Candia must now convince even the most obstinate writers of the Public Press that the policy of this country in the East is a fallacy, and that the further existence of Turkey in Europe is an impossibility. Yet they are blind to the lessons of the past, turn a deaf ear to all the appeals and entreaties of the oppressed Christians in the East; and it is to be regretted that some articles have lately appeared, in which the Turk is held forth to the admiration of the world as the very ideal of Eastern perfection, and the Greek as everything that is degraded and worthless.

It is indeed lamentable that a Government the most despotic and corrupt in Europe should have the support of the Western Powers and of the majority of the enlightened press of this country, and that a tyranny the most odious, should, through foreign influence, be imposed on a Christian population, forming the great majority of the intelligent classes in the East; possessing, through their energy and industry, nearly all the commerce, and certainly all the talent and education, of the country.

It then becomes a question of serious consideration whether the oppressed Christians in Turkey should tamely submit to the continuance of such a state of things, or whether they have not a higher duty to perform than the respect they may owe to the advice of the Western Powers, and that is by opposing by force of arms their Turkish persecutors and oppressors. It is no exaggeration to say that the present Turkish Government is not only odious to the Christians in the East, and alien to them in religion, language, and manners, but it is a system of Government steeped in crime, venality, in fact, in everything that can make a Government hated and despised by its own subjects. Its continuance in Europe is a scandal to the age we

live in, a reproach to civilization and humanity. Yet such a Government is supported by the Western Powers and by the talent of a majority of the press of this country. Against its tyranny and oppression the Candioties have risen up in arms. It is true they are fighting against greater odds; but they are the advanced guard, the pioneers of that greater movement which is to free Europe from the Turk, and which a majority of the press of this country will not understand.

Independent Greece will necessarily be dragged into the struggle, for be the consequences what they may, the Greeks cannot remain idle or indifferent spectators of passing events in the neighbouring Turkish provinces. The very existence of Greece as an independent state is associated with every movement in the East, and it would be hazardous on the part of any Greek Government to oppose the natural sympathies of its own subjects in favour of their brethren struggling against Turkish tyranny and oppression. Imagine 12,000,000 of Protestant Christians placed in the same position. What would be the feelings of Protestant England? We seriously ask the English press to answer this question. Besides, let any impartial person compare the present state of Turkey with the progress and education in independent Greece. Let him compare the wretched sensual materialism of the Turk with the progress and civilization of Europe, and having done so, let him say whether such a state of things must be allowed to continue, or whether the time has not at length arrived for the Turk to leave the shores of Europe, for the Osmanli to take up his "tent and depart."

We ask the press of this country to point to us one single element in the present Turkish Empire that can denote its greatness or its prosperity? What has it ever done for humanity? For civilization? Where are its authors? Where its monuments? Where its schools? Its institutions? Nothing—positively nothing. One dismal blank, like the desert of Arabia, is all that

will be left to posterity to mark where the Ottoman once stood in Europe.

The longer the Turk is kept in Europe by the weight and influence of the Western Powers, the more terrible will be the consequences, and the more wicked and criminal the conduct of those who, from political and interested motives, maintain the infamy and debasement of an Asiatic tribe in Europe. Yet in spite of the Western Powers and of the Public Press of this country, the finger of time points inevitably to the final expulsion of the Mahomedans from Europe. Blind indeed must be the man who cannot see this. It is, however, sad to think that this inevitable result is not allowed to take place without torrents of blood being shed, and perhaps without a repetition of the brutal massacres of Scio and Ipsara; such, indeed, as occurred and horrified Christian Europe in the insurrection of 1821. But even supposing that in the present struggle the Christians are overpowered by superior forces, or by events over which they may not possibly have any control, the struggle will be renewed again and again as opportunity presents itself, and the same spirit which now animates the Candiotés to throw off the Turkish yoke, will be handed down from generation to generation until their efforts are crowned with success. In the hour of triumph it will be a source of pride to the Greeks to know that the enlightened and liberal press of this country assisted them in their great movement; for they cannot bring themselves to believe that a country which gave to Greece a Byron, a Cochrane, a Church, a Gordon, a Hastings, and a host of other generous spirits, can possibly desert them in the moment of perhaps their greatest trial.

GREECE.

"Clime of the unforgotten brave!
Whose land from plain to mountain cave,
Was freedom's home or glory's grave!"—BYRON.

IN 1830 the three Protecting Powers established the present independent kingdom of Greece. The frontiers were limited, and it is to be regretted that Thessaly, Epirus, and Candia, were not added to the present kingdom. It has been the fashion for the philo-Turkish press of this country to charge Greece with having made no progress since the thirty-six years of her independence, and to assert that the experiment of establishing the Greeks into a free government is a miserable failure. We will not say anything of the limited territory assigned to the present kingdom of Greece, nor of the four centuries of Turkish rule, all we can say is, that those who bring the charge forward are not acquainted with the government or people of independent Greece, and that the information they profess to give is derived from partial observers, casual travellers, or from partisan political newspaper correspondents. Many persons who have resided in Greece know that the progress of the country has been really astonishing, and we challenge any of the writers of the philo-Turkish press to show us a country that, in the same period of time, has made, comparatively speaking, an equal amount of progress. Let our reader consider that Greece under the Turk was reduced to a mere skeleton, that with the exception of her undying monuments, not a vestige remained on the spot to mark her ancient glory

and greatness. That she endured with heroic fortitude, sad to say, all now forgotten by the press of this country, a desolating war of seven years against the whole flood of Turkish and Egyptian cruelties and abominations, and that at last, bleeding, tottering, and almost exhausted, the three Protecting Powers stepped in, and it may be said, completed, at the battle of Navarino, the work of her independence. True, the original limits of her frontiers were not conceded to her. True, the insult was offered her of making her a tributary dependency of the Sultan, yet the one great principle of making her an independent State was recognised, and she became once more, within a narrow and circumscribed limit, one of the great family of nations in Europe.

Thirty-six years have elapsed since this event took place. Let us see what progress Greece has made.

In 1830 the population of independent Greece numbered 650,000 souls, it is now 1,250,000, nearly double, exclusive of the Ionian Isles.

In 1833 the revenue of Greece was 7,950,000 drachmas, equal to £280,000. The budget of 1865 was

£833,920	Greece.
£171,684	Ionian Isles.

Total . . . £1,005,604.

In 1830 the total quantity of currants grown in Greece was 6,000 tons. It is now 40,000 tons, from which the British Government derives an annual revenue of about £300,000.

In 1830 oil was an article of importation. It is now largely produced, and in seasons of a good crop the exports reach to 8,000 tons.

In 1830 but few tons of figs were exported, now the exports reach 5,000 tons annually.

These are some of the principal articles of production, showing at least that the agricultural industry of

the country has made considerable progress. We may enumerate the following articles, also exported from Greece:—Tobacco, raw silk, liquorice, sponges, wool, cotton, hides, galls, raisins, goat and sheep skins, light wines, green fruit for the Levant and Russia, maize and other cereals.

In manufactures not much can be expected, yet there are steam flour mills at work in the country, and some iron foundries at Syra. A few silk, cotton, and wool goods are manufactured, and a great number of hides are prepared and tanned for all parts of the Levant.

There is a National Bank, the shares of which are at a high premium; a Steam Navigation Company, successfully conducted; and there are some Insurance Companies.

The Mercantile Marine of Greece numbers 5,000 flags, and there are ship-building yards in the Island of Syra, at Galaxidi, Poros, and other places in Greece.

ATHENS, the capital of independent Greece, has now a population of 50,000 inhabitants; it had only 7,000 in 1830. It was then a miserable dilapidated town of mud huts and Turkish hovels. It is now much enlarged, well lighted with gas, having stone and marble buildings. It has a university, colleges, free schools, asylums, observatories, libraries, museums, free hospitals. There are at present 1,500 students in Athens, coming from all parts of the East, and finishing their studies there.

PATRAS, a commercial city at the entrance of the Gulf of Corinth, has a population of 25,000 inhabitants. Any traveller who has been at Patras cannot fail to have noticed the great improvement between the old Turkish town and the new. From the great and rapid progress this town has made in commerce, and the industry of its inhabitants, it bids fair to become, at no very distant day, one of the largest cities in the Mediterranean.

SYRA.—The great importance of this island, in a

commercial point of view, is well known all over Europe. Its progress in wealth and population has really been wonderful, contrasting strongly with the decaying state of the Turkish towns in the neighbouring provinces. It has become a rendezvous for all steamers to and from the East, and the activity of its port, the industry of its inhabitants, the large increase of its population, the wealth and industry of its merchants and bankers, all testify to the truth of the immense progress this island has made since it ceased to belong to the Turks.

Greece is a constitutional country. It has a free press, registered manhood suffrage, vote by ballot. Every religion is free in Greece, without the least interference on the part of the State. No person is called upon to pay anything in the shape of rates or taxes for the maintenance of any particular sect or religion. Every government appointment is open to persons of all religions or denominations—Jew, Turk, or Christian. Not long ago a Turk was elected “Dimarck” (Mayor) of a village in Eubœa. The Code of Greece is one of the best in Europe, having been composed from the Roman and German jurisprudence, and from the Code Napoleon. In all criminal cases trials are conducted by jury. There is a court of commerce, a court of equity, and various tribunals of justice, all properly conducted. The Dimarcks—say, Mayors in England—and all other municipal officers are elected by the people every three years. The suffrage, the same as for members of the Assembly, is universal, and the vote is by ballot.

In every village there is a free school where the poor can send their children. In many towns there are free colleges, and every person, irrespective of rank or station, can send his children to school or college free of all expense. It can be stated without fear of contradiction, that the system of education in Greece is one of the most perfect in Europe. All masters of schools or colleges are bound to pass a rigid examination, and all professors, masters, and tutors are paid by Government.

These are some of the benefits which at present exist in independent Greece. This is the progress she has made since 1830.

We are tempted to add, that in Greece there is no privileged or titled aristocracy. There are no game laws,—no rich livings,—no overpaid parsons and starving curates,—no pocket parliamentary boroughs. Such anomalies we are happy to state are not to be found in Greece.

We proceed now to meet the two most serious charges brought against the Government of Greece by the Philo-Turkish press of this country :—

1st. That it encourages brigandage. Brigandage unhappily exists in some parts of Greece, thanks to the three Protecting Powers who limited the present frontiers of the country, but it mostly prevails near the Turkish frontiers; and it is as much to be attributed to the insecurity of life and property in Turkey as to any fault of the Greek Government. Brigands find shelter, and, from the nature of the country, protection, in the neighbouring Turkish provinces. Far from the Greek Government encouraging Brigandage, it has done all that a Government can do, placed in its position, to extirpate the evil; but so long as the frontiers of Greece are not extended and properly defined, it will prevail in spite of all the efforts of the present Greek Government to put it down. It seems to us a peculiar case of hardship that independent Greece, with her present limited resources, should be compelled to send forces on the Turkish frontiers to watch the movement of brigands. Does it not strike the reader that the desolating state brought about by the tyranny of the Turkish Government, in those districts bordering on Greece, has as much to do with brigandage as anything else we can mention.

We think that if Thessaly and Epirus formed part of the present independent Government of Greece, as was the original plan of the kingdom at first laid down by the three Protecting Powers, we should hear no more of brigandage in Greece. What progress

these two provinces would have made under Greece we will not venture to say, we only ask our intelligent readers to take up a map of Turkey. Let him look at the Gulf of Arta and Prevesa on the one side, and of Volo and Salonica on the other, and let him say if such places under a better system of Government would not rise in commerce and population. At present they bespeak nothing but ruin and desolation around them, and they are likely to remain so as long as they are in the hands of the Turks.

The 2nd charge is—That Greece has not yet recognized the loans of 1824 and 1825, and that therefore she has not kept faith with her creditors. On this point we may say that with her present limited resources, it is impossible for Greece to do much, yet, it is satisfactory to know that the Greek Government, since the present king ascended the throne, has shewn every disposition to come to an amicable arrangement with the bondholders in this country. It is, however, much to be regretted, that when King George was in London at the date of his first nomination, the king, through the influence of Count Sponeck, was not permitted to grant an interview to the representatives of the bondholders. Had this been done, then it would have been shewn to His Majesty, that he ought to ask from the three Guaranteeing Powers a total surrender of their claims past, present, and future, and in the then state of public opinion, anything would have been given to him. It is not too late now; the fact being that the amount due by Greece, on account of this guaranteed loan, is used by each power to bully the poor little kingdom, and to worry King George and his advisers, whenever they turn restive, and shew any testiness, in return for the lectures, advice, and admonitions given by the representatives of the three Powers at Athens. At that interview the advisers of the King could, with justice, have pointed out to the bondholders the importance of reducing their claim for the £7,300,000 to one third of the amount, and thus have paved the way to a settlement.

We think Greece might now reasonably offer to capitalize into new bonds all the old bonds and arrears of interest, whether represented by Coupons or not, into an amount of one-third, guarantee a dividend on this sum of two per cent., and then put aside a portion of the surplus whenever the income exceeds a certain figure, this surplus to be employed partly to give an increased interest and partly as a sinking fund. This might become an important addition in the no very improbable event of Thessaly, Epirus, Macedonia and Candia becoming part of the kingdom. The English bondholders should at the same time take into consideration that these loans were not contracted for the present restricted portion of independent Greece, but for all those provinces then in arms against the Turk, who took part in the insurrection of 1821.

CANDIA.

"For wealth, for valour courted and revered,
What Albion is, fair Candia then appeared."

FALCONER'S "SHIPWRECK."

ON the 6th of September, 1669, the Island of Candia surrendered to the Turks after a war which lasted twenty-five years. The fleet of the Ottomans was twice destroyed by the Venetians. With its capitulation Candia lost its senate, liberty, prosperity, and, in fact, everything that made it a thriving colony under the Venetians. Nearly all the rich families fled from the island, and many of them sought refuge in the Ionian Islands, then under the Venetians. The name of Count Solomos, the poet of the Island of Zante, is of course familiar to every Greek. His ancestors were Cretans, and they fled from Candia to escape the atrocities of the Turk, and found an asylum in Zante. The population of Candia, which, before the conquest of the Turks, numbered 700,000 souls, has since dwindled down to 250,000 inhabitants, of which 200,000 are Christians and 50,000 Turks. What greater proof is required of the iniquitous Government of the Turks. Wherever these human locusts land prosperity vanishes, commerce languishes, and the miserable inhabitants either seek refuge in foreign lands, or die in abject poverty and misery in their own. Sismondi tells us, in his "History of the Italian Republics," "That courageous adventurers arrived from every part of the West to fight under the Venetian banner." Sad change now! The West sends forth, through the columns of its leading journal, ridicule, abuse, and bitter sarcasm. The Candiotes took an active part in the insurrection

of 1821, and under protest from the Liberal press of this country, the three Protecting Powers, to their shame be it said, overlooked the claims of the Candiotas to be united to Greece, and once more consigned the unhappy inhabitants of the island to the tender mercies of the Turks and Egyptians. On this point we cannot do better than print the following extracts from a speech delivered by Lord Palmerston on the 16th Feb., 1830, in the British House of Commons. How correct were the views of that eminent statesman on the affairs of Greece, and, looking at the events now going on in Candia, how prophetic were his words.

Lord Palmerston said—

“He hoped as they would have the pleasure of seeing what could not fail to be gratifying to the national honour—to collect from the lips of the English Minister that the people of Greece would enjoy the rights of freemen, and be no longer confined to the shackles and fetters of despotism. When it shall be shewn to the house from the expected documents that His Majesty’s Government had done all in their power to secure the accomplishment of that object, then would his right hon. friend be entitled to the thanks of the house and of the country. But so far as the right hon. Secretary (Peel) went, his statement was far from satisfactory. He had altogether failed in showing that the addition of Candia to the territory of Greece was not essential to the well-being and independence of the new State. This was but small matter of surprise, for no one who had turned his attention to the subject could doubt that the political existence and the military defence of Greece would mainly depend upon the possession of Candia. What would form a more immediate ground of complaint, if it proved to be well founded, would be that this country had not fulfilled her engagements in seeing the treaty executed in its true spirit, than which nothing was more important as affecting the honour and interest of England.”

“On the South it was of importance that Greece should be in possession of a territory which would afford her a good military defence, for there it was of peculiar importance that she should be preserved from collision with her neighbours. The natural defence of Greece on the South would be Candia, for with that island left in possession of the Turks, the means of aggression would be continually in their hands.”

“The Turks had wrongfully preserved possession of Candia, and now it was contended that they should be allowed to profit by that wrong. It was a principle of law that no man should profit by his own wrong; it was a maxim of justice that the infliction of one injury should not stand good as a reason for the infliction of further and deep injuries.”

"Was that devoted and unhappy island to be left exposed to the pouring forth of the vials of Turkish wrath in all its inhuman and atrocious barbarity—to a repetition of the atrocities of Ipsara and Scio?"

"Let Candia remain in the hands of the Turks, and what probability was there that the Greeks in that island would remain patient under the yoke which their brethren had shaken off?"

"Candia, even in a maritime point of view, was essential to the safety of Greece; it was to Greece what Cuba was to Mexico, and could not be excluded from its territory without endangering the existence of the new State. Would it be possible for the Sovereign of Greece to stand by and see thousands of his subjects' countrymen slaughtered by the Turks without interference? And yet, should he interfere, the certain consequences would be war with Turkey."

"If both England and the Sovereign of Greece refused to interfere, the Greeks themselves would fly to the succour of their brethren, and then of what advantage would it be that the State was nominally at peace?"

"He would venture to predict that if Candia was not settled to Greece it would fall to our lot to be at war with some State or other in the course of a few years on account of this very Candia."

What was true in 1830, when Lord Palmerston delivered the above speech, is equally true in 1866. The details, which have reached this country from reliable sources, of the cruel massacres and the burning of villages in the Island of Candia by the Turks, confirm the news brought from Constantinople of the orders sent to Mustapha Pacha to put down the insurrection by a war of extermination. Till now, Mustapha Pacha has not been able to carry out these orders successfully, on account of the stubborn resistance of the Candiotes. Reinforcements are, however, pouring into the Island, and we fear the brave Candiotes will have to succumb. The latest news received in this country brings us the sad and heart-rending intelligence that the Turks were destroying and burning whole villages and carrying fire and sword before them. Twelve millions of Christians in the East cannot remain silent spectators of such fearful scenes. It is satisfactory to know that in this trying emergency the Greeks fully understand and appreciate their own position, and they suffer here with their oppressed brethren. It is still more satisfactory to know that they do not lose sight of their future destiny, and,

whatever policy the Western Powers may think proper to carry out in the East, the Greeks can only have one object above all other considerations, and that is, to unite the scattered elements of their Nationality, and to prepare the way for the restoration of that Eastern Empire, which is their legitimate right. Let them only be united and firm, and success will assuredly crown their efforts. The majority of the Public Press of this country has not, we regret to say, taken a proper and humane course on this question. We think, however, that when the long list of Turkish atrocities is placed before it,—when the wrongs of the Christians in the East are fairly represented to it,—when the destructive and demoralizing consequences of Mahomedanism are pictured to it in not overdrawn colours, that it will again distinguish itself, as it has often done, on behalf of suffering humanity, and that the appeal of 12,000,000 of oppressed Christians in the East, deprived of all political rights,—looked upon as aliens in the land of their birth,—will not be made in vain.

3/3

1-24





