

222179

ACADEMIA ROMÂNĂ
MEMORIILE SECȚIUNII ISTORICE
SERIA III TOMUL XIV MEM. 4

UN OBSERVATOR ENGLEZ ASUPRA
ROMÂNILOR DIN EPOCA LUI
TUDOR VLADIMIRESCU

DE

N. IORGA
MEMBRU AL ACADEMIEI ROMÂNE

BCU Cluj / Central University Library Cluj



MONITORUL OFICIAL ȘI IMPRIMERIILE STATULUI
IMPRIMERIA NAȚIONALĂ
BUCUREȘTI

1933

UN OBSERVATOR ENGLEZ ASUPRA
ROMÂNILOR DIN EPOCA LUI
TUDOR VLADIMIRESCU

DE

N. IORGA
MEMBRU AL ACADEMIEI ROMÂNE

Sedința dela 31 Martie 1933

D-l D. N. Ciotori, al cărui zel în a căuta la Londra ceea ce poate interesa istoria poporului nostru nu se poate lăuda în de ajuns, a găsit în Arhivele engleze un raport cu privire la Țara-Românească care oferă în multe privinți, cu câteva știri nouă, o vedere deosebită de cele obișnuite.

Datarea raportului, un mic studiu, pe care-l public aici, e posibilă printr'o serie de note cronologice, amestecate în cursul unei expuneri mai vioaie decât bine ordonată.

Dacă nu se poate stabili care e hati-humaiumul acordat « anul trecut » Principatelor, dacă o ucidere a Turcilor la Galați ar părea — ceea ce, după alte știri, nu se poate admite — că trimete la anul 1821, mențiunea înlocuirii « acum doi ani » a consulului rus Chirico dă anul 1820 pentru scrierea acestei lucrări.

Autorul ei, V. Bargrave, originar din Kent și om « cu stare », « agent secret », sprijinit de ambasadorul englez din Viena și de un Cooke dela Foreign Office, spune d-l Ciotori, e un om care, fără a face parte din corpul consular, pe care, cum vom vedea, îl atacă nemilos în relele lui obiceiuri, a stat mult timp în Orient. Astfel știe cum, la Constantinopol, Turcii, cari simt primejdia din partea creștinilor, iau stricte măsuri ca

aceștia să nu calce nici cea mai neînsemnată din măsurile cu privire la port și la obiceiuri, el poate povesti cum un Grec a înșelat la Atena pe consulul prusian Gropius, asociatul său, strecurându-se înaintea lui ca beneficiar al permiselor pentru exportul untdelemnului, și asupra Corintului a trimis un raport din Rusia. La București are casă mare, și povestește cum s'au găsit în pivnițele lui mărfuri furate dela negustorii vecini, cari preferă să scape, după restituire, hoțul decât să meargă la judecată: de aici, fără îndoială pentru afaceri, merge, când la Brașov, când la Vidin. De altfel a fost și prin Rusia, a cărui moralitate o critică, și împrejurările politice din propria lui Anglie îl interesează destul ca să facă glume pe sama unui Fox (lord Holland) și unui Wilberforce. D-l Ciotori adaugă că Bargrave a făcut parte din cei cari pleacă la Brașov în momentul apariției pandurilor. Scrisori inedite cu privire la anul 1821 le menționează tot d-sa.

E un spirit paradoxal, cu scrisul desordonat și corosiv, un amator de literatură și de istorie, care citează pe Wolsey și pe Shakespeare. Ca politică, dacă-și bate joc de tinerii nobili englezi, « căpitani de cavalerie și vânători de vulpi », un « juriu de măcelari și pitari » nu-i impune de loc. Cugetarea lui cu totul liberă, care nu se oprește la nicio piedecă, și limbajul care nu se supune niciunei înfrânări oficiale par să arăte un om de autoritate, care nu îndeplinește o funcțiune, ci binevoiește să aducă diplomației engleze un serviciu.

Lucrarea curiosului cercetător, nemulțămît de toată lumea, dar strălucitor de inteligentă, începe cu descrierea cadrului geografic al Munteniei. I se pare că această « Valahie » ar putea să aibă, cu o bună îngrijire, bielșugul Egiptului; pășunile sunt ca în părțile Elveției și Tirolului, mineralele sunt răspândite ca pe coasta Guineii sau în Munții Anzi; aurul, cules în fărâmițe de Țigani, se află în nisipul râurilor, dar se întâlnesc uneori și bulzi; chihlimbarul se găsește adesea. Autorul cunoaște foarte bine țara și descrie exact cursul Oltului, care i se pare că vine din șes (cel ardelean) spre munte. Explicații se dau pentru regimul ploilor, în legătură și cu Ardealul. Pământul negru e înfățișat și descris cu competență. Informatorul a străbătut terenurile inundate primăvara. A fost prin sate,

pline de bogății nepuse în valoare. «Păsările și porcii din Valahia întrec pe cei din orice altă țară ca frumuseță, greutate, gust și ieftinătate. Satele românești sunt, literal, pline ca un roi de cele mai alese articole ale mesei unui gastronom.»

Se dau prețurile obiectelor de hrană. Se laudă caii, deși scăzuți în talie din cauza neîngrijirii. Rezistența acestor făpturi mărunte e așa de mare, încât «doi cai de călărie ai miei mi-au urmat trăsura fără a fi legați nici cu cea mai mică funie, cu iuțeala a cinci poște pe zi, ca niște câni». Se înfățișează casa de poștă și felul în care se schimbă acolo caii. Se explică răpeziciunea căruței de poștă prin caracterul șes al țării întregi.

De mult ce gălesc ușor în jurul lor fără muncă, locuitorii sunt «lacomi, bețivi, îndolenți din fire, sensuali», și e păcat, căci sunt «sănătoși, tari, îndrăzneți, răpezi la înțeles, mândri, mulțămiiți și politicoși.» «Nicio nație nu poate produce o rasă de oameni mai bine proporționată, mai veselă, mai iute, mai dârză decât Valahii adevărați.» Traiul lor, contra opiniilor primite, îl judecă el fericit, supt raportul material. «Și cel mai sărac țăran mănâncă regulat de patru ori pe zi și niciun prinț în creștinătate nu se poartă mai luxos. El poate să privească toată țara ca fiind la dispoziția lui: el samănă și culege unde-i place, lăsând doar o zecime din grâne pentru proprietar, oricare ar fi, ceea ce nu-și dă osteneală să afle. Nevasta-i face hainele și nu are altă grijă (în consecință alt îndemn la lucru) decât cererile repetite ale zapciului», al cărui aspect se și zugrăvește.

«Niciun guvern în Europa nu ia *nominal* și *potrivit cu legea* contribuții bănești mai de nimic dela supușii săi ca Poarta Otomană. Bugetul anual al Domnului Valahiei, pentru o țară mare cât Anglia, cu un milion de locuitori, se ridică *legal* la suma neînsemnată de 3.300.000 de piaștri... împreună cu haraciul pentru Sultan, de 600.000 de piaștri.» Numai apăsarea și nevoia ar scoate mai mult, și în folosul locuitorilor, cari nu pot fi îndemnați decât printr'o astfel de silă. Oamenii n'au ideie că dătoresc ceva țării căreia-i aparțin.

Acești țărani, ajunși egoiști, nepatrioți din simplă ignoranță, din lipsa unui mai înalt ideal de viață comună, se află într'o situație mai bună decât tovarășii lor de ocupație de peste munți:

pentru întâia oară un străin are competența și curajul s'o spuie. «Starea țărănimii, care a fost mult îmbunătățită, și se îmbunătățește și acum, în ce privește drepturile feudale ale nobililor, e nesfârșit superioară aceleia din Ardeal, unde țăranul trebuie să lucreze trei zile pe săptămână gratis pentru proprietarul său, pe când cei din Valahia sunt siliți să lucreze numai o zi pe lună, adică douăsprezece zile pe an.» Și cu acest prilej se arată ce a făcut Constantin Mavrocordat pentru înlăturarea șerbicii. Se adaugă că, acuma, scutelnicii ¹⁾ nu mai sunt, ca pe vremea reformei, liberi de orice taxă către Stat.

Judecata asupra guvernului, care nu scoate dela pământ și dela oameni ce ar putea să deie unul și alții, e foarte aspră.

E întâiu incapabil de a-și înțelege măcar propriul folos. Un mare export de animale s'ar putea face. Grâul prisoselnic, care nu află clienți, nu s'ar mai arunca. Canalizarea Oltului ar revărsa bogăție asupra țării. Numai acuma în urmă, Vistierul Grigore Filipescu, sub cuvânt că are să meargă la Mehadia, a pus pe țărani să redeschidă calea pe la Căineni, care de mult era practicabilă numai pentru căruți.

Comerțul e oprit de monopolul turcesc și de înțelegerea puternicilor cu anume străini privilegiați, cari au toate puterile.

Dar oamenii sunt mai mult corupți, și corupători, decât lipsiți de pricepere. Totul se vinde, și cine cumpără are toată voia să fure, supt ochii altora cari fură și ei și nu vreau deci să controleze, cum n'au obraz să pedepsească. Domnul jăfuește, ispravnicul, care a plătit pentru funcția sa, câștigă 30—50.000 de piaștri pe an. Vistierul, care a dat 300.000, poate ajunge și la un milion. Spătarul, care a cheltuit 200.000 de piaștri, vinde căpităniile unor Arnăuți, așa încât, în loc să fie cei 12.000 de soldați călări scriși pe hârtie, s'ar găsi de fapt doar «o jumătate de duzină de vagabonzi în zdrențe, un fel de regiment al lui Falstaff», care, supt pretext de întreținere, terorizează lumea din sate. Țăranii cari vin cu lemne la târg defilează în fața unor dregători cari iau asupra căruțelor o astfel de «contribuție indirectă» încât le golesc.

¹⁾ El scrie: *sokotchniks*. Aiurea, *tchelebis* în loc de gelepi.

Justiția e cu totul nesigură. Amenzile s'ar ridica la jumătatea sumei pretinse. De aceea judecătorii ar favoriza înmulțirea proceselor. A se muta pe pământul unui boier înseamnă pentru țăran a și-l căpăta protector. Divanurile se schimbă cu Domnii, așa încât reluarea pricinei e totdeauna posibilă. În materie criminală, pedeapsa poate fi evitată.

Și toată lumea aleargă după titluri zădarnice, după semne exterioare de importanță, în capitalele românești ca și la Constantinopol. Caragea le-ar fi dat în loc de a plăti celui onorat cu dânsule datoriiile sale.

Consulii străini se prefac după mediu și ajung niște pro-fitori: la Dunăre, unde « Armeanul » Chirico ar fi făcut așa, ca și în Moreia, unde e consul austriac criminalul Zacinini.

Totuși Pini, alt « Armean », ar fi adus servicii reale țăranilor, făcând să li se plătească la monopolul turcesc produsele cu o treime mai mult și apărând pe săraci contra puternicilor.

Ce ar trebui făcut pentru ca prețurile să nu fie așa de joase, de mult ce s'a stors « vaca cu laptele », se cuprinde în aceste puncte de program personal:

Stabilitate a funcționarilor, numindu-se ispravnici oameni cu titluri din străinătate, de preferință dela Viena. Scăderea numărului sărbătorilor, care se ridică la două sute patruzeci pe an. Impuținarea preoților. Secularizarea averilor bisericesti și lege care să oprească « mâna moartă ». Libertate a comerțului. S'ar putea atrage coloniști, mai ales din Elveția și Germania, de unde atâția pleacă spre depărtata Americă.

Astfel, spune el, și un « haraciu » de zece ori mai mare ar putea fi ușor răspuns de o țară prosperă.

WALLACHIA

This rich and beautiful Principality (adopting the term according to the reveries of some political theorists) seems separated by the *hand of Nature* from the rest of civilized Europe by a stupendous chain of mountains which still (in common parlance) retain their original and classical name of *Carpathian*, whose summits, crowned with perpetual snow, discharge (by the action of the central heat of the Earth upon the inferior beds) a never failing supply of fertilizing streams, which falling from the rough pinnacles in romantic cascades, unite near the base with impetuous and boiling torrents, irrigating the whole surface of the country as in an artificial garden or rice plantation and finding a certain vent in the majestic Danube, which in some places near its «embouchure» is more than a league in breadth, saturate, without too long, even in the equinoxes, inundating the soil.

This proximity to mountain torrents, impregnated with the choicest particles of virgin earth and most precious mineral productions, offers to the agriculturist, supposing a wise Government employed the same provident means, the same advantages as are experienced in Egypt, by the depositions of the mud of the Nile, to the grazer the same exuberance of herbage and graminous productions, as is remarked in the vallies of Lucerne, Zurich and Inspruck, to the speculator and hardy adventurer the same exhaustless fund of minerals as (under the auspices of vigilant chiefs) reward the courage and perseverance of the Negroes on the Coast of Guinea, or the Spaniards amongst the recesses of the Andes. Unaided by the arm of Government or the science of a chemist, the wandering Gipsies of Wallachia are taxed a certain — and considerable — annual quantity of gold dust, which they collect with certainty and scarcely any labour, by merely washing the mud of the environs of the cataracts in wooden troughs — I have seen morsels of virgin gold weighing more than three ounces thus collected.

Amber of various and beautiful hues is precipitated in masses from these trackless and inaccessible heights, whirled by the impetuosity of the stream leagues from its natural bed and left by alluvions on the strand in such quantities as to render it of *no value* in a country where foreign commerce is unknown, where ignorance and her infant superstition govern absolutely the noble as well as the peasant and the existence of man is as inferior and his enjoyments as limited as those of the domestic animals submitted by Providence to his authority.

A geographical anomaly occurs in the ridge of Carpathian Mountains. Instead of being a continuous elevation, discharging as the Alps and the Andes their torrents in all directions, they are completely pierced in several places and give vent to considerable rivers. The Aluta (commonly called Olta), which divides Wallachia into two duchies, called *great* and *little* Wallachia (the later governed by a Ban (Duke) almost independant of the prince, and who resides in Crayova, the Capital of little Wallachia), is a phenomenon at first sight incomprehensible. This river (at Hermanstadt in Transilvania), instead of rushing from the mountains to the plain, as the Rhine, the Inn, the Niger and the Nile, proceeds rapidly from the *plain towards* the very heart of a mass of hills, whose white heads are lost in the clouds.

I fancied at first that by some sinuosity the original stream had returned to find an easier level and was surprized at its comparatively measured pace so near the supposed torrent, but the road over the Mountains conducted me at various intervals close to and even *through* the same river, until I found it again in Wallachia, where it loses itself in the Danube.

Under a civilized government this river might easily and at a trifling expence be made navigable and an easy level road on its banks, and thus Wallachia might (even with the approbation of these confidants of the *political* wishes of nature) be said to *belong* to the great *European* Family.

BCU Cluj / Central University Library Cluj

At present the Turks or their viceroys at the instigation of the Russians endeavour by all *passive* means to create this *natural* barrier by destroying the roads over the mountains. The late Prince however very dextrously had them repaired last summer by means of his Vistiar Gregoire Philippesko, who, under pretence of taking the baths of Mehadia, sent a number of peasants to make it passable for carriages over *Kienen*, which was before impassable, except by the small carts of the country.

Protected on the North from the cold winds of the continent by these enormous Mountains, Wallachia is defended and might be infinitely benefited by commerce under an enlightened government by the Euxine on the East, whilst the Danube on the South and West again seems to present a *natural* frontier and line of demarcation between the Christian Principalities and Mussulman Pashaliks of European Turkey. By the original treaty between Sultan Bajazet and Prince Mirza of Wallachia in 1360 the frontiers of that christian sovereign extended towards Constantinople as far (as) the Black Sea and Mount Hoemus (Balkan) and to the West as far as Temeswar. But this frontier as far the Carpathian hills has been successively encroached upon by the Hungarians and by degrees the Sultans have not only driven the Wallachians back to, but even across the Danube and in the *whole left bank* of that river, with all its forteresses, in which are *now* established Pashas, whose domains extend about two leagues in depth,

forming a belt of pasturage and arable land for the subsistence of the Turkish garrisons.

This geographical situation between a ridge of Mountains, the extensive Euxine and the mouth of by far the finest river in Europe produces by a combination of physical causes the important advantage of an unparalleled richness of soil. The diurnal evaporation of such a mass of water by the sun is driven by every wind (except the north) to the elevated frontier, where being arrested in the sinuosities of those enormous Mountains (unless the wind is very strong), the sun sets before the suspended vapours have forced their passage into Transilvania, in which case they are immediately precipitated in rain or snow, according to their previous elevation, proceeding from the rarity or density of the atmosphere the day preceding.

The ceaseless and inexhaustible fund of humidity satisfactorily accounts for the almost incredible richness of the soil of Wallachia, which resembles the black mould of an English artificial melon-bed, and in some places in summer the high roads seem composed of pounded charcoal, the pure couch of which extends in some districts to a depth of more than twenty feet and increases annually, for the richness of the soil undrained by the artificial calls of the nobler grains produces herbs and weeds, particularly hay, of such an extraordinary vigour, that, in passing through meadows near Widdin on horseback, the grass touched my elbows and the thistles left their film upon the crown of my hat.

The trifling population of Wallachia (about a million), which is not a tenth part of what the soil could easily nourish, is insufficient to consume or even *repress* this redundance of vegetation. It is left to be scorched by the rays of an autumnal sun, drenched by the succeeding rains and rotted by a winters congealed inundation. The whole Dacian plain in spring displays a black swamp, as ungrateful to the olfactory nerves as noxious to the organs of respiration and digestion, producing agues and intermittent fevers, which abound in these regions. In this trackless morass the horses of travellers plunge up to their bellies, until by repeated compression they have created a road for their light wicker waggons. The tips of verdure which now peep through the interstices of this extensive compost are found upon examination to be already hay three feet long, as white as snow: they continue their elevation, nourished and supported by this prop, until the revolution of the earth round the sun has produced from *their* decomposition an additional superficies of compost, for the annually renewed effort of prodigal nature.

It may be easily inferred from these premises that the finest pastures, the most certain and plentiful harvests at the least possible expence and the most luxuriant vintages, present to the necessary and even voluptuous desires of man all his insatiate heart could wish. They do, and to such an extent that the (so called) necessaries of life: meat,

bread and wine are in such abundance and consequently so cheap (from the exportation *except to Constantinople*, and even *that at a maximum*, being prohibited) that this year and every year of peace many proprietors have found themselves reduced to the necessity of throwing away whole magazines of damaged corn, which they had preserved for some time in hopes of a war, or such an increase of price as would cover the expence of sending it to market.

A labouring man would find difficulty in eating a farthing's worth of bread a day. Good wine is sold at a halfpenny a bottle, meat in proportion. Horses eat only barley and are allowed as much as they desire. The kilo (800 lbs) of barley is sold in summer for about 2/6d English, a waggon load of hay for a shilling, and delivered and *stowed* by the *seller*.

This abundance produces upon the characters of the lower classes the necessary concomitants of gluttony, drunkenness, natural indolence and violent sensual appetites. But it renders them healthy, strong, bold, quick of apprehension and (in the intervals of positive corporal pain from the *zabtchis*), proud, contented and courteous. A Wallachian peasant (the very poorest) eats regularly four times a day and no prince in Christendom fares more luxuriously. He may consider the whole country at his disposition: he sows and mows hay where he pleases, merely leaving a tenth of the crop for the ground landlord, *whoever he may be*, a fact of which he does not always take the trouble of enquiring. His wife makes his cloths, and he has no other care (and consequently no other incitement to *labour*) than the repeated demands of the *zabtchi* (collector of taxes, an officer of the *ispravnic* or governor of the province). This functionary is always attended by Albanians, armed with pistols, musquets, sabres, daggers and particularly whips of an appalling consistency. The genuine Wallach scarcely ever pays a para without having previously submitted to as many blows as his posteriors can endure.

He has as natural an antipathy against the payment of taxes as the Englishman, the Scotchman or the Irishman, but, being unable to *call meetings* of his brethren, to appeal, remonstrate, menace, or rebel, he seems to have listened to and adopted Mr. Benjamin Constants advice to Frenchmen, the doctrine of *passive resistance*, but invariably finishes as the French have done, by paying, not only the original demand, but the Albanians for administering and the *zabtchi* for superintending the punishment.

The quantity of forage has produced the hardy race of horses for which Wallachia (from its earliest periods) has always been celebrated, but which, from the strain not having been sufficiently crossed, has diminished in size, but which still possesses a force, rapidity and fire scarcely to be matched in Europe, and so docile that two saddle horses of my own have followed my caleche without being attached by the slightest cord, five posts a day, like dogs. The peasants have all quantities

of these horses, which may be bought for a trifle, but they prefer bullocks for agricultural purposes and even transport, as requiring less care and of certain although trifling profit by selling them to the Turks to be stewed into a fat jelly (with which they make their pilafs) and sent to Constantinople at the appointed annual visits, whilst the horses are mere lumber except in case of a war for the remount of the cavalry of the foreign armies.

Hence, in no part of the world, not excepting even England or Russia, is travelling post so expeditious and agreeable as in Wallachia. On the great roads to Yassy, Hermanstadt, Constantinople, Crayova, etc., nearly, and some times more, than 100 post horses are seen grazing round the station, the fore fetlocks coupled; at about a miles distance the 2 postillions (one is obliged to take eight horses to a travelling caleche) crack their long whips with such address as to make themselves heard by their comrades at the post house.

Immediately the whole « corps de poste » is in motion, the two postillions (*first turn*), in readiness, mount each a vigorous hackney and, galloping without saddle bridle or even halter, by the aid of their legs directing the march of their « montures », round the herd of grazing steeds, by the noise of their whips soon drive as many as are requisite within the spacious enclosure, where the rope tackling for 8 horses is already extended on the earth by an officer called a *tchaoutch*, each animal mechanically hobbles to his place; the breast band is merely lifted over his head and the attelage is ready even before the caleche arrives. The price of the whole journey is paid at Buccorest on quitting, or on the frontier on entering Wallachia, a mere trifle, which includes postillions; the secretary, a mere peasant, dignified by the high sounding title of logothete (chancellor), merely makes a minute upon the back of the Menzeel ¹⁾, or order for post horses, and the whole is terminated in five minutes. If the traveller gives a piastre (about 3½d a head) to the two postillions, he is thought generous, and the fresh postillions are delighted at the hopes of an equal share of good fortune: they grin, shout and drive off at full speed. The whole country is level as a bowling green, covered with sward, and not a stone to be found: thus the pleasure arising from rapidity is not counteracted by the disagreeable « cahotemens » of an artificial high road in England and particularly in France.

No Government in Europe exacts *nominally* and according to *law* such trifling pecuniary retributions from its subjects as the Ottoman Porte. The annual budget of the prince of Wallachia for a country as large as England, with a million of inhabitants, only raises *legally* the trifling sum of 3,300,000 piastres or £ 90,000 (including the haratch or poll tax to the Sultan of 600,000 piastres).

¹⁾ Stație de poștă, menzil, — de unde Mizil.

This, according to the *published statement* of the ways and means by the fugitive prince Karadja, at the *command* of general Pini, covers the expence of the Court, all the public offices, governors of districts and the small military force of Albanians, and, were the laws in *favor* of the peasantry strictly enforced, the exuberance of the soil would soon leave no *stimulus* for *exertion* amongst that class of rayahs. And it may be remarked in general that what is called the *oppression* of the higher classes is by no means in a philosophical or even moral point of view an unmixed evil or misfortune even for those oppressed members of the community, still less for the State. For *necessity* (the result of fear and force) is the *only spur* to *industry*, upon uncultivated minds.

The ideas of the virtues of abstinence, or a provident accumulation of more than is sufficient for the current expences or actual exactions, under the hope of benefiting their descendants families or friends, is merely the moral fruit of education and rarely (if ever) enters the brain of an untutored and consequently ignorant human being, to whom the argument of a country's claims upon his toil must appear ridiculous and insane.

Corporal toil is every where (unless sweetened by a moral sentiment) bitter, painful and odious, but in the plains of Dacia the excessive heats of summer and the hurricanes, piercing frosts, tremendous snow storms and quantities of wolves (which enter and kill full grown individuals almost every winter even in the streets of Buccorest) render exposure to the atmosphere as dangerous as disagreeable *oppression alone* prevents a general torpor.

Were merely the £ 90.000 allowed by the Russian general exacted from the peasantry, not a tenth part perhaps not even a 20th of the already small cultivated tracts would be withdrawn from the fallow of so many centuries.

The peasantry would become mere useless, lifeless drones, scarcely superior to the enormous swine, for which their country is renowned. *As it is*, they eat *four times* and sleep twice in the 24 hours and no nation can produce a finer proportioned, gayer, quicker, bolder race of men than the genuine Wallachs.

It may appear a *cruel jest*, but I am seriously of opinion, that they owe this health, alacrity, vigour and courage to the whips of the Albanians, the vigorous and efficacious instruments of the acute and rapacious Greek and Wallachian ispravnic (governors of districts), whose *head servants* are nominated, for the *year* of their authority, *zabtchis* (collectors of taxes) and measure the extent of the demand according to the moral and physical ability to pay of the tenants of their delegated territories. An ispravnic is nominated for a year only by the Prince, at the recommendation of the *Vistiar* (treasurer, or farmer *general*); his pay from the treasury is nominally 5.000 piastres, about £ 200, which however, instead of drawing, he generally leaves, together with as *much more*, in the hands of his protector the Vistiar,

as a « *douceur* » for his protection. Some *ispravnic*s draw 30 and even 50.000 piastres, besides this fee given during the year's government, and upon this sum contrive to exist until the arrival of their turn, in 2 or three years, to the government of another province; and not only these governors, but all their servants, accumulate enough during the years harvest as to be able to serve *without wages* during the like interval, when they again descend from sovereign authority in the villages and country towns to the humble situation of laquies and mount behind their lord's caleche in the streets of Bucarest.

The Vistiari, who purchases his place of the reigning prince at about the rate of 300.000 piastres for the *year only*, by these and *other means*, sometimes clears above half a million of piastres, in this short administration. This is the mode of collecting the *civil* revenue. The military (or supposed so) force is at the disposition of an officer called Spathar (*generalissimo*) who also *purchases* his annual charge from the Prince at about 200.000 piastres; he *is charged* with the maintenance of the police of the country and defence of the frontiers, for which services he has the nomination of captains of circles or commanding officers of districts, who are bound to maintain a respectable force of armed and mounted cavalry, to the amount, as I am informed, of 12.000 men. The Spathar *sells these posts* to Albanians, the best bidders, who, instead of *keeping up the troops*, exact merely the *forage, provisions, dues, quarters, etc.*, for an army, and roam about the country accompanied by about half a dozen ragged vagabonds, counterparts of *Falstaff's regiment*, menacing, beating and extorting from the peasants as much as *they can squeeze*. The Spathar by *these means* clears nearly as much as the Vistiari.

The peasant (who *would not pay a para* if he could help it, either to Spathar, Vistiari, landlord or *his own father*, but would give *all he has* to the *priest* to save him from the still more acute and permanent vengeance of the Devil hereafter) is thus compelled, in spite of his lazy nature, to rise betimes and work hard, to avoid the discipline he is sure to receive, provided the forage or the *value*, which the captains prefer in ready money, be not forthcoming. His only means of procuring ready money is by the transport and sale of his grain, hay, honey, sheep, swine and fire wood to Bucarest or the chief town of his district, which gives birth to another species of tribute, called by the French, who have adopted it, « *contribution indirecte* ».

Each waggon, upon its arrival, is subjected to a toll *in kind*, taken *almost at discretion*, by the officers of *all the great offices* of State at Bucarest, before whose houses the peasants are compelled to pass *in parade*, and the governor of the district, *in the country*, for the *service of their households*. These ministers (Greeks) generally *farm these tolls* (which form the principal perquisites of their places) to Greek, German or other speculators and never enquire into the *amount of vexation* of the collection. It is sufficient to state once for all that the Greeks of

Fanari consider the Wallachs of *all ranks* exactly upon the footing of « canaille ». They retaliate the contempt of the Turks for *their* nation upon the Wallachs — exactly as in the « School for Scandal » when Charles Surface's servant consoles himself for a kick of his master by kicking a boy, who goes of vowing to kick the cat.

The Russian General Pini has done himself great credit by the patience and vigour with which he has remonstrated and obtained *some palliative* to this (perhaps *necessary*) *indirect contribution*, by means of which a waggon load of fire wood brought perhaps *four day's journey's* distance was frequently so reduced before its arrival at the market place as scarcely to contain a *dozen* logs; the fruit of which was perhaps the only means the poor wretch possessed or had hopes of procuring to appease the fury and arrest the arm of the zabtchi, or captain, for, according to *law*, the cattle, grain and sheep, by the Turkish fiscal laws, can only be sold to the tchelebis or commissioners from Constantinople and at a maximum, all exportation being strictly prohibited, and, from the great exuberance of the soil and activity of the zabtchis, the quantity of corn of every description, bullocks and sheep is so great and even excessive, that these Turkish commissaries can procure more than they want for even half the maximum price, *all competition* being removed. The finest wheat is left to rot on the ground, or be eaten by swine, poultry or vermin in their small wicker graineries, which surround their semi-subterranean cottages. It may be imagined that the poultry and swine of Wallachia surpass those of *every other country* in beauty, size, flavour and cheapness. The Wallachian villages literally *swarm* with the choicest articles of a gastronomist's repast: turkies may be purchased for 1/- and fowls for less than a ½d a head.

The state of the peasantry has been greatly ameliorated, and is actually, as far as concerns the *feudal* rights of the nobles, *infinitely superior* to those of Transilvania, where the peasant must work *three days a week gratis* for his ground land-lord, whilst the Wallachs are only compelled to work *one day a month*, or twelve days in the year. Until the reign of Mavrocordato (whose object was to *reduce the power* of the nobles) the peasants were mere *slaves* and might be sold (as in Russia at the present moment) by their masters. But Mavrocordato, about 60 years ago, dextrously prevailed upon the nobles to *exchange* this right for certain other privileges such as *sokotchniks*, or *subjects*, *independant* of this *Prince*, which flattered their vanity, but by degrees the subsequent Princes have infringed upon this *latter right*, and now the memory of Mavrocordato is held in detestation by the Wallachian patricians. *Sokotchniks* are now subject to *certain taxes*.

A more serious evil exists in Wallachia, by a general and revolting state of corruption in the administration of *justice* (so called), criminal as well as civil, which is converted into a mere *mode of revenue*.

The great bulwark of individual happiness in all states consists not so much in any *peculiar* code of laws, to which *all* the members of the

community are equally subject, as in the due impartial and above all *final* administration of justice in civil causes. «Sint fines litibus» is an axiom of the English laws and Courts of Justice, for which ends the great and only means is that the judges be learned as well as calm and upright, but above all *independant* and *permanent*. Unfortunately for Wallachia, which possesses a noble and admirable civil as well as criminal Code, chalked out (as our own) upon the Pandects of Justinian, not one of these essential attributes of Themis are to be discovered in her Dacian varieties.

The tribunals *in the first instance* are presided by the zabtchi, or head footman of the ispravnic, from whose sage decisions an appeal lies to the ispravnic himself, generally a wild young nobleman, over head and ears in debt, of the most neglected education, an English captain of cavalry or fox hunter, who resides and keeps up the ball at the country town, from whose awful fiat the peasant (if supported by a rival boyar) may resort to Buccorest and have his cause *reheard* before the Divan (Privy Council), composed of the Metropolitan, bishops and greatest annual officers of State (or Cabinet Ministers), from *whose award* the ousted suitor or convicted culprit may *insist upon* pleading his cause himself *in person* before the Prince.

A *right*, upon which the ears of all strangers are dinned by the nobles, as if the Wallachian peasant were the most favored and fortunate of human beings. How far the theory is justified by the experience, I shall endeavour to give an idea. The zabtchi (a mere tool of the ispravnic), the ispravnic himself, the Vistiari and all the great officers of the Divan are appointed and recalled arbitrarily by the Prince at discretion and never continue longer than *a year* in the *same* posts. The Prince himself is only nominated for 6 years, and all, from the highest to the lowest, purchase their places for the sole end of making money (as it is called). The judicial mode of making money is the most important, certain and lucrative, and is effected by creating and fomenting trifling disputes, which, once engaged in, generally terminate with the ruin of one or both of the contending parties. On my journey the other day from Buccorest to Cronstadt, I was witness of the solemn hearing of a cause before the zabtchi: a peasant lodged a complaint against his neighbour for having *driven* one of his fowls out of his own garden with *too great violence*. The fowl was not worth a half-penny. The zabtchi condemned the rude proprietor and sturdy defender of his territory to pay a fine of *ten piastres*.

The usual fee to the judge is not less than the half of the sum demanded, if obtained. Thus should a peasant assert a claim to 20 or 200 piastres upon his neighbour, the decision of the zabtchi is instantly in favor of the complaining and presumed injured party, and the money summarily levied with costs, the half of which is paid over to the plaintiff. The defendant, or sufferer, resorts to the ispravnic and demands the increased amount of the verdict and damages and, after,

as certainly and summarily, obtaining a reversal of the sentence, pays that nobleman his moiety. Stung by this imagined wrong (for all suitors fancy themselves in the right), the original plaintiff goes to Bucearest and presents himself to the noble proprietor of a neighbouring estate (if a member of the Divan), offering to establish himself with his family and perhaps friends upon an uncultivated and unprofitable tract of his, if he will support his appeal before the Privy Council. The minister leaps at the proposal, the affair now becomes a mere war of parties and the minister of the day generally triumphs. The cause gained, the peasant recovers his accumulated expences, of which he pays *half* to his new Apollo and migrates with his moveable possessions to the territories of his powerful patron, leaving his adversary in by no means an enviable plight. But the day of vengeance arrives: at a certain annual festival the ministers are changed, the new annual cabinet is declared, and perhaps the late favorite's name is omitted (as Mr. Fox's was) in the list. The beggared peasant's lord is seated on the couch of power and favor; despair gives place to confidence and resentment; he sells perhaps his last sheep to procure a fair written petition to the Prince, to be delivered in person, and with it plods to Bucearest, to solicit the aid of his landlord, now basking in the sunshine of influence. The indignation of this gentleman at the recital of the whole affair is not a little aggravated by the serious loss to his revenues, by the emigration of his subjects to his rivals estates. He procures his tenant access to the postelnick (or secretary of State), a Greek, who presents his petition and gravely explains his cause in a language of which not only the sovereign, but not one Fanariot of the Court understands a syllable or thinks it worth his while to study. The Prince (who is altogether guided by his postelnick) naturally refers the cause to the temporary favorite, whose report is *not unfrequently* in favor of the appelland, who, upon the tribute of the accustomed fee of *half* the estimated damages to the prince, is immediately put into possession of the remainder, regardless of the total temporary ruin of the former exulting emigrant. At the expiration of *another year*, the former minister is perhaps again in place and countenances (if there remains a hope of recovering the amount demanded) another petition from his emigrant to the Prince and the former decision is again reversed. Or the Prince is recalled, in which case every cause decided during his reign may be reopened and reexamined. And thus the wheel revolves with the advance of the machine of government towards its close, and this is civil justice administered in Dacia.

This general and highly reprehensible state of corruption operates (if possible) in a still more noxious manner to society and, in a greater degree, in the administration of criminal law, where, as is said in Hamlet: « offence's gilded hand can show by justice ». All punishments for all offences from the highest (murder for instance) to the very lowest are commuted by the payment of fines, and no offender, or robber

even, is actually punished unless the party injured purchases his punishment from the aga (minister of the police, a Greek), at Buccorest, or from the ispravnic of the district, in the country. And the sale of these punishments, mitigations and pardons, which are *all arbitrary* and the price of which depends entirely upon the pecuniary capability of the person who applies, form the principal feature in the revenues of these officers. I shall offer a striking instance. The iron window frames of a cellar in my house at Buccorest were stolen in the night and the cellar half filled with the plunder of the contents of three shops: the robbery was committed by removing the tiles from the roofs of the merchants houses in the night, what is called in England a burglary, a capital felony.

The thief was discovered to be a helper in my stables, who, upon being detected in the act of breaking the cellar door, to take possession of the stolen property, confessed the fact and declared the names of the ransacked shopkeepers. These, upon information being given, were glad to recover their goods, but begged me earnestly not to mention their names to the aga, to whom I had sent the robber for punishment, as that minister would compel them to prosecute, and they should be obliged to pay more than the value of the goods, or remain every day for weeks in his antichamber with the thief, waiting for an audience. I consented. The thief (although I had formally denounced the burglary to the aga) escaped without any punishment and was seen the very same day drinking in a wine house with my coachman, who was doubtless his accomplice.

One fertile source of revenue in Wallachia (not for the country, but the Prince — and would that all were as innocent, for it is drawn from the puerile vanity of man, his ignorance of true honor and the real object and utility of titles in good governments, and operates its own cure by the diminution of the value of a purchased name in proportion to the quantity of titulars, as in almost all the civilized States of Europe, particularly France and Russia — is the sale, at a tariff, of honors, titles and distinctions, without the slightest regard to birth, age or services. In all oriental States great importance and dignity is attached to the natural decoration of the chin, and of course, in Wallachia, only noblemen of the five superior classes (called the *first class*) and priests are permitted to retain that distinctive attribute of virility: a flowing beard. All inferiors are unmercifully compelled to cut short this venerable excrescence. The various classes of nobility and the numerous steps in each class are sold at an established tariff, and few Wallachians can resist the temptation of pleasing the ears of their *fair friends* by ascending at costly prices the ladder of titular grandeur.

Bonapartes creation of 30.000 knights of the Legion of Honor and a whole order of patricians from princes to barons at a blow and the innumerable companions of the numerous orders of knighthood in Russia are respectable compared with the distribution of the proud

titles of great standard bearers: High Chancellor, Grand Equerry, Grand Chamberlain, Minister of the Police (Aga), Generalissimo (Spathar), Cardinal (Vornick), etc., which are to be met with by scores in every society, together with all the various high sounding offices of a polished Court in Europe, which are enjoyed by shopkeepers and even by the menial attendants of the first nobility (as I have seen knights of St. Vladimir in *Russia*), to the wonder of the rabble and ridicule of respectable foreign settlers at Buccorest.

I remember in St. Petersburg hearing the pathetic complaints of a poor German lancasterian schoolmaster whose petition for his pay of 300 paper roubles from the Government was answered by the cross of St. Vladimir of the 4th Class: the sensible pedagogue was inconsolable. I have witnessed in Wallachia the same distress of a young nobleman, who, instead of the rent of his house let to the count of prince Karadja, was created *Grand Master of the Horse* by the fugitive prince and, by a ridiculous coincidence, the Albanian guards of that prince at the same moment pressed the poor young mans horses from his carriage for the service of the princely debtor in his flight and left the high dignitary alone in a wood, to find his way back to Buccorest as he could.

The injurious and even ruinous effects of every barbarous, viz ignorant government, particularly the Turkish, are experienced in the most fatal manner to itself by the absolute extinction of all foreign commerce between its own christian subjects and other nations. First from the insecurity to private property and the danger of being thought rich, secondly from the absurd and ridiculous fiscal system of the Musalman, by which foreigners pay considerably less than rayahs.

All the products of European Turkey are monopolized by the government and can only be purchased by Turkish commissioners at fixed periods, avowedly for the use and supply of the metropolis. If exported from thence to Europe, the commerce is carried on by foreigners or Greeks under foreign (and now almost *Russian*) colours, from being subject (as such) to *inferior* custom house duties.

Thus, all competition is at an end, not only in Wallachia, but all over European Turkey. The farmer, grazier, vintner, etc. must sell at the arbitrary price fixed by the purchaser (the prince, pasha or *his contractor*), or his effects rot in his hands, and any murmur against this system is followed by a punishment, generally *a fine* (enforced by imprisonment in irons and bastinado until it is paid), which absorbs the whole subject matter of the dispute. Frequently partnerships are established between these Princes and pashas, and *foreigners*, for the fraudulent exportation of the raw products of the country to other ports than the Bosphorus. But agents and confidants are in such cases necessary, and, upon the slightest suspicion of danger, or hopes of gain from a rupture of the contract, it is unblushingly violated, as no appeal lies against a despotic governor. I saw a striking instance

of an affair of this sort during my stay in Greece: a Mr. Gropius (celebrated by the notes of Lord Byron to *Childe Harold*) Prussian consul at Athens, had agreed with the pasha of Negropont for a years monopoly of the olive oil, for which Attica is and ever has been justly renowned. In an official note this simple (although clever) Prussian detailed the destination of his oils, the certainty of sale and the great profits of the speculation, which the pasha was to divide with him.

The pasha (being illiterate) was compelled to resort to the aid of his secretary (a Greek), who, no sooner « au fait », instantly solicited and obtained, upon similar terms, a contract for all the oils of Negropont. These oils were purchased even cheaper than those of Attica, and the Greek had the address to purchase moreover, from the same pasha, a temporary embargo upon the Athenian oils of Gropius (already embarked and waiting for a fair wind at the Piraeus), until his own oils were sold without any competition. Poor Gropius, being ruined by the delay and return of his bills of exchange, was glad to sell his oils at a fifth part of the prime cost to the same Greek who had procured and profited by the embargo. All over Turkey the sale of these products is prohibited except to Turkish commissioners. Frauds are certainly committed and intentionally winked at, in order to encourage some rich speculator, who upon detection is punished by all the severity of the law, until the governor has extracted by blows and imprisonment the *finis* which he imposes at discretion.

An arbitrary government possesses however (as all evils contain a mixture of good and vice versa), in times of peace and tranquillity, a beneficial effect, if not upon the morals, at least upon the exterior conduct and deportment of the inferior classes. All governors and men *in authority* are not only the *iudices criminum*, and the *censores morum*, but the *arbitri elegantiarum* of rayahs of every description.

Not only a positive infraction of the laws of chastity on *either* sex, married or celibate, — to *prove which* the *immediately aggrieved* or interested party is admitted as good and conclusive evidence, of which I have given an example in my notes upon Corinth, sent from Rome, not only a violation of those of decency, of deportment, language, carriage, even glance of the eye, but the most trifling aberration from the ordained and defined measures and colours in their dresses or mode of wearing them, of which the officer is himself (as an English justice of the peace) the ultimate as well as primary judge, is punished by heavy fines (enforced by the same cogent and effectual means of imprisonment and blows on the feet or posteriors) in proportion to the presumed poverty or affluence of the delinquent, the latter being invariably considered as infinitely most culpable, upon the plausible pretext that from their superior condition they are bound to present an *example of morality and obedience* to their inferiors, an argument employed by advocates, with considerable effect, to a jury of butchers and bakers in England in similar cases. From these causes the poor

Greeks possess that humble, sneaking deportment, which is so disgusting to a man who feels the dignity of his nature and is shocked at a view of its baseness, and from a deep sentiment of these insults proceeds that boiling resentment which recently at Galatz could only appease itself by the indiscriminate slaughter of every Mussulman within reach.

I shall endeavour to explain the motives of the Turks for this scrupulous attention to «costume». Their crass ignorance has induced them to attach a literal signification to the term «great man». They seek to support their claims to real, viz. moral grandeur by the extension of their physical exteriors, clothing, or rather muffling themselves according to their respective ranks in society with pelisse upon pelisse and enormous rolls of muslin round their turbans — call «kavooks» — which makes a man of great quality's head sometimes nearly as large as his posteriors. In every country slaves ape their masters and inferiors their superiors, as much as is permitted, and which is in Europe partially remedied by decorations, to denote the various classes (an excellent system in pure military governments, such as Prussia and Russia). The poor vain Greeks, not being permitted to wear a *kavook* at all, and condemned (as a *distinctive mark of slavery*) to crown themselves with caps of lamb's wool in form of a baloon, have at various intervals endeavoured to draw «bright honor» even from this degrading badge of ignominy, by swelling the dimensions of this capital ornament, to the indignation and horror of their masters, who have procured a hattı şerif from the Commander of the Faithful, limiting the size and even impudent *form* of the Greek *kalpaks*.

But so strong is vanity rooted in the hearts of *Greeks* that repeated examples have been found necessary to enforce the observance of this regulation, by summarily *decapitating* in the streets of Constantinople even the most respectable Greeks, whose caps upon inspection were found to possess more cubic inches than allowed by law. This mode of decapitation for trifling offences (the Turkish «receipt to govern Greeks») and which they *may* have drawn from the precepts of the greatest of the Greek legislators of antiquity, however cruel and needless in the zenith of the Turkish Empire, is now *necessitated* by the same motive which calls upon the States of Europe to interfere in their expulsion, viz. the actual, absolute *inability* of the very few remaining Turks to maintain their dominion over the comparatively immense christian population in Europe except by acts of cruel despotism which shock every feeling of humanity, by crimes, the commission of which however *cannot be remedied* as long as the reins of power are in the hands of *so few* individuals, whose only means of personal safety for themselves, as well as enforcing obedience, are terror, in order to produce a state of brutally abject inferiority in those they are compelled to trample upon. The Turks have the instinct of brutes (which sometimes is more efficacious than the sublimest reasonings of the human

beings): this points out to them the inevitable danger of permitting the mental progress of their *christian slaves*, whose blind ignorance is as essential to their dominion as to our West India planters, where the human, but impolitic system of Mr. Wilberforce of enlightening the minds of Negroes would only tend to render them more *certainly* and *speedily* the butchers of their overseers. The *shortest* and *only* effectual remedy to *this oppression* would be to *kill those few overseers*. The Turks are wiser politicians, though not such eloquent moralists as Mr. Wilberforce.

This state of things in European Turkey and the mode with which justice (so called) was administered by a Turkish *cadi* (judge) in a dispute between believers and Infidels would soon have prevented all commerce, sojourn and even communication between the *Faithful* and members of foreign States had not an expedient been discovered and adopted of palliating the evil and withdrawing foreigners from Turkish tribunals altogether by the creation of a class of men in the Levant called consuls, a race of men «*sui generis*», whose impudence at first astonishes and afterwards excites a smile from an European of education, who from the title consul in civilized Europe can form a very feeble idea of the extent of authority and importance to the fortunes and lives of their countrymen of these functionaries in Turkey.

In the western States of Europe an English gentleman considers his consul as a mere «*notary public*», nominated to *legalize* certificates of deaths, marriages, signatures to contracts and powers of attorney, in order to make those documents admissible evidence in English Courts of Justice, for *each* of which the consul receives a *trifling fee*.

But the weapon of an European consul in the Levant, as far as concerns the subjects of the State he represents (by a stipulation with the Porte), are infinitely more formidable than those of *an ambassador* elsewhere. Not only the pen and seal of office, but he holds with an arbitrary and *sometimes cruel* hand the balance of civil and criminal justice. The key and fetters of a dungeon and the whips of an executioner are employed at his discretion by *Turkish janissaries*, of which each has a certain number allowed by the Porte, who serve *without pay*, and contrive to make their *places profitable* in a country where power is profit to those who chose to employ it in that direction. Even in many cases the ultimate fiat of life or death issues from his lips. In most parts of Turkey these awful functions are in the hands of men of very lowest class, of ignorant minds, depraved habits, ruined fortunes, absolute proscripsts. The present Austrian consul in the Morea, Zacchini, is a *condemned felon*, whose forfeited life was spared from the merit of having impeached and procured the conviction of his accomplices (I have formerly sent the record of his recent pardon, under the great seal of the Ionian Islands, at the request of Mr. Frere, to Sr. Thos. Maitland). Nevertheless from this *fact alone* the still horrible state of a *rayah* (or christian subject in Turkey) may be imagined,

for every rayah prefers placing his fortune and life in the hands even of *such men* and sacrifices the half of his possessions to *purchase* from foreign consuls *fraudulent certificates of foreign origin* (as in the case of *Sakellario*), in order to escape the more dreadful and unblushing iniquity and mockery of a Turkish tribunal when the dispute is between a Mussulman and an Infidel.

The *sale* of these fraudulent certificates forms the most lucrative branch of the revenues of these consuls.

The vexations and misfortunes of the suffering Wallachs are particularly detailed and remedied (as far as mere stipulations could effect) in the hattı-hoomayoon I had the honor to transmit a translation of last year. But nothing short of the presence of a Russian *army* on the frontier could restrain the Turkish ministry in the connivance at, if not actual, injunctions for the spoliations of the Greek princes, particularly as the Russian consul general Kirigow (for the last 26 years, until he was removed two years since), an Armenian from Constantinople, was ever disposed to sell his taciturnity and wink at (even *aid in*) the commission of the most revolting abuses and even murders of the temporary sovereigns of Wallachian and even Russian subjects.

These insupportable excesses about three years since brought the patience of the Wallachians to an end; they petitioned to Constantinople and St. Petersburg, time after time, against Karadja and Kirigow: the petitions to the former were doubtless intercepted until the conclusions of this Princes reign, when, upon the pretext of some crying enormities, committed so long ago as the year 1812, at the time of the evacuation of Wallachia by the Russian armies, Kirigow was recalled and is now waiting for his trial at Odessa, having been *degraded* to the *rank of a peasant*. The petitions to Constantinople were answered *à la turque* by Capidgi-Bashis, or court assassins, who were all however intercepted and murdered on the frontiers by an Albanian named Gentch, now and always a great favorite of general Pini, the present Russian consul general, from the circumstance of his formerly having been in the Russian service. It is fit to remark that, although the Porte, at the proof of Karadja's enormities (accusations which were supported by the Russian consul Pini) wished and offered to depose him and nominate a successor, Strogonoff always opposed this simple and efficient remedy, invoking the treaty of Buccorest. It is evident that Karadja's object and that of the Russian Court was the same, viz to render the government of the Greek princes so insupportable to the Wallachs that they would be reduced to petition the aid of the Russians to relieve them from so shocking a burthen.

Kirigof was replaced by a general Pini, also an Armenian from Constantinople, a man of great natural talent, kind heart, excellent private character and devoted to the interests of his sovereign. He has effected much good in Wallachia: for the peasantry he has tripled the amount of the maximum price for provisions purchased formerly for a mere

trifle, about a *shilling a head for sheep* etc., he has *restrained* many galling vexations of the Greek and native nobility upon that class, and, as long as he supposes himself *watched*, will probably not much abuse his trust to enrich himself, which he might easily do to an indefinite amount. But great riches in this country are only to be acquired by the commission of a connivance at crimes: the temptations for cupidity in Wallachia are almost irresistible to a man of low origin and early and long subordinate habits, surrounded only by men of all nations, scarcely emerged from a state of absolute barbarism, who consider, as our Wolsey did, «simony fair play, and even in the presence would tell untruths». Greeks, Wallachs, Russians and Austrians (in this devoted country) of all ranks and descriptions consider the acquisition of money *quocunque modo rem* as the great and sole end of exertion and existence. The Wallachians alone spend as freely as they obtain it; the rest have their eyes steadfastly turned towards their own respective countries, hoard their gains and look upon Wallachia as the mere milch cow to be drained and exhausted at discretion.

This system, so long acted upon, has produced the necessary consequence: it has withdrawn the whole circulating medium of the country and explains and accounts for the excessive cheapness of all articles of necessity to the despair of the landed proprietors, the peasantry and even the Greeks and Turks themselves, who find the source dried up — and that they have killed the goose, instead of wisely waiting for the daily golden egg.

The aggressions of various Sultans upon the frontier of Transilvania, where they have committed every horror of the most barbarous warfare, have necessitated at various intervals similar visits of retaliation on the part of the German sovereigns, who have occupied and retained for *several years little Wallachia* and at times even the whole principality. These Austrian military incursions of revenge are by no means remarkable for those regular habits of discipline which have been presented to the admiration of the civilized world during the late three years military occupation of France by the allied Powers, and their excesses may be justified.

An Austrian soldier who sees a Turk deliberately cut off the head of his officer (who perhaps from his horse being shot under him has the misfortune to be made a prisoner) loses his *sang froid*, his superiors that *esprit du corps* and feeling of humanity which adorns the character of most European and particularly English officers and often prompts them at the hazard of their own lives to save that of a fallen foe. This war in Turkey is conducted on both sides with fury; all the horrors accompanying the mad storming of an obstinate fortress are exercised at the occupation of a defenceless village. The males fly, the females offer no resistance, and a repetition of these scenes ensures the sex to patience and submission to injuries, the recital of which only excite a smile upon the lips of the unreflecting. The effect is easily

divined. That sense of shame at the commission or participation of a prohibited offence, which urged Lucretia to suicide is felt only in those societies where the majority have escaped to triumph over the victims of lawless force. But so repeated and general have been these military operations in Dacia, — Albanians, Turks, Austrians, Russians and Wallachs advancing and succeeding each other in an almost uninterrupted succession (and the latter are perhaps the least refined of all), — that Brutus, if alive, might again declare, on contemplating the fair sex of a Wallachian village on the banks of the Dimbovitza, where every hand is occupied in the duties of her station, « Virtue, thou art but a name ».

It is an easy task to point out the evils of any system of government or administration, but very difficult to indicate a remedy. The actual misfortunes, misery and ruin of the hapless Wallachs, springing originally from the base passions of our nature — cupidity, cruelty, revenge (and who dares arraign the inscrutable decrees of Him who implanted them in the hearts of man as well as in those of cats, monkeys and wolves?), these passions, so fatal to their possessors (and of which the Greek princes and their craft followers profit) would not cease with the expulsion of the Turks and their obsequious viceroys. *Quid leges sine moribus proficiant?* and where is this region of morality to be found? In England, the only spot in Europe where it is not thought *mauvais ton* and *maussade* to avow in good society a general respect for and admiration of what is just and honorable and a disgust at perfidy, notwithstanding the reiterated and united efforts of all the most sincere, zealous and experienced statesmen, philosophers and moralists to check if not prevent bribery at elections, the laws upon this subject have been found not only useless to prevent (by that *some* supposed) evil, but in many cases absolutely noxious and productive of a diametrically contrary effect to that intended (*viz.* to *purify* the House of Commons) by placing arms in the hands of the corrupt, to expel a fair intentioned generous candidate, to check the real benevolence and liberality of the affluent towards indignant merit.

An endeavour to eradicate partiality and extortion from the judges of Wallachia, without annihilating their existence as a nation, by introducing foreign Courts of Justice, would be as chimerical as to drain their hearts of their vital blood without killing the rapacious individuals.

But, as in a fever the too rapid circulation may be diminished by cathartics and the irritation tempered by abstinence, thus the moral irritation of cupidity, produced by a swarm of needy Greeks, who arrive in the country loaded with debts, contracted during perhaps their whole lives upon the mere strength of their connection with a reigning family, who are necessarily compelled to acts of rapacity, in order to procure supplies only to be procured by connivance at, or instigation to, crimes of this description, *viz.* gross partiality in the

distribution of (so called) justice, as these Greeks are perpetually renewed from Constantinople, and as the system of a perpetual renovation of the ispravnic or district judges is a mean of punishment instead of recompense for the conscientious discharge of his duty (could such an example be found!), I conceive a positive amelioration, though not cure, of the actually diseased state of civil jurisdiction might be effected, in the course of a *few years*, by extending the duration of — if not making permanent — the situation of ispravnic, as far as regards their judicial functions and exacting on their nomination proofs of a previous course of legal study by a degree *in laws* obtained in a foreign University. Vienna is the most fit for this purpose, from its vicinity, and being more scrupulous in the distribution of its honors than many other Universities of Germany. This would also help to form and correct the versatile character of the young Wallachians of quality by infusing a part of the German gravity and solidity, and a useful political bias which ever turns with pleasure and affection to the seat of early instructions and amusements.

This however can only be effected after the expulsion, or permanent establishment (*for life* at least), of the reigning Prince. No advancement towards serious reform can be effected or hoped for, as long as the impelling causes of disorder continue to operate in so forcible a manner, from the temporary and cursory interests of the sovereign and his ministers being forwarded instead of leashed by the vices and iniquities of his representatives.

As to a political, commercial and certain advantage to the country in general as a nation, of which Prince, nobles and peasants would all speedily feel the effects: firstly, a reform in the immoderate number of fast days and festivals, and which it is a crime to *labour* — amounting to 240 days in the year!; 2-dly the like reform in the immoderate number of priests and monks — five or six are to be found in every small hamlet, and in the great towns they swarm by hundreds; 3-dly a resumption of the two great extent of church lands for the use of the State — the Church possesses about a third part of all the territory of Wallachia; 4-thly a law against donations and legacies in mortmain for the future; fifthly, free commerce upon payment of moderate duties, permission to export the immense (and actually useless and valueless) forests of timber to Russia and the Crimea (where none is to be had), to export corn, hemp, wine, flax, horses, bullocks, sheep and swine into Germany or through the Bosphorus into the Mediterranean.

These simple and just rights of every nation would not only be of infinite advantage to the actual population of Wallachia and bring crowds of settlers from Switzerland, Germany and other parts of the Continent, who now emigrate to America, but greatly benefit the Sultan by the transit duties he would receive, and clip the wings of Russia, whose ports on the Black Sea, Odessa, Sebastopol, etc., etc. owe their

present prosperity entirely to the ignorance of the Turkish government in taking away all competition of her European provinces in the exportation of corn (the staple commodity) from the Crimea and other southern departments of that Empire to the islands of the Archipelago. The haratch might be tripled and decupled in a short time without being felt by the prosperous rayahs of Wallachia.
