

would be, as mentioned in several of my reports,
 the construction of a new custom house. -
 Several plans for such a construction have been
 submitted to the General Direction at
 Constantinople but nothing has been
 decided as yet.

I have the honour to be,
 with the highest respect,

Sir,

Your Excellency's,
 most obedient,
 humble servant,
 J. Falanga

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1907 .		203 68 Jer.
Jerusalem, September 8. 1908	No.	Received by <i>post</i>
Consul Blech N° 45.	(Subject.) <u>Reform in Turkey</u> : Local views and tendencies. As to abolition of Capitulations.	
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Jerusalem.

September 8. 1908.

Sir,

Six weeks have elapsed since the institution of the constitutional régime in Turkey, and the outburst of popular rejoicing at the change has now subsided. The fellahin are still enthusiastic in their joy at having obtained liberty, but it may be doubted whether they have a correct idea of its meaning. It will be a disappointment to some when they learn that liberty does not imply, as they seem to think, the general abolition of taxes. But there are as yet no signs of a reaction in the feeling of equality for all classes, and I have not heard of any untoward incident

to Your Excellency

The Right Honourable

Sir Gerard Dowther, K.C.M.G., C.B.,

in

in this Sanjak, such as have been reported from JENIN and Nablous (both under Beirut) where the popular interpretation given by the local Moslems to the change was that now they could treat the Christians just as they wished. Even at Hebron, a notorious centre of Mussulman fanaticism, the celebrations passed off quite quietly.

It cannot be expected that any tangible result of the new order of things should be noticeable at Jerusalem until the new Governor has arrived and has had time to acquaint himself with local requirements. The first thing to which I hope he will devote his attention is the state of the roads, which through years of neglect have fallen into a condition of disrepair recalling that of

of the roads near Constantinople. But the task of administration will be complicated at first owing to the loss of revenue arising from the abandonment of illegal and excessive taxation. If, however, commerce and industry are freed from the arbitrary and vexatious impediments to which they have been subjected hitherto, this loss will rapidly give place to a considerable gain.

The most important of all the reforms which the 'Committee of Union and Progress' can institute will be the close supervision of the officials, both judicial and administrative, so as to insure the prevention of all illegalities. It is too much to hope that the Turkish official can at a single stride abandon all the malpractices so common in this country from time immemorial; for
their

their gradual cessation two things are requisite: the change from above in the system of government, and the creation of a healthy public opinion which shall adequately condemn corruption and injustice. The first condition has been realised; the second may come in time, and last week's issue of the local government newspaper contained a warning that the names of all offending officials would in future be published. But, to be effective, the change must be far reaching, especially when it is remembered that but a few weeks have elapsed since the people of this country could read in the Constantinople newspapers the accounts of sumptuous entertainments, attended by the elite of the capital, given by high Ottoman officials whose venality and corruption were a by-word.

Paragraphs have appeared in the
European

European press as to the abolition of the Capitulations, and at least one Great Power is alleged to be ready to give its consent to this measure. Those of my foreign colleagues with whom I have conversed on this subject are of opinion that the proposal is at least premature, and that, while giving every credit to the party of reform for their desire to improve the administration of the country, it must not be forgotten that one result of the Constitutional change will be to increase the tendency to curtail all the privileges enjoyed by foreigners; it is assumed consequently that there will be no desire on the part of the Powers to divest themselves of the safeguard against injustice now afforded by the Capitulations, at least until the judicial staff of the country

is very greatly improved.

I have the honour to be,

with the greatest respect,

Sir,

Your Excellency's

most obedient,

humble servant,

E. Blech.