

Jerusalem

7 November 1851

No 20

Sir.

I have the honor to offer a few remarks on the condition of Palestine in general.

Having recently perused a book called Turkey and its Destiny, I could not but remark mentally as I proceeded, on the contrast existing between the condition there portrayed of the provinces of Asia minor, and that of this country.

The Author's description of an expiring population, and deserted towns

Right Honorable
His Excellency
Sir L. Canning GCB.

1851
London 3 Nov.

The General Rivin

No 19

No 18

8

At present

Paul

This sketch has been read to

the Pasha

4 days ago

Arrival of Major's
Pasha - Character of
Adhem Pasha

Handwritten marginal notes in Arabic script along the left edge of the page.

and villages coincide so accurately with other books, and the oral reports of travellers, that without full and clear proof to the contrary, I cannot but believe them all.

Having never myself travelled in any portion of the Turkish Empire except in Palestine, I can only speak of it - But Palestine I have traversed in every direction, and feel sure that there are elements in operation here containing the germ of a vigorous nature, which cannot be found in other provinces.

There are however two subjects in which we who live in Palestine find the representations made in the abovementioned book to resemble our own observations.

1. The personal immorality and the official delinquencies of the officers of Turkish government, in all grades

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2. The grossness and rapacity of the Armenian character.

3. The steady increase of Christian native population, and the decline of the Moslem population.

Yet in spite of these the province of Palestine is making head, slowly in some parts, though more rapidly in others, against the stream of Moslem-Turkish immorality and delinquency.

The visible evidences of this fact, are
1. The great increase of revenue actually levied in the province within the last three years; but whether that increase is perceptible in Constantinople, or not, I am unable to state.

[It arises from the extension of agriculture, confessed by all - and the augmentation of mercantile commerce in Jaffa] so much owing to the exertions of S. Kayat. Her Majesty's Consul there.

2. The rebuilding of villages from utter heaps of desolation, and the improvement

of others which have not ceased to be inhabited - this is mostly the case in Christian villages, and in the Pashalic of Jerusalem, as Bethlehem, Ain Karim, Deir Diwan, Ram Allah, and Latrôn - but not exclusively so, for the troublesome Moslem village of Kabâtiéh near Nablus, has lately done much in the way of improvement, and Samoor near it, is entirely rebuilt.

In the Pashalic of Acre the sudden rise of the little town of Caiffa is very remarkable.

I know of no place in Palestine that has deteriorated within my knowledge of nearly six years.

3. In the city of Jerusalem the sums of money expended in building, particularly by the Convents, is considerable - in some instances the architecture is in excellent taste - and the files of camels laden with

stone

stone, with the sound of masons' hammers all day long, attest the amount of this species of industry - nor should I omit the difficulty experienced in Jerusalem by Europeans in finding a house for residence.

There are also changes which may or may not be regarded as improvements here, such as the general ringing of church bells, and the Latin funeral processions with chanting, and a huge silver crucifix.

The increased security of Christian interests in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth &c is of course attributable to the extension of Consular establishments - upon this subject I may recapitulate the gradual development of European jurisdiction in Jerusalem - arising as it seems from the work of the

London

Right Honorable
Sir S. Cassing
S.C. 1/3.

London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews.

In 1833. The Rev. J. Nicolayson, a Dane in English service, finally settled himself here as Missionary to the Jews.

1837 - He was ordained English Priest

1838 - Anglican Divine services commenced.

— English Vice Consulate established

1839 - The premises for a Church allowed to be held by Mr Nicolayson in his own name.

1840 - The foundation of the English Church laid.

1841 - The English Vice Consulate made a Consulate

— The first Pasha arrived.

1842 - The Anglican Bishop arrived.

1843 - Establishment of the Russian Sardinian, and French Consulates

1845 - Greek Patriarch commenced residence in Jerusalem instead of Constantinople.

1848 - Arrival of a Latin Patriarch

1849 - Establishment of the Austrian Consulate

1851 - A Pasha of superior rank arrived.

Other European nations are now represented in Jerusalem by the French Russian and Austrian Consulates. —

The Sardinian Consulate is suspended but not for any reason connected with the fortunes of this country.

An important element in the present condition of Palestine has been the transfer of Russian Jews to British protection — these persons form a considerable portion of the population of Jerusalem, Safed, and Tiberias — and enjoy a protection far more efficient than that enjoyed by the Jews of other European protection, and are visited by the Consul or Cancelliere, once or sometimes twice a year.

But of Jews in general it is to be remarked that in Safed and Tiberias if not in Jerusalem, they form the majority of the inhabitants, and very few of them are Turkish subjects — they

present the curious anomaly of so considerable a population living exempt from Turkish rule - it is true they are not so efficiently attended to as might be desired, but in them lies a germ of development for future time and a character different from that of the ordinary population of Palestine.

The Jews are almost the only artisans - for it is remarkable that the glaziers, blacksmiths, watch makers, tailors, shoemakers, bookbinders &c are almost exclusively Jews.

In these as well as in the Christian elements cooperating in Palestine, it is Europeanism alone which keeps the province from sinking, and which gives a tone to affairs and politics unknown in other Turkish provinces.

- these elements are not likely to sleep again, being sustained by deep religious feeling of the people, and the support of European powers -

Moslem veneration for the Holy city
is

is a non-entity except within the precincts of the great Mosque.

Among the European powers, I need scarcely say that the British name, however used with propriety has immense weight.

All these considerations, however encouraging, are nevertheless accompanied by gross venality and oppression exercised by Turkish officials on the unfortunate subjects of their authority. - wherever this has full play the misgovernment is as palpable as ever it was. -

The number of European and American travellers to Palestine is steadily augmented -

And I have no hesitation in saying that were non-Turkish subjects allowed to hold land in Palestine, or even to hold long leases of land, the country would speedily be half peopled by

Right Honourable
Sir J. Canning
G. C. B.

Europeans

Europeans - But without this
permission, Trade will force its way
into towns - and the principles of
Turkish polity are unable to cope with
the tide of religious, antiquarian,
and mercantile interest, which is
setting in towards this country,
whether from Roman Catholic, or
Protestant countries.

I have the honor to be
Sir

with the greatest respect

Your Excellency's

most obed^t. humble servant

J. Finn.

Jerusalem

7 November 1851

No 21

Sir.

I have the honor to state that having recently sent my Cancelliere to Nablus, requesting Mohammed Pasha of the Cavalry to inform me what steps have been taken for punishment of the people of Rabatieh for the assault upon Mr Aylwin.

He replied that he has not neglected the business, and though he has not yet apprehended them, will certainly punish the offenders.

Right Honorable
Sir J. Canning
B.C. 13

J

backets, given to late
Pasha - Dec 4. 1851.

St. Pauline

Jerusalem 7 Nov:

Mr General Pim

No 20

Rec: Yes 4

St. Pauline
No 20

Remarks on the
general condition
of Palestine