

Danube, and communicates by a bridge with the rock on which its twin sisters are built. This ancient place of strength is now turned into a quarantine station.

The Danube soon narrows its channel once more, and runs through another defile, where its whirling current dashes against the gigantic obstacles which obstruct its course. Here we were set ashore, and the most majestic scenes we had yet beheld since we commenced our journey through these regions arrested our attention on every side. A wall of rocks rising to a height of more than eight hundred feet, overhangs the stream from either bank. Some yards above the level of the Danube, cut out in the lower portion of these immense rocks, a magnificent road is seen winding—a recent undertaking, still pursued with vigour, and worthy those grand vestiges of ancient Rome, relics of which are still extant on the Servian shores of the Danube. A spacious grotto opens out from the Banat side, and beneath its vaulted roof, taking advantage of the natural cavities, a rustic hostelry has been constructed. After resting awhile beneath the shade afforded by this cool retreat, we proceeded along the road to the spot where a steep path leads up to the entrance of the grotto of Veterani, celebrated for the stirring legends which attach to it of exiles, robbers, and deadly conflicts.

During the war sustained by Hungary against the Turks, in 1788, the grotto of Veterani is said to have

been occupied as an entrenchment by a garrison of infantry and a piece of cannon, hoisted with considerable labour to its mouth, commanded from this impregnable position the course of the river to a wide range.

Our boat awaited us at the lower end of the road, and we again began to drift rapidly down the stream, keeping near the Servian shore. We were enabled to observe, that on this side the rocks were regularly shaped out at their base, to make space for the windings of a road which follows without interruption the sinuosities of the Danube; this road is the work of the Romans, who, during the war with the Dacians, long occupied these countries previous to leaving them in the possession of their colonies. Shortly after, on the same shore, a large inscription appeared through the interstices of a mass of brushwood; our boatman detained us a moment to contemplate this noble memorial of the victorious passage of a great people. On the face of an immense vertical rock, a richly sculptured frame-work, ornamented with spread eagles, surrounds this long inscription. Notwithstanding the ravages of time, and the blackened traces left by the fires which, during so many ages, the shepherds have kindled at the foot of this historical rock, the two first lines may yet be deciphered, the result of the process of divination being as follows:—

IMP. CÆS. D. NERVÆ. FILIUS NERVA TRAJANUS

GERM. PONT. MAX.

When we had contemplated, from a prudent distance, not to alarm the coast-guard, this imposing memento, which one is so astonished to find in the midst of such a desert, and in a region probably not a whit more civilised than when Trajan directed his legions thither, we resumed our course towards Alt-Orsova, the ancient fortress of the Banat, and shortly after we were installed in the only solitary and humble inn which this little town possesses. Of all the passengers of the *François Premier* not belonging to our party, we had only retained the young French lady who was proceeding to Bukharest, and met with so singular an escape at Peterwardein, and an old Armenian merchant of agreeable intercourse and courteous manners. The latter, who from a long acquaintance with this route had become an experienced pilot in respect of the Danube, spoke of nothing but his apprehensions as to the formidable pass we had to encounter on the morrow. He had laid such stress on the rashness of braving, at a time when the waters were so high, those terrible banks of rock, in the bed of the Danube, called by the Turks *Demir Gapy* (the Iron Gate), that we had allowed ourselves to be persuaded to accompany our Armenian by the land route to the *Skéla* station, where the steam-boat, navigating the lower Danube, awaited our arrival. This arrangement moreover, suited our taste for exploring, and

indulging our curiosity, and would allow of our visiting Mehadia, a place renowned for its mineral waters, the beauty of its scenery, and the remains of Roman wealth and luxury which are still to be found mingled with modern structures. The Romans were acquainted with the medical properties of these waters, and they were consecrated, according to their mythology, so full of poetical images, to Hercules, Venus, and Hygeia. An untoward circumstance presented an obstacle to our intentions, and obliged us to renounce this interesting excursion. The land route to Skéla was at that time partly inundated, and we were accordingly under the necessity of braving the dangerous cataracts aforesaid, and trusting our fate to the boat which was to carry us through these shoals to the Wallachian shore.

It was left for us to determine how we should employ the half day which remained at our disposal; each followed his own fancy. Orsova, however, is soon exhausted; three streets at right angles with the Danube, and two parallel with it, constitute the whole town, which is as yet but thinly inhabited. The custom-house people took possession of all our baggage, and while they were leisurely employed in making an inventory of it, we paid a visit to the lazaretto, at a short distance from Orsova. A shed, divided into three longitudinal compartments, serves as a public waiting-room, and the officials occupy

the intermediate space. A number of Servians, of miserable appearance, were confined in the space assigned to suspected persons, and held out to the visitors, over the partitions, some trifling wares of no very attractive appearance. Among these articles, which were pretended to be of Eastern manufacture, we recognised some bearing the address of the Rue St. Denis, in Paris.

In the midst of these puny Mussulmans, we were not long in distinguishing a little man, with a cunning and somewhat impudent expression of face. European garments, not a little the worse for wear, and that hideous cap worn by Turks in the discharge of any public service, composed his entire costume; he was smoking his pipe with a dignified air, when suddenly perceiving us, he addressed us in Italian. A colloquy ensued, in which the semi-Turk displayed a certain degree of caustic humour, some wit, but more especially a rare amount of assurance. The functionary who thus honoured us with his conversation was no less a personage, according to his own account, than the private medical attendant of the Pasha Milosch.

On an island in the neighbourhood of Orsova, between two stately branches of the Danube, and facing Servia, which is under his government, Prince Milosch has established his residence; rather, it would seem, on account of the remarkable character of the situation than

of its fortifications, which are half fallen into ruins. This Pasha is spoken of as a man of elevated mind and profound erudition. He is said, also, to carry his severity, at times, almost to cruelty. His childhood, like that of Sixtus the Fifth, was spent amidst the rude toil of a herd. That one who has risen from so humble a degree to a position so exalted should be inflated with some pride need excite no wonder.

The learned doctor who was before us asserted himself to be the favourite as well as the medical adviser of his master. An Illyrian by birth, then a renegade and something of an outlaw, a surgeon, an apothecary, a courtier, and for the rest, in his contempt of dress, a philosopher—this curious personage had taken a master's degree in impudent roguery. With what inexhaustible eloquence did he extol the wealth and power of his protector! A few artillerymen in ragged uniform, part of the Pasha's army, bore witness, however, that his princely bounty did not extend to the appointments of his soldiery.

Orsova, which is so near Turkey, cannot consider itself, in spite of the sanitary precautions employed in its quarantine, as completely secure; and this, probably, is the reason that the preventive measures taken against the introduction of the plague amount there to a system of persecution. Woe betide the traveller who, enticed by the beauties of the journey from Constantinople to Vienna

by the Danube, should undertake to ascend the stream. After experiencing interminable delays in the passage to Orsova, he would there have finally to expiate his fatal imprudence in the quarantine, where a fortnight's imprisonment would indefinitely lengthen the duration of his journey. This little town is, however, extremely characteristic. The picturesque disorder of the military colonies, the careless deportment of the women, the roguishness of the children, rendered more striking by the large loose dresses of the country—such were the traits of local manners we were enabled to seize, as it were, by stealth.

We left Orsova in a different boat, larger and more solidly built than the first, and we soon drifted down to New Orsova, or Ada Galeh (Fortified Island), as it is called by the Turks. This place of strength, the favourite residence of the Pasha, stands on a flat island, pleasantly situated, and covered with verdure and plants of various kinds, mingled with buildings and fortifications in the most lamentable condition. No regular plan is observable in the construction of this fortress; and it is evident, that the system upon which it is built, the result of the ignorant precautions of a succession of Pashas, is conformable to no rules of art. On the Servian shore, a large fortified tower, flanked by casemates and level batteries, forms a connection with the defences of Ada-

Galeh, and ensures to Servia the possession of the entire branch of the Danube which washes the right side of the island. When we had, at last, left behind us both these fortresses, we dashed into the foaming tumult of waters, where the Danube whirls madly round in eddies about the rocky peaks which bristle up from its shallow bed. This really dangerous part of the journey lasts for not less than twenty minutes; the roaring of the angry waters, the wild beauty of the neighbouring hills, and the vast prospect which opens out in front, rendering this rapid transit extremely impressive. The angry stream soon resumes, however, its majestic aspect, and spreads out serenely, and as though reposing from its trouble and agitation, between the distant shores of Wallachia and Servia. From this point we could perceive on the naked strand on the Wallachian side a few sorry-looking huts. This assemblage of hovels is called Skéla—and immediately opposite, on the Turkish shore, stands Cladova. Here our perilous navigation terminated. Henceforward the Danube flows peaceably on, presenting neither danger nor obstacle. The large steamer, the *Argo*, which we beheld moored alongside the barren shore, was only awaiting our arrival to dart forth upon the broad sheet of water stretching out before us, and which, from that point, is subject to the dominion of Turkey

The first aspect of the Wallachian territory, upon which

we now set foot, was not of a character to entice us. A desolate and naked tract, studded with a few huts built of mud and brushwood, is the prospect which presents itself to the traveller awaiting the departure of the steamboat from Skéla. We employed our time to some profit, however, by a visit to Tchernez, a little town situated at about a league's distance inland; and it is just to confess how much we were struck from the first by its thoroughly oriental character. Tchernez consists of little more than a long winding street lined with shops and stalls, which render it still narrower. All these shops are dirty, and the wares spread out in them for sale are frequently of a disgusting nature. It was Sunday, and the entire population was idle. The men were smoking their pipes before their doors, and the women, apart, though not entirely secluded from the men, were seated carelessly on the ground, with one leg bent under them and the other raised so as to touch the chin with the knee, carrying on lazy and listless conversation. This attitude, though strange, is graceful, and there is a loose negligence about it which is quite in harmony with the languid physiognomy of most of the young women. The costumes worn by the people bear a strong resemblance to the eastern form of dress; and, in other respects, the aspect of all these grave, immovable faces, with long, half-shaded eyes, makes one feel that there, on the

opposite shore, stands Turkey; and that she has left upon Tchernecz an impress of her manners which it will take time to efface. We were spectators of a Wallachian dance, replete with character and originality. Six men, spread out in a line with their arms interlaced, performed a marching movement from right to left and from left to right alternately, varying the step according to the taste or talent of the dancer, and heavily marking time to a tune played by two screeching fiddles. The two coryphœi, that is to say those who lead the dancers to the right or to the left, grasp, with the disengaged hand, a tall staff, on which they lean; and it is their peculiar function to embellish, with a variety of graces and flourishes, this dance, the general character of which is masculine and severe. A young Wallachian serjeant discharged this office with marked success. Holding up his head with a proud air, he swayed the whole chain of dancers along with his lusty arm, and ever and anon cast a satisfied glance at his legs, which he agitated with an agility and precision always faithful to the measure. The musicians were two Bohemians of that numerous and erratic race known in Wallachia by the name of *Tsigans*. One of these men presented so admirable a type of beauty that it was not without a feeling of pity that we saw the serjeant, who showed himself so skilful in the dance, inflict repeated blows with his

staff on his noble and interesting face, too beautiful to belong to a degraded soul, but which, nevertheless, expressed no other sentiment than that of brutish submission.

On our return from Tchernecz, in the afternoon, we found our vessel, the *Argo*, exposed to a storm of projectiles of a novel character. The inhabitants of Skéla were showering on our deck, with emulous perseverance, a volley of land tortoises; a species of bombardment which seemed to fill the besiegers and the besieged of both sexes with equal delight. Our intention was not to descend the stream as far as Galatz, the lower station of the Danube steamers. We were to leave the *Argo* at the foot of an ancient fortress on the Wallachian shore, called Giourjévo, whence it was our intention to proceed to Bukharest. The steamer we were now conveyed by would have travelled much faster than that which brought us from Pesth, had she not had to take an immense barge in tow, laden with coal, for one of the dépôts on the route. Throughout the whole day, which was overclouded and rainy, and during which the wind blew with extreme violence, the weight of this enormous mass retarded our progress, and more than once threatened the safety of one or both vessels. At one time, the whole forepart of the coal barge was carried away; and to repair this disaster entailed a

considerable loss of time. To complete our distress, the captain, who was an Italian, could with difficulty make himself understood by a Hungarian and Wallachian crew. Again, we must repeat it, for the interest of the Danube Steam Navigation Company,—the prosperity of this useful association will never be ensured, until it has reviewed with severe scrutiny its organisation, hitherto extremely deficient, and provided for the rapid transit and complete security of the traveller, as well as for the comfort which every class of society has a right to claim at the hands of a public undertaking.

We soon came abreast of Widdin, which was still healthy, though perhaps only for a few days, the plague being at the very gates of this great city. Driven along by a violent current, we were just enabled to obtain a glimpse of some fortifications, apparently in good condition, above which rises the harem of Seid Pasha, studded with innumerable windows closed with blinds, and surrounded by balconies of irregular construction. Seid Pasha possesses no less than a hundred wives, carelessly waiting, as we were told, till the ravages of the plague should thin their number, and make a few vacancies in their lord's favour. Widdin abounds in edifices which may almost be considered elegant, is thickly planted with shrubs, and bristles with those long slender minarets, which cannot be compared to

anything better than wax candles topped with silver extinguishers. A few troops in good order, a small naval arsenal, and a number of war ships drawn out along the river-side, attest the zeal of a vigilant and active chief, worthy to govern a place of this importance, numbering not less than thirty thousand inhabitants.

A frightful and desolate space, devoid of all vegetation, separates Widdin from Lon-Palanka, the principal city of Bulgaria. Further on is Oréava, then a prey to the destructive ravages of the plague.

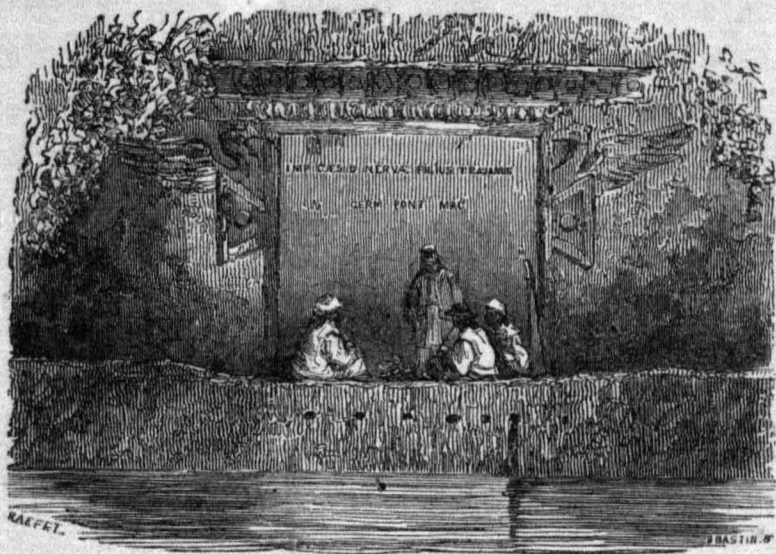
As soon as we were delivered from our dangerous and troublesome task of towing, the captain of the *Argo*, wishing to make up for lost time, determined not to allow any stoppage during the night, and trusting to the experienced steerage of an excellent Hungarian pilot, he made us continue our course in the midst of a multitude of islands, through which the Danube makes itself a thousand passages, spreading out to such a breadth as at times to resemble an inland sea. Szystow and Rouschouk are the last Bulgarian towns perceived on the right bank, the scene, at a remote period, of desolating wars, and now wasted by another plague, for we are now in the land of plagues. Shortly after, the *Argo*, steering towards the left bank, across the whole broad extent of the Danube, and coasting its low flat islands, from which the approach of the vessel startled into flight myriads

of pelicans, cormorants, and storks, landed us at last in the principality of Wallachia, beneath the dismantled walls of Giourjévo.

An abrupt shore, on which our baggage and carriages were hoisted with infinite labour, and the assistance of a great number of horses, received our caravan, somewhat wearied with the last monotonous part of our journey. It was not till we had fulfilled a series of long and tedious formalities, that we were enabled to obtain post horses to take us to Bukharest. After three hours spent in journeys backwards and forwards, and urgent solicitations, we succeeded in obtaining the disposal of all the post horses possessed by Giourjévo, where they are kept in an enclosure, and entirely without shelter. Twenty-four of these were collected, of which only two carriages availed themselves. These horses are small and slight, and without breeding. They bear a great resemblance to what in France are vulgarly called *porteurs de cerises*, but they are remarkably spirited, full of energy, and fly like the wind. The mode of harnessing them is extremely simple—two slender ropes serve as traces, and are united across the chest by a leather strap; another rope of smaller size is twisted round the head, in the fashion of a halter; no bit is used, and the feet are unshod, so that the animal is thus entirely at liberty. If these horses become fatigued in the interval from one stage

to another, the postillions dismount, and begin to rub their eyes, and pull their ears, believing that this refreshes them. Twelve of these coursers were harnessed, two by two, to each of our carriages. Animated by the long, shrill cry of the postillion, a species of half-naked savages, they suddenly started off, carrying us across plains, intersected by ravines, brooks, and bottomless bogs, and brought us by evening to Bukharest. Some of my companions had remained behind, waiting for the return of the post-horses. They took advantage of the interval, to make observations on all the curious diversions practised on the occasion of the festival of St. Peter, which fell on the day of our arrival at Giourjévo. I shall leave to them the task of describing these noisy revels.





CHAPTER III.

BUKHAREST.—WALLACHIA.

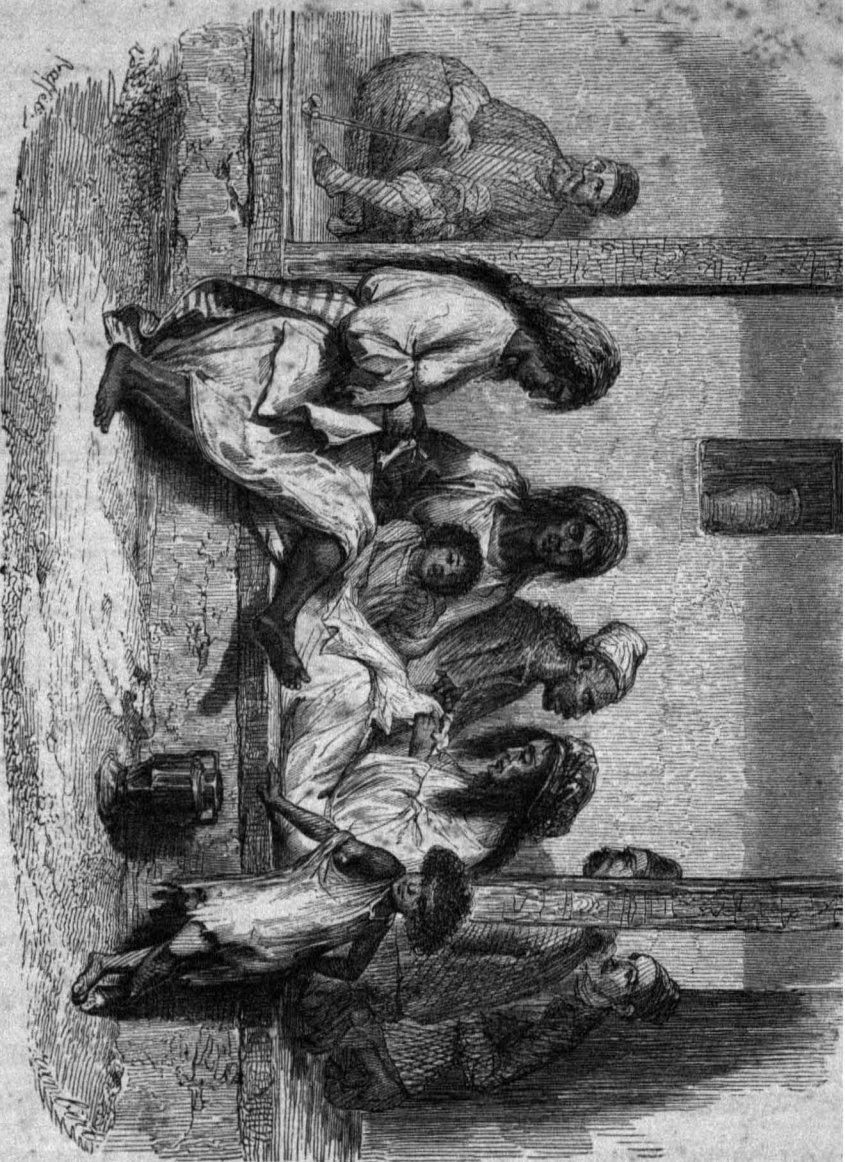


THE vast plain stretching out between Giourjévo and Bukharest is intersected, at intervals, by ravines of considerable depth, which become in the rainy season so many dangerous quagmires. With our heavy carriages, we more than once ran the risk of remaining stuck in these miry bogs, the road through which merely consists of branches of trees thrown across. An evil day would

it be for the equipage whose horses left it sunk in this black, soft mud; it would be long ere any one could come to its assistance. On these wretched roads, however, travellers are as rare as the villages themselves, if it may be allowed so to call a miserable assemblage of huts, built of clay, and covering a sort of kennel, in which an entire family is found burrowing.

On the occasion of our journey, however, these miserable hamlets were enlivened by sounds of mirth; the celebration of the festival had awakened all the fiddles of the Tsigans; the 'sourish-sweet liquor, which the Wallachian peasant is accustomed to call wine, had cheered up the hearts of all these robust villagers and dark maidens for the dance; and given fresh vigour to the nasal voices of the old women, to chaunt out their traditional songs, which perhaps Dacian or Roman ears had heard in the days of Decebalus and Trajan.

The twenty leagues we had to travel were performed quickly enough. So long as one is on the smooth surface of the meadow land, the travelling is as rapid as it is easy. The lean and famished horses, holding by nothing but old ropes, whirl the traveller along with extreme swiftness. The postillions, perched on their high wooden saddles, sling round their shoulders the rope, which serves as a bridle, and, howling and gesticulating like madmen, urge to an unceasing gallop this herd of half-wild horses



FAMILY OF TSIGANES (WALACHIA).

THE J. CLAY.

harnessed to a single carriage. From time to time the grotesque equipage plunges through the tall grass of the meadows; and the horses, profiting by the occasion, seize a few dried-up blades, and devour them as they run. On reaching the end of a stage, the team is soon freed from its harness, which, as we mentioned, consists of two traces and a girth, into which the animal passes his head of his own accord, and withdraws it in the same manner. When this is done, the drivers, to express their satisfaction, and by way of refreshing their steeds, as they say, violently tug the ears and the forelocks of each horse, and then leave them panting, to repair their vigour upon the seared grass of the plain.

On our arrival at Bukharest, the evening was already far advanced, and we experienced all the annoyance of having to seek lodgings in an immense city, through dark and tortuous streets, accompanied by guides to whom it was impossible to make ourselves understood. The club of the nobles, established in the theatre, had been pointed out to us as the only place where we could find a lodging, but we were nearly being refused all accommodation by the host; and it was only by dint of the most urgent entreaties, and after waiting out the performance, that we were enabled to take possession of two rooms, so close to the theatre, that we had only to open a door to find ourselves upon the stage. It

would, however, be ungracious to complain of this side-scene hospitality, as, notwithstanding the strange character of our apartments, we soon received visits in them from the most distinguished personages.

Scarcely were we installed, when an officer, dispatched by His Highness the Prince Regent, came to place himself at our disposal. At the same instant, a permanent guard was set over our equipages, standing out in the middle of a large court-yard, to protect them from the rapacity of the Tsigans. These wandering beggars, ever on the track of strangers, had already found means, in the confusion of our arrival, to appropriate a few articles of no great value.

We should advise the weary traveller who comes into Bukharest to let his first visit be to the capital Turkish baths, of which we were now about to test the quality. These establishments, which are situated in the quarter of the town watered by the Dombovitzza, unite all the salutary effects of vapour and shampooing, with every refinement by which the Eastern people have learnt to administer to the physical wants of existence. If the prophet was wise enough to exalt a maxim of health to the sanctity of a religious duty, the true believers, on their side, have been sensual enough to render it one of those pleasures such as they love them, and to which they abandon their whole being with such exquisite

delight. There is nothing can compare with the gentle languor that creeps over the wearied limbs, when after leaving that warm atmosphere of vapour, and undergoing a course of vigorous shampooing and aromatic frictions, you find yourself stretched out upon a soft couch, wrapped in sheets of the most delicate and yielding texture, while the pipe breathes forth its aromatic perfumes around you, and from time to time iced water, tinted with preserved roses, imparts its fragrant coolness to your lips; and yet this perfect beatitude of all the senses may be purchased in Bukharest at the most moderate price. It is to be hoped that the usages of Vienna and Paris, which daily tend to spread themselves more and more in this capital, will not interfere with the only two things which do honour to the Turks, and which alone, in Eastern civilization, are to be envied by Europe, namely, the bath, and the coffee-house.

The few visits we paid and received during the first day already began to give us a general notion of Bukharest and its inhabitants. We were treated with such marked politeness, that from the first hour the whole of our time was engaged during our stay, and would have been so, had our sojourn extended even beyond the time we were enabled to devote to their pressing hospitality.

The reigning prince had been gracious enough to appoint an hour for our reception in the evening; in

the meanwhile, like thorough foreigners, we proceeded to pass in review the fashionable world of this capital, which was taking the air at its accustomed place, and in its ordinary every-day equipages; for in this city every one keeps his own carriage. This much frequented promenade is little worthy the popularity it enjoys, for it is nothing more than a great dusty street, full of ruts. When you have reached the extremity of the street and of the city, you are not the less exposed to a good shaking on an ill-kept road, where an avenue of trees of three years' growth give hopes of a cool shade for the Wallachians of the next century, but leave the promenaders of the present day a prey to the slant rays of the sun. A flat, marshy country is the sole prospect which greets the eye around this walk. Nevertheless, the string of carriages along the road is long and close, and here, every evening, are punctually to be found the *élite* of this motley people, which is daily changing its manners no less than its costume. In the same coach in which you see women doing their best to imitate, in their dress and manners, the elegance and coquetry of the Viennese, you may also observe the black coat which represents young Wallachia facing the noble and venerable countenance of some white-bearded Boyard with the monumental dome-shaped cap imported by the Greeks of Phanar. On the box of these carriages, sits gravely

at one time a coachman in the Russian costume, muffled up in his long kaftan ; at another, a Turk with a large turban, or an Arnout with floating white skirts. This rapid procession, in short, whirling through the dust,—the plumes, the turbans and veils, passing and crossing each other about you, form quite an extraordinary spectacle, which, by its novelty, fixes the attention.

Meanwhile, we had betaken ourselves to the palace of the Hospodar. Several officers were waiting the prince's return from the drive, and we found among them a Frenchman, Viscount Grammont Louvigny, of whose extreme politeness we had already had proofs. The apartment into which we were ushered possessed no other ornament than a portrait of the Russian general, Kisseleff, a popular portrait, if ever there were one, as that of a good and brave man, whose revered features are to be met with on the most humble, as well as the proudest walls in the country. In a short time, the Hospodar was announced, and the gracious and cordial reception with which we were favoured, gave us an opportunity of judging of this prince's various acquirements. A flowing and intelligent conversation on all the different topics then occupying the attention of society in the western world, proved to us that in this capital, only to be reached through deserts, the most refined thought, and the onward march of the times, find sound and rational

interpreters. Could we venture to sketch, in a few touches, the character and personal appearance of the Hospodar of Wallachia, we should say, that Prince Ghika, who reigns under the name of Alexander the Second, with the manners and address of a nobleman, possesses a mild and grave countenance, which at once inspires confidence. His conversation is precise, yet fluent, and betokens a highly cultivated mind. The prince, who appears to have arrived at the middle age, has remained single: he sets an example of social virtues, no less than of zeal for the public good. The reigning Princes of Wallachia have adopted the civilian dress of Europe, and the uniform of the Russian Empire. They make use habitually of the French language, which they speak with remarkable fluency.

It was not till subsequently that we had the honour of being presented to the two brothers of the Hospodar. Prince Michael Ghika, the eldest of the family, is invested with the office of Minister of the Interior, under the title of Grand Vornik, and he has been raised to the dignity of Bano, which is the first rank in the state after the Hospodar. Prince Constantine Ghika, the youngest of the three brothers, is at the head of military affairs, and, as Grand Spathar, commands the little army of Wallachia.

According to Turkish usage, we were offered pipes

and coffee, and we did not take leave of the prince till a lengthened interview had given us more than one opportunity of remarking how solid and various was the information, how elevated the views of this sovereign, ruling over a country whose institutions are as yet to be established.

On our return from the palace, we found those of our travelling companions whom we had left on the Danube. They had just arrived, worn out with fatigue, and we lost no time in pointing out to them the lodgings which, with the greatest difficulty, we had discovered in a neighbouring quarter. I give their own account of what had detained them, and what they had seen at Giourjévo after we had taken our departure, clearing the post-house of all its horses.

“When,” said they, “we saw ourselves obliged to remain at Giourjévo, having neither horses nor carriages to take us to Bukharest, our first step was to secure at the post-house a sufficiency of the national carriages to convey our persons and the lumbering apparatus which was left in our charge. Nothing can be more simple or more novel than the Wallachian carriages, called in the country *caroussi*. They consist of a kind of small trough made of wooden bars, placed upon four wheels, more or less circular, and two wooden axles, without a nail, or a single particle of ironwork. This receptacle,

abundantly supplied with hay, too often in a state of fermentation, can accommodate one traveller—seldom two. The sufferer, crouching down upon his haunches, with nothing to lean upon or support him, cleaves the air, clutching the sides of this brutal equipage as a raw horseman clings to the mane of a runaway horse. These carriages can only be compared to the *telègues* of Russia, to which, however, they are far inferior. This mode of transport, which combines all the inconveniences a traveller endeavours to avoid, is, nevertheless, the only one fit for use to be had in Wallachia. We were to start at midnight, when the returned post horses would have sufficiently rested. We had, therefore, time enough to inspect the town, and enjoy the spectacle of the rejoicings, the noise of which filled the air.

“Giourjévo was a Turkish fortress, until the treaty of 1829 transferred it to Wallachia. At that epoch the generous intervention of Russia raised from their degraded condition the principalities which had been crushed by extortionate levies. Barbarism re-crossed the Danube; but, ere leaving Giourjévo, the Mussulman dismantled its ramparts, and consequently this town is a mixture of ruins and new buildings. The symmetrical plan of the modern constructions carries its right lines without deviation through the irregular mass of the old eastern buildings. This is why unfinished streets, and plots of ground encumbered

with old building materials, will long continue to disfigure the regular design of the modern Giourjévo. The quarter of the town contiguous to the Danube is of recent construction. Several pretty houses, and a church dedicated to St. Peter, consecrated that very day, gave it altogether a European aspect. Further on, is found a circular space, in the centre of which stands a tower. This place represents Giourjévo. Here all the shops and cafés are collected with their groups of smokers, seated in a circle before the door: here, too, we find two or three hotels, with fallacious sign boards, in which the only supper a traveller can get is a sorbet, and the only bed a billiard table. This piece of furniture, which is as ill fitted for one use as the other, is common in Wallachia.

“Meanwhile the town was deserted, the whole population having betaken themselves to an immense plain with neither verdure nor shade. Here whole families and villages of Wallachians arrived in troops, with numerous bands of Bohemians. The almost innumerable crowd of traders, dancers, musicians, and curious spectators attracted by the festival, which was to last several days, continued thus to swell unceasingly. On reaching the ground where the festival is held, the teams are unharnessed, a bivouac is formed, and a movable city, in which all the various races to be found in Wallachia

are mingled together, continues incessantly extending its dimensions. The Wallachians encamped beneath large awnings of white cloth, flanked by their lumbering cars, near which the buffaloes or oxen by which they are drawn were seen ruminating; while the tribes of Tsigans were recognisable by the sombre hue of their tents, striped with black.

“ On all sides arose volumes of smoke from the fires, over which was being prepared the simple food of these people, who appeared so eager for the pleasures of the festival; while beneath all the tents, men and women were dressing to make a figure in the dance. The stout daughters of Wallachia were distinguishable by their velvet caps, glittering with long chaplets of sequins or paras, the sum total of their dowries. Sometimes, the cap which was the most heavily laden with ducats, and the best calculated to attract suitors, oppressed with its weight a repulsive or sickly-looking head; while more than one gentle and refined countenance, on the other hand, was only adorned by a scanty garland of paras. This is an epitome of the history of dowries in all the civilised nations of the world. The young Tsigan girls are remarkable for a peculiar kind of beauty, which still exhibits the characteristics of the race from which these wandering tribes are asserted by some authors to have descended; the supple and lithe figures, and delicate

hands and feet of the women on the borders of the Ganges, reappear among them.

“ It would be difficult to convey an idea of the bustle and noise going on among the lively crowd assembled at this fair. An apparently endless plain, over which hung a thick cloud of dust, was covered throughout its extent with tents, booths, cars, and cattle. In the midst of this confused assembly, with no police regulations, yet without disorder, the traders set up their stalls, at which woven fabrics, cloths, skins, and provisions in abundance may be bought. Should there occur any unoccupied space in the midst of this moving crowd, it is immediately taken possession of by the dancers, who form themselves into a large ring, and commence turning, now to the right, now to the left, in a slow, marked measure, which ever and anon becomes more animated. In this dance the men and women hold each other by the hand, the Tsigan minstrels standing in the middle, and apparently taking a great deal of trouble, and exerting themselves violently, to execute their unending tunes. When the dancer has become tired of this diversion, he may leave it as soon as he chooses; and any by-stander desirous of taking part in the dance may introduce himself among the party without ceremony; accordingly, this interminable ball is kept up through a great portion of the night, the Wallachians appearing passion-

ately fond of it. Whatever may be their enthusiasm, however, for this kind of exercise, they practise it with a dignity and decency of deportment truly remarkable. Even the Tsigan girls join in it with a modest and reserved demeanour. It was not unfrequent to see fifty or sixty dancers, dressed in a variety of picturesque costumes, linked together in one circle; and an infinity of these circles were to be found throughout the extent of the plain, turning backwards and forwards round the screeching orchestras of the Bohemians. We took much pleasure in contemplating these simple diversions, which seem impressed with something of an antique severity. After wandering a considerable time among the crowd, we became accustomed, at last, to this atmosphere of din, confused cries, and sounds of bells and musical instruments; but the arrangements for our departure summoned us away, and we returned to the steam-boat agent, who is also the apothecary of the place. We were but too fortunate in confiding ourselves to his courtesy; and as we were enabled to communicate with him by means of the Italian language, this good-natured personage began by prophesying that we should not leave Bukharest on that day: he knew well, he said, the apathy and ill-will of the captain of the post towards strangers. Meanwhile, as we were threatened with getting no dinner, for want of convenient quarters, our

BUKHAREST.—WALLACHIA.

protector conducted us to the purveyor of the Quarantine, where we made a frugal repast, somewhat in the Turkish fashion; after which the honest apothecary, who had had our luggage safely stowed away, offered us the same hospitality, of which a few bundles of hay furnished forth the whole preparation.

“The power of obtaining post horses is only granted in Wallachia, as is the practice in Russia, to the bearer of a permit previously obtained from the superior authorities in the town; and it is necessary to put down the price of the whole journey from one town to another, before this document, called a *podorojnaia*, and which has to be presented to the captain of the port at each intermediate stage, can be obtained. This being done, the traveller has nothing more to disburse than the gratuity with which he rewards the postillions. To obtain this passport on such a day was no easy matter, for the festival engrossed everything and everybody. The commandant of the place was entirely absorbed in the solemn duties of his office; and his deputies, by way of contrast with the rejoicings of the day, displayed a degree of ill-humour which rendered them unapproachable. Another inconvenience was, that the Wallachian civilisation, in replacing Turkish manners, had not yet driven out of the erst Mahomedan city an annoying and sometimes dangerous bequest; at nightfall, bands of wandering dogs take

possession of every quarter in Giourjévo, and render it difficult to pass through them, especially for strangers. In spite of every obstacle, however, we were thoroughly in order when, at midnight, the post-master in person arrived, with his numerous *caroussi*, to the door of the apothecary.

“ Our baggage was already laden, when we found ourselves obliged to give up going, thanks to the obstinacy of the post-master, who refused to take any baggage. It was not till the next day, as had been predicted to us, that we were enabled to start, which we did, placing ourselves pell-mell with our luggage into two great peasant cars, and taking with us no other provisions than two loaves of black bread.

“ When we had passed the gates of the city, we found ourselves in a meadow, or rather a large marsh, in which great herds of oxen, horses, buffaloes, and sheep were grazing; we scarcely knew whither we were taken; all that we could tell with certainty was, that we were proceeding to the northward, but no other sign or indication was there by which we could identify the road leading to the capital. The roads across these wilds are as uncertain as the caprice of man. The space is broad, ruts abound in every direction, and the peasant elects, according to his fancy, between the turf and the bare earth. Our first halt was near a well, in the depths of

a small valley. In Wallachia, wells are common, and invariably constructed in the same manner; the trunk of a tree, hollowed out, lines the interior, and prevents the outward walls from falling in; the great number and large dimensions of these natural cylinders, converted to this purpose, afford an idea of the magnificence of the vegetation in the mountains whence they are brought. The water is brought up by means of a lever, and the bucket employed is a block of oak, scooped out.

“By degrees, after leaving Giourjévo, the country becomes less barren, and a few tufts of young trees begin to cover the soil. For so many years the unfortunate Wallachian peasants, hunted like wild beasts, had seen their harvests pillaged, and their fields devastated by the Turks, that it is easy to imagine how much they dreaded the neighbourhood of their oppressors. They had, therefore, left a desert of six leagues between the Danube and their first farms, as a space abandoned to the inroads of the depredators—an accursed region, overrun every year by savage bands issuing from Giourjévo, to ruin every new settlement, and drive the panic-stricken husbandmen towards the mountains.

“We had to cross two or three muddy rivers, and at each of these passages we blessed the post-master for his capricious refusal, for if we had taken those low and frail equipages, our baggage must infallibly have been

swamped, and ourselves perhaps upset in these dangerous fords. More than once we met with large holes into which the horses sunk, dragging after them our massive carts. In these difficult conjunctures, the cries of our conductors became positive howlings. Sometimes the horses, for a moment, stood still, powerless, and the postillion voiceless; then, after incredible efforts, the heavy machine, dragged out, at last from the abyss, issued heavily out of the river, leaving behind a long trace of blackish water and liquid mud.

“After having passed through several poor hamlets, whose wretched huts denoted the most abject misery, we came to a town where we again beheld with pleasure well constructed houses. A fine monastery, the entrance to which is surmounted by a tower, faces a tavern of unusual dimensions. The walls of both these edifices have been decorated by an itinerant Raphael, who has represented a most extraordinary variety of subjects, and in such numbers as certainly to show a prodigious fecundity. This daring artist has attempted to reproduce, on these whitened walls, the whole scale of creation; he has first portrayed the principal species of the animal kingdom, not omitting even the kangaroo of Australia, who certainly could not have expected this honour; then coming to the human species, to the genus *homo*, he has delighted in representing the master-piece of creation in his most magnificent

attitudes. Here, were fine gentlemen and ladies; superb pashas, with black-pointed beards; imposing boyards, with their gigantic kalpaks; then Wallachian soldiers in full costume, and the whole crowned with foliage, surrounded with garlands, and bordered with fantastic trees.

A large see-saw, which threatened to hurl each of the players into the air, as, in their turn, they balanced themselves on its summit, was erected under the walls of the convent. The Wallachians are said to have a remarkable predilection for this kind of exercise. In the great saloon of the tavern, which is also covered with brilliant frescoes by the hand of the Wallachian Rembrandt, a gipsy was accompanying on the violin a youth who was singing a slow, solemn air, in a voice as true as it was clear. Judging from the expression of the music, and the emotion of his numerous audience, this chaunt, which consisted of two simple and touching movements, must have been one of those melancholy ballads in which all primitive people have told their traditions, and related their victories or their misfortunes. The Wallachians, those descendants of Rome so long despised, must have preserved some of those melodies, which are the consolation of bondage, the last echoes of a happier destiny. Such, at least, were our impressions on hearing this simple air, sung by the poor Tsigan lad.

“On quitting this town, the name of which is Dérestié, we crossed a bridge of boats, and night soon overtook us; we did not reach the gates of Bukharest till late in the evening, for our horses, jaded by a journey of twenty leagues, slackened their pace, and our conductors, now quite hoarse, had given up their noisy driving. Conducted, at first, into a khan, or caravanserai, of the most repulsive aspect, it was only by the aid of the Jews, a serviceable people, if ever there were one, that we were enabled to discover traces of the expedition which had arrived on the previous day. At last, after much trouble, and thanks to the thoughtfulness of our fore-runners, as well as the attention of a captain who had been sent by the Hospodar, we found ourselves at midnight established in the house of an Italian, where each could enjoy the delights of a bed consisting of planks laid across tressels.”

The 13th of July found us all together in the capital of Wallachia, where our only difficulty was to choose among the many ways of spending every moment of our time usefully and agreeably. The first care in Bukharest is to secure an equipage: the great extent of the town renders this precaution necessary; and what renders it still more imperious, fashion requires it; for no person of any rank in society can be seen on foot in the streets. This custom, and that of the cloak,

which is worn on all occasions, as a protection against the dust, are anything but convenient to a stranger, anxious to see and observe everything. We soon set out, each on our own way, through this large city, whose populous streets are lined with numerous shops, in which activity is the substitute for wealth. One entire quarter is occupied by fur warehouses and tailors' workshops. The streets, of unequal width, are irregularly built and ill paved, many not having pavement at all. The houses, for the most part, are little better than barns of rotten timber, among which are seen edifices of the most pretentious style of architecture. Unfortunately, the materials used for building in this country are of too fragile a nature to resist the climate; and the finest houses in Bukharest are, in consequence, wofully dilapidated in their exterior, notwithstanding their luxurious display of flowery ornaments. What strikes one most in this town, is the variety of costumes and countenances — a fresh type occurring every moment, amidst this large population. The people here go about the town in a much more brisk and busy way than would be expected in the lower orders, who have retained their oriental character. The artisans, porters and working men of Bukharest do not seem to be afraid of work; but that which gives peculiar animation to this place, is the immense number of Jews who inhabit it: active,

insinuating, and never discouraged, they disseminate life and movement about them; for they spare neither trouble nor fatigue, in the hope of obtaining the smallest recompense. Thus, the moment you perceive the broad-brimmed hat, and black rusty gown of a Jew, you may reckon upon commanding, if you please, the services of a clever, intelligent, indefatigable servant, ready to submit to everything—contempt or anger. You may, without fear, ask anything of this man: he will answer you in German, in Italian—perhaps in as many as four languages; and for a few piastres—putting aside all other business—his industry, his ingenuity, his silence, his patience, his eloquence, his virtues, his vices, his soul and his body—all are yours. And if for a momentary service, on some slight occasion, you have once employed an Israelite, do not imagine it an easy thing to get rid of him: he is henceforth yours, or rather, you are his: he will never leave you; he will follow you at twenty paces distance in the street, and at the distance of twenty paces will divine what you want. He will take his seat on the threshold of the house you have just entered, and on coming out, you will meet his wily, respectful glance, soliciting some command. He sleeps on your staircase—under your carriage; becomes the servant of your own people; greets your dog in the streets; and is never absent for an instant: though you

may have repelled him with roughness twenty times, he still persists and perseveres in his attentions. After thus rebuffing him, you may find yourself some day, at some particular moment, for some passing whim, in want of a Jew. Scarcely have you formed the wish, than he appears, as though starting up from the earth, bending with his accustomed humility, in that peculiar attitude of the Jews, which is neither erect nor bowed down, with submissive air and attentive ears. This moment is the triumph of the Jew: he has purchased it at the cost of forty-eight hours of intessant watching, fatigue and humiliation. Scarcely have you spoken, when your wishes are obeyed—obeyed with punctuality, acuteness, and respect; and when, after all this trouble and self-denial, the poor bearded and tattered sprite fingers his cherished recompense—that coin which he has dogged, which he has invoked, whose humble varlet he has been for two days—you see, by his grateful expression, that he commends you to the gracious protection of Abraham and Isaac, and that he is ready to undergo the same trouble and fatigue for a similar reward.

A number of interesting visits which we all paid together took up the whole of this day. We saw the Museum of Bukharest, which is specially devoted to natural history, and takes up a space daily growing in extent, as the collections, which have not long been commenced,

increase in importance. The public library is established in the same building, and is composed of about seven thousand volumes. This scanty nucleus awaits further additions, by which the departments of science and history, the latter especially, will require to be better represented. On taking leave of these interesting establishments, already so prosperous, when it is considered how recent has been the regeneration of the principality, I felt great pleasure in presenting the mineralogical collection with a specimen of our Siberian platina, which, I trust, will remain as a memento of the kind reception we met with on the occasion of our visit. We were conducted thence to the college. The appearance of the spacious and commodious buildings, and of the young students dressed in a pretty uniform, at once gave a favourable impression of this institution.

In a state of such limited extent as Wallachia, public charges, henceforward to be conferred on the most capable, will become the object of a competition, which must have a good effect on the education of youth.

The wise intentions of Prince Alexander Ghika will tend to endow the country with a nursery of enlightened young men, destined to vie with the youth of other European countries. If we reflect from what a state these unfortunate Turkish provinces have emerged—what they have done, and what they are yet destined to achieve,

it is impossible to withhold our acknowledgments from the man who has laid the noble seeds of civilisation in these principalities—General Kisseleff—one of those creative geniuses so rarely met with, whose far-sighted benevolence is able to penetrate into the future. Nor can we avoid also acknowledging, that the plans of the General have been bequeathed to worthy successors, and that the rising generation of Wallachia appears well prepared to put them into practice.

On this head let me be allowed to remark how painful it has been to us to see travellers, after being received, as was the case with us, with that warmth of hospitality and devotion to the pleasure and comfort of the foreign visitor, writing, on their return, accounts so harsh in their criticism, and so forgetful of the mild and polished manners of their hosts. These travellers who, like us, visited every part of Bukharest, appear far too eager to note the sores, as yet imperfectly healed, which the present condition of society has inherited from the ancient order of things. If, in the freedom of conversations too soon allowed to become confidential, our predecessors were able to discover the existence of these evils, what good purpose is attained by disclosing them to Europe, who will not call the principalities to account for their listless attitude during the long period of moral torpor, which they have happily shaken off, but for the

manner in which they have employed the years since their restoration to that better state, whose re-invigorating effects they have already experienced? Now, in this point of view, it is perfectly true to state, that no European community has been more active in working out its way towards the right goal, through all the obstacles with which its path has been encumbered. In proof of this, examples might be cited of more than one important reform adopted and incorporated into their habits of life. After all, our somewhat critical narrators, who have paid for the hospitality of Bukharest in the coin of their witty sarcasms, will not deny, so well are they acquainted with history, that there are nations whose moral and political regeneration date only fifty years back, and who are scarcely better endowed with principles.

Having come to the end of this digression, let us return to our visits. Dr. Mayer, a German physician, an intelligent person, and a man of the world, showed us over the military hospital which is under his direction. This establishment, contained in a building not originally constructed for a hospital, leaves much to be desired as regards situation and salubrity. The supply of air in the wards was deficient. The number of sick was considerable, febrile affections being common in the country, and raging at particular seasons of the year, although considerably mitigated by the sanitary regulations to which

the soldiery are subjected. The large hospital of Panteleimon, situated in one of the approaches to the city, appeared to us much better adapted to its purposes. This establishment, instituted by a number of philanthropic subscribers, presents a suite of spacious apartments, in which light and air, the life and hope of the sick man, find free admission. The only objection to be made is, that the large space occupied by the administrative staff is lost to the patients, and takes up a room which might be employed for the relief of a few more unfortunate people. The bedsteads used at Panteleimon are of iron, while those of the military hospital are of wood. While visiting the latter place, we beheld the frightful ravages of a horrible disease, not to be mentioned, originating, for the most part, in the unbridled vices of capital cities. On our return from these excursions, we met the reigning prince, who stopped his carriage, and invited the entire party to come on the following evening to his residence, situated, at that season of the year, some distance from the city.

The morning of the 15th of July was devoted to visiting the General Assembly, the name given to the chamber of representatives of Wallachia. Prince Michael Ghika and Prince Cantacuzène were kind enough to be our introducers. The hall in which the deliberations are held, is a building connected with the metropolitan

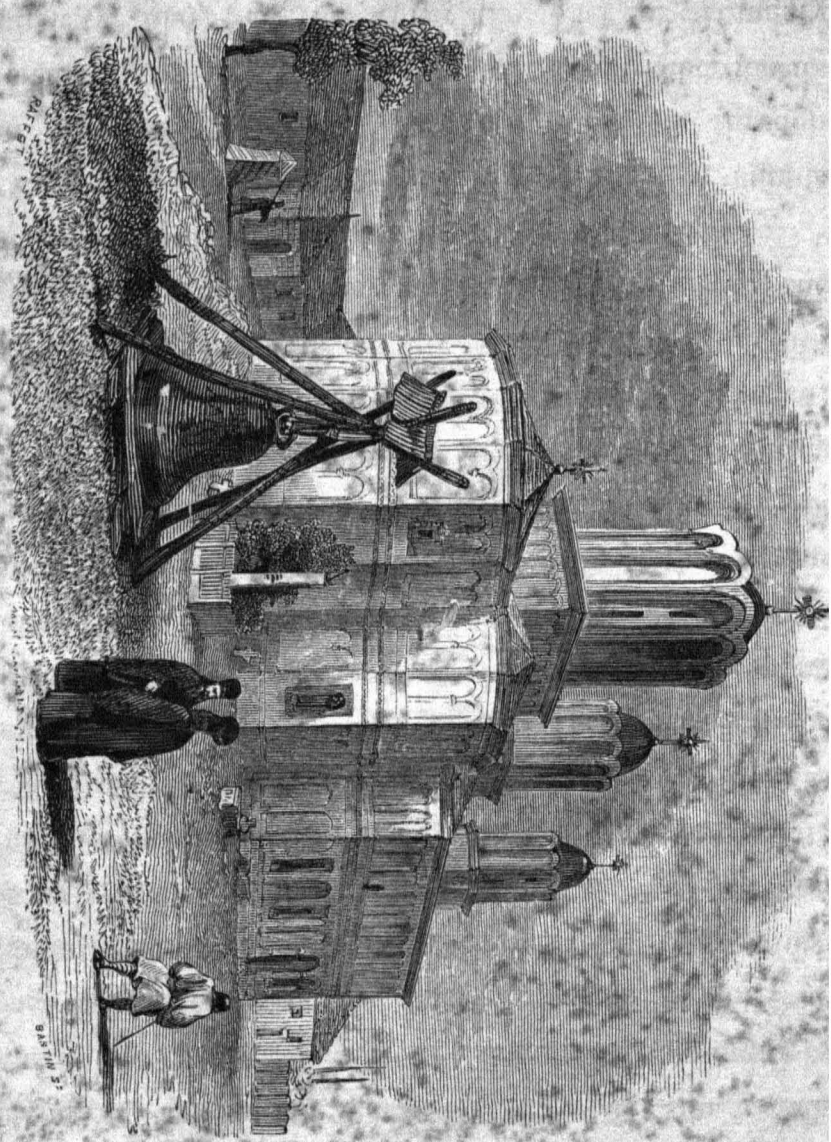
church, standing on a hill which commands the city of Bukharest, and forms a most picturesque site. This church, like all the others in the capital, is surrounded by spacious cloisters, the entrance to which is by two solid gateways, surmounted by towers, an arrangement which formerly enabled them to carry on a protracted defence. The metropolitan church is not an important monument; it is surmounted by three belfries, the domes of which, as well as the roofing of the church, are in metal; and the whole group of buildings is covered with a coat of dazzling whitewash. In the front of the edifice, which is at one of its narrowest ends, stands a peristyle, the interior of which is adorned with a profusion of paintings of the most varied description. The nave of the church is narrow, and thickly covered with gilding and images; the screen which shuts off the sanctuary is decked with the richest ornaments. The light struggles into the vaulted interior through narrow elongated windows.

In a building forming part of the cloisters stands the Hall of Assembly; access to which is through a small ante-room. Within this hall, remarkable for its simplicity, like that in which the Diet of Hungary assemble, are held the deliberations of the Boyards; it is long and narrow, and at one end stands, surmounted by a canopy, an arm-chair, occupied by the Metropolitan, who is the constitutional president of the

METROPOLITAN CHURCH OF BUKHAREST.

THE J. CLAY.

BASTIN 3.



Assembly. The forty-three members composing the Assembly were almost all present; among them might be seen one or two old Boyards, retaining the ample and majestic costume worn by them under the Turkish rule; they still keep to their beards and voluminous kalpaks. The military chiefs take part in the deliberations, dressed in their uniforms, and wearing their swords. The members speak from the places where they are seated in front of a table covered with green cloth, and the ministers are not separated from the rest of the Assembly. The order of the day was a debate on the subject of certain modifications in the organic law, or constitution of the country, having regard more particularly to ordinances enacted during the interval between the sessions of the Legislative Assembly. M. Stirbey, the Minister of Justice, sustained almost alone, yet without apparent fatigue, the whole weight of the debate. However warm the arguments might grow during this Parliamentary discussion, none of the orators were observed to outstep the forms of a polite conversation. That portion of the hall which is appropriated to the public contained but few spectators; these generally remain standing, but as soon as we entered, several Boyards were courteous enough to have seats placed for us. It is only within a short time that the deliberations of the Assembly have been made public; and

even up to the present day, the public journals have not yet obtained permission to report the debates. * On quitting the hall, we were accompanied by one of the members, Colonel Philipesco, who belongs to one of the most ancient families in the country. This officer, who received an excellent education in France, commands the 1st Regiment of Wallachian troops, and presents to his native city the remarkable example of solid acquirements allied with perfect elegance and grace of manners. It was in company with this good-natured guide that we visited the various portions of the edifice and its admirable site. From this height, Bukharest is seen to stretch out towards a distant horizon; in fact, this city, interspersed as it is with a number of gardens, covers an immense area; and, with its many-coloured roofs, lofty towers rising from more than sixty churches, and verdant tufts mingling with the mass of buildings, presents a most picturesque appearance. In the evening we obeyed the invitation of the Hospodar, and had the honour of being received at his residence of Scouffa, which is situated a few versts from Bukharest, on the banks of the Dombovitzza. The house is small, and of the humblest description; but the gardens, which stretch out into a small vale, through which the river flows, render this summer residence far preferable even to the house occupied by the prince in the city. Bukharest

no longer possesses any palace for the Wallachian princes. In 1812, that which then existed, and which was very vast, was burnt down. The Hospodar now resides in a large and splendid mansion, his own property. The interview we had with him passed off, like the first, in the most interesting conversation, in which the correct and practical judgment, and unchanging benevolence of the prince, appeared in the most favourable light. As on the first occasion, also, the Hospodar was surrounded by his family, the princesses, his sisters-in-law, and a large number of officers. The elegant uniform of the latter only served as a foil to the simple attire of the prince, who wore a black dress coat, and a waistcoat with large lappels folded back. This fashion is said to be peculiar to himself; and, indeed, we saw it adopted by no other person. At night every one proceeded to the city, which was soon reached, and the little court visited the theatre, of which, had we chosen, we might have done the honours; for the theatre was, as it were, the ante-chamber of our apartment. A few scenes of *Semiramide*, and a very lively German comedy, were the performances of the evening.

The next day the garrison of Bukharest was reviewed by Prince Constantine Ghika. The manœuvres, executed by these troops with great precision, are all upon the Russian model. We were invited by the Spathar to be

present at this review, and were stationed by his side, when an unfortunate occurrence interrupted the proceedings for a while, and caused much anxiety among the spectators. The prince, who had remained too near the fire of the troops, was struck in the face by a cartridge. The wound which it occasioned—a slight one, Heaven be thanked!—and a burn which might become serious, were immediately dressed by our companion, Dr. Léveillé; whereupon the Spathar mounted his horse, and proceeded with the review.

A dinner, to which the Hospodar graciously invited us, brought us in company with the *élite* of society at Bukharest; the *réunion* took place beneath the fine trees at Scouffa, in a broad space inaccessible to the rays of the sun. During the repast, which was preceded by the *schale*, a slight collation taken also in Russia previous to sitting down to dinner, two bands of music, concealed behind the foliage, played alternately the national airs of Wallachia, and the singular melodies of the Tsigans. The orchestra of the Tsigans, composed, as it is, of discordant instruments, nevertheless produces effects which could never be obtained by means of the regular and correct harmonies to which European ears are accustomed; as regards the measure, it is unequal, hopping, halting, and breaks out into unexpected changes. After dinner, Wallachian dances were executed, and we

were so charmed with the severe precision and perfect *ensemble* of the dancers, that the prince was kind enough to prolong these diversions in our favour, and to procure us copies of the airs, so full of originality and simple grace, which we here insert, and which accompany this Roman dance, *Hora Roumaniaska*, as it is called by the people of Wallachia. While the dancers were performing wonders, the Bohemians continued with unflagging spirit their interminable melodies. Two mandolines, two violins, pan pipes, and a sort of muffled bass, constituted the whole instrumental resources of these skilful executants, whose fine brown faces, animated with their musical ardour, produced a charming picture. When we had long enjoyed these rustic diversions, we betook ourselves to the vast and splendid drawing-rooms of M. Philipesco, where an elegant ball had assembled all the *élite* of the dancing folk of Bukharest. I know of no city in Europe in which it is possible to find more agreeable society, or in which there is a better tone, united with the most charming gaiety. This delightful ball was kept up till far in the night, and it was a pleasant sight to see the master of the house, the Aga Philipesco, in his ample Boyard dress, his fine head fringed with a long, silky-white beard, surrounded by a swarm of young and pretty women, whose gauze and ribbons, long tresses, and charming faces, were so well matched with the gentle

physiognomy of the stately old man. It was a faithful emblem of the situation of their country, which has unhesitatingly adopted the pleasures and unrestricted manners of the western world. In vain would the austere boyards oppose this invasion of modern fashions and frivolities; the present generation must have their spacious drawing-rooms, in which the waltz and the mazourka may freely develop their whirling mazes; they must have costumes which will not fetter the graceful movements of the mazourka, nor embarrass the dancer in threading the labyrinth of the French quadrille. And is it not in reason that this youthful race, called upon to take share in the civilisation which is invading the east, should adopt whatever seems to befit it, from all the elegancies and refinements, no less than the gloomy political ideas now settling upon their country? Soon enough will come the cares of public life—the anxieties of business, of industry, and speculation! Wallachia has been long enough enchained, to be allowed a short time for breath, ere it enter upon the stern career of a nation bent upon governing itself. To a nation thus awakening, it may be permitted to say, sometimes: “To-morrow we will think of serious business.”

Such was our existence at Bukharest; pleasures, visits, hospitable meetings, interesting excursions, and clear and lively observations on all that struck our minds or

attracted our eyes. In all quarters, it was a struggle who should render us the most valuable services: the most illustrious and honourable inhabitants of this good city placed themselves at our disposal, to increase our traveller's budget; and it would have been scarcely possible to have employed five fleeting days more profitably than we did. As soon as we had set our own personal notes in order, and collected those furnished us by several enlightened persons (at the head of whom we were kindly allowed to place the Hospodar, and his minister, M. Stirbey), we threw a last parting and grateful glance at this city, which has already become worthy to be numbered among the most interesting capitals. For the last time, we strolled through its tortuous streets, once more halting before the churches, with their twisted columns and elegant friezes, resplendent with coloured medallions and holy images; we hastily paid another visit to the old quarters of the city, and to the public drive of the fashionable world; we breathed the fragrant air of the cafés, where the smokers assemble, and the journals of every nation gratify the curiosity of a public, greedy of the political news of the world; and having done all this, we bethought ourselves of our departure.

With respect to the statistics of Bukharést, we are enabled to give here the amount of population, according to the last census:—

	Inhabitants of both sexes.
Boyards	2,598
Persons composing the households of Boyards . .	5,757
Inhabitants of various classes	46,604
Lay Priests	256
Their families and households	1,058
Monks	137
Jews, their families and households	2,583
[This figure represents almost the total number of Jews established in Wallachia; but very few are found in the rural districts, as they do not practice agriculture.]	
Foreigners	1,795
	<hr/> 60,788 <hr/>

In this number are omitted ten or twelve thousand individuals, who have no permanent domicile in the city, and only come there from time to time, for their business or pleasure.

There are in the city of Bukharest :

Houses	10,074
Monasteries	26
Churches	95
Printing Establishments	3
Hospitals	2
Journals:— <i>The National Museum</i> , and <i>The Walla-</i> <i>chian Courier</i>	2
Society for Literary Publications	1
School of Arts and Trades, for Soldiers	1

The ordinary food of the people consists of porridge, made of the meal of Indian wheat, or millet—a sort

of polenta: meat or salt fish are almost unknown to them. Their principal spirituous beverage is a brandy distilled from plums.

The city of Bukharest is divided into five districts, each taking its name from one of the five colours—yellow, red, green, blue and black. The Aga is the head of the police, and under his orders are five commissioners, one for each district; these superintend a greater or less number of sub-commissioners, according to the extent of the district.

After expressing our gratitude to the good and amiable Prince, from whom we parted with very sincere feelings of regret, and after taking leave of his family, and all who had shown us so much kindness, we quitted Bukharest on the 17th of July.

Our caravan was augmented by two carriages, which we had bought in the country: they were light covered carriages, and, as the sequel will show, solid enough for anything.

Forty horses were procured for us, and placed along our route; and the generous attention of the Prince went so far as to send *estaffettes*, to make sure of our being properly supplied: we were accordingly carried along with extreme speed. We first of all traversed a marshy and gloomy tract, and at twelve we forded the Yalomnitza, whose swollen waters rolled rapidly along. The relays

were waiting for us in the open fields. At these isolated stations, a clay hut is the ordinary shelter of the captain of the post. Our lengthy caravan proceeded in this way rapidly over these melancholy steppes, until a succession of heavy showers inundated the whole surrounding country, and rendered our progress slower and more laborious. An escort of gendarmes (*dorobantz*), whom we encountered at one of the stations, galloped by the side of our carriages, and when the roads became bad, kept them up with their hands; showing themselves zealously attentive, whenever any difficulties occurred. Meanwhile, we kept advancing towards the north, and approaching still nearer and nearer a fine chain of mountains, on the summits of which were accumulated heavy black vapours. More than one gang of Tsigans, overtaken by the storm, had pitched their dark tents upon the plain, and were preparing to receive the squall which was threatening to burst upon us. Beneath these smoky retreats might be seen half-clad women and girls, with one or two naked children crouching near them; poor little deformities, with distended bellies and emaciated limbs. The prairie soon became a deep marsh: horses, escort and carriages were wading through water; and now and then, when a ditch presented itself, we had either to make a circuit, or leap it by dint of blows and vociferations. It was a singular sight to

see these four coaches ploughing their way beneath a leaden sky, through inundated meadows, and at every unexpected hole, at every jolt against some obstacle beneath the water, threatening to roll over and remain buried in the mud. During these moments, every one was animated with fresh zeal. The attentive *dorobantz* lent a timely assistance to each endangered carriage; and the postillions addressed their foaming steeds no longer with vociferations, but in the mildest language, and using words of encouragement in an almost fraternal tone; for indeed these unfortunate animals quite exceeded their strength during this long and difficult journey. At length we reached Bouzéo, in the midst of roaring thunder and a dense torrent of rain, through which we could scarcely descry the green belfries and white walls of the vast abbey, the fitting residence of a bishop who is one of the wealthiest prelates of Wallachia. Our escort had fortunately obtained a reinforcement; and their assistance was at once put into requisition in crossing a torrent, the bed of which was not yet quite filled up by the rain. As we approached the Bouzéo, however, which flows between very steep banks, it was much feared that my carriage would be left behind: it had, in the first instance, crossed the torrent in safety, but on reaching the other side, a slippery steep presented itself, which it required half-an-hour of struggles and

vociferations, and more than twenty horses, to ascend. We had previously been shut up in a sort of ark, but afterwards made our way out by the carriage door, on the backs of the horses, which we used as stepping-stones, to escape a frightful bed of mud two feet deep.

At Rimnik we were to find beds. A Wallachian gentleman, M. Nikolesko, informed of our arrival, was ordering preparations for our reception, at the very time that we were inundated with the waters of heaven, and almost buried in the muddy depths of the plain. Unfortunately, as we approached the Rimnik, which we had to cross before we could gain this much desired shelter, we found the river so turbulent, that not one of our guides would venture across it during so dark a night; accordingly, we had to resign ourselves to spend the night in our carriages, and in the hovel of a peasant, who could only offer us a quantity of straw, which no horse having any pretensions to English blood would have had for his litter. Towards three in the morning, the sky had in some measure cleared, the river had become fordable, and it was not long before we reached Rimnik.

This mischance prevented our profiting by the hospitable preparations so kindly made for our reception. Arriving at so inconvenient an hour, we felt the greatest scruple to disturb the household of M. Nikolesko, and

took fresh horses to proceed without delay to the Moldavian frontier.

The residence of the noble Boyard appeared vast and sumptuous. It is built in the Italian style, with open galleries. Rimnik itself is a considerable town, and possesses a castle built of bricks, in the Turkish style. It was here that Souvoroff engaged with Mustapha Pasha, and carried off a victory which won him the title of Count of Rimnik. On the 18th, at daybreak, the weather had become fine; the plains wore an appearance of freshness charming to the eye, and a grateful sun warmed our benumbed limbs. We soon forgot the fatigues of this detestable night, and arrived at Fokschani, where the president of the district, M. George Razo, received us with the most pressing marks of politeness.

Fokschani forms the last limit of the Wallachian territory. A small stream in the midst of this city, the Milkove, over which there is a wooden bridge, marks the common boundary of the two principalities. The situation is favourable to trade; and this little town appears to be in no want of traders, more especially Jews. The Hotel de France, kept by a Frenchman, accommodated a portion of our party; while the president of the district honoured me with the hospitality of his own house in the Wallachian quarter of the town. The Ispravnik, or chief of the police, united with this superior

functionary in offering us his services. The district of which Fokschani forms a part, is called Poutna, and contains twenty-five thousand families. A French missionary is established on this frontier; he professes the Roman Catholic faith, to which twenty churches are devoted in Wallachia, and sixty in Moldavia. This morose priest, on once more meeting with Frenchmen, instead of giving himself up to the very natural pleasure of hearing about his distant country, preferred entertaining his compatriots with endless complaints of the men and things of the country in which he had been established for several years. With such feelings, life, in these distant and solitary regions, must be sad indeed.

A favourable opportunity appeared now to present itself for classifying the documents with which our amiable hosts at Bukharest had enriched us; and before quitting Wallachia, we arranged them in the order which appeared most fitting to give our readers an idea of the country we had just travelled through. Six days spent in the territories of this principality were, doubtless, not sufficient to have allowed us to collect from our own observations, information sufficiently complete on this country; nevertheless, we purpose, in the following simple statements, to put to use, in the first instance, the fruits of a special course of reading carried on during the leisure hours left us by our journey down

the Danube; and next, the result of our conversations with a number of well-informed persons, with whom it was our good fortune to meet at Bukharest.

If we devote a few pages to the history of the ancient Wallachian people, it is not that we have any intention to enter more seriously than our subject will allow into the question of their origin. But, when we consider the distinguishing traits of these people—the empire which the memory of their ancient condition still exercises over them—keeping in view those Roman traditions handed down from a period not less than eighteen centuries back, it would be almost cruel to dispute their glorious origin, traceable to the Dacians and the Romans. Moreover, we have no inclination to call into question the genuineness of those Dacians sculptured in marble on Trajan's column, and bearing so strong a resemblance to the Wallachians of the present day. Let us, therefore, leave the question of their origin, and come at once to the history of the principality. The following is, in a few words, what we have been able to collect from books on the ancient history of this country.

Towards the beginning of our era, the regions now divided under the names of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania, formed the kingdom of those terrible Dacians so frequently mentioned in the odes of Horace,

and who were descended from the Scythians, or Sarmatians. They were for a long time so formidable, that when led by Decebalus, one of their kings, Rome was alarmed, and Domitian accepted the terms of a disgraceful peace. Trajan, to revenge this defeat, twice led his victorious legions to the shores of the Danube; and to this epoch belong the curious vestiges previously spoken of, as well as the bridge so daringly conceived, the remains of which are seen not far from Skéla. So soon as Dacia was subjected, Roman colonies took possession of the territory so long plunged in barbarism, and it was governed by one of the Roman prætors.

This state of things continued up to the third century, at which time an invasion of Goths and Huns fell upon Dacia; but the Roman Empire was already tottering to its fall, and Aurelian contented himself with recalling his colonists, to whom he assigned other lands in Mœsia. Wrested from the grasp of Rome, these countries shortly fell a prey to the Huns (they were driven back after the death of Attila into Scythia), to the Gepidi, who treated with the Romans; the Lombards, who, under Justinian, marched to the conquest of Italy; and of the Avari, or White Huns, who, according to some historians, dared to threaten Byzantium, and were destroyed by Heraclius.

From the seventh to the ninth century, we find ancient Dacia occupied by the Slavonians and the

Bulgarians, who had crossed the Danube to take possession of these fertile lands, and if we may rely on certain writers, it is exactly to the period of the Slavonian invasion, that we are to refer the origin of the name Wallach, which is given to these people. The Slavonians, they assert, were accustomed to designate the Romans by the generic name Vlacci, or Vlassi; what can be less astonishing, than that they should apply the same name to a people long subject to the government of Rome. On the other hand, the lovers of etymology have discovered an etymon for the word Vlacci, like most of those discovered by them. They suppose that the first Roman colonies were established in Dacia, under the command of a certain Flaccus, and that, accordingly, the whole country was called Flaccia, and the inhabitants Flacci, whence the Vlacci of the Slavonians, and our modern Wallachia. The wisest course, in our opinion, in these questions as to names and origin, is to refer to the inhabitants of the soil, whose local traditions are frequently surer guides than the researches of historians. Accordingly, if we consult the inhabitants themselves of Wallachia as to the origin of their name, they will tell us that the name Wallach, a modern appellation, is only known to history since the twelfth century, and was applied to them by foreigners alone, it being almost unknown to the people of the

principality. These people call themselves Roumann, Roman; they call their native country, Wallachia, Tsara Roumaneska, Roman land. Moreover, the Wallachian arms consist of the Roman eagle, to which a cross has been added; and if, in the last place, we look at the masculine and robust physiognomy of the population, bearing an incredible resemblance to the Transteverini of the present day, if we search into their language, their games, their festivals, we shall find undoubted traces of the glorious origin to which the Wallachians lay claim. And this origin it would be ungracious to dispute; where, besides, would be the evil if this people should still feel within itself a little of that noble pride which has sustained and consoled it through its reverses? The people of Wallachia, of the present day, we will admit, therefore, according to all appearances, are the representatives of the Dacians and the Romans, and the Slavonians, who came into the country as conquerors, constitute the nobility of the land.

Some of these Slavonians, however, taking along with them a certain number of the ancient inhabitants of Dacia, had formed a separate settlement between the river Olt and the Danube, in order to withdraw themselves from the calamities by which these unfortunate regions were so frequently visited. This union of people constituted themselves into a national body, and they

elected a chief, on whom they conferred the title of Ban. Such is the origin of the Banat, that portion of Wallachia which stretches along the Upper Danube, and of which Craïova is the capital.

Up to the thirteenth century, the successive invasions of the Scythians, and of the Tatars of Tchinguiz-Khan, had driven away almost the entire ancient population of Dacia. Wallachia and Moldavia, then almost depopulated, placed themselves under the protection of Hungary. About this time, under the reign of Louis I., appeared *Raddoulo-Negro*, or Rodolph the Black, the first voïevode of Wallachia proper. Expelled from the Hungarian provinces by the irruption of the Tatar hordes under Batou-Khan, this chief returned with his dismayed companions to seek a refuge amid the solitudes of their native land.

The provinces then breathed awhile, and once more assumed a stable form under their voïevodes. Gradually reduced to discipline, and skilled in the art of war, the Wallachians became sufficiently powerful to resist all attempts upon their independence on the part of the Hungarian sovereigns; and more than this, they sent an invading army against the Turks, their neighbours, whose territories had been left without defence on the Danubian side. Bajazet checked this enterprise in time, and exacted a tribute from Wallachia.

For the space of nearly a century, the Wallachians now singly, now with the assistance of the Hungarians, attempted in vain to shake off the rude yoke of Turkey, whose hand only fell with a heavier weight upon their country. At length, towards 1520, Mahomed II., having expelled the sovereign of Wallachia, imposed a new voievode upon the principality, bearing the title of pasha, and concluded a treaty with it, the principal articles of which still remain inherent in the constitution of the country. During the period which succeeded this treaty, the influence of Turkey over Wallachia continued to extend itself more and more; and in 1544, a portion of the Wallachian territory was ceded to the Ottoman Empire, and fortresses were erected on the borders of the Danube, at Ibrail, Giourjévo, and Tourno, which were occupied by Turkish garrisons.

Such was the state of things when, in 1593, a voievode called Michael, resolved to shake off the Ottoman yoke. Supported by alliances formed with skilful policy, he held in check the power of the Turks, whom he had driven from their fortresses, with such effect, that Mahomed III., after sustaining a long contest, at the head of a formidable army, was forced to abandon his pretensions. After the death of Michael, however, the dissensions which arose in the councils of the clergy and nobles, caused Wallachia to fall once more under the authority of the