

Asiatic elements in the Empire were the least likely to meet with the appreciation or sympathy of the former.

Are the Arab-speaking peoples, therefore, likely to revolt, or be successful in splitting the Ottoman Empire, if they do? The present writer would like to say at once that, in his opinion, this consummation of the Empire is not devoutly to be wished. Bad, according to our standards, as Turkish government is, native Arab government, when not in tutelage to Europeans, has generally proved itself worse, when tried in the Ottoman area in modern times. Where it is of a purely Bedawin barbaric type, as in the Emirates of Central Arabia, it does well enough; but if the population be contaminated ever so little with non-Arab elements, practices, or ideas, Arab administration seems incapable of producing effective government. It has had chances in the Holy Cities at intervals, and for longer periods in the Yemen. But a European, long resident in the latter country, who had groaned under Turkish administration, where it has always been most oppressive, bore witness that the rule of native Imams, who shook off the Turkish yoke in his time, only served to replace oppressive government by oppressive anarchy.

The substitution of Arab administration for Turkish, therefore, would necessarily entail European tutelage of the parts of the Arab-speaking area in which Powers, like ourselves, have vital interests—Syria, for example, Southern Mesopotamia, and, probably, Hejaz. The best-named, in particular, would involve us in a very ticklish and thankless task. We might put in Egyptians as caretakers, but hardly with much hope of success without a leaven of Europeans, whose residence in the Holy Land would excite unappeasable susceptibilities; and we had better think many times before we exalt an imperfectly