

riches which can be procured, covered with jewellery, pearls, and pieces of money, which the parents often hire. They also try to beautify the face, by colouring it red, blue, and white, painting the eye-brows black, and staining finger-nails red. Thus adjusted, and placed upon an elevated seat, under a canopy—the bride composes herself, keeping her eyes firmly fixed upon the floor; whilst troop of women, invited to the fête abandon themselves up to amusements of a ludicrous and disgusting nature, executing divers dances and playing upon instruments. At night, the parents, husband, and women, proceed with torches and music to the house of the bride, to conduct her to that of her husband. She sets out with her parents, and more immediate friends, the men remaining at her house and regaling themselves. Arrived at harem, the attendants perfume and place the bride on an elevated seat, prepared for the purpose, and all strangers retire, leaving only the relations of both parties. The husband is all this time in another apartment, being perfumed and dressed in the most expensive apparel his station affords, by the young men of his acquaintance, who sing songs adapted to the occasion.—This done, all the men, accompanied by music, go to the mosque, from whence they return to the door of the house of the bridegroom leaving him to enter only with his parents. Whilst they are at the mosque, the lady is conducted into her destined place of incarceration; and upon the bridegroom being introduced, all retire, except an old woman who serves him with supper. Whilst he partakes of this, the bride remains standing before him in an humble posture; and after supper she presents her lord and master with a dash, water, and linen, and then sits down. When she has handed him a pipe and coffee, she sups herself. The servant now retires, and the newly married pair remain alone.—On the following day the female friends return more richly dressed than before, to congratulate the bride and bridegroom, and to spend the day in amusements. The husband is expected to appear very modest and silent; lounging upon an Ottoman, his eyes cast down, his face melancholy, whilst all besides are transported with joy.

An Illustrated copy of Mackin's Bible is exhibiting at No. 22, Golden Square, with a view to its being disposed of by a kind of raffle; the subscribers not to exceed 128; and each subscribers to be entitled also to prints to the value of twenty-five guineas—the amount of his subscription. The Bible was illustrated by the late Mr. Bowyer, whose names has been so long connected with the arts; it is valued—and not too highly—at £3000; it contains nearly 7000 engravings, "Illustrative of the Divine Records, from the era of Michael Angelo to that of Reynolds and West." In the collection there are also 113 original drawings by De Louthembourg. It is stated in the prospectus, that upwards of thirty years were expended in collecting and arranging the materials; and it is beyond all question a monument of industry and perseverance. It is illustrated by the finest engravings after Reynolds, West, Smirke, Opie, &c.; and an amusing collection of etchings and engravings, including the works of Raffaele, Marc Antonio, Albert Durer, Callot, Rembrandt, &c., extending to nearly every object treated of in the Holy Scriptures. It would be the work of a week to examine these forty-five volumes; but an hour's scrutiny will be sufficient to satisfy as to its exceeding interest and rare value.

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE.

If there is an object of British policy beyond any others paramount, it is that the Dardanelles, the most important military position in the world, and the surrounding countries on which its strength mainly depends, should be held by a power not only possessed of strength to resist the encroachments of Russia, but to inspire such a dread as even to repel all desire on her part to attempt any. This is, indeed, not only a British, but an European interest, and as such it has been felt and discussed in every European cabinet. But while this is so clearly perceived and universally acknowledged to be essential to the general safety, the several powers more immedi-

ately concerned have (in ignorance of the internal state of Turkey, the nature and extent of her resources, as well as the causes which were depriving her of all substantive power) been led to the adoption of a policy destructive of her independence. Meanwhile the intelligent cabinet of St. Petersburg availed itself of the opportunities which they thus afforded it of acquiring a predominant influence with the Porte, through which it succeeded in further disorganising, embarrassing, and weakening the Ottoman empire.

As the character of the Eastern intelligence which has recently reached this country is not such as can afford us the means of arriving at the causes of the events which have there occurred, or of estimating their probable results, we must be content, for the present, to set at rest the absurd proposition entertained in some quarters of displacing Sultan Abdul-Medjid, the descendant of the Prophet, from the throne of the Ottomans, and of establishing there Mehemet Ali in his stead; and this by way of checking the advance of Russia!

That no measure could more fully realize the objects of that power by affording it an increased and unparalleled facility for further disorganising and dismembering the Turkish dominions, must be the conviction of all perusing that clear and convincing exposition of Mr. Urquhart, of which the following are extracts.

Whoever has opened the history of the Ottoman Empire, must have been struck by the fact of the supremacy of a single family through thirty generations, and during six centuries. We will not venture to trace the cause of this fact, but we may be permitted to infer from it, first, the great probability (to us certainly) of breaking up the empire by displacing this family; and, secondly, the deep demoralization that must ensue from destroying throughout a whole people, a principle which is not only their sole political bond, but which is so interwoven with their habits, their feelings of duty, and religion, that it cannot be separated from them. In this country there are no codes of written laws. Man's social rights and his political constitution, are defined and preserved by a few, but simple and estimable, convictions—deeply engraven on every man's bosom. Teach them or force them to throw aside the respect which to you appears to you solely political, and you insult all that renders them individually inestimable; you endanger all respect whatever, so that, in the furtherance of what you are led to believe to be a design for uniting them against a foreign foe, you destroy that bond of union, and you weaken, if you do not entirely destroy, the peaceful habits of submission, without which there would be no government in Turkey to work upon.

During six centuries the line of Ottoman has reigned without the support of any of those institutions which are supposed with us to be the sole props of a dynasty or a throne. It has had no standing army, no aristocracy, no centralised administration.

The Sultan is the key-stone of an arch which exists not by him, but which cannot stand without him. He is the centre of a great system, which has conciliated the interests apparently so discordant,

according to European notions of interest, of this vast empire, ever since its erection; which has established habits to govern and sustain its action; which reposes on long traditions of submission; which has many and great abuses, but which has exhibited an immense power of self-regeneration. This last consideration, which ought to give it favour in our eyes, is precisely the cause of our actual doubts, and of its weaknesses; for before there was sufficient time for the effervescence to subside; for the results to appear, for the experiments to be made, an artful and watchful enemy attacked it, seized the moment when the Ottoman nation was disarmed and in doubt, to throw its armies upon it, having succeeded at the same moment in producing internal revolt, and in detaching from it those powers which ought to have flung at all times their shield before it, and more especially at the moment that so great and important a change was in progress. These appear to us imperative reasons for supporting Turkey as an independent state, without reference to the danger, for ourselves, of its annexation to Russia. It can only be supported by supporting its chief and its government. It would be a strange infatuation, either to think of supporting it by the destruction of both, or to compromise their existence by hesitation as to what policy is to be pursued in a contingency which certainly ought not to take us by surprise.

We have weighed Mehemet Ali against Mahmoud, now we must weigh the Pasha of Egypt against the Sultan; but what balance is there between the two? Is not the very power of Mehemet Ali the result of a state of indecision in the central government which must become dissolution if he were at the head of it? The prejudices, prescriptive rights, habits of submission, vanish the moment that Mehemet Ali succeeds to the Sultan, for these all centre in his person. Mehemet Ali is moreover an old man, his son is not certainly to be looked to, as a peaceable successor; England has nothing to reckon on, save the personal ability of a man of 65. Her whole schemes frustrated by a diarrhoea or a quinsy, what guarantee of duration, of stability, can be imagined to support a decision, or an indcision, which may lead to such a result, through the destruction of a system that has so long existed, that exists to-day, and which contains the germs of future and prosperous existence.

Had Mehemet Ali been the most able administrator that ever appeared in Turkey; had he comprehended the principles of the constitution of Turkey; had he made himself the idol of those populations which are subject to his authority, then should we consider his merits as the greatest of misfortunes; if they gained for him at such a crisis such golden opinions in Europe, as to make him the champion of the allies against the Sultan; for even then the destructive principle which would have raised him to the throne would have dissolved the empire; every Pasha would have looked on him as an equal; the causes of actual discontent which proceed from political circumstances, would not have been altered, and the unity of the empire would have been lost.

But such as he is, having failed,

whether by his own system, or the personal violence of his supposed successor Ibrahim—having lost Greece to the empire—having disgusted the populations of every province he has acquired, having lost the good name which, won so unjustly, has served him so well, the supposition of to-day of his succeeding to the sway of the Sultan is but the dream of an impossibility.

CONFLAGRATION AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

(From Galignani's Messengers.)

The Ministerial Journal announces that Government has received intelligence from Constantinople of the 10th ult., stating that, on the preceding morning, at 10 o'clock, a fire broke out at Pera and Galata, which at first appeared to be of slight importance, but afterwards spread so widely, that, by four in the afternoon, two hundred houses were destroyed. As soon as the Prince de Joinville was aware of the occurrence, he hastened with the officers who accompanied him to Constantinople, and the crew of the steamship Papin, to the scene of conflagration. All the French at Pera and Galata joined his Royal Highness, and placed themselves under his orders, which were given with judgment and effect. The Argus, stationed off Therapia, was directed by the Ambassador to run down to Galata for the double purpose of lending the assistance of her crew, and of receiving on board the wives and children of such families as might require an asylum.—Baffled by the winds and currents, the Argus did not arrive before one o'clock in the morning, but the captain, with many men, got into their boats, and joined the Prince in stopping the progress of the flames. They were not, however, extinguished till late in the morning, when his Royal Highness, covered with smoke and ashes, retired to his residence at Pera, which, fortunately, remained untouched. "The people's" this journal adds, "are unanimous in attributing to the Prince, and the crews of the French ships, the salvation of Pera from total destruction, and are, consequently, loud in the expression of their gratitude.— Happily, too, the north, wind did not prevail as usual at this season, or the disasters of 1831 would have been renewed, and the Pera and Galata would have been reduced to a heap of ashes.—The number of dwellings burnt are estimated at about a thousand, but few of the French inhabitants have suffered, as the quarters destroyed were principally those of the Turks, Armenians, and Jews. It is not believed that the fire was wilful. The local authorities displayed their usual apathy, although Ali Pacha, the Seraskier, of Constantinople, was on the spot. The Prince de Joinville, notwithstanding the fatigue he has undergone, continues to enjoy the most perfect health, nor have we to deplore any accident to our sailors.

VICTORIA LEVEL.

It gives us much satisfaction to learn that the promoters of the magnificent undertaking of reclaiming from the ocean and bringing into cultivation upwards of 150,000 acres of fertile land, are making considerable progress. Another meeting was held at the Fen Office, in Serjeant's Inn, on Tuesday last, Lord George Bentinck, M. P., in the chair, when a communication was made, that her Majesty's government had relinquished upon terms all the rights of the Crown to the land intended to be recovered. A variety of reports were read from several scientific and other persons well acquainted with the subject, all confirmatory of the opinion of the promoters as to the practicability and profit of the proposed undertaking, of which 4,000 acres, valued at forty pounds per acre, would be brought into cultivation in the short space of four years; and 73,000 acres are already land at the receding of the tide. Under these circumstances the promoters felt themselves justified in forming a company to be ratified by an Act of Parliament, to be called "The Company of Proprietors of the Victoria Level," under the immediate sanction of her Majesty. Lord G. Bentinck was unanimously elected president, and several noblemen and gentlemen of the first rank and property (subject to their concurrence) as trustees and provisional directors, many of whom have expressed such concurrence. The capital to be two millions, divided into shares of £100 each, with five per cent,