

proceeded to the station for the purpose, vowing vengeance, however, against an Arab zaptieh who had apparently ill-treated some of them. The zaptiehs resisted, the station was set on fire, and the six men were shot as they came out, the story about their having been smeared with petroleum and burnt being a simple invention. The other zaptieh was persuaded by some Europeans to offer no resistance, and, on his being taken into the presence of Benkowsky, the latter paid him the sum of 12*l.* 10*s.* Turkish for his horse, arms, and accoutrements, which were seized for the benefit of the Bulgarian insurgents.

These details were given to me by a gentleman who had business at Bellova, and who conversed with Benkowsky upon several occasions.

At Vetren, a village on the high road between Bazardjik and Sofia, the insurgents cut the telegraph wires, burnt the guard-house and small Turkish village of Palanka, and fired on the post and on some zaptiehs who were escorting Hassan Pasha's harem.

It is now necessary to glance at the measures taken by the Turks to suppress the insurrection.

Some of the village mudirs had reported to head-quarters that they thought a rising probable, but their warnings were unfortunately allowed to pass unheeded; accordingly, when the insurrection did break out, it found the authorities utterly unprepared.

On the ^{19th April}_{1st May}, Aziz Pasha, the Mutessarif of Philippopolis, proceeded to Bazardjik, where he stayed a day or two to procure information. He then left for Otloukeui with a few of the notables and about 100 guards.

This alarmed the population, and when, somewhat later in the day, a report was spread that the Pasha was surrounded, a general panic ensued; shops were shut, village people who had come with their bullock carts to the market fled, leaving everything behind them, and Mussulman women rushed about the streets crying "Giaour Guelmisch," "Moscow Guelmisch." The Turks immediately flew to arms, and the position of the Christians was most critical. The Kaimakam lost his head completely, and hid himself.

In the meantime, a train arrived with 400 regular troops, and Hafiz Pasha went about the town endeavouring to reassure the people, and prevented the Mussulmans from doing any mischief. In the evening some wounded gipsies arrived, saying that the Bulgarians were rising all over the country, which naturally increased the terror of the Mussulmans.

Aziz Pasha, who had not been surrounded, but who had been turned back by the alarming reports he had heard on the road, now returned to Bazardjik and told the Turkish notables, who went to remonstrate with him for his being too favourable to the Bulgarians, that had he but four battalions of regulars he could suppress the insurrection at once. This was most undoubtedly true, but, unfortunately, these four battalions were not forthcoming at that moment.

Aziz Pasha then went back to Philippopolis, and the Medjliss of Bazardjik got some 400 armed Turks in from the surrounding country for their protection, and sent orders to Achmet Agha, of Dospat, to march against Batak, where some Mussulmans had been killed, and the people were reported to be rising; which order he executed by utterly destroying the village on the 9th of May.

At Philippopoli there was also a considerable panic, but, perhaps, not such a one as at Bazardjik. The Vali of Adrianople, on being applied to by the Mussulmans, telegraphed that they must arm and defend themselves, and sent Raschid Pasha to command them. At first, every man only had such arms as he happened to possess, but subsequently the Government distributed arms among the volunteers. The inhabitants of the Mussulman villages received orders to defend themselves in case of need, and some 2,000 irregulars were brought from Hasskeui.

The fact is that the country was for a moment in a complete state of anarchy, and everybody gave orders to everybody else respecting the arming of this village or the attacking of that one. The responsibility of calling out the Bashi-Bazouks must, however, I think, rest with the Vali of Adrianople, who in reply to the question asked from Philippopolis, replied by ordering a general arming of the Mussulmans. His orders were, however, no doubt anticipated by some of the Mussulman Beys, particularly by those of Tatar-Bazardjik, who are notorious for their fanaticism.

At this time Aziz Pasha, who had not been favourable to the general arming, was recalled from Philippopolis, and was replaced by Hamid Pasha, to whose firmness and impartiality the Christians of that town undoubtedly owe their safety. By protecting them, however, he incurred the serious displeasure of the fanatical section of the Mussulmans, who have more than once petitioned for his recall.