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ANGLO-FRENCH RIVALRY IN THE LEVANT FROM 1583 TO 1612

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THE period from 1583 to 1612 witnessed a bitter diplomatic struggle between France and England in the Levant. The conflict involved claims to jurisdiction over Christian nations which were not officially represented at the Porte and over their merchants trading in the ports and territories of the Ottoman Empire.

Early in the sixteenth century France had established itself as the pre-eminent Western power in commercial and diplomatic relations with Turkey. Apparently since the treaty of capitulations of 1536—later specifically confirmed in the treaty of 1581—the king of France had exercised jurisdiction over Christian traders in the Levant, which obliged them to enter and do business in the Ottoman Empire only under the French flag and under the exclusive surveillance and representation of the French ambassador and consuls.¹ Apart from the

great political prestige which this authority carried, considerable financial gains had accrued to France; for French representatives in Turkey had the privilege of collecting consular fees (“consulage of forestiers”) on all goods brought into the Ottoman domains. These funds were employed in maintaining the French embassy and consular offices in Turkey, in establishing factories in the chief trading centers for promoting French trade, in bribing Turkish officials, and in advancing French power and influence in the Levant.²

Toward the end of the sixteenth century the English entered the Levant, and soon France was confronted with a most aggressive rival who challenged its diplomatic as well as its commercial position in that region. From the beginning, the English were determined not only to free themselves from French protection and to obtain for their flag complete equality with that of France but particularly to supplant France as the most favored power in the Ottoman Empire and to

¹ England and other maritime nations traded under the French flag long before the treaty of 1581. See Johann Wilhelm ZINKEISEN, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches in Europa* (Gotha, 1855), III, 417-18 (see below, p. 290); M. de FLASSAN, *Histoire générale et raisonnée de la diplomatie française, ou de la politique de la France* (Paris, 1811), II, 97-98; and see also n. 3, below.

² In this article the term “flag” will be used in the technical sense of the jurisdiction of the covering flag for other nations which carried with it the right to the consulage of forestiers.

bring the Christian nations under the authority of England.

In 1583, despite strong opposition from France and in contravention of the French treaty of capitulations, Queen Elizabeth obtained from Sultan Murad III, through the diplomatic efforts of William Harborne, able first ambassador to Turkey, a treaty of peace and friendship which gave the English the privilege of official representation at the Porte and placed English merchants on a footing of complete equality with the French with regard to privileges in the Levant trade.³ But English diplomacy in the Levant was not satisfied with these unusual achievements. Soon a succession of capable English ambassadors—Edward Barton, Henry Lello, Sir Thomas Glover, and Sir Paul Pindar—challenged France's prominent standing at the Porte and especially its jurisdiction over the other Christian nations. In this contest between the two powers, palace intrigues and bribery played an important role in swaying Turkish favors now to one side and now to the other; but never for any considerable length of time did the Porte definitely commit itself to the support of either nation, although for political and economic reasons it was sympathetic to the aspirations of England.

The story of the Anglo-French struggle over the covering flag for the trade of other nations in the Levant has not received adequate treatment by English writers. Moreover, A. L. Rowland, who has dealt with this subject, has based his highly inadequate account of it largely on reports of the Venetian ambassadors;⁴

³ Arthur Leon HORNIKER, "William Harborne and the beginning of Anglo-Turkish diplomatic and commercial relations," *Journal of modern history*, XIV (1942), 289-316.

⁴ "England and Turkey: the rise of diplomatic and commercial relations," *Studies in English commerce and exploration in the reign of Elizabeth* (Philadelphia, 1924), Part I, pp. 154-69.

he has overlooked important French, English, and Dutch documentary materials that bear directly and throw considerable light on this significant phase in Anglo-French relations in the Levant. Of greatest importance are the letters of Henry IV to François Savary, seigneur de Breves, his ambassador at the Porte from 1589 to 1606,⁵ and the dispatches of the English ambassadors in Constantinople—Barton, Lello, Glover, and Pindar, all active participants in this struggle—to their court in London. It was really under Henry IV that France's position in Turkey deteriorated, and the king's letters to Breves are eloquent testimony to the success of the English in undermining French authority over other Christian nations in Turkey. The dispatches of the English ambassadors (in the available collection) refer in the main to the Anglo-French rivalry over the covering flag for the Dutch.⁶ Without knowledge of these documents it would have been difficult to unravel the complicated skein of diplomatic intrigues in which the English ambassadors became involved while endeavoring to deprive France of its high place in the Ottoman Empire. These documents form the basis for the study of the "Dutch case" (as an illustration of the contest between the two powers), and they make it possible

⁵ Jules Berger de XIVREY, *Recueil des lettres missives de Henri IV* (Paris, 1843-76) (hereafter cited as "*Lettres missives*"). The king's letters to Breves are included in Vols. IV, V, and VI. As far as the writer is aware, ZINKEISEN (III, 641-54) and PAUL MASSON (*Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant au XVII^e siècle* [Paris, 1896], introd.) are the only historians who have utilized Henry's correspondence in their discussion of the Anglo-French rivalry in the Levant.

⁶ The dispatches dealing with the Dutch case are collected in Vol. I, beginning at p. 162, of KLAAS HEERINGA's *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van den Levantschen handel* ('S-Gravenhage, 1910) (hereafter cited as "*Bronnen*").

to give, for the first time, a full account of that episode.

In the sixteenth century the Christian nations trading in the Ottoman Empire could be classified in three categories: nations to which the sultan granted treaties of capitulations embodying rights of extra-territoriality, nations which obtained treaties of peace and friendship allowing them the privileges of official representation at the Porte and of freedom of trade in the Ottoman domains, and nontreaty nations. In all cases, it was the Christian nations which had taken the initiative to establish diplomatic relations with the sultans, for only in this way could they hope to secure on easy terms the advantages which accrued from trading in the Levant. But, although the Turks remained passive in respect to diplomatic relations with the Christians, they nevertheless were always ready to negotiate treaties with them, for the Osmanli law of nations was based on the principle that the high Porte was at all times open to all who sought its protection and aid—be they friends or enemies, Moslems or *giaours*.⁷

The nation which obtained a treaty of capitulations from the sultan occupied a leading place in the diplomacy and commerce of the Levant. By the middle of the sixteenth century France came to occupy such a position. The French had wrested the leadership in the Levantine trade and diplomacy from the Venetians and held it undisputed until they, in turn, were challenged by the English.

Under the treaty of capitulations of 1536 between Francis I and Suleiman the Great, which was negotiated by the distinguished French diplomat and ambassador to the Porte, Sieur Jehan de

La Forest, France had secured the most favored position with the sultan. Moreover, what was of greatest significance, the king of France had assumed the right to act as protector of all Christians in the Ottoman Empire.⁸

Nevertheless, up to the seventeenth century at least, French kings did not take advantage of their exclusive position in the Levant. Indeed, under the protection of their flag, the other Christian nations had enjoyed equal privileges with the French. These nations could trade freely in the Ottoman Empire without having to secure a treaty from the sultan. The kings of France held out such advantages to other princes of Europe as proof that in their friendship with the Porte they were interested not only in their own gain and in that of their subjects but also in the general welfare of Christendom. Whoever wanted could partake, under the French flag, of all the advantages which accrued from the rich trade of Aleppo and Alexandria, where the treasures of Asia, Africa, and the East Indies flowed in and whence they were distributed throughout Europe.⁹

On the other hand, France could not maintain its superior position in the Levant trade under the changed and unfavorable conditions in the latter part of the sixteenth century resulting from continual conflicts with England, Italy, and Spain and from its own civil and religious wars, which proved highly disastrous to the industrial life and the commercial activity of the country.¹⁰ Consequently, although at the turn of the sixteenth century France was still the

⁸ See p. 289 and n. 1, above.

⁹ This was pointed out by Breves in a memorial, "Discours sur l'alliance ... [de] le roy avec le grand-seigneur et de l'utilité qu'elle apporte à la Chrestienté," submitted to Louis XIII. The memorial is summarized in ZINKEISEN, IV, 187 and 208.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 296-307.

⁷ Joseph von HAMMER-PURGSTALL, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches* (Pest, 1827-35), IV, 41.

leading nation in the Levant, its participation and share in the trade, as well as its diplomatic position, were really on the decline.¹¹

Nations which obtained treaties of peace and friendship from the sultan had the privilege of appointing their own ambassadors to the Porte, and they could also maintain consuls in the chief trading centers, if they so desired. At the same time, they were obliged to trade in the harbors and marts of the Levant exclusively under the French flag. These nations naturally tried to secure treaties of capitulations from the sultan. In 1583 the English, under Queen Elizabeth, were the first to obtain—in contravention of the French capitulations—a treaty of peace and friendship which also gave them the privilege of trading under their own flag in Turkey.¹²

Until late in the sixteenth century England had no direct commercial and diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire. English trade with the Levant had been monopolized from earliest times by the Venetians, and it was not until the reign of Elizabeth that the English themselves began gradually to take over this trade. It appears that early in the second half of the sixteenth century individual English traders had received the sultan's permission to bring their ships into Ottoman ports, but only under the French flag. As long as the trade was

¹¹ The weakened diplomatic position of France in the Ottoman Empire is evident from the fact that Henry IV, in his anxiety to avoid trouble with the English, was willing on the occasion of the renewal of the capitulations to forbear naming England among the nations which were obliged to employ the French flag in the Levant trade (*Lettres missives*, IV, 524).

¹² "When Harborne made an independent treaty for his country, England's became the first deflection from the general authority which France exercised over Christian traders in the Ottoman Empire" (ROWLAND, *loc. cit.*, pp. 154-55).

unimportant, the English submitted to this regulation, and the question of the national flag was of no political consequence. Once commerce with the Levant began to loom large in English eyes, it was inevitable, particularly in view of the rising nationalism under Elizabeth, that the question of the flag should assume great importance. The enforced subservience to the French became unbearable to the English. Hence, almost from the start, Elizabeth directed her attention not only to the advantageous participation in the Levant trade but, above all, to the freeing of British ships from the protection of the French flag.

The great difficulties which Elizabeth had to overcome before she achieved her aims are related elsewhere.¹³ Here it will suffice to point out that in the afore-mentioned first treaty with the Porte, Elizabeth obtained from the sultan all the conditions which secured and regularized the commercial relations of her subjects with the Ottoman Empire and which put England on a footing of complete equality with France at Constantinople.¹⁴

The nontreaty nations, or "nations forestiers," as they were called, originally consisted of two groups: those trading in the Levant under the protection of the French flag and enjoying equal rights with French merchants and nations which traded exclusively in Egypt under a general public privilege. Egypt and its port of Alexandria had always been free for all traders, who could carry on business under their consuls or, if they so desired, could come under the protection of another power. By virtue of this privilege, the nations forestiers in Egypt at first traded under their own consuls. Finding this expensive, however, they

¹³ HORNIKER, *loc. cit.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

placed themselves under the authority of France, paying a consular charge of 2 per cent on all goods brought into Egypt.¹⁵ The consulage of forestiers exacted by France from the nontreaty nations was the stake involved in the long-drawn-out struggle between France and England over the covering flag for the nations forestiers in the Ottoman Empire.

Having secured the treaty of peace and friendship from Sultan Murad III, Elizabeth soon wanted more. In 1593, Edward Barton, Harborne's successor at Constantinople,¹⁶ obtained from the sultan a treaty of capitulations which appreciably strengthened England's position at the Porte and encouraged its aspirations.¹⁷ Consequently, an intense rivalry presently developed between England and France with regard to the jurisdiction exercised by the king of France over Christian traders in the Levant. The contest between the two powers for the control of the nontreaty nations may be illustrated by reference

to the case of the Dutch. The struggle over the covering flag for the Dutch continued for a period of about eighteen years. From the time of Edward Barton successive English ambassadors exerted every effort to bring the Dutch merchants in Turkey under the protection of the English flag, but they were just as strenuously opposed by the French, under whose authority the Dutch came in 1598. The conflict was terminated only when the United Provinces obtained from Sultan Ahmed I a treaty of capitulations which gave the Dutch full equality with the French and English in the Ottoman Empire.

The story of the Dutch in Constantinople began in 1594 when the ship of the merchant Jan Adriaansz Kant was captured by the *kapudan-pasha* (admiral of the fleet) and brought into the Turkish capital. It was in this manner that the first Dutch merchantman entered a Levantine port.¹⁸ Kant was imprisoned for three years.¹⁹ From the beginning Barton was very much interested in the Dutch case. He sought to have Kant and his men freed and brought under the authority of England. Realizing, however, that this encroachment upon the prerogatives of the king of France would immediately bring him into conflict with the French ambassador, Barton tried first to obtain the support of his court in the matter. Repeatedly in 1594 and 1595, he wrote to London asking for specific instructions.²⁰ But it appears

¹⁵ Edward Barton to Sir Robert Cecil, Feb. 21, 1596/Mar. 3, 1597, *Bronnen*, I, 164. Cecil was appointed secretary of state by Elizabeth in 1596. He was continued in office as secretary by James I.

¹⁶ Edward Barton (1562 [?]–97) the second English ambassador at Constantinople, served first as secretary to William Harborne and then succeeded the latter upon his retirement in 1590. Upon assumption of his duties, Barton bore the title of "agent for her majesty with the grand seignor" and was paid by the Turkey Company. Early in 1596 Barton received a formal commission as ambassador, thus being removed from his dependence on the company. The ambassador was very popular with the Turks and fought under their flag in Hungary in 1595 (see below, p. 294). Soon after his return from the campaign the plague raged in Constantinople, and in 1597 Barton took refuge on the little island of Halke, where he fell a victim to the scourge on December 15. He was buried there outside the church attached to the convent of the Virgin ("Barton, Edward," *Dictionary of national biography*, I, 1262–63).

¹⁷ HAMMER-PURGSTALL, IV, 207 and 621; and ZINKEISEN, III, 432, and IV, 307–8.

¹⁸ *Bronnen*, I, 154.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ ". . . and for ye present cause of the Flemings, none knoweth better then Your Honour, that these 14 monethes I have ordinarily writt to Your Honour concerninge them, requiring eyther assistance in the cause, or advise for my government" reads Barton's dispatch to Sir Thomas Heneage, vice-chamberlain of the royal household, of September 7/17, 1595 (*ibid.*, p. 162).

that neither Elizabeth nor the Turkey Company evinced interest in Barton's plans at that time.²¹ Nevertheless, urged on by English merchants in the Levant and encouraged by the expressed willingness of the Dutch to place themselves under the authority of the queen of England, Barton continued his efforts to have the imprisoned Dutch merchants freed.²² But Breves, the French ambassador, stood his ground and successfully thwarted his opponent.

Moreover, Breves also succeeded in bringing back other nations forestiers, over whom the French had temporarily lost control to the English, under the jurisdiction of the king of France. That anomalous situation had arisen from the disturbed political conditions in France. In the interval between the murder of Henry III and the accession of Henry IV to the throne of France, and before Breves was appointed ambassador, Barton had represented the French interests and, by virtue of this, likewise those of the nations forestiers at the Porte.²³ It

²¹ "I have now received Your Honour's favorable letters of ye 24 May, by which I perceive my sutte for ye Flemings is ill taken by Your Honour and the Company, Your Honour counsaying me therewith all, yet I should nott medle in matters unrecomended by Her Majestie" (*ibid.*).

²² *Ibid.*, p. 163.

²³ Before Henry of Navarre became king of France, M. de Lancosme, the then French ambassador at the Porte, remained at his post as accredited agent for the Catholic League and was openly hostile to the king. As Elizabeth supported Henry and the Huguenots, Barton was instructed to oppose Lancosme and to assist Breves, his nephew, who, desirous of filling his uncle's place, strongly espoused the cause of Henry of Navarre. After Lancosme was crushed and expelled from Turkey, French interests were placed under Barton's protection until Breves was fully accredited as French ambassador in April 1593 (Horatio P. BROWN and A. B. HINDS (eds.), *Calendar of state papers and manuscripts, relating to English affairs existing in the archives and collections of Venice, and in other libraries of northern Italy* (London, 1871-1927) (hereafter cited as "*Cal.S.P., Venetian*"),

appears that Barton somehow retained a *de facto* control over the forestiers even after Breves had assumed his official position at Constantinople. But during Barton's temporary absence at the time of the Turkish campaign in Hungary in 1595,²⁴ Breves took advantage of his great opportunity to recapture control over the nations forestiers. As the English ambassador later reported to London, Breves managed "to extorte out of our hands a grace and graunt, made by the deceased Grand Signor unto H.M., which is that all nations tradinge into Egipte, except the Ffrench and Venetians, passe under Her Majestie's banner, and he in my absence hath maliciously procured, thatt they all passe under the French king his banner."²⁵

Obviously, this action enraged Barton and the English merchants. It frequently led to very annoying encounters between the ships of the rival nations in Turkish harbors, from which the French almost always came out heavy losers. Barton, moreover, began to set everything in motion at the Porte in order to remove foreign nations altogether from French jurisdiction and to bring them under the authority of England. When the treaty

IX, xxxii-xxxvi. As protector of French interests, Barton also had supervised the interests of other countries that traded under the French flag. It is noteworthy that this situation had arisen before Barton obtained the treaty of capitulations in 1593. It appears, however, that some nations forestiers trading in Egypt came under the English flag as early as Harborne's embassy (*Bronnen*, I, 164; and ZINKEISEN, IV, 212). But this was only a temporary situation, no authority having been granted to England in the treaty of 1583 over other nations in the Levant.

²⁴ See n. 16, above.

²⁵ Barton to Cecil, Jan. 20/30, 1596/7, *Bronnen*, I, 163. Murad III died on January 16, 1595. The "grace and graunt" referred to by Barton in the dispatch was possibly a simple decree by the sultan; it was not a stipulation in the treaty of capitulations.

of capitulations of 1593 was being renewed, he requested that the Porte insert in it a specific declaration to the effect "that foreign nations need no longer recognize the French flag."²⁶

Henry IV complained bitterly to the sultan about the attempts at infraction of the French capitulations, and the king's protestations helped Breves keep the afore-mentioned declaration out of the English treaty. The French monarch also protested to Elizabeth about the intrigues of her ambassador. He admitted, however, that his complaints to the English queen were completely fruitless because, even when for the sake of appearances she forbade her ambassador to persist in his machinations, she herself had nothing else in mind but the complete ruin of the French flag and the raising of her flag to the ruling position in the Levant. Writing in this vein to Breves, the king said in his letter of October 5, 1597: "Do not expect that the queen of England, if I should write to her, will order her ambassador to abstain from his intrigues against me; for no matter how great may be the existing friendship between princes, they do not give in to each other in matters affecting their power and greatness, as it is in their nature, without regard to the interests of their dearest friends, to profit from everything which comes to hand, and this the English do more than all other nations."²⁷

Henry IV realized that in this disturbed situation he had no other alternative but to counteract energetically the intrigues of the English ambassador, who was determined to appropriate for the English the prerogatives of the French flag. He instructed Breves, in

case friendly representations failed, to inform the grand vizier that the king of France would be very little interested in the sultan's friendship if the latter proved unwilling to maintain the existing capitulations. "I possess no less courage than my predecessors," Henry wrote, "and I will know how to enforce the respect due to me as well as to my kingdom."²⁸

In December 1597 Edward Barton died, and the English remained temporarily without an official representative at the Porte.²⁹ Henry IV considered that an opportune moment had come to bring back the English under his authority and thereby to eliminate his rival in the Levant. He believed that the lack of direct intercession with the Porte would compel the English merchants to utilize the good offices of the French ambassador in Constantinople.³⁰ This was only wishful thinking on the king's part; it is clear that under the prevailing circumstances the death of the ambassador could not have brought about any reversal in English policy and objectives. On the contrary, the English were not at all ready to relinquish the important privilege of controlling the nations forestiers and to suffer impairment of the prestige of their flag in the Ottoman Empire. Hence, the conflict between the French and the English over the forestiers continued under Barton's successors.

Meanwhile, the afore-mentioned Kant episode evidently had little effect on the enterprising Dutch; it did not discourage them from bringing their ships ever more frequently into the waters of the Le-

²⁸ Instructions to Breves, Nov. 3, 1597, *ibid.*, p. 879.

²⁹ See n. 16, above.

³⁰ This is clear from Henry IV's instructions to Breves, April 21, 1598 (*Lettres missives*, IV, 962-63).

²⁶ This is evident from the king's instructions to Breves, May 8, 1597 (*Lettres missives*, IV, 761).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 861 and 869.

vant.³¹ Indeed, Dutch trade with the Ottoman Empire grew and prospered with the progress of the war of independence which the United Provinces were then waging against Spain. In April 1598, upon Breves's recommendation to the Porte, Dutch merchants received the official permission of Sultan Muhammad III to trade free and unhindered in the Ottoman Empire under the French flag.³² But this authorization did not definitely settle the question under which flag the Dutch, as well as the other forestiers, should sail. The conflict was soon to be renewed.

In the fall of 1599, when, after long delay, Elizabeth sent some expensive presents to the sultan,³³ Henry Lello, the new English abassador,³⁴ was instructed to employ all means to secure confirmation of English jurisdiction over the nations forestiers in a treaty of capitulations. Lello failed in this mission, however, because, as he complained bitterly in a report to London,³⁵ "the French ambassa-

dor, who with his great bribes, receyvinge now the Pope's his pay, spareth nothinge to hinder all my desingies in mallice, seinge the reputation of Her Majesty so great in this port and cheefly for the consulledge of the forestiers, which the Grand Signor little after the arivall of the shipp graunted should come under Her Majesty's banner." Furthermore, Breves not only prevailed upon the Porte to refuse to confirm the former grant of consulage of forestiers but also to ignore England's other requests. And, in addition, the grand vizier denied the English ambassador an audience to show reason for his demands.³⁶

Lello soon ran into another difficulty with the French ambassador. In November 1599 he reported to the secretary of state that "of late certaine Fflemyngees are come with a shippe into Surria and have submytted themselves under the proteccion of H.M., sayinge: we are H.M.'s subiects and will bee under her banner."³⁷ The immediate reason for this action of the Dutch was obviously the French ambassador's announcement of the imposition of a 2 per cent tax in addition to the ordinary consular charges on all goods brought into Turkey.³⁸ When the local French consul learned about the unauthorized withdrawal of the Dutch from French protection, he sought to intimidate the Dutch merchants by warning them that they would be hanged.³⁹ Thereupon Lello requested and was granted by the grand vizier Halil Pasha "a comandemente," which forbade the French to interfere with the Dutch merchants who had placed themselves under English authority. Soon thereafter Breves obtained from the grand vizier a counterauthorization

³¹ "The Dutch, too, are beginning to frequent those waters," reported Girolamo Capello, the Venetian *bailo* in Constantinople, to the doge and senate, on October 6, 1597 (*Cal.S.P., Venetian, IX, 291*).

³² A Dutch translation of the complete text of the sultan's order is given in *Bronnen, I, 164-66*.

³³ Presents were sent by ship and arrived in the autumn of 1599. The gifts included a wonderful mechanized organ and a beautiful gilded carriage for the sultana (see "Description of the receipt of the present of an organ by the sultan in A.D. 1599," in H. A. ROSEDALE, *Queen Elizabeth and the Levant Company* [London, 1904], pp. 78-81). Capello reported significantly that, in addition, the ship carried "a cargo of woolen cloth and other high-class goods" (see his dispatches of Aug. 21, 1599, *Cal.S.P., Venetian, IX, 371-72*; and of Sept. 18, 1599, *ibid.*, p. 375; and see also p. 298, below).

³⁴ Lello had been secretary to Barton. Upon the latter's death, he took over the management of English affairs, at first with the title of agent. His earliest extant dispatch to Cecil is dated March 1, 1597 (*Cal.S.P., Venetian, IX, xlv*).

³⁵ Lello to Cecil, Oct. 21/31, 1599, *Bronnen, I, 167*.

³⁶ *Cal.S.P., Venetian, IX, xlvii*.

³⁷ Nov. 4/14, 1599, *Bronnen, I, 167*.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

which forced these merchants to submit to the protection of the French king and also demanded that "the principal merchante mighte bee delyvered into his consulls hands, ther to be beaten or ponyshed at his discretion." But Lello protested to Halil against issuing a "comandement" for the "punishinge of anye of Her Majesty's subiects." Heeding the protest of the English ambassador, the grand vizier revoked both authorizations and set a day on which the two ambassadors were to appear before him for the purpose of settling the case. As Halil Pasha himself failed to appear on the appointed day, the case remained undecided.⁴⁰

Lello then appealed to the secretary of state for guidance and assistance in the Dutch case. He requested the "counsell and furtherance of Her Highnes for the procuring them [the Dutch] to come under her baner—seinge theye can note bee prohibited—which wil bee the more honour to H.M. and som helpe to the merchants in comportinge their greate charges, and the rather also, because theye have alredie put themselves under H.M. for the forraigne nations." He also informed the secretary of state that he was sending his private secretary to England to place before him the whole matter in greater detail.⁴¹ Apparently, in order to force favorable action, he reported in his next dispatch that the French ambassador likewise had sent his secretary to France for the purpose of getting the support of the king for retaining the Dutch under the jurisdiction of the French flag.⁴²

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* On November 27, 1599 Capello informed the doge and the senate that "the English Secretary has left for Venice on his way to his Court" (*Cal.S.P., Venetian, IX, 385*).

⁴² Lello to Cecil, Nov. 17/27, 1599, *Bronnen, I, 169*.

About this time another factor arose which tended to embitter Anglo-French relations in the Levant for many years—English piracy. Evidently, as early as the fall of 1597, there appeared in the waters of the Levant numbers of English privateers who, under the English ensign, preyed upon everything flying the French flag.⁴³ English piracy had developed rapidly after the defeat of the Spanish armada. The booty brought home from the West Indies inflamed the imagination and tempted buccaneers to try the Mediterranean as well. The war with Spain gave them an excuse for passing the Straits of Gibraltar, and soon that sea was swarming with heavily armed ships which continually attacked French vessels.

Henry IV had no other means available against these pirates than energetic self-help. But his efforts to restore the naval strength of France, which during the religious and civil wars had almost completely disintegrated, proved futile. Owing to the country's general economic deterioration and the exhaustion of the treasury, the king lacked financial means to rebuild the navy. There was also a shortage of experienced seamen and particularly of condemned criminals, who in general made up the personnel of the fleet.

⁴³ The earliest report is that of Capello, dated October 6, 1597, in which he informs his government that "the French Ambassador has sent copies of two letters written from Syria to complain of the damage done by the English ships in attacking the 'Silvestra' and the 'Lion,' and wishes to present a memorial to the Sultan" (*Cal.S.P., Venetian, IX, 291*). English piracy in the Mediterranean, referred to briefly above, is a subject in itself and falls outside the scope of this paper. It should be mentioned, however, that numerous reports of the Venetian ambassadors in Constantinople deal with piracy, as the English privateers attacked not only French ships but the ships of almost every nation, including Turkey, trading in the Mediterranean. The ships of Venice suffered as much as those of France. The English ships were much stronger and better armed than those of the other nations.

Indeed, the situation with regard to the latter was so bad that the king could not obtain an adequate supply of them in his kingdom to man even twenty galleys, as is evident from the fact that he conceived the idea of purchasing galley slaves from the sultan's ministers.⁴⁴

While the English privateers carried on, the prestige of the English flag in the Levant and the influence of Elizabeth's representative at the Porte increased. Political and economic factors ostensibly contributed to this. On the one hand, Sultan Muhammad III, who was greatly concerned over "holding the King of Spain in check," considered the arrival of the afore-mentioned royal gifts a confirmation of the "alliance" with England which he thought highly important; and, on the other, English trade in woolen cloth, because "of its excellence and its appearance, in which the Turks delight," was expanding rapidly. The English were beginning to open factories throughout the Ottoman Empire, which gave them an opportunity of exerting even greater influence on the Turks.⁴⁵ Indeed, by March 1600 the English position at the Porte had improved to such an extent that Lello succeeded in having ships coming from Flanders into Ottoman ports appear under the English flag, despite Breves's opposition. By this time, however, Elizabeth's ambassador began to fear the threat of competition which the Dutch trade held out to English commerce in that area.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ See the king's instructions to Breves, Oct. 31, 1600, *Lettres missives*, V, 335-36; and see also p. 299 and n. 47, below.

⁴⁵ Capello to the doge and senate, Aug. 21, 1599, *Cal.S.P., Venetian*, IX, 371-72. There was, of course no formal "alliance" between the sultan and Queen Elizabeth at that time, but there was a tacit understanding and, usually, concerted action against their mutual enemy, Philip II.

⁴⁶ "The Fflemmings marchants doe beginne to trade into these countryes, which will cleane subvert ours, although it be now butt little worth;

Bitterly disappointed by the course of events and in a state of high discontent, Henry IV wrote to Breves on July 10, 1600 that he could no longer endure the insolent behavior of the English "agent" at Constantinople. He suggested that all available means would have to be employed in order to put an end to English piracy. From the queen of England, although he was at peace with her, nothing was to be expected. She was determined to increase her power and her influence in the Levant at the expense of his flag. He had already started to fit out galleys, but it would take time before a strong naval force could be brought together. He urged that the French in the meantime protect and defend themselves as best they could against the pirates. And, astonishingly enough, he also instructed Breves to demand from the Porte that all English consuls and other officials be expelled from the Ottoman territories and that the English again be forced to raise the French flag on their ships.⁴⁷

yett seing ther is noe meanes to prohibitt them, I thought it better to take their protection then suffer them to goe under the Ffrench, who ceaseth not to give them all the trouble he can, saying they ought to come under his kinge, and although the Grand Signor hath absolutely commanded they shall come under H.M.'s her bannor and noe other, yet with his continuall bribing he still troubleth me" reads Lello's dispatch to Cecil, Mar. 13/23, 1599/1600 (*Bronnen*, I, 169). It appears that Lello had obtained the sultan's authorization much earlier but had encountered difficulties in establishing his control (Lello to Cecil, Nov. 17/27, 1599, *ibid.*, p. 169). That Lello actually assumed control over the Dutch is evident from Henry IV's instructions to Breves, June 21, 1600 (*Lettres missives*, V, 243).

⁴⁷ *Lettres missives*, V, 247. Breves communicated to the Venetian *bailo* the king's intention of fitting out a strong naval force, probably with the idea that it should reach the ear of the English ambassador (*Cal.S.P., Venetian*, IX, 433). Breves also protested to the Porte regarding English piracy and requested its suppression (see document, "Complaint by the French ambassador at Constantinople of English piracies [1600?]," *Calendar of manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury* [London, 1904], X, 455-56). Not only had Henry IV, by October 1600, encountered difficulties in building up

England's influence at the Porte was too strong, however, for the king of France to be able to persuade the grand signior to take such drastic measures. All that the promptings from the French monarch accomplished was that the sultan made written representations to Elizabeth regarding English piracy, but without effect.⁴⁸ The Porte itself was almost helpless in the matter; it possessed neither the power nor the means with which to enforce its authority.⁴⁹

Attacks by English privateers on French ships continued, and in February 1602 Henry IV again complained to Elizabeth about the matter.⁵⁰ But he accomplished nothing because, as he well knew, the English officials who were charged with punishing the pirates made common cause with them and participated in the outrages against French merchants.⁵¹ Conditions did not improve

with the accession of James I to the throne of England in April 1603, although the new king was well disposed toward the French and showed a willingness to suppress piracy.⁵²

The struggle between the two ambassadors over the covering flag for the Dutch had been renewed with the appointment, at the end of March 1600, of Hafiz Pasha as grand vizier in place of Halil. The latter had favored the English and supported their request for the inclusion in their treaty of capitulations of a grant of authority over the nations forestiers, although he had not succeeded in having this privilege assured to England. The new grand vizier was from the first antagonistic to the English.⁵³ But Lello immediately opened negotiations with Hafiz Pasha "to secure that the Flemish shall sail under the English flag."⁵⁴

The favorable progress of the revolt of the United Provinces against Spain now became a factor in the dispute. In his negotiations with the grand vizier, Lello advanced, although wrongly and unsuccessfully, a double argument for retaining the Dutch under English jurisdiction: first, that the Dutch were now

the necessary naval force (see pp. 297-98 and n. 44, above), but evidently no French fleet was available to protect French shipping in the Levant as late as the middle of 1603. Breves was compelled to charter a ship and arm it, and he gave it "express orders to treat all English *bertons* as enemies" (Maffio Michiel, governor of Zante, to the doge and senate, July 4, 1603, *Cal.S.P., Venetian*, X, 60).

⁴⁸ *Cal.S.P., Venetian*, XV, 225-26.

⁴⁹ See Henry IV's instructions to Breves, Sept. 30, 1602 (*Lettres missives*, V, 682-83). The highest Turkish officials abetted English piracy (Michiel to the doge and senate, June 9, 1603, *Cal.S.P., Venetian*, X, 45-46; and Francesco Contrarini, Venetian ambassador in Constantinople, to the doge and senate, June 28, 1603, *ibid.*, p. 57). On the decline of political power under Muhammad III, see HAMMER-PURGSTALL, IV, 343.

⁵⁰ MASSON, pp. xxv-xxvi and n. 1 on p. xxvi.

⁵¹ *Lettres missives*, V, 655. Michiel has confirmed the connivance of English officials at English piracy (*Cal.S.P., Venetian*, X, 30). Evidently the situation did not change or improve, for a few years later, on February 11, 1607, Gian Domenico Biffi, the Venetian consul at Lepanto, wrote to the doge: "As a proof of the understanding which exists between the resident English and the pirates I must inform you that the English Consul in Patras, named George Buler, has bought a large part of the cargo of the 'Liona,'" which was burned by English pirates (*Cal.S.P., Venetian*, X, 465).

⁵² Summary of instructions of Henry IV to Breves, June 22, 1603: "L'avènement du nouveau roi d'Angleterre fait espérer la cessation des pirateries des Anglais, leur prince l'a déjà promis" (*Lettres missives*, VI, 671). "Traité fait avec le roi d'Angleterre, qui déclare désapprouver les pirateries de ses sujets" (Summary of instructions of Henry IV, July 22, 1603, *ibid.*, p. 672). But in the instructions to Breves, dated November 9, 1603, Henry IV pointed out the reason for the English monarch's failure to suppress piracy. He wrote: "Car le roi d'Angleterre n'a pas plus d'autorité réelle que le Sultan contre la piraterie" (Summary of instructions, *ibid.*, p. 679). It appears that the sultan also had written to James I regarding English piracy but received no reply. While he refused the French king's request to write again to England, he informed him of the measures he had been taking to suppress piracy (*Cal.S.P., Venetian*, XV, 225-26).

⁵³ Agostino Nani, Venetian ambassador in Constantinople, to the doge and senate, Dec. 3, 1600, *Cal.S.P., Venetian*, IX, 434-37.

⁵⁴ Nani's dispatch, Mar. 5, 1601, *ibid.*, pp. 447-48.

a free nation and therefore were included in the English capitulations; and, second, that those capitulations distinctly gave the English ambassador consular rights over forestiers. Breves maintained, on the other hand, that the Dutch were still Spanish subjects, since the outcome of the revolt had not been definitely decided, and that therefore they were still under his authority, as French ambassador.⁵⁵

In fact, Breves fought to maintain his king's privileges and prerogatives. In his appeal to Hafiz Pasha against granting the English control over the Dutch, the French ambassador "produced all the usual arguments in his favor." He also complained "that there was an intention to break the Capitulations in existence between the King and the Grand Signor. He urged reasons of policy, and hinted that his master would be forced to make advances to those who were inviting him, to the prejudice of the Porte."⁵⁶ As a result of the ambassador's remonstrance Hafiz seemingly gave in to the French and declined to enlarge the English capitulations.⁵⁷

Nevertheless, as Lello managed to continue his negotiations with the grand vizier, he was able to secure the friendship of the powerful *kapudan-pasha*, Cicala. This he did "according to the custom of this country which must be by bribes."⁵⁸ He reported to London that

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. lv; and dispatch of Capello, June 3, 1600, *ibid.*, pp. 411-12.

⁵⁶ Dispatch of Nani, Apr. 17, 1601, *ibid.*, pp. 452-53.

⁵⁷ "The suit between me and the French Ambassador continues without aid," Lello complained to Cecil on April 8, 1601 (quoted in *ibid.*, p. lviii). See also Nani's earlier dispatch, Dec. 3, 1600, n. 53, above, for the grand vizier's opposition to ratification of enlarged English capitulations.

⁵⁸ Lello to Cecil, Apr. 8, 1601, quoted in *ibid.*, p. lviii.

"the Admiral stands very firm in my behalf, especially for the Flemings."⁵⁹ Indeed, Agostino Nani, the Venetian *bailo*, has testified that Cicala's intervention on the side of the English was decisive. Reporting on April 1, 1601 to the doge and the senate on the *kapudan-pasha*'s activities,⁶⁰ Nani stated that "Cicala sent for the French Ambassador, and begged him to desist from his opposition to England, and to allow the Flemish to sail under the Queen of England's flag." Breves was told that if he "would not yield on his own accord, at least . . . he should do so to please the Capudan Pasha who would requite him in other ways." Breves said that he would ask his master for instructions, but Cicala replied that letters took too long and that the ambassador must make up his mind at once. Under this pressure and in the hope that Cicala would be overthrown, whereupon everything might be revoked, Breves informed the *kapudan-pasha* that he was willing "to consent to a simple royal decree conferring on the English the right to . . . the covering flag for the Flemish, and [to] write to his master urging him to abandon his claim to jurisdiction over them."⁶¹ The French ambassador probably believed that it would be easier to revoke the sultan's decree than to change the English capitulations. Cicala, however, saw through the stratagem and caused the privilege to be inserted in the English treaty.⁶² Breves's appeals to Hafiz proved futile. By that time Hafiz and the Porte had already been convinced by "the weighty opinion" of the *kapudan-pasha* that the English were better friends to the Porte than any other

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 449.

⁶¹ Nani's dispatch, May 2, 1601, *ibid.*, p. 458.

⁶² *Ibid.*

power and ought to be favored.⁶³ Accordingly the sultan ordered that the Dutch were to sail under the English flag.⁶⁴

On May 23, 1601, Lello informed his superiors of his diplomatic success. Nani quoted him as saying: "I told you that the suit between the French Ambassador and me for the protection of the Flemings and forestiers was to be ended by the Grand Seigneur's whole council. It is now ordered that the Flemings come under her Majesty's banner and be included in our Capitulations."⁶⁵ But the French ambassador still hoped that he might one day bring about a change in the English capitulations.

During the next two years England's authority over the Dutch in the Levant apparently remained unchallenged, and Lello retained a high place at the Porte. Elizabeth's hostility toward Spain and her Protestant faith secured for her the regard of the sultan; on her part, the queen fostered good relations with the grand signior as a counterpoise and a standing threat to Philip II in the Mediterranean.

But this situation changed with the accession of James I to the throne of England. It was not long before the sultan heard of the king's peaceful policy toward Spain and, possibly, of his coquettings with the pope. And the French and the Venetian ambassadors kept the Porte fully informed of anything that could damage their English colleague. Consequently, Lello soon found his position untenable. In December, 1603, according to report, he sent his secretary to London to apprise his court that he was being mistreated by the sultan and his ministers, "who decline to recognize him

as an Ambassador, and refuse to observe the capitulations made under Elizabeth."⁶⁶ Not only had Lello lost influence at the Porte but the disturbed state of the Turkey Company prevented it from paying his salary.⁶⁷ The attack on, and the burning of, an Ottoman squadron by English pirates off Algiers early in 1604 made his position even worse.⁶⁸

On the other hand, the report that English ships had attacked Ottoman galleons caused rejoicing in France. It heightened the king's hope that the English merchants would once more be placed under the jurisdiction of France. He thought that the friendship between the Porte and England would be broken for a long time and that English subject would have no other choice but to place themselves again under the protection of the French flag.⁶⁹ Henry IV, however, once more miscalculated; his hope did not materialize, for the sultan did not break off relations with England.

In 1606 occurred the episode of the "Royal Merchant." This ship sank a Turkish galleon after a three-day battle. The galleon's entire cargo and many of its crew were removed. The cargo consisted of consignments to the principal Turkish merchants in Constantinople and even included presents "for the Sultana and other women who are the Turk's incendiaries." The news of this event caused the greatest alarm in the Turkey Company. It feared Ottoman re-

⁶⁶ Nicolò Molin, Venetian ambassador in England, to the doge and senate, Dec. 25, 1603, *ibid.*, X, 125; and see also Glover to Salisbury, Mar. 18/28, 1606/7, *Bronnen*, I, 171-72.

⁶⁷ *Cal.S.P., Venetian*, X, lviii.

⁶⁸ Dispatches of Molin, May 11, 1604, *ibid.*, p. 149; and of Francesco Contrarini, July 1, 1604, *ibid.*, p. 165. In that year Breves also negotiated a considerably revised and strengthened treaty of capitulation (see n. 78, below).

⁶⁹ *Lettres missives*, VI, 685.

⁶³ Nani's dispatch, Apr. 17, 1601, *ibid.*, p. 454.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. lix.

prisals, and the party in favor of withdrawing from the Levant and of trading only with Venice made capital out of the episode. Lello was thereupon recalled.⁷⁰ In the autumn of 1606 he was succeeded by Sir Thomas Glover, who "had been bred in the Court at Constantinople, and was therefore deeply versed in matters Turkish."⁷¹ Glover assumed the position of ambassador on January 9, 1607.

Like his predecessors, Glover was soon embroiled in the endless quarrel over the consulage of forestiers. Immediately after his appointment he applied to the Porte for a confirmation of the capitulations. Perhaps through carelessness, Sultan Ahmed I renewed the treaty⁷² providing "that all the Flemings and all other merchantts forastiers whatsoever should come under the kinge of England his banner."⁷³ When the new French ambassador, François de Gontaut-Biron, baron of Salignac, learned about the treaty embodying the bitterly contested provision, he was outraged. He wrote home about this matter and "moved heaven and earth" in Constantinople to have the provision in the English capitulations withdrawn.⁷⁴ He protested to Murad Pasha, the grand vizier, that Glover was not an ambassador but only a merchant and asserted the old French claim to the covering flag for the nations forestiers. In this he was supported by

the Venetian *bailo*.⁷⁵ As a result of this vigorous protestation, the capitulations were revoked.⁷⁶ Salignac, on the other hand, secured for his country a renewal of its former privileges.⁷⁷

Despite this serious defeat, Glover proceeded with his plan to bring the Dutch under English authority. The question was settled in the autumn of 1609 by an agreement which was to operate at least during the residence of Salignac and Glover. In the early part of that year the Venetian *bailo* could still report that there was a great difference of opinion between the French and the English ambassadors as to the covering flag for the Dutch. "This is a point," he wrote, "that has been contested before, but never with such heat."⁷⁸ Both parties had appealed to the grand vizier who declined to decide the case without consulting the *bailo*. The latter cautiously refused to let himself be involved in

⁷⁵ *Cal.S.P.*, Venetian, X, lviii-lix; and the dispatch of Bon, Apr. 27, 1607, *ibid.*, p. 493.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 493; and the dispatch of Mar. 28, 1607, *ibid.*, p. 485, cited in n. 73.

⁷⁷ Bon's dispatch, Apr. 27, 1607, *ibid.*, p. 493. These capitulations were probably the same as those embodied in the treaty of 1604. They included a clause requiring all foreign nations, except England and Venice, to use only the French flag in the Levant trade. Articles IV, V, and VI of the treaty revoked all concessions that had been granted to the English, contrary to the existing treaties and to the prejudice of the prestige of the French flag. The articles specifically stated that, with the exception of England and Venice, all foreign nations could hereafter, as theretofore, carry on business in the Ottoman Empire free and unhindered under the French flag and that they were to be subjected to the jurisdiction of the French consuls. Article VI forbade the English ambassador to raise any objections to the treaty or to hinder the nations concerned with regard to it. Article VII provided that all later stipulations which might be contrary to this document should a priori be declared null and void (ZINKEISEN, IV, 211-13; and n. 1 on p. 213).

⁷⁸ Dispatch of Simon Contarini, Venetian ambassador in Constantinople, Apr. 15, 1609, *Cal.S.P.*, Venetian, XI, 260-61.

⁷⁰ *Cal.S.P.*, Venetian, X, lviii; and the dispatch of Zorzi Giustinian, Venetian ambassador in England, Feb. 10, 1606, *ibid.*, p. 320.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 426.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. lviii.

⁷³ Glover to Salisbury, Mar. 18/28, 1606/7, *Bronnen*, I, 171; and the dispatch of Ottaviano Bon, Venetian ambassador in Constantinople, to the doge and senate, Mar. 28, 1607, *Cal.S.P.*, Venetian, X, 485.

⁷⁴ *Bronnen*, I, 172; and *Cal.S.P.*, Venetian, X, 485.

the dispute.⁷⁹ But in October, Glover and Salignac concluded an agreement to terminate their differences and to prevent others from arising in the future. Although by this arrangement Glover had won only a part of his objective, it was nevertheless a considerable diplomatic and financial success for the English. It is true that he renounced his claim to the consulage from nations forestiers under French jurisdiction, but, as compensation, Salignac conceded to him the right to share equally in the consular fees collected on Dutch merchandise brought into the Levant. The deed of this accord was brought to the Venetian embassy for safekeeping by the secretaries of the French and English ambassadors.⁸⁰

Reporting to London on the agreement, Glover gave some glimpses of the behind-the-scenes activities that had led up to its ratification, and he tried to justify his action by emphasizing the advantages which would accrue to the English from the pooling of the consular fees.⁸¹ He expressed the hope that the agreement "will be to Your Honours good likinge and our contynuall quietnes and better meanes in the furtherance of all our suites."⁸² This arrangement was discarded, however, by Salignac's and Glover's successors, who were not willing to abide by it.⁸³

Meantime, after the conclusion of the truce with Spain (1609), the United

Provinces came rapidly to the front as a sea power, and their trade expanded in the East Indies and in the Levant. At Constantinople their object now was to secure a treaty of capitulations like those obtained by France, England, and Venice. All three countries were consequently suspicious of this move. When Cornelius Haga, the head of the mission sent by the United Provinces to negotiate a treaty of capitulations with the Porte,⁸⁴ reached Constantinople in March 1612, he found a combination of French, English, and Venetians opposed to him;⁸⁵ and it cost him large sums of money and much time before he succeeded in securing the capitulations.⁸⁶ The French ambassador, Achille de Harley Sancy, baron de la Môle, even went the length of offering ten thousand sequins (gold coins) in an effort to upset the negotiations. He had invited Sir Paul Pindar, the English ambassador, to join him, but Pindar declined. When the latter saw, however, that the Dutch were really going to succeed, he himself approached the French ambassador with a proposal for concerted action.⁸⁷ But it

⁸⁴ The Porte apparently was also interested in a political alliance with the Dutch. (Marc' Antonio Correr, Venetian ambassador in England, to the doge and senate, Mar. 17, 1611, *ibid.*, p. 125).

⁸⁵ The opposition was due to the threat of competition which Dutch trade held out to the commerce of other nations in the Levant (*ibid.*, pp. 333-34). It is interesting to note, however, that each ambassador accused his colleagues of conspiring against the Dutch (*ibid.*, pp. 297 and 309; and *Bronnen*, I, 189-90).

⁸⁶ Haga's report "To the illustrious and potent lords," Constantinople, Apr. 7, 1612. This was enclosed with the dispatch of Antonio Foscarini, Venetian ambassador in England, London, July 5, 1612 (*Cal.S.P., Venetian*, XII, 387-88). Haga's report is not available in the Dutch sources (*Bronnen*, I, 206, n. 1).

⁸⁷ Dispatch of Christoforo Valier, Venetian *bailo* in Constantinople, Sept. 7, 1612, *Cal.S.P., Venetian*, XII, 420-21. The original document is given in *Bronnen*, I, 256-58.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

⁸⁰ A copy of the agreement was enclosed with Simon Contarini's dispatch of October 17, 1609 (*ibid.*, pp. 370-71).

⁸¹ Glover to Salisbury, Oct. 7/17, 1609, *Bronnen*, I, 174-75.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Dispatch of Simon Contarini (and Cristoforo Valier), Mar. 10, 1612, *Cal.S.P., Venetian*, XII, 308.

was already too late, for on July 6, 1612 the Dutch were granted by the sultan a treaty of capitulations conceding to them the privilege of free trade in the Ottoman Empire under their own flag.⁸⁸

The conclusion of the Dutch case did not end the Anglo-French rivalry for prestige and power in the Levant. The English continued to pursue their objective of undermining France's already weakened position in Turkey and of capturing for themselves the French privileges and prerogatives. Eventually, it was Sir Thomas Roe, by far the ablest of the early group of English ambassadors, who firmly established English in-

fluence at the Porte.⁸⁹ Although France still occupied the leading position in the Ottoman Empire, its primacy was definitely challenged by England, whose might and authority grew by leaps and bounds.

The factors which had contributed to this situation were, first, the weakening of France as a result of the civil and religious wars. This was reflected in the decline of French naval power which made it difficult to enforce respect for the French flag and to maintain French prestige abroad. The Turks were well aware of this situation and knew that they could not expect assistance from the French king in case of conflict with a third power, particularly with Spain. Second, the long internal disturbances had ruined French industries and emptied the royal treasury. French goods could not compete with English products in the markets of the Levant. A general preference grew up for English manufactured goods, which rapidly won a pre-eminent place in the Ottoman Empire. As early as 1580 the French ambassador Germiny had testified to this effect in a dispatch to Henry III.⁹⁰ Moreover, an empty treasury was not conducive to retaining the favor of the Porte. Frequent and expensive gifts for the sultan and his highest officials, as well as large-scale bribery, were out of the question for France. Financial difficulties led the French to impose additional taxes on the nations forestiers, who tried to withdraw from French protection and place themselves under the authority of England. Third—and this was of the greatest significance—France had the bad fortune to be represented at the Porte by men of low moral character, whose be-

⁸⁸ On the events leading up to the granting of capitulations to the United Provinces, see *Bronnen*, I, 206–55. For the text of the treaty of capitulations in the Dutch and French languages see Jean DUMONT, *Corps universel diplomatique du droit des gens* (Amsterdam, 1728), V, Part II, 205–14. A summary of the "Letter from the sultan to the Dutch," dated June 1, 1612, announcing the grant of the capitulations, accompanied the dispatch of Foscarini, London, November 16, 1612. It reads: "Refers to the Embassy of Cornelius Haga and the letters he brought, begging for the grant of capitulations such as have been granted to other Sovereigns. These capitulations have been conceded to the Dutch. Dutch slaves are to be set free. The custom of the City is that the port is open to all comers, but especially to those who come in friendship. The Dutch to be admitted on the same footing as England and France" (*Cal.S.P., Venetian*, XII, 447). Valier, reporting to the doge and the senate on the granting of the capitulations, wrote on September 7, 1612: "The Dutch Ambassador here resident, after a long period of study and toil, has signed and established the Capitulations between his Masters and the Porte. Imperial orders have accordingly been issued to all places and ports that Dutch Consuls are to be admitted and Dutch vessels well treated in the Turkish harbors when they arrive with goods and merchandise" (*Cal.S.P., Venetian*, XII, 420). Valier was wrong, however, in his contention that the main point of the Dutch capitulations was "that the Dutch shall pay five per cent. customs duty as do the French; he [Haga] was not able to obtain the English tariff, which is three per cent. only on all goods and merchandise" (*Cal.S.P., Venetian*, XII, 420). In fact, the Dutch obtained the same tariff as that paid by the English (see Article XVII of the treaty of capitulations).

⁸⁹ ZINKEISEN, III, 654.

⁹⁰ HORNIKER, *loc. cit.*, p. 300.

havior considerably weakened the prestige of the French monarchs and contributed to the decline of France in the Levant.⁹¹

On the other hand, during the same period, England not only gained a position of importance as regards trade in the Ottoman Empire but also acquired more political influence at the Porte. In contrast to France, England was fortunate in being represented at Constantinople in the early and formative stages of its relations with the Porte by a group of outstanding diplomatists, who knew how to gain and maintain the confidence of the sultans and to protect the prestige of their sovereigns and of their

flag in the Levant. The rapid progress of the English in the Ottoman Empire is evident from the following facts: In 1583 Harborne, the first English ambassador, obtained from Murad III a treaty of peace and friendship granting the English the privilege of trading under their own flag in the Ottoman domains. In 1593 Barton, the second ambassador, negotiated a treaty of capitulations; and by 1623 English agents had secured such confidence at the Porte that the then English ambassador, Roe, was able to represent the sultan in peace negotiations between the Ottoman Empire and Poland.⁹²

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⁹¹ ZINKEISEN, IV, 216-17.

⁹² *Ibid.*, III, 845-46.