of an Asiatic army, and march against the janissaries and sipáhís in Constantinople. But the janissaries heard of this design and rose in revolt. Incited by a vizier whom 'Osmán had deposed, they seized their sovereign and dragged him to the state prison of the Seven Towers, where shortly afterwards he was foully murdered by the traitor minister, 1622 (1031).

The wretched Mustafa was again raised to the throne, only to be deposed fifteen months afterwards in favour of Murid, the eldest surviving brother of 'Osmán.

In Murid IV., who succeeded to the supreme power in 1623 (1032), when a child of eleven years, Turkey had once more a sultan of the old 'Osmánli type. Since the death of Suleymán the empire had been cursed with a suc­cession of *rois faineants,* under whom it had rapidly fallen to decay. The vigour and courage of the new sultan stayed it for a while upon its downward course, and re­stored to it something of its bygone glory. While still quite young, Murid had been compelled by the mutinous janissaries to deliver into their cruel hands his favourite vizier, Háfiz Pasha. This embittered him against that corps, and, when soon afterwards the soldiers began openly to discuss his deposition, Murid swiftly and suddenly cut off the ringleaders and all others whom he suspected of disloyalty ; this struck fear into the hearts of the dis­affected soldiers, who, finding themselves without any to organize or direct them, returned to their allegiance. Murid next turned his attention to checking the intoler­able corruption and abuses which pervaded every depart­ment of the state. He had but one simple though terribly drastic method of reform,—the execution of every official whom he even suspected of any malpractice. Having re­stored some sort of order in his capital, Murid marched against Persia and recaptured the city and district of Erivan. In 1638 (1048) he undertook a second and more important campaign against the same power. His object was the recovery of Baghdád, which had been taken by the shih’s troops some sixteen years before. The Persians resisted long and gallantly, but at length the Turks carried the city by storm, when Murid disgraced himself by the slaughter of a vast number of the inhabitants. By the peace which followed Turkey restored Erivan to Persia, but retained Baghdád, which has been in its hands ever since. Murid on his return entered Constantinople in triumph. This sultan died in 1640 (1049); his death is said to have been hastened by habits of intemperance, which he had contracted towards the close of his life.

Ibráhím, the brother of the late sultan, now mounted the Ottoman throne. He was another of those wretched princes who gave themselves up to the indulgence of their own follies and vices without bestowing a thought upon the welfare of their people or the prosperity of their country. All the evils that had been curbed for a time by the stern hand of Murid broke out afresh and in worse form than before. The sultan himself was the most venal of the venal. Shut up in the seraglio, he thought of nothing but the gratification of his own and his favourites’ caprices; gem-encrusted coaches and pleasure-boats, and carpets and hangings of richest sable for his rooms, were among the objects for which he plundered his people and sold every office to the highest bidder. This went on for eight years, till at length his subjects, weary of his ex­actions and tyranny, deposed him, and made his son Mu­hammed, then only seven years of age, sultan in his room. The only events of note that occurred during Ibráhím’s tenure of power are the capture of Azoff from the Cossacks and the occupation of Crete. This island, which was then in the hands of Venice, was soon overrun, but it was not till well on in the next reign, after a siege of twenty years, that the Ottomans succeeded in taking Candia the capital.

The minority of Muhammed IV., who became sultan in 1648 (1058), was marked by all the troubles and evils that might have been anticipated, until the grand vizierate was conferred on Köprili Muhammed in 1656 (1067). This statesman, who was seventy years old when he entered upon the duties of prime minister of Turkey, was the founder of an illustrious family of viziers, whose integrity and strength of character did much to counteract the per­nicious influence of degenerate sultans and to prop up for a season the declining empire. Old Köprili accepted the office of grand vizier only upon condition of receiving abso­lute power ; this he employed much in the same way as Murád IV. had done when he set about the work of reform : he executed every one who fell under his suspicion. He died in 1661 (1072), leaving the vizierate to his son Fázil Ahmed. Ahmed was, like his father, a man of great ability, and happily for Turkey he enjoyed the complete confidence of the young sultan, who cared for nothing but the chase, whence he is called in the Ottoman histories Avji Muhammed or Muhammed the Huntsman. Before long Ahmed was called on to lead the Turkish army against Austria. He took Neuhäusel and several places of little importance ; but near the convent of St Gotthard (on the Raab) he was completely defeated in 1664 (1075) by a smaller Christian force under Montecuculi. A truce for twenty years on the basis of the treaty of Sitavorok was the result of this battle ; the Ottomans, however, re­tained Neuhäusel. Ahmed next appeared in arms in Crete, for the purpose of bringing to a close the siege of Candia, which had been going on ever since 1648 ; but it was not till other three years had passed that the brave garrison opened the gates to the grand vizier, in 1669 (1079). The sultan himself was induced to head the next campaign, which was undertaken on behalf of the Cossacks of the Ukraine, who had craved the protection of the Porte against Poland. The Turks took the cities of Kamenetz and Lemberg, whereupon King Michael sued for peace, 1672 (1083), and promised to make over Podolia and the Ukraine to Turkey and to pay an annual tribute of 220,000 ducats. The sultan accepted these terms and returned home in triumph ; but the Poles refused to be bound by them, and under the command of Sobieski they attacked and defeated the troops of Ahmed Pasha. The war lasted till 1676, when it was brought to an end by the treaty of Zurawno, which left the sultan in possession of Podolia and almost all the Ukraine. Three days after this peace was signed Ahmed Pasha died. Few men have done more to ruin their country than Kara Mustafa, who succeeded Ahmed in the grand vizierate. His pet scheme was the conquest of Germany and the establishment of a great Turkish province between the Danube and the Rhine, with himself as nominal viceroy but virtual sovereign. He accordingly marched with an enormous army, probably not far off half a million strong, against Vienna. In the summer of 1683 (1094) this mighty host appeared before the walls of the Austrian capital. For an account of the siege, see vol. xix. p. 296. A few weeks after his discom­fiture Kara Mustafa was executed at Belgrade by the sultan’s orders. Venice and Russia now declared war against Turkey; misfortune followed misfortune ; city after city was rent away from the empire ; the Austrians were in possession of almost the whole of Hungary, the Italians of almost all the Morea. At length a severe defeat at Mohacz, where Suleymán had triumphed years before, exhausted the patience of the soldiery, and Muhammed IV. was deposed in 1687 (1099).

The first year of the reign of Suleymán II., who suc­ceeded his brother, was marked by a serious mutiny of the janissaries of the capital, who, aided by the dregs of the population, created a reign of terror in Constantinople,