cd, so long as he could purchase and secure the favour of the sultan and his ministers. The provinces were indeed sold to the highest bidder, and the successful candidate was sent to his province with full powers to make the people disgorge as much of their money as force and cunning could squeeze out of them. The Porte received the stipulated sum from its nominee, without inquiring how it was pro­cured ; and to such a pitch was the tyranny of the pashas carried, that many districts offered the sultan to pay direct­ly into his treasury more than three times the nominal sum demanded of them as taxes, provided the money might be collected by an officer totally distinct from the pasha. At length Sultan Mahmoud, in the course of his reforms, or­dered that with each pasha should be associated an officer charged with the collection of the imposts, independently of the pasha ; but whether from a difficulty of finding per­sons qualified for such an office, or from other causes, this order had never been carried into effect up to July 1834, when Marshal Marmont, duke of Ragusa, was at Constan­tinople ; and the cupidity and injustice of the pashas and mutselims, the marshal states, were never greater than at that time. We learn also from the sultan’s hatti-sheriff, issued in November 1839, that the venal concession of offices then still subsisted ; that the civil and local admini­stration of each region was still, at that time, delivered up to the arbitrary will of one man ; and that the people still had no security for person or property. Yet we are told by an anonymous writer in 1838, that this state of things had already been very generally altered ; that the pasha was then a salaried military anti civil officer, without the power of life and death, and personally uninterested in the revenues of his province ; that a treasurer from the Porte then received directly from the communes the amount of their contributions. the result is stated to be highly gra­tifying, the people contributing a fixed and a higher sum to the state than the former nominal one, but in reality much less than what the pashas used to extort from them. The imperial treasury is stated to have greatly improved in its receipts, the subjects paying less, while the government receives more.@@1 So little are writers on Turkey to be trusted.

The Osmanlee are all Mahommedans, and Islam is the re­ligion of the state ; but all other religions are freely tolerated, and with their professors the Osmanlee live in the ut­most harmony. Both the law and the religion being found­ed on the same common basis, the Koran, the clergy and the lawyers form but a single order, divided however into two classes, the ministers of religion and the ministers of justice ; for the prayers and ablutions prescribed by the Koran are so numerous and so frequent, that the ministers of religion could never find leisure to execute the office of a judge ; they form therefore a separate class, leaving the administration of justice to the cadis. Every Osmanlee is entitled to become a member of this body, but he must first receive a suitable education. After a few years’ study, and an examination of his capabilities, the candidate may be admitted to the service of a mosque ; but having once en­tered upon the sacerdotal office, his career is closed, and no further promotion awaits him. Those who aspire to higher honours continue their studies for a longer time, and, after several examinations, obtain the rank of *mulazim,* which en­titles them to hold the office of deputy to a cadi or judge. If their ambition urges them still farther, and they wish to obtain the degree of muderis or doctor, their noviciate must be continued seven years longer, and they undergo a final examination in presence of the mufti. The title of mu- deris being once conferred, the first dignities of the magi­stracy lie open to their hopes. The classification, how­ever, does not end here ; the muderises of Constantinople are divided into ten classes or degrees, from the first of which only are chosen the supreme magistrates of the state. This exact organization gives to the clerical body a firm coherence, which makes it the most solid part of the Otto­man institutions. Its unity is secured by the controlling authority of its head, the grand mufti, or sheikh-ul-islam, from whom depend all the appointments to its various ranks and offices, while the members have all a common interest in maintaining its privileges. Of all the offices in the state, that of grand mufti, or sheikh-ul-islam (head of the faith), is alone held for life. He is the oracle of the law, and the representative of the khalif or sultan in his spiritual capaci­ty ; and as all new laws, and even the question of peace and war, must await his sanction, he thus participates in the le­gislative power of the sovereign, and interferes with all the movements of the government. The privileges common to all the members arc exemptions from taxes and arbitrary imposts, arbitrary confiscation, and the punishment of death. They arc sufficiently enlightened to understand their interests ; the prerogatives on which they depend are of the most solid and important nature ; their chiefs are bound to them by the strongest ties, or are proved by long novitiate or repeated trials; they unite the firmness of an aristocracy to the spirit of a profession ; in fine, their influence has na­turally such a good foundation, and is so artfully fortified, that it would be extremely difficult to overturn it. But all the advantages which result from their combination are exclu­sively their own ; they cannot resist the arbitrary violence of the sultan, but they can impede the alterations of the law. Their power is founded on the false principles which woul<l arrest the progress of civilization, and they are the natural supporters of the present state of things. In the Ottoman empire there is nothing of a solid construction, except this bulwark against innovation. It is difficult to re­form law and religion, even when taken separately ; but when united, they offer an inert, or even an active resist­ance, sufficient to baffle the strongest efforts of the bcst-in- tentioned despot. The whole body is termed the Ulema.

To give, however, a precise idea of this important body, we should begin with the students, who arc called *suhhte* (vulgarly pronounced *sokhta,* or the scorched), because it is supposed that they burn with a zeal for knowledge. There are schools or colleges, named medreses, established in all the imperial mosques in Constantinople, Adrianople, and Brusa. The pupils first study grammar, and then Arabic and Persian poetry, and rhetoric. When considcrably ad­vanced in the Arabic language, they apply themselves to the reading of the Koran, the commentaries upon it, and the books which treat of the civil law. Finally, they study logic, natural philosophy, and metaphysics, in old Arabic works. Totally neglecting mathematics, they also study judicial astrology, as the most sublime branch of human knowledge. Such is the sum of information possessed by the sukhtes. They are chiefly from Syria and Asia Minor, very few being from European Turkey. They are the most savage, the most fanatical, the most turbulent, and the worst subjects, among the Turks. Their number also is so considerable, that Constantinople alone contains above 10,000 of them. They perform, in their clerical quality, the services of the mosques ; their daily sustenance is re­gularly furnished out of the revenues of these temples; and they are lodged in the numerous cells annexed to them. But as most of them are poor and unprotected, it is very seldom, and only when at an advanced age, that any of them attain the chief clerical dignities. The student who has neither patronage nor distinguished talent to carry him through the ten degrees of muderis or doctorship, which lead to the higher dignities of the law, aspires only to inferior

@@@1 British and Foreign Review, vol. vii. 121.