CELEBRATED CRIMES

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Celebrated Crimes by I. G. Burnham & Jacques Wagrez

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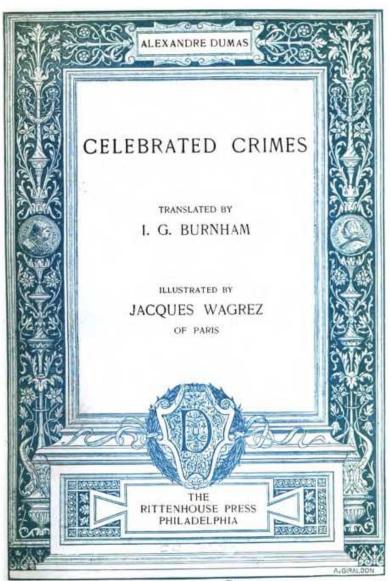
I. G. BURNHAM & JACQUES WAGREZ

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Ali-Pacha superintending the destruction of Janina.—Ali-Pacha.



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ALI-PACHA

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CELEBRATED CRIMES

ALI-PACHA

The beginning of this century witnessed many bold undertakings, and extraordinary alternations of fortune. While the Western world was by turns resisting and bending the knee to a sub-lieutenant become emperor, who made kings and unmade kingdoms at will, the effete East, like mummies which are alive only in appearance, was gradually falling in pieces and being parceled out among the bold adventurers who assailed it on all sides. Beside the comparatively unimportant revolts, which led to naught but brief conflicts, and resulted in trifling changes only, like that of Djezzar Pacha, who refused to pay tribute because he deemed himself safe from attack in his citadel of St. John of Acre, or that of Passevend Oglou Pacha, who took his stand upon the walls of Widdin as the defender of the institution of janissaries against that of a regular militia as decreed by Sultan Selim at Stamboul,—beside these there were more extensive rebellions, which aimed their blows at the constitution of the empire and curtailed its extent, like those of Czerni-Georges, who raised Servia to a place among the free nations, of Mehemet Ali, who made a kingdom for himself out of his pachalik of Egypt, and lastly of the man whose story we propose to relate, Ali Tepalen, Pacha of Janina, whose long resistance preceded and brought about the regeneration of Greece.

This great movement was in no sense planned or carried out by him. He foresaw it, but never sought to help it forward, and there was no time when it would have been possible for him to check it. He was not one of those men who devote their whole lives to the service of a cause, and all that he did was done to acquire and augment a power of which he was at once the architect and the beneficiary. He never could see anything but himself in the whole universe, he loved none but himself, and worked for none but himself. He bore in his heart the seed of all the passions, and devoted his whole life to their development and gratification. His character is sufficiently described in that statement; and his actions were simply the natural consequences of his character trying conclusions with circumstances. Few men have been more thoroughly consistent, or better suited to the atmosphere in which they lived; and as a personality is the more striking, the more completely it sums up in itself the ideas and morals of the time and country in which its possessor lived, the figure of Ali-Pacha is certainly one of the most interesting if not of the most brilliant in contemporary history.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, Turkey was already suffering from the political gangrene, for which she is vainly seeking a cure to-day, and which will soon make an end of her before our eyes. Anarchy and disorder reigned from one end of the empire to the other. The race of the Osmanlis, built solely for conquest, was like to show itself good for nothing whenever the tide of conquest should turn against it. And that was what actually happened, when Sobieski, saving Christianity under the wails of Vienna, as Karl Martel saved it long before on the plains of Politiers, set bounds