

Tiflis and Van. Russia has also other commercial interests on a large scale to watch over in this country where three empires meet. Along the valley close to the western foot of Ararat, and farther along the *ipek-yolli* and the Murad and through ancient Assyria, there is a route marked out by Nature for a railway to Bagdad, which might become a formidable rival to the German Bagdad line. It is really from this point of view that Bayazid is of importance to Russia, and one cannot help noticing the well-ordered system of observation instituted by the Russians in these parts of Asia.

Already Russians can feel pretty much at home in Bayazid, for they have captured the town four times, in 1828 and 1854, and on April 29, 1877, when Colonel Shtockvich occupied the town and citadel without striking a blow, but in June evacuated the former to defend himself in the latter with a battalion against the superior force of the beleaguering Turks. The water-supply was cut off, and only with great danger could water be obtained from a point much farther down. The provisions came to an end, but still the besieged refused to capitulate. An Armenian who is still living in Bayazid informed the Russians that relief was on the way, and this news revived their courage. It was General Targukassoff, of Armenian birth, who was approaching, but his force was too small, and, to make a more imposing appearance, he collected a quantity of carts, tents, and camels, in fact a baggage train, which might make the enemy believe that he had a strong force at his command. The division of 18,000 Turks which lay at Kizil-dise, $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours' march from Bayazid, allowed themselves to be outwitted, and did not venture to attack. Targukassoff reached his goal unharmed, and found that the Turkish besiegers had taken up a position on a flat-topped height above the citadel, where they could fire on it without being themselves exposed to danger, for the ammunition of the besieged had given out. Targukassoff's Cossacks climbed the ridge above the town, where ruins of Kurdish fortifications are still to be seen, and thence opened a murderous fire on the Turks and freed the distressed garrison. With it Targukassoff managed to