

**THE LIFE OF MIDHAT PASHA.**



*Mullaht Pasha.*

THE LIFE OF  
MIDHAT PASHA

A RECORD OF HIS SERVICES,  
POLITICAL REFORMS, BANISH-  
MENT, AND JUDICIAL MURDER

DERIVED FROM PRIVATE DOCUMENTS AND  
REMINISCENCES

BY HIS SON ALI HAYDAR MIDHAT BEY

WITH PORTRAITS

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## PREFACE

As the Son of Midhat Pasha I was for fifteen years compelled to reside as an exile in Smyrna, but finding the physical and moral sufferings to which I was there subjected greater than I could endure, I succeeded in quitting the territories of the Sultan, and came to take up my residence in this hospitable land, and among this great and free people.

In the following pages I have endeavoured to carry out a duty which has long been incumbent on me, by letting the public, and especially the English public, know the true story of my father's career, and of his death.

The record is based mainly on documents and notes left by him. In obedience to requests from high quarters I abstain from publishing certain documents and correspondence which, bearing as they do on International affairs, might be calculated to cause embarrassment and do harm.

It is possible that some of my father's papers which I have now printed, and which were written in Turkish, may have lost some of their original brightness in the process of translation, but at least, most scrupu-

lous care has been taken to give the sense of them accurately.

There can be no doubt that at the present time Turkey is suffering from a Reign of Terror, and is in a state of anarchy. I hope that the narrative contained in these pages may afford some evidence of the methods by which this condition of affairs has been produced.

My readers will learn how the Sovereign of the Ottoman Empire, in order to carry out his own system of Government, has suppressed every effort for reform, and has removed those men, who by their force of character, by their uprightness, and by their popularity, seemed capable of thwarting his designs, and amending the condition of the country and of the people.

I wish to state here that I have a profound respect for the Imperial Throne, and it is this consideration alone, I repeat it, and the honour of my country, which makes me regard it as a duty to humanity to expose the nefarious system of Sultan Abdul Hamid.

In conclusion, I would beg to offer my thanks to the Proprietors of the *Times* newspaper for giving me permission to reprint the excellent report of my father's trial which appeared in their columns.

ALI HAYDAR MIDHAT.

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## APPENDIX A

### THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE BERLIN NOTE AND THE CONFERENCE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

THE effects of the Bulgarian troubles on British policy were clearly visible. England, that had hitherto been favourable and friendly to Turkey; that had counselled against the Consular Commission of August 1875; had adhered to the Andrassy note of December (1875) only at the express request of the Ottoman Government (on the 13th June 1876); had pressed reforms upon Turkey as a means of forestalling the designs of the enemies of the Ottoman Empire,<sup>1</sup> and had firmly refused to adhere to the Berlin Memorandum, now took up a slightly altered position. This nuance was clearly perceived in a despatch from Lord Derby to Sir H. Elliot of the 25th May 1876, in which he said: "In the course of conversation with Musurus Pasha, I took the opportunity of suggesting to His Excellency that it would be undesirable that the Turkish Government should misunderstand the attitude of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the proposals of the Berlin Conference. Her Majesty's Government had declined to join in proposals which they thought ill-advised, *but both the circumstances and the state of feeling in this country were very much changed since the Crimean War*, and the Porte would be unwise to be led, by recollections of that period, to count upon more than the moral support of Her Majesty's Government in the event of no satisfactory solution of the present difficulties being found."<sup>2</sup> It will be seen later on that even this attitude of benevolent diplomatic neutrality was not entirely preserved by the British Government at the Conference of Constantinople or the negotiations that led up to it.

"The three Northern and allied Powers" were evidently disconcerted by the turn matters were taking at Constantinople. It seemed impossible to present a comminatory note to a new Sultan and a new Government established by a revolution, the very purpose and aim of

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 422.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1877.

which was to introduce practical reforms in the country, without a certain delay demanded by equity and even decency. They determined to make it as short as possible.

In spite, however, of strenuous efforts to conceal the fact, differences had arisen among "the allied Courts," or rather between the two principal parties interested. Russia was in favour of an occupation of the three disturbed provinces, with a view to the eventual establishment of autonomies on the model of Servia and Roumania. Austria was dead opposed to both propositions. There is no doubt that she had been working up to an occupation by her own troops of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the mandate of Europe—up to the time of the Bulgarian insurrection; but now that such an occupation would be accompanied by a Russian occupation of Bulgaria, she entirely changed her mind. If a joint occupation took place, the last state of those provinces would be worse than the first. At present she had the strategical advantage of position over Russia, but Russia in Bulgaria would have it over her. She was firmly opposed to joint occupation. Neither would autonomy suit her. The establishment of autonomous provinces, placed under the guarantee of the Great Powers, would make the absorption by herself of these coveted possessions impossible. Count Andrassy put his foot down against both these proposals.

A very active interchange of ideas consequently took place during the whole of the month of June between the two Empires, and it was here that the full value of a third partner, the disinterested broker, was revealed. Russia evidently meant business, for Servia, which was, as Consul-General White explained, absolutely in her hands, now (1st July 1876) formally declared war against Turkey, and invaded the Ottoman territory. Montenegro followed her example. In the latter case it was rather a superfluous or *ex post facto* formality.

A knot had occurred worthy of the interposition of the gods, and on the 8th July a meeting was arranged at Reichstadt between the Emperor Francis Joseph and the Czar. Of course it is only in Homeric times that accounts of the interviews of Olympic gods were vouchsafed to men, and simple mortals have to content themselves nowadays with being told the results of these interviews. The result of this particular interview was "very satisfactory." According to Sir A. Buchanan, "the Emperor and Count Andrassy returned last night (10th July 1876) *greatly satisfied* with the interview of Reichstadt." "The Emperors parted on the best terms; they agreed to maintain the present principle of non-intervention, reserving for the future the expediency of coming to an understanding with the Great Powers, according to circumstances which may arise."<sup>1</sup> So, according to this authority, the Emperor of Austria returned to Vienna "greatly satisfied" with doing nothing. It was scarcely worth

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, Nos. 529 and 530.

while going all the way to Reichstadt for that. It was, however, generally supposed in well-informed chancelleries in Europe at the time, and subsequent events greatly corroborated the surmise, that the Emperor had something else to be greatly satisfied about than what was vouchsafed to Sir A. Buchanan.

It was said that two specific points had been formally agreed upon between the rulers of these two military Empires, in presence of the threatening aspect that affairs were assuming. (1) That, should affairs in the East eventuate in war between Turkey and Russia, Russia would, under no circumstances, seek any territorial acquisition *in Europe*. (2) That Bosnia and Herzegovina should be considered within the exclusive sphere of Austria's influence, and that Russia would not actively oppose any arrangement with respect to them that Europe might propose. All the rest would be left to their respective chancellors, each would retain his liberty of action and pursue the policy he deemed the best, certain that nothing that could happen in the way of differences of opinion between them could bring about a rupture between the two Empires. The middle term of an agreement had evidently been found. "British interests" would pay the bill, and the desertion of Bucharest would be avenged.

By a curious coincidence, on the same day (8th July) that this historical interview took place, there appeared in the *Daily News* the famous "atrocities article" that set all England ablaze and started the greatest orator of the day on his crusade against the "unspeakable Turk."

The indirect effect on English policy of this crusade and the atrocity meetings all over England that followed it, was seen in the nuance already noticed, between the terms of the despatch of the 25th May and that of the 25th September, which was the prelude to the Conference where it was still further accentuated.

July was destined to bring an aggravation of trouble on the Turkish Empire and anxiety on Turkish Ministers. Austria chose this moment (1st July) to shut to Turkey the port of Klek, through which the Turkish army in Herzegovina received its chief supplies. It is not necessary to enter here into the question of international right involved in this matter. This turned on the interpretation of ancient treaties with the Venetian Republic, and on the boundaries of the "enclaves" in Dalmatia, and these questions had, by mutual consent, been left dormant for long years between the Austrian and Ottoman Governments. Suffice it to say that a *modus vivendi* had been arrived at between the two Governments in 1853 ("in the hope that an amicable arrangement will intervene relative to the question of the enclaves of Klek and Suttarina"), and had subsisted ever since. For Austria, after leaving the question of right in abeyance for twenty-three years, to choose that particular moment when the maximum of inconvenience would be thereby caused to the Ottoman Government, was a high-handed proceeding of the most unfriendly

nature, and could only be justified on the principle of *la force prime le droit*. At any rate, it finally exploded the pretext of "her deep and earnest anxiety" for the pacification of these provinces which she was continually putting forward as the motives of her diplomatic actions, as well as all pretence of friendly dispositions towards the Porte. The energy displayed by the new Government at Constantinople in sending reinforcements to the scene of action, and the success attending these efforts, were perhaps the real motive of this unqualified act, for in consequence of that energy, things were not going well with the insurrection, and new factors would have to be imported to keep it going.

Accordingly, at the same time the port of supply for the Turkish troops was closed, Montenegro and Servia declared war on the Porte (1st July 1876). (As far as the first-named principality was concerned this formality was rather superfluous *ex post facto* formality.) Ever since the "intimate relations which had existed for two years back" between the Courts of Vienna and Cetinje, Montenegro had never ceased to carry on war against the Ottoman troops. Indeed her mountaineers, together with the Grenzlers and Dalmatians, had been the mainstay of the "rebellion." Only as, nominally, peaceful relations had never been interrupted, the Turkish Commanders were debarred from following the rebels on Montenegrin soil, and Russia had drawn a taboo round Montenegro, and forbidden, under penalty of war, the invasion of that land, and Mr Jomine, the Russian diplomatic agent at Cetinje, was, with his Austrian colleague, the confidential adviser of the prince.

As far back as January 1876, Sir H. Elliot had informed Lord Derby of "the system employed by the Montenegrins in aid of the Herzegovinian insurgents. All the men (in Montenegro), capable of bearing arms, are considered to be soldiers, and are made into battalions of 600 men. The commanders and majors of these battalions, who are called commanders and pod-commanders, receive pay; the remaining officers and men are unpaid. When an expedition is contemplated, each man takes with him potatoes and bread, if he has any, for five days, and a reserve of provisions from each village is carried by women or baggage horses. The Austrian Committees, having provided surgeons and medicines, hospitals and ambulances have been organised in some villages on the frontier. The prince furnishes all those who join the insurgents *without authorisation, but he sends one-fifth of his effective forces into the Herzegovina. Not to overtire these poor people, His Highness takes care to change them at the end of each expedition, or when their provisions are exhausted. Reforms alone, it is stated, will never put an end to the insurrection, and force is of no avail so long as the insurgents and their Montenegrin friends have only to cross the frontier to be in safety.*"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Turkey, 3, 1876, No. 1.

As for Serbia, Consul-General White had for months past warned his Government of what was preparing, and of the wholesale influx of Russians into the Servian army, nor had Prince Milan made any disguise of the fact of the likelihood of his being drawn into the *mêlée*, but a certain almost comic jealousy existed between the rulers of these two little principalities, lest the one should steal a march on the other, and acquire a better right to the title of the "liberator of the Slav race."

They consequently agreed to declare war on Turkey together. As Serbia, confident in her new levies, was now determined to act, Montenegro could not afford to be behindhand, however much it might have suited her to continue the particular mode of safe warfare that she had, for twelve months, been indulging in.

In spite of the new levies, military matters did not progress to Prince Milan's satisfaction. The fact was that a new spirit had been infused into Ottoman Councils by the new ministers, and large reinforcements of regular troops under competent generals had been hurried to the Servian frontiers and despatched into Bosnia. The consequence was that victory did not attend the Servian arms, and, after the loss of an important position near Deligrad on the 24th August 1876, barely two months after the pompous declaration of war, Prince Milan "with the approval of his ally, the Prince of Montenegro," requested the good offices of the Powers for a suspension of hostilities. All Europe eagerly seconded this request, and although a formal armistice was never concluded, a *de facto* suspension of hostilities took place. It is unnecessary to detail the negotiations that followed.

The Porte very naturally desired that an agreement on the basis of peace should precede or accompany an armistice, otherwise it would lose all the advantages of its present military position. Serbia wanted an armistice without any basis of peace. When at last, in consequence of the insistence of Europe, the Porte agreed to this, a dispute arose about the duration of the armistice. The Porte proposed six months to give ample time to negotiate a permanent settlement, and England adhered to this view of the matter. Serbia would have none of it; one month or nothing. She was moving on safe ground, for she knew well that Europe had taken the negotiations out of her hand and would never allow a renewed attack upon her. Russia strongly insisted on the shorter term, and when, in order to solve the difficulty, England appealed to the honest broker at Berlin, he proposed as a compromise an armistice of six weeks.

These *pourparlers* occupied about a month, and when they seemed to be on the point of being settled, as usual by the Porte yielding in the matter, it was found that Prince Milan had changed his mind, and would have no armistice at all.

What had occurred in the interval to account for this change of front?

On the 24th September, Consul-General White writes to Sir Henry Elliot<sup>1</sup> "that the last six weeks have produced an important change in the affairs of Servia. The Civil Government has ceased to have a voice in public affairs; the presence of Russian officers, some of them officers of the Imperial Guard, the courage and enthusiasm with which they are animated, the growing influence of the Slavonic Committees through their agents, have all given a warlike tone to what is called public opinion here. . . . The Russians present here say openly that it is their aim and object to prevent the conclusions of peace." And again, on 4th October 1876, he writes to Lord Derby:<sup>2</sup> "It may be interesting for your Lordship to hear that money appears abundant in the Servian Exchequer, and although the Ministers deny that it is derived from Russian sources, it is quite impossible to account in any other way for its origin."

But something more particular must have occurred to encourage Prince Milan to order on the 26th September, the very next day on which the suspension of hostilities terminated, a general attack on the Turks in the Morava Valley. What was it? On the 28th September 1876, Mr Malet (afterwards Sir Edward Malet), writing from Rome to Lord Derby,<sup>3</sup> states that Sig. Melegari, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in order to convince him "of the imminence of the danger to the Ottoman Empire" read the following paper to him, as coming from Livadia, adding that England alone was able to avert the execution of the design by "compelling" the Porte to acquiesce in His Lordship's demands. The paper was dated 26th September, and ran as follows: "The Emperor has sent General Soumarakoff to Vienna with instructions to propose a peace, should Turkey attempt to evade the armistice, upon conditions that would suit all the Powers, viz. Austrian military intervention in Bosnia, Russian military intervention in Bulgaria, and the joint entry of all the squadrons of the Levant into the Bosphorus. These steps appear to us indispensable in order to bring the Porte to its senses, to prevent war, and save the Christians from a general massacre."<sup>4</sup>

This *grandis epistola a Capreis* which frightened Mr Malet so much that he immediately telegraphed its substance to Lord Derby, and which was, no doubt, intended to frighten Lord Derby, had no chance at all of being accepted at Vienna, and if the constant and continuous intercourse between the three Northern "and allied Powers" was to any purpose at all, it is quite impossible that the nature of the reception it should meet with there, should have been ignored. It could therefore only have been intended as a "spur" to the Foreign Office, and it succeeded admirably in its intention.

It is scarcely worth while to waste many words over the proposal

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, I, 1877, Incl. No. 554.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 452.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 559.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Incl. No. 479.



from Livadia. Austria feared nothing so much as a joint occupation with Russia. It would have been a guarantee exacted from her for her own eventual simultaneous retirement, which would have upset all her plans. Nor was England yet brought up to concert pitch. But the notice had served its purpose. England, a little timorously, and with the best intentions towards Turkey, and with the general approval and even applause of Europe,<sup>1</sup> had undertaken the lead in proposing terms to Turkey as a basis of pacification. As early as the 11th September Count Schouvaloff in an interview described "(1) The *status quo*, speaking roughly, both as regards Servia and Montenegro. (2) Administrative reforms in the nature of local autonomy for Bosnia and the Herzegovina. (3) Guarantees of some similar kinds (the exact details of which might be reserved for later discussion) against the future maladministration of Bulgaria."<sup>2</sup>

Ten days later, on the 21st September, Lord Derby, having in the meantime secured the agreement of the Austrian Government<sup>3</sup> to these proposals, these terms were forwarded to Sir H. Elliot for communication to the Porte. The second condition relating to Bosnia and Herzegovina was amplified by the important stipulation "that the Porte should undertake, *in a Protocol to be signed at Constantinople with the Representatives of the mediatory Powers*, to grant, etc."<sup>4</sup>

Sir H. Elliot, in obedience to positive instructions, went to the utmost limit of friendly pressure<sup>5</sup> to induce the Porte to accept these conditions. The Porte, on its side, showed the greatest possible desire to meet the wishes of the English Ambassador.<sup>6</sup> The term "local autonomy," and still more the form of a Protocol demanded, were the two most serious obstacles to an understanding. So great was Sir H. Elliot's influence on the Turkish Minister, and so great was their confidence in England's loyalty, that an understanding was almost arrived at when the news of General Soumarakoff's Mission reached the Porte. On the 4th October, the new Turkish Government telegraphed to the Ottoman Ambassador in London an indignant protest against the proposals of which that envoy was the bearer, and concluded by saying: "If the Sublime Porte has, though challenged (by Servia), not made use of her victory, she will never forget that she is still an independent State, and that she owes it to herself to choose an honourable death rather than the dismemberment and partition of her States."<sup>7</sup>

This incident did not facilitate Sir H. Elliot's task. On the day following the 5th October, Lord Derby instructs Sir H. Elliot to inform the Porte that it is intended that the armistice should be

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 1, 1877, No. 452.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 197.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 325.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 324.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 564.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 470 and 498.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 508.

followed by a Conference, and that if an armistice for not less than a month is not granted, the Ambassador was to quit Constantinople and leave Turkey to its fate.<sup>1</sup>

On the 8th October, the Porte asks the very pertinent question whether, in the event of the conditions being accepted, a Conference would still be proposed.<sup>2</sup> No answer seems ever to have been given to this important question.

The Turkish Ministers now submitted the question of the armistice to a Grand Council, which acceded to it for five months.<sup>3</sup> On the 13th October, in a long telegram to Musurus Pasha, the Porte makes a last despairing attempt to stay the decision for a Conference, which it says "will at least give rise to the danger of certain impulses on which head we have the right to be anxious, and which in reality would be of no use. The five months' armistice would leave ample time for the Powers to exchange explanations and observations without any Conference. During this time, the work of internal reform would go on, and Europe would have the opportunity of being edified as to the serious and practical character of the promises of the Imperial Government," and concluded by saying, referring evidently to the negotiations with Sir H. Elliot, "I hope His Lordship will agree with us in preventing the question, *which was just beginning to look brighter*, thanks to so many sacrifices and efforts, from being turned into a path of new difficulties and perils."<sup>4</sup>

If it had not been for the Soumarakoff Mission, and the scare it created in the Foreign Office, it would have been an inexplicable mystery why Lord Derby, abandoning negotiations carried on by Sir H. Elliot, which "were just beginning to look brighter," should have hurriedly fathered this proposal of a Conference. If the Soumarakoff Mission was only intended to secure this point, it was most eminently successful. Anyway, from this time forth, Lord Derby stuck grimly to a Conference. Without a Conference there was no salvation. The question, however, of the duration of the armistice was not yet settled, and as England, having accepted six months, could not recant, General Ignatieff arrived from Livadia to settle it.

But here an incident occurred of a too charmingly amusing character to be passed over in silence. *La note comique* is never entirely absent from these negotiations. Lord Adolphus Loftus, Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at St Petersburg, received leave in the middle of October to go to the Crimea, whither the Russian Court had removed, and where Prince Gortchakoff, the Chancellor, was staying, in order to be nearer the official source of diplomatic information. On Friday, the 27th, accordingly, he arrived at Yalta, accompanied by Mr Egerton of his Embassy. On Sunday, the 29th, he had an interview at Orianda with Prince Gortchakoff, "who re-

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, I, 1877, No. 516.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 1877, No. 584.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 540.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 1877, No. 612.

ceived him very cordially, and after some friendly remarks, the conversation turned to Constantinople." After stating that the state of affairs there was grave, the Chancellor expressed "a hope that the question of the armistice was arranged, the Porte having, on the advice of Sir H. Elliot, yielded to the considerations in favour of the shorter term." His Highness further stated "that General Ignatieff had been instructed to be yielding and conciliatory on the subject of the armistice."

Two days after this, *i.e.* on Tuesday, the 31st October, Lord A. Loftus "met" Prince Gortchakoff, who, in answer to the question whether there was any news from Constantinople, replied that there was, but "that he preferred that the Emperor should communicate it." Lord A. Loftus's audience with the Czar had been arranged for the next day, 1st November, but was subsequently postponed till the 2nd. Between the accidental meeting with the Chancellor and this audience, Lord A. Loftus received the *Journal de St Petersburg* of the 31st October, in which he read that General Ignatieff had presented that day an ultimatum to the Porte to conclude an armistice with Servia, and had required an answer within forty-eight hours. So that the English Ambassador, having traversed the whole length of Europe in a four days' journey with a secretary of his Embassy attached to him, in order to be near the fountain of official information, would have received the news two days sooner if he had stayed at home!

We will let Lord A. Loftus describe his audience on the 2nd at Livadia, himself: "I had an audience with the Emperor of Russia to-day at Livadia, when His Majesty was pleased to receive me with his customary kindness and cordiality (*sic*). After some gracious enquiries after my family, His Majesty at once opened on the Eastern question. His Majesty stated that he had that morning received a telegram from Constantinople announcing the probable acceptance of the armistice, and he read to me another telegram reporting that orders had been already sent by the Porte to their commanders to suspend military operations. This, His Majesty observed, was very satisfactory. On my observing on the sudden change which had taken place between the Sunday when I had seen the Chancellor and the following day when the ultimatum was despatched, His Majesty said that this had been caused by the intelligence he had received of the complete discomfiture of the Servian army, and his fear that it might be followed by similar atrocities to those which had occurred in Bulgaria. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

It would indeed be a pity to spoil the uniqueness of this *tableau* by any superfluous commentary, but a despatch from Sir H. Elliot at Constantinople, dated on the same day as this audience (2nd November), throws some further light on this already luminous

incident. "In the course of conversation this morning with General Ignatieff, I remarked that I understood that he had returned from Livadia with instructions to present his ultimatum. He answered *that he had brought it with him* with a discretionary authority to withhold it if he thought desirable. *This is a rather different version* from that which he had previously given to my colleagues and myself, when he told us on Tuesday (31st October) that he *had received the ultimatum two days before*, and that he had taken on himself the responsibility of withholding it, but had now imperative orders to execute his instructions. It is impossible to doubt that he had kept his Government fully informed of the progress of his negotiations with the Porte, or that they were perfectly well aware that his own proposals had been accepted with very trifling modifications, upon which an understanding could very easily be arrived at. It is evident enough that the sudden sending in of the ultimatum was decided upon in the hope that by an immediate cessation of hostilities, and the acceptance of an armistice, the fall of Alexinatz would be averted. The capture of the Servian positions at Junis made it certain that "the occupation of Alexinatz and Deligrad would soon follow, and the only hope of saving the Servians and the Russian Auxiliary troops from this mortification lay in the chance of stopping the Turks before they had time to reap the fruits of their success."<sup>1</sup>

But, independently of the object lesson in veracity that this narrative inculcates, it gives the measure of the value attached by the Emperor of Russia to the European concert, and the degree to which it was likely to hamper his own liberty of action whenever he thought proper to liberate himself from it. The *proceeds* with regard to the British Ambassador only concerns the British Government.

The Porte had yielded to the ultimatum.

In the meantime negotiations for assembling a Conference continued. The Czar had expressed to the English Ambassador "a very earnest wish that the Conference should meet with the *least possible delay*, and that instructions should even be immediately sent by the several Governments to enable the Ambassadors at Constantinople to deliberate *at once* on the necessary preliminaries of peace."<sup>2</sup> Prince Gortchakoff, too, *expressed his anxious wish* that on the arrangement of the armistice *no time should be lost* in organising a Conference.<sup>3</sup>

But Austria was coy. The term "local autonomy" accompanied by no matter what gloss, seriously perturbed her; and yet this was the very point on which Russia insisted the most. In reporting his conversation with Prince Gortchakoff at Orianda, Lord A. Loftus said: "It is evident to me that Prince Gortchakoff does not wish to make the question of the armistice the ground for a rupture with the Porte, and that he *looks to the question of the 'autonomy of the three Provinces' as being the important deciding point of peace or war.*"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, I, 1877, No. 986.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 952.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 950.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 950.

Until Count Andrassy received guarantees that no kind of *political* autonomy was meant, he would have nothing to do with a Conference, and it was only when, after a good deal of fencing, this guarantee was at last accorded him, that he gave his consent to the proposal.

Although there had been a serious proposal to exclude Turkey from the Conference to be held in her own capital to decide on the administration of her provinces, the cynical incongruity of the proposition had procured its rejection, and now the Porte was asked to adhere to it. Without any illusion, since Russia's ultimatum, as to whither the Conference would lead, the Porte, on the 18th November, with the sanction of a Grand Council, gave her assent to a proposal, the rejection of which would have meant immediate war.

In the course of the six months that intervened between the 13th of May (date of the Berlin Note) and the meeting of the Conference in December, an apparent contradiction seems to manifest itself between the "intimate alliance" of the three Northern Powers (which for the purpose of these negotiations means between Austria and Russia), and the frictions and disagreements between their respective Governments. On no less than five points did this disagreement manifest itself: (1) as to whether Turkey should be coerced into an armistice, pure and simple, with Servia, or whether a basis of peace should, at the same time as the armistice, be proposed;<sup>1</sup> (2) as to inculcating prudence of conduct on Servia;<sup>2</sup> (3) as to the joint occupation with Russia of the Turkish provinces;<sup>3</sup> (4) as to the "autonomy" of the revolted provinces;<sup>4</sup> (5) on the question of the Conference.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, we have seen Count Beust calling at the Foreign Office to assure Lord Derby that never was the alliance of the three Northern Powers so "intimate"; we have the meeting of Reichstadt, and General Soumarakoff delivering an autograph letter from the Czar to the Emperor of Austria, and we have a very mysterious communication from Lord A. Loftus on the 15th August 1876, in which he says: "In speaking of Austria, Prince Gortchakoff again repeated to me that he had fully discussed the question of a pacification with Count Andrassy, and *that they were entirely agreed on all points and for all eventualities.* 'I can state no more,' said the Chancellor, 'but that much I can tell you, as I have done to your Colleagues; and I can add that our Ambassadors at the other Courts know no more than you do.' This language," continues Lord A. Loftus, "though, perhaps, satisfactory . . . is mysterious, and we can only unravel the mystery by conjectures."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 1, 1877, Nos. 166 and 239.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, No. 544.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, Nos. 459 and 517; and *Turkey*, 1, 1877, Nos. 551 and 898; and *Turkey*, 2, 1877, No. 27.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, Nos. 528, 541, 551, and 552.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 52.

## 270 NEGOTIATIONS FOLLOWING THE BERLIN NOTE

Perhaps the mystery, as Lord A. Loftus calls it, is not so mysterious after all. A reference to what took place in another diplomatic discussion in 1859 will help to unravel it without the aid of much conjecture. In that year Mr Disraeli startled the House of Commons by informing it, on the faith of information on which he relied, that there was a secret treaty between Italy and France for the cession to the latter Power of the provinces of Savoy and Nice. Lord Palmerston denied the existence of any such treaty, and twitted Mr Disraeli with having discovered a mare's nest. When Mr Disraeli's information was proved to be substantially correct, Lord Palmerston explained that there had been no treaty but a mere *pacte de famille* agreed upon on the occasion of the marriage of the Princess Clotilde to Prince Jerome Napoleon. The mystery that puzzled Lord A. Loftus is easily unravelled. There was undoubtedly a distinct and specific understanding between the two Emperors; but none between their Governments; so that Lord Derby could, on the 20th October, write to Sir A. Buchanan that "The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador called upon me to-day, and informed me, by order of his Government, that the reports which have been recently, and are still, current as to the existence of a secret understanding *between the Austrian and Russian Governments* are absolutely unfounded."<sup>1</sup> In countries and ages where the letter of a declaration is considered more important than its spirit, such hair-splitting distinctions may pass current. At any rate, they serve their purpose.

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, I, 1877, No. 718.

## APPENDIX B

### THE INSURRECTION OF HERZEGOVINA AND BOSNIA, AND THE BERLIN NOTE

ON the 2nd July 1875, Consul Holmes, writing to Lord Derby from Bosna-Serai, says: <sup>1</sup> "I have the honour to report to your Lordship that there is disturbance in the Herzegovina. Early last winter some 164 of the inhabitants of the district of Nevesinje left their homes and went into Montenegro. After remaining there some months, however, they petitioned the Porte to be allowed to return to Nevesinje. The Governor-General advised the Porte to reply, that, as they had chosen to leave their country for Montenegro, they might remain there. The Government, however, decided to grant their request, and allowed them to return. Shortly afterwards they appeared in revolt, declared that they were oppressed, refusing to pay their taxes or admit the police amongst them, and they have been endeavouring by intimidation to cause their neighbours in the surrounding districts to join them. The Mutesarif of Mostar invited them to come to that place to state their grievances, which he assured them would be redressed, but they refused, and the Governor-General tells me that they cut to pieces a man quite unconnected with them, who had gone to Mostar to seek redress for some grievance, and threatened with the same fate any within their reach who should do so in future. The Governor-General informs me that at present he has no intention of sending troops against them, but will prevent their efforts to extend their revolt by surrounding those districts with policemen, and he will probably send some of the notables of Serajevo to endeavour to bring them to reason."

In a subsequent despatch dated a week later, Consul Holmes adds that "Haidar Bey and Petrarchi Effendi, two notables of Serajevo, were sent to communicate with the rebels, but before they reached Nevesinje they found that the rebels had forced and persuaded many others to join them, and had attacked and captured a caravan of twenty-five horses on the road from Mostar to Nevesini, belonging to some merchants of Serajevo, laden with rice, sugar, and coffee, which they carried off to the village of Odrichnia. At the same time, they murdered and decapitated five Turkish travellers, named Salih, Hassosunovich, Marich, Sarnich, Ali of Nevesinje, and another whose

<sup>1</sup> Blue Book, *Turkey* 2, 1876, No. 1.

name is not yet known, a native of Erassni. One of the insurgents, named Tschoubate, at the head of some three hundred followers, drove away forty Zaptiés placed in the defile of Stolatz, and, separating into small bands, have, for the moment, interrupted the various roads in the neighbourhood. One band is stationed out at the bridge over the Krappa, and renders the road between Mostar and Meteorich unsafe. The detached bands of insurgents are endeavouring to force others to join them by burning the houses of those who refuse to do so, and by other means of intimidation. The Governor-General has received telegrams from Mostar signed by the two Commissioners and the Mutesarif and Commander of the troops at Mostar, stating these facts; also that the headless bodies of the Turks have been recovered and burnt. Under these circumstances, the Commissioners hesitated to continue their journey; and the authorities at Mostar state that great excitement prevails throughout the Mussulman population, who are impatient to attack the insurgents and avenge the savage murders of their co-religionists, whose decapitation has particularly roused their feelings, and requesting five battalions to keep order."<sup>1</sup>

The methods adopted by the insurgents were the same as those adopted in Bulgaria, and wherever an organised attempt at insurrection was made in the Ottoman provinces by agents *provocateurs* and foreign bands with a view to provoke the Mussulmans to deeds of retaliation which would be exploited by the Committees and excite indignation in the world. It will be remembered that when Midhat Pasha was Governor of the Danubian vilayet (p. 43), the band that crossed into Bulgaria from Sistovo began by massacring five Mussulman children between the ages of eight and twelve. When the Consuls, sent on a peace message to the insurgents visited Nevesinje, they "found all the Eastern part of the town towards the plain and all the bazaar, burnt and in ruins. Dead bodies were lying in various corners unburied; and we noticed the head of a boy in one of the streets blackening in the sun. A little Turkish girl was brought to us, wounded in the throat, and we were told that an insurgent was on the point of cutting off her head when she was snatched from him by one less bloodthirsty, and allowed to escape."<sup>2</sup>

Another aim of the insurgents was to force an emigration *en masse* into Austrian territory by promises that they should be well fed and cared for by the Austrian authorities until favourable conditions were secured for them. Montenegro, too, was let loose on Turkey and well supplied with the sinews of war. It was determined at Vienna that no time should be lost in "putting their pin in the game," and in taking the lead in negotiations that must necessarily precede an occupation. The principle of interference once admitted, all the rest would follow in due course. On the

<sup>1</sup> Blue Book, No. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 32.



## LORD DERBY AND AUSTRIA

24th August 1875, Lord Derby writes to Sir H. Elliot that Her Majesty's Government have had under their consideration your telegraphic despatch of the 20th inst., in which you report that a proposal, *concerted at Vienna by the three Northern Powers*, had been made to the Porte by their Ambassadors. Your Excellency states that they propose that Consuls should be delegated by the Embassies to proceed to the scene of the insurrection and inform the insurgents that they must expect no support or countenance from their Governments. They are also to advise the insurgents to desist from hostilities, but to make known their complaints to a Commission. . . . The proposal is favourably received by the Porte, and the Grand Vizier (Mahmoud Nedim) had just been to beg you not to stand aloof. . . . Her Majesty's Government consent to this step with reluctance, *as they doubt the expediency of the intervention of foreign consuls. Such an intervention is scarcely compatible with the independent authority of the Porte over its own territory, offers an inducement to an insurrection as a means of appealing to foreign sympathy against Turkish rule, and may, not improbably, open the way to further diplomatic interference in the internal affairs of the Empire.*<sup>1</sup> Prophetic words on the part of Lord Derby. Of course the consular farce came to nothing. The rebels would not even meet the Consuls. Facts were more eloquent than words, and they had their cues from the Committees. Now was the time, if the Powers had been in earnest, to shut the Dalmatian frontier to the rebels, as they had undertaken to do. We shall see how Austria fulfilled this part of the bargain. Instead of occupying themselves in the slightest degree with this part of the business, they immediately set about concocting another diplomatic move.

On 11th December 1875, the Austrian Ambassador, Count Beust, called on Lord Derby, and said that "The Turkish Ministers had hitherto directed their energies exclusively to the task of preventing anything which could be construed into an interference of any kind with the internal affairs of Turkey. This standpoint, however respectable it may be, has the disadvantage the Austro-Hungarian Government considered, of prolonging a regrettable state of things, and therefore of aggravating the danger. *Negotiations respecting the affairs of the East are now being carried on between Vienna and St Petersburg*, the result of which will be communicated as soon as an agreement has been arrived at, to Her Majesty's Government, not in the light of an accomplished fact, but for their consideration, and for them to state their own opinions on the propositions agreed upon."<sup>2</sup>

On the 3rd January 1876, Lord Derby received from Count Beust a copy of the famous despatch, which goes by the name of the Andrassy Memorandum, of the 30th December 1875, which, after

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 2, 1876, No. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 47.

stating that the three Courts of Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Germany, after exchanging their views on this subject, "have united for the purpose of employing in common their efforts for pacification, and this object appeared too much in conformity with the general wish for them to doubt that *the other Cabinets when invited to associate themselves in the movement*, through their representatives at Constantinople, would hasten to join their efforts to ours," proceeded to recommend to the Porte the following five points :—

- (1) Full and entire religious liberty.
- (2) Abolition of the system of farming the taxes.
- (3) A law guaranteeing the produce of direct taxes being employed in the interest of the provinces.
- (4) The institution of a special commission composed of an equal number of Christians and Mussulmans, to control the execution of the reforms.
- (5) The improvement of the position of the rural population.

And in submitting these proposals to the English Minister, Count Beust added that "they were not regarded by his Government in the light of mere good advice. *They wanted a pledge* that the reforms that they recommended should be carried into execution, failing which, they would not undertake to use their influence with the Christian population to advise them to lay down their arms."<sup>1</sup> And in another interview, the next day, he spoke again of an "explicit engagement" from the Porte, adding that "there could be no doubt that the postponement of the pacifying influences of the Powers *even by single days* might in the present state of affairs be fraught with incalculable danger."<sup>2</sup> The Austrian Government, however, repudiated any idea "of armed intervention, and stated that it had no desire to constitute itself guardians of the peace beyond its own frontiers," and that if the Porte accepted, and the insurgents did not submit, "then the Porte would be left to subdue them by force of arms, and that they (the insurgents) would be prevented from obtaining the support derived by them from exterior aid."<sup>3</sup>

This was six months after the so-called insurrection had broken out, and had been all the time "obtaining continuous support from exterior aid," and three months after the Consular Commission, which had been obtained from the Porte by a formal promise to shut the frontier to the rebels if they refused the advice of the Consuls. Lord Derby, after distinctly stating that he would be no party to any pressure being brought to bear on the Porte to carry out these reforms, and having ascertained that the Turkish Government desired England's adhesion to the Note, consented to support it at Constantinople.

In connection with this famous Memorandum, it is interesting to note an interpolation that took place in the Hungarian Diet on

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 2, 1876, No. 70.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 71.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 63.

11th March with respect to it. In answer to Deputy Pollit, Mr Tisza, the Minister President, stated "in the answer to the question as to whether the Hungarian Government approves of the intervention, *there is no question of intervention, but only of good advice*, which had been given in concert with the European Powers, and which had been accepted in the most friendly manner by the Porte. . . . In answer to the question as to the action of Hungary if the pacification was not effected, and if Serbia intervened, *such an eventuality was most improbable* . . . but in that case the policy of the Empire would be guided by the interests of Europe. . . . With reference to the question of the refugees, the Empire had not disregarded the interests of humanity . . . as was shown by the subvention amounting to nearly 1,000,000 florins which had been already given to them. . . . The speaker concluded by expressing a hope that the House would accept his explanation." If they did, they were easily satisfied, these Hungarian Deputies. Not a word about the capital question of shutting the frontier to the rebels. Serbia, too, was arming to the teeth, and was to declare war on Turkey three months later.

We shall see the literal fulfilment of this prediction. Bosnia was the first to follow suit with the Herzegovina. On the 8th February 1876, Sir H. Elliot writes to Lord Derby: "The Porte is much disturbed by the unsatisfactory account received from the Governor-General of Bosnia, who has applied for fresh troops. *Bands supposed to consist of old Grenzers are stated to have passed the Save from Austria at four different points, but have been repulsed. The body which invaded Bosnia is stated to have consisted of 400 or 500 men all well-armed.* Much excitement is said to prevail on both sides of the Servian frontier, and apprehensions are entertained of an aggression from that quarter. Reschid Pasha tells me that Count Zichy has given him, on the part of Count Andrassy, the strongest assurance . . . that measures shall be adopted to prevent the recurrence of such acts, and has promised . . . that those who have taken part in them shall be disarmed and *internés*."<sup>1</sup>

It would be difficult to carry intentional bad faith further. All this time, notes and memorandums were flying about the Chancelleries of Europe to force the Porte to give guarantees for suppressing an insurrection which was being organised and fed by bands "all well-armed" across a friendly frontier, its suppression being thus rendered materially impossible. As well might one try to extinguish a conflagration, over an unlimited area, that was being continually fed by petroleum springs, the sources of which could not be got at. Nor let it be supposed that to guard such a line of frontier was impossible. The rebels had it all their own way. And so had the Diplomats of the "Allied Courts of Berlin, Vienna, and St Petersburg." Russian Committees were joining their efforts to Austrian.

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, No. 6.

On the 14th February 1876, Sir H. Elliot writes to Lord Derby: "The accounts of the encouragement given to the insurgents at Ragusa greatly exceeds all that I was prepared for. The Russian Consulate is the open resort of the insurgent chiefs; their correspondence is sent to the Consul, who is a party to all their projects, and associates himself intimately with them. He does not appear to make any attempt to conceal the part he is playing, for on the occasion of the death of the chief Maxima, in one of the late encounters, the Russian flag at the Consulate was hoisted at half-mast, and M. Jomini himself joined the funeral procession.

"Some of the wounded when asked why they continue the struggle when the Porte is ready to grant all their demands, have answered plainly that they are bound to go on as long as they are told by Russia to do so. The assurances given at St Petersburg of the wish of the Imperial Government that the insurgents would lay down their arms, must naturally go for nothing as long as its official Representative, with whom they are in communication, encourages them to go on."<sup>1</sup> Pretty plain speaking this! and Austria that continued the "exequatur" to a foreign Consul, acting thus on its territory towards a friendly Power. So gross and palpable was this assistance given by Austria to the insurgents, whilst pretending all the time to be so keenly anxious for its suppression, that Lord Derby thought it necessary on the 10th March 1876, to give the following instructions to Sir A. Buchanan, the English Ambassador at Vienna: "I have to inform Your Excellency that it has come to the knowledge of Her Majesty's Government, through Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, that the Porte had received information that a severe fight took place on the Dalmatian frontier on the 4th inst., and that on the following day, the combat was renewed by a force said to be 700 strong, who came from Austrian territory with large supplies of ammunition, and that this having occurred so immediately after the assurances of the Austro-Hungarian Government that their frontier would be officially guarded, has caused great discouragement to the Turkish Government, and it is feared that the effect of it in Montenegro will be very mischievous, and I have therefore to request Your Excellency to call the serious attention of the Imperial Government to this matter."<sup>2</sup> But these remonstrances, which were evidently sincere and well-meaning, had not the very slightest effect at Vienna. The Hungarian Chancellor was always ready to give any amount of assurances and promises to the credulous Sir A. Buchanan. On the 3rd April 1876, Sir H. Elliot was obliged to write again: "I learn that the Porte has received information of the passage of considerable bands said to be accompanied by two pieces of artillery from Dalmatia and Croatia, into the north-western district of Bosnia."<sup>3</sup> And further, on the next day, 4th April,

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 44.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 121.

he writes: "A telegram from the Governor-General of Bosnia, which has been read to me by Reschid Pasha, gives a very alarming account of the state of things in that province. *Armed bands are passing freely from the Austrian territory*, and there are symptoms indicating a probable insurrection of the populations along the rivers Save and Una. The Governor-General states that he has been unable to re-establish the line of telegraph along the Save, *as the workmen are continually fired at from the Austrian bank of the river, and his remonstrances addressed to the Austrian authorities have been unattended to.*"<sup>1</sup> The reason why Austria was not content to confine her operations to Herzegovina, but had extended them to Bosnia, was clear. The Porte was succeeding, in spite of all difficulties, in pacifying the former, and as the Berlin note was being drawn up at Berlin for the three "Allied Powers" and would be presented in a month, such a precipitation would derange all their plans.

The following despatch of Sir H. Elliot of 7th April 1876 clearly indicates this state of things. "The enclosed report from Mr Sandison of the account received at the Porte from Haidar Effendi (the Turkish Commissioner) gives a very serious aspect to the state of affairs in Bosnia. It is evident that the Austro-Hungarian Government *have failed lamentably in their engagement to guard their own frontier, and by means of well-armed bands coming from their territory, a formidable insurrection has been excited in districts which have hitherto remained quiet. Although the news received from the Herzegovina is good, and gave hopes of a pacification*, it would be too much to expect that the movement in Bosnia should not produce its effect in the districts which have been so long in insurrection."<sup>2</sup>

In the month of May we arrived at another stage of the business. It is time that diplomacy should register another point of "terrain acquis." On the 4th May 1876 Lord Derby, writing to Sir A. Buchanan, says: "The Austrian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and placed in my hands for perusal a despatch which he had received from his Government. The purport of the despatch was to state that there is *an entire agreement between the Governments of Austria, Germany and Russia as to affairs in the East*, and that any reports that may have been circulated to the contrary are simple inventions."<sup>3</sup>

The purport of making this communication could be no other than a warning to all whom it may concern, that they could join or not join the "European Concert," as they thought proper. It would make no difference to the European Concert. It was a notice certainly calculated to open the eyes, even of the blind, to what was going on.

As the fact of armed bands could not be disputed, it was obviously the interest of Austria to endeavour to throw the blame on others Montenegro and Servia especially. We shall come to these little

<sup>1</sup> Turkey, 3, 1876, No. 128.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 3, 1876, No. 130.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 3, 1876, No. 195.

States later, but *à propos* of shifting the blame on Serbia, there is a very significant despatch from Consul-General White, dated Belgrade, 28th April 1876. "The Prince (of Serbia) takes no pains to conceal that, more than ever, he considers a collision with the Porte as within the range of possibilities; but he continues to disclaim at the same time any intention to act as the aggressor. He pointed out to me the other day that the portion of Bosnia which is conterminous to Serbia has been entirely free from armed bands since last November, when the Papas Zarko was repulsed into Serbia, whilst the insurgents who had within the last few weeks made their appearance on the river Unna between Bihatch, Novi and Kostainitza, were all in proximity to the Austrian frontier, and he defied anyone to show that Serbia had been instrumental in fostering insurrection in that department of Bosnia, though he added that such an accusation had been made somewhere, evidently alluding to Austrian Authorities."<sup>1</sup> The explanation of these apparent mysteries was really simple enough. Serbia was reserving herself for Bulgaria, which was within the sphere of her action, as she herself was within the orbit of Russia's influence, and she had no intention of playing Austria's game for Austria's sole benefit.

Unless strongly backed by Russia, Serbia knew well enough that Austria, posted in the conterminous province of Bosnia, would be a most awkward neighbour, and render any hope of future independence on her part purely illusory. Turkey's yoke would be light indeed in comparison to that of Austria, if she were surrounded on three sides by the Kaiserlich. A great deal of the apparent contradiction, seesawing and hesitation of this period is to be accounted for by these conflicting inner currents, set in motion by two of the three allied Governments, whose agreement Count Beust was instructed to inform Lord Derby was "entire." It was entire as regarded Turkey, there was no doubt about that, but there was a very pretty little by-play going on besides, within the circle of the larger drama. No wonder this state of things created a situation, as Consul Holmes pithily described it, "in which everyone seems to profess precisely what he fails to practise."

#### BERLIN NOTE.

Whatever light friction there may have been between Russia and Austria in the Spring of 1876, it seems to have been smoothed over, probably by the intervention of the third disinterested partner in the Alliance; for on Saturday, the 13th May 1876, Lord Odo Russell, the British Ambassador at Berlin, received an invitation from Prince Bismarck to call on him that day in order to meet Count Andrassy and Prince Gortchakoff, together with the Ambassadors of France

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 221.

and Italy; M. de Bülow and Baron Jomini were also present at the interview. "After a few preliminary words from Prince Bismarck, Prince Gortchakoff and Count Andrassy confirmed the cordial understanding that exists between them, and expressed their sincere hope and anxious desire that the Governments of England, France and Italy, *who have given their moral support* to the attempted pacification of the Herzegovinians, will equally agree to support the further attempts they have now met to concert, in consequence of the alarming state of affairs in Turkey. Baron Jomini was then invited to read the enclosed document to us, and the proposal to which they solicit the co-operation of the Great Powers. . . . Prince Gortchakoff observed that he and Count Andrassy would remain till Monday (15th inst.) at Berlin, and that they hoped the Governments of England, France and Italy would be able to express an opinion on the telegraphic summary of their proposal, before they left."<sup>1</sup>

It is no part of the purport of this book to comment on the *proceeds* of the "three Allied Powers" *vis-à-vis* of the other so-called Great Powers, England, France and Italy. That is a matter of their interior *ménage*. We are exclusively concerned with their conduct, severally and collectively, towards Turkey. If it were otherwise, one might have something to say concerning the strangeness and singularity of the proceeding among Great Powers, supposed to stand on a footing of equality, of three of their number convoking the rest to hear a document of the very highest international importance read to them for their assent to it, if possible by telegraph, within two days! But let us proceed with the narrative.

The document referred to, which goes in history by the name of the "Berlin Note," was a very curious document. It started with the declaration that "the alarming tidings which come from Turkey are of a nature to *impel the three Cabinets to draw closer their intimacy*. The three Imperial Courts have deemed themselves called upon to concert among themselves measures for averting the dangers of the situation, *with the concurrence* of the other great Christian Powers." After referring to the history of the question up to the Andrassy Memorandum, by which the Powers acquire a moral right and an obligation to insist on "pacification," and enumerating the causes that have prevented the success of that action, and especially the agitation caused by the prolongation of the strife in other parts of the Turkish Dominions, and laying stress on the deplorable events at Salonica, it declares that it is most essential to establish certain guarantees of a nature to insure beyond doubt the loyal and full application of the measures agreed upon between the Powers and the Porte."

As the first step in this direction, the three Imperial Courts

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 248.

propose to insist with the Porte on a suspension of arms for two months, and to open negotiations between the Porte and the rebel delegates *on the basis of the wishes that the latter have formulated*, and which may be enumerated as follows:—

- (1) That materials for the reconstruction of their houses should be provided the refugees by the Turkish Government.
- (2) The appointment of a mixed commission to superintend reforms.
- (3) The concentration of the Turkish troops, on some points to be agreed upon.
- (4) Christians and Mussulmans to retain their arms.
- (5) The Consuls or Delegates of the Powers to keep a watch over the application of the reforms in general, and on the steps relative to the repatriation in particular.

And then the Note concludes: "If, however, the armistice were to expire without the efforts of the Powers being successful in attaining the end they have in view, the three Imperial Courts are of opinion that it would become necessary to supplement their diplomatic action by the sanction of an agreement with a view to such efficacious measures as might appear to be demanded in the interest of general peace, to check the evil and prevent its development."

It is not intended here to criticise at length these five heads, but one interesting and significant point must be noted. The Note says, in a passage *underlined* above, that these five heads were framed "on the basis of the wishes formulated by the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Delegates." Who were these Delegates? On the 27th May, the *Times* quoted an article from the *Nord* of April 1876, in which another Note was addressed by one Golub Babitch, in the name of the Bosnian insurgent chiefs, confirming full powers on one Gabriel Vasilitchki (a Russian subject who had made himself very busy in these matters) to treat on their behalf for peace on the basis of four points which were absolutely identical with four points of the Berlin Note.<sup>1</sup> Now, who was this Golub Babitch, who describes himself in this Note as "voivode," and who signs in the name and on the behalf of the "chief Bosnian chiefs"? Mr Consul Freeman, who was by no means prejudiced against the insurgents or in favour of the Turks, and knew his *monde* well, describes him. He was a "former brigand," now the chief of one of the principal bands, consisting of 3000 men, all well armed, that had invaded Bosnia.<sup>2</sup>

This, then, was the source of the inspiration of the five heads of the famous Berlin Note. It might certainly be more justly described in history as the "Golub Babitch Note." The five heads, however, seem to have been admirably adapted to secure the object

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, Incl. No. 313. (Lord Odo Russell pronounces this document authentic. 3rd July 1876, No. 363.)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 185.



perhaps intended, viz., to perpetrate and aggravate the bloodshed between the armed Mussulmans and the armed returning refugees, and so by "bleeding Turkey to death" to justify the action of the last and most important notice thrown in carelessly, and almost as an afterthought, and at the end of the Berlin Note, but which was, of course, the whole point of it, viz., that if the measures proposed did not produce their effect (or, let us add, produced the exactly opposite effect), "the three Imperial Courts would consider it necessary to supplement their diplomatic action by the sanction of an agreement," etc., etc. If ever there was a case of the sting being in the tail, it was in this "Berlin Note."

Lord Derby was not deceived either as to the intrinsic value, or worthlessness, of the four points which he politely but mercilessly dissected in an interview with Count Munster, the German Ambassador in London, on the 15th of May 1876,<sup>1</sup> nor was he intimidated by the "still closer intimacy of the three Imperial Courts," which the Note ostentatiously declared. France and Italy thought fit to adhere to it. The rejection of it by England made its rejection by Turkey doubly certain. It was certain in any event. The courteous but unshakable resolution of the English Cabinet to have nothing to do with the Berlin Note, in spite of the "still closer intimacy of the three Imperial Courts," and the adherence of the other two Cabinets, brought the whole proposal down like a house of cards. But the allied quiver was not empty.

A stage, however, was reached in the Berlin Note which it is necessary to note carefully, as a new departure, involving a re-adjustment of compasses all round, became henceforth necessary.

We have seen the apparently unaccountable hurry that Austria was in to get matters in Bosnia and Herzegovina diplomatically settled to her satisfaction. The Consular intervention in August 1875, the Andrassy Note in December 1875, General Rodich's parley with the insurgents in April 1876, and the Berlin Memorandum on 15th May 1876, were the different stages of this pragmatism interference. The reason was clear. Austria was quite well aware, through her Intelligence Departments, that Russia was making superhuman, albeit unofficial, efforts to catch up the advance that Austria had secured for her operations in the Turkish provinces, and that every day made it less probable that the lead in the negotiations would be left in her hands.

We shall see that from this moment, *i.e.*, on the rejection of the Berlin Memorandum, Austria's precipitation no longer exists, and that she takes ample time to readjust her compass to the altered condition of things. The principal object of this Appendix being to describe the conduct and follow the policy of Austria in these matters, it is necessary to examine a little more closely the relations of Austria

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 259.

with Montenegro, and the part played by this principality in this so-called rebellion.

It was generally taken for granted that Montenegro was completely and exclusively under Russian influence and protection, that it was a citadel and outpost of Russia in this part of the world, and that its prince moved in obedience to orders from St Petersburg alone. This belief, which assumed the character of an axiom in men's minds, served admirably the purpose of Austria in the general mystification with which it suited her to surround her policy at this time.

As the active and effective action of Montenegro in the insurrection was a secret to none in Europe, and as Russia exclusively pulled the strings which moved its prince, it was obvious that Russia was at the bottom of the Herzegovinian insurrection which Austria was doing all she could to assist the Porte in suppressing—*quod erat demonstrandum*. Now, there can be no doubt that Russia had for a very long time past preponderating influence in the Black Mountains, and that during the whole period that Austria followed what we have called her "normal policy" with respect to the Ottoman Empire, the influence of Russia over Montenegro was exclusive of any other followed in the nature of things; but Consul-General White, at any rate, knew better than to suppose that this meant that no steps had been taken by Austria (and the nature of the steps is evident) to acquire that influence over the prince that the "new policy" of Austria rendered desirable and necessary. In a despatch of the 25th of February 1876, Consul-General White, writing from Belgrade to Sir H. Elliot, says: "I beg to inform Your Excellency that I have been assured, from a source which I have hitherto found reliable, that the chief reason that has prompted Prince Milan to assume a bolder and quasi-martial attitude is the growing suspicion in his mind that a bait in the shape of an accession of territory was about to be offered by Austria on behalf of the Porte to the Prince of Montenegro. This opinion is strongly entertained here by persons *who are supposed to be well acquainted with the nature of the relations which have existed during the last two years between the Court of Vienna and that Prince.*"<sup>1</sup>

Not only did money pour into the principality, and arms, munitions and military science, as we shall presently see, were lavishly provided to these interesting mountaineers, but when the conditions of peace between Serbia and Montenegro on one side, and the Porte on the other, came to be discussed (in the month of August 1876), Austria, who opposed the claim for any accession of territory to Serbia, advocated a considerable extension for Montenegro. There can be slight doubt that this was one of the conditions of the bargain arranged "during the last two years between the Courts of Vienna and that Prince." It is, of course,

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 51, Incl.

a noteworthy coincidence that the two years mentioned at the beginning of these intimate relations brings us exactly to the date when Count Andrassy became Chancellor of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Mr Monson, the English political agent at Ragusa—afterwards sent on a special mission to Cettinje, and now H.B.M.'s Ambassador at Paris, who will certainly not be accused of prejudice against the Prince of Montenegro, by whom, on the contrary, he seems to have been quite fascinated, be it said in passing—in writing to Lord Derby from Ragusa, on the 14th June 1876, says: "The town of Ragusa, the capital of Dalmatia, is daily visited by armed insurgents who, at Vienna, are represented to be peaceful Dalmatians from the rural districts . . . or Montenegrins on their travels, whose costumes would be incomplete without the traditional carbines and poniards . . . During the period in which the export of munitions of war was suspended, *the contraband traffic was openly carried on at Ragusa and Meglina without hindrance; cases of dynamite were passed across the frontier, to be used for the destruction of the Turkish forts and blockhouses; and it is alleged that certain military stores have been furnished to the insurgents at Grebgi by way of Ombla. . . . The share taken by Austrian subjects in the late battles of the Douga Pass is notorious; it is now known that 179 Crevosians were killed during the three days' fighting; but, as far as I am aware, no measures have been taken to prevent a repetition of such violations of neutrality. . . .* My own conviction is that had it not been for the money spent by Russia and by Dalmatian Panславic Committees upon certain influential chiefs, *the insurrection would long since have collapsed. . . .* If these considerations are correct, as I honestly believe them to be, it is clear that, as far as the Herzegovina is concerned, a great step in the suppression of the insurrection would be effected *if the Austrian Government would dissolve the Panславic Committees, enforce a strict surveillance of the frontier, and would absolutely forbid and put down the export of arms and ammunition to Montenegro.*"<sup>1</sup>

The facts stated in this important despatch need no addition; and would be only weakened by any commentary.

Let us proceed with others. Consul Holmes, writing from Bosna Serai, on the 15th June 1876, to Lord Derby, says: "On the 6th inst., the authorities at Mostar announced to the Baron Rodich (Governor of Dalmatia) the fact that 1800 cases of rifles and their cartridges were being landed at Cattaro for the Montenegrins. On the 9th, Baron Rodich thanked them for their information, and said he would order an enquiry into the matter and punish any illegality. Of course, the arms will all be at Cettinje before he commences. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

This is what Consul Holmes, who had resided fifteen years in the country, and who knew more of it than any foreigner alive (it was he

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 479.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 491

whom the English Government lent to Baron Calice at the Conference, on account of his special knowledge of the country, and who received the thanks of both Governments for his services), says: "To people residing in these countries, and who know the real state of parties, *and the true nature of the insurrection*, the idea of securing pacification by concessions to the insurgents appears simply absurd. In the first place, reforms and concessions cannot be executed until pacification is obtained, and in the next, for reasons which I have frequently explained to your Lordship, those who are in arms and who keep up the insurrection, *care nothing about them; they have other objects and other interests.*"<sup>1</sup>

Such was Austria, that was at peace with Turkey, entertaining friendly relations with the Porte, and protesting in every tone of diplomatic expressions to every Cabinet in Europe her earnest and anxious desire for the pacification of the Turkish Provinces!

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 491.

## APPENDIX C

### BULGARIAN ATROCITIES

THE Slav Committees that had been for thirteen years "working up" the recalcitrant materials of rebellion in Bulgaria, were proceeding leisurely in their work when Count Andrassy stole a march upon them in the Herzegovina; but in spite of every effort on the part of Austria to precipitate a diplomatic crisis before the Bulgarian plot was ripe, the Slav Committees, whose venue was Bulgaria, caught him up before his work was completed. The head Slav Committee was at Moscow, and there were two central Committees at Kichenew and Bucharest. They had been established for about thirteen years, but although their activity had been intermittent, it was through their influence that the Bulgarian Church had been separated from the Greek Patriarchal, and that a Bulgarian School under Government patronage had been established at Odessa to form young Bulgarians into missionary propagandists of the Slav idea. When, however, the Herzegovina insurrection broke out, and matters were fast ripening on that side, a revival of energy at once manifested itself in the action of these Committees with reference to Bulgaria. As General Tchernagoff wrote in his paper, the *Russki Mir* (on  $\frac{3}{4}$ th May 1876): "I chose the route by way of Kischenew and the Danube, *along the whole course of which*, commencing from the Russian frontier to the Servian boundary, *Committees were formed towards the end of last year* for organising the plans of the Bulgarians in their approaching struggle for independence. Commencing from Bolgrad (a Bulgarian colony that fell away from Russia and became incorporated with Roumania by virtue of the Treaty of Paris), I everywhere heard the same thing, which was to the effect that all had been done that was possible by the people for the impending struggle. . . . The movements of the insurgents are regulated by a fixed programme."

We have seen (p. 43) during Midhat Pasha's Governorship of Bulgaria, how a raid over the frontier, following the usual tactics of exasperation, had endeavoured to excite a rising, which was promptly suppressed by the energy of the Vali. In the beginning of 1874 unrest began to show itself again in the districts of Trianova, Kezanlic, and Zagra, but, warned by the effects of neglect in a recent instance, the authorities had all the leaders of the movement arrested. Thereupon General Ignatieff made such energetic representations to the Porte, that orders arrived, not only for the release of the imprisoned,

malcontents, but for the dismissal of all functionaries concerned in their arrest. The effect of this novel and original mode of dealing with an insurrection was soon apparent in the effervescence and excitement it caused among the Mussulman population throughout the Province. They saw rebel bands organising without disguise, and approaching their own hearths, the leaders of which were patronised by foreign consuls and supported by foreign embassies, whereas defensive measures on the part of their own natural leaders were discountenanced and punished.

It was in this frame of mind of the Mussulman population of the Empire, that the troubles both at Salonica and in Bulgaria occurred. In October 1875, a local rising took place in the village of Eski Zagra. Mr Vice-Consul Brophy writes to Sir H. Elliot:—"In October 1875 everything was settled for a rising in Bulgaria, in eight or ten places simultaneously. Something occurred which made it advisable that the rising should be put off, and messengers were sent to all the centres, but the "put off" for Eski Zagra arrived twenty-four hours late, and that town rose in the full conviction that it was being seconded by all the force of the insurgents. In fact, the *émeute*, revolt, rebellion, revolution, or whatever it was, of May last (1876) was to have come off in October 1875, but did not."<sup>1</sup>

The Committees were not ready. But the unrest continued, and when the Provincial Governors begged the Porte to send regular troops into the district, General Ignatieff dissuaded Mahmoud Nedim, the Grand Vizier, from doing so, on the ground that "the presence of regular troops would have the effect of still further increasing the excitement."

We will now allow Vice-Consul Dupuis, writing on 7th August 1876, to give an account to Lord Derby of the origin of the outbreak: "This was the condition of things when, on the 2nd of May, the insurrection organised and planned by the Revolutionary Committees, established during the last thirteen years in Bucharest and Moscow, suddenly exploded at Avrat Alan. The plan of operation of the revolutionists, assisted by the village priests and school-masters, was to destroy the railways and bridges throughout the vilayet, to set on fire Adrianople and Philippopolis, and to attack Tatar Bazardjik with 5000 men, and seize upon the Government stores there." An accident caused the premature explosion of the revolt. "A sergeant of Zaptiés, who had gone to Avrat Alan, either to collect taxes or to effect some arrests, was suddenly attacked by armed Bulgarians (who thought their plans had been betrayed), and had to fly for his life. Shortly after, troubles broke out at Otloukeuyi and Bellowa; at the same time, the inhabitants of several Bulgarian villages, it would appear, under the impression that the impending massacre was at hand, left their homes and fled to Otloukeuyi and Avrat Alan.

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, I, 1877, No. 674 Incl.

The alarm then appears to have become general. The Christians were afraid that they would be massacred by the Mussulmans, while the latter were afraid that they were going to be exterminated by the Christians. The numerical strength of the insurgents was stated to be 15,000. The Mutassarifat of Philippopolis was at that time a Tatar Bazardjik. Troops were telegraphed for to the Governor-General of Adrianople, who, it is said, replied that *as he had no military force at his disposal*, he thought the best plan would be to raise irregulars. On the 4th May, a meeting of some notables at Philippopolis was held, under the presidency of the Mollah, when the recommendation of the Governor-General, for raising Nefer Ami (public soldiers) was approved of, and a decision to that effect was signed and forwarded to Adrianople. Orders were then immediately sent to different parts of the vilayet for enlisting irregulars or Bashi-bazouks.<sup>1</sup> These Bashi-bazouks attacked Peroushtitza Batak and Klissoura and Otloukeuyi, and there is no doubt that very great excesses were committed by them. But Mr Dupuis goes on to say : " It is said, without any attempt at concealment, that the Russian Vice-Consul in Philippopolis is solely responsible for the sad disasters which have befallen Peroushtitza. In many instances, too, the villages were set on fire by the Bulgarians themselves in order to compel their inhabitants to take up arms. The village of Singerli, now a complete mass of ruins, was in the first instance set on fire by a priest. This man, in order to force the people to rise against the Government, rushed about the place, knife in hand, telling them that their hour of deliverance had arrived, and that Russian soldiers were at hand to aid them against the Turks. I am assured, on reliable and independent authority, that the Bulgarian insurrection was carefully and skilfully planned by men possessing knowledge and experience in military tactics from foreign parts. Had their plans succeeded, and if the Bulgarians had got the upper hand of the Turks, there is little doubt the existence of Turkey in Europe would have been endangered, and the Bulgarians would have committed far greater excesses than are laid to the charge of the Mussulmans, from the fact that the former had, from the commencement of the disturbance, *killed every Turk they came across, regardless as to age or sex, and by the practising upon them, in several instances, of unspeakable atrocities*. Atrocities have, undoubtedly, been committed by the Bulgarians as well as by the Turks. Thus at Carlowo, it was related to me, on good authority, that a Turkish boy had both his arms flayed to the elbows by the Bulgarians ; while at Otloukeuyi, the Bulgarians massacred eighty Mussulmans, and cut up a child into pieces, and publicly offered the flesh for sale, and committed other unspeakable atrocities on females."<sup>2</sup>

As for the Russian Vice-Consul at Philippopolis, Mr Gueroff,

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1877, No. 57 Incl.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

Vice-Consul Dupuis says of him: "The news of the Russian Vice-Consul at Philippopolis having been insulted, though repeated, is not generally confirmed. Some say, if he was not insulted, he is trying his best to provoke it by his conduct."<sup>1</sup>

Sir H. Elliot, on 11th August, writes to Lord Derby: "A letter from Mr Baring, received yesterday, contains these words: 'There is not the slightest doubt that the Russian Consul at Philippopolis had a leading part in creating the late insurrection.'"<sup>2</sup>

As to the menacing character of the insurrection, there is cumulative evidence to that effect. On 13th May, Vice-Consul Brophy, writing to Sir H. Elliot, says: "I have the honour to express to your Excellency my belief that the Bulgarian insurrectionary movement, commenced in the Caza of Philippopolis, will not be confined to that district. I have some reason for thinking that the plans of the insurgents embrace six centres of revolt, most of them in the high Balkan (Kodga Balkan, Stari Planina), in each of which localities depôts of arms—rifles, revolvers, etc.—ammunition, and provisions are hidden."<sup>3</sup>

The cruelties practised by the insurgents on the Turks were also beyond all doubt. They were, moreover, in strict conformity with the practice and instructions of the insurgents in all similar risings. On 12th May, Mr Dupuis informs Sir H. Elliot: "The burning of Bellowa seems to have been attended with horrible cruelties to the small Turkish guard in charge of the place, which, being overpowered, was hacked to pieces by the Bulgarians. My informant adds that, shortly after this occurrence, a party of about a hundred and fifty well-mounted and equipped insurgents, led by the priests, presented itself in the village, declaring, with crucifixes in hand, that that was the way to exterminate Islamism."<sup>4</sup> Mr Sandison, the first dragoman of the English Embassy, writing to Sir H. Elliot on 11th July 1876, says, *à propos* of these cruelties: "I may here quote the testimony of the artist employed by the *Illustrated London News*, who in his travels through Bulgaria came across the body of a Turk who had been impaled and roasted by Bulgarians. Such acts could not but lead to reprisals, and to the consequent destruction of many thousand lives, as well as of a large number of villages, amongst which must also be included a good many Mussulman ones."<sup>5</sup> Consul Reade reports from Rustchuk on 19th July (1876) that "Some Bulgarian insurgents one day seized two Mussulman women, whose breasts they cut off *and then put* them to death."<sup>6</sup>

Vice-Consul Calvert, writing from Philippopolis on 29th August 1876, says: "The Christian Commissioners, one of whom, Yovantcho Effendi, is himself a Bulgarian, state themselves to be satisfied that deeds of great atrocity on the part of the insurgents marked the

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 343, Incl.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, Incl. 4 in 289.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 289, Incl.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 1876, Incl. 1 in No. 18.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 1876, Incl. 2 in No. 21.



commencement of the rising in May last, and that *cruelties were designedly committed by the insurgents as being the means best calculated to bring on a general revolution in Bulgaria*, by rendering the situation of the Christians, however peaceably inclined, so intolerable under the indiscriminate retaliation which the governing race was sure to attempt, as to force them in self-defence to rise. Among other instances of this Blacque Bey mentioned to me that the Christian inhabitants of a village near Tirnovo related to him, how, at the beginning of the revolt, the insurgents had seized a wealthy Turk of the locality, beloved by Christians and Moslems alike, for his justice and benevolence, had buried him up to the waist in the earth, and then stoned him to death."<sup>1</sup>

With reference to the invariable mode of procedure of the leaders of the insurrection for the very purpose of exciting reprisals, Sir H. Elliot, in a communication to Lord Derby, says: "The inhabitants of another village stated that at the beginning of the insurrection, they were told by *the priests and the schoolmasters* that the Turks were advancing, that they must leave this village or they would be killed by the Turks, and that those who objected were driven out by force. The Mussulmans who happened to be there were murdered; their number was differently estimated at twelve and thirty-two; the village was then set on fire. The Mussulmans in the neighbourhood seeing part of the village in flames, went there and pillaged and burnt the remaining houses."<sup>2</sup> The revolutionary agents from the Slav Committees had, since the recrudescence of their activity in the winter, been working zealously among the Bulgarians. On 4th May Sir H. Elliot, in acquainting Lord Derby with the movement at Otloukeuyi, says: "It was known that revolutionary agents were working actively among the Bulgarians, and that arms and ammunition have latterly been introduced in considerable quantities."<sup>3</sup> They knew, too, pretty well what they were about and when to strike, so that reprisals could be most surely counted on. Consul Reade, from Rustchuk, informs (9th May) Sir H. Elliot: "I have also just heard of an event said to have occurred near Avrat Alan, which, if true, may bring on serious complications. It is said that a Circassian village in that vicinity has been burnt; if so, the Circassians, generally a lawless set, are sure to take their revenge, and this may severely tax the Government to put down, when once commenced."<sup>4</sup> Prophetic words indeed! The revolutionary agents of the Committees found this work difficult in the face of the repressive measures taken. On the 16th May 1876 Consul Reade reports from Rustchuk: "Many of the revolutionary Bulgarians in Wallachia are said to be entering this vilayet, and some have already been discovered and arrested."<sup>5</sup> Here, then, we have revolutionary agents coming from abroad and exciting the

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 1, 1877, Incl. in No. 222.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 1876, No. 22.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 252.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 273, Incl.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 315, Incl.

people already long worked upon by priests and schoolmasters brought up in Russia, to rise in rebellion and to commit every species of atrocity on the Mussulman population with the direct object of provoking them to reprisals, which could be exploited against them all over Europe. We have further the Consul of a friendly Power, one of the chief leaders of the insurrection, and the "Ambassador of the same friendly Power" at Constantinople, strongly counselling against the despatch of regular troops to districts where the Governor-General urges the necessity of their presence, and when the Mussulman inhabitants, in their defence and under the impulse of panic and exaggerated fear of what was going to happen, without any regular force to protect them, arm irregular bands from any quarter they can procure them with, likely enough, not sufficient discrimination and examination as to their character, scenes are, no doubt, enacted, and atrocities committed, which every human being, be he Christian or Mahometan, would in cold blood deprecate and deplore.

As Sir H. Elliot says: "An insurrection or civil war is everywhere accompanied by cruelties and abominable excesses, and this being tenfold the case in Oriental countries where people are divided into antagonistic creeds and races, the responsibility and sin of those who incite a peaceful province to rise becomes doubly heavy, and they now endeavour to throw them upon others."<sup>1</sup> Nobody outside Timbuctoo approves or condones cruelties, but the charge against the Ottoman authorities really amounts to their arming and employing irregular troops, Pomaks, Circassians, Gipsies, etc., over whom they could exercise very imperfect control. But as Mehemet Rushdi Pasha told the English Ambassador, "the emergency was so great as to render it indispensable at once to stamp the movement out by any means that were immediately available."<sup>2</sup> Mehemet Rushdi himself, it will be remembered, only came into office after those acts had been committed. He was consequently in no way responsible, neither he nor Midhat, either for their commission or for the events that led up to them.

With reference to the *Daily News* article on Turkish atrocities, which started the agitation against Turkey in England, Sir H. Elliot, writing on the 25th July 1876, says: "I have reason to believe that the credulity of the correspondent of the *Daily News*, whose letters on the subject of the Bulgarian atrocities attracted so much attention in England, has been imposed upon by two Bulgarian relatives of one of the presumed ringleaders of the revolt, inhabiting Philippopolis. One of these was for a time editor of a Bulgarian journal in Constantinople, and it is evident that information derived from such a source can only be regarded as untrustworthy."<sup>3</sup>

As the very aim and purpose of the insurrection was to create excitement and provoke hatred of the Turk in Europe, it is no wonder if the most monstrous exaggerations passed current as peremptory truths.

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 1, 1877, No. 221.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 513.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 1876, No. 24.

Sir H. Elliot, writing on 6th July, says: "The excesses committed in the suppression of the insurrection have unquestionably been very great, as was inevitable from the nature of the force which the Porte was, in the first emergency, obliged to employ, but it is equally certain that the details which have been given, coming almost exclusively from Russian and Bulgarian sources, are so *monstrously exaggerated* as to deprive them of much claim to much attention. Cases of revolting cruelty have been mentioned to me in such a circumstantial manner as to make it almost impossible to doubt this truth, but which proved, on investigation, to be entirely fictitious. . . . Turkish ministers deny that the cruelties have been on a scale at all approaching to what they are represented; they point out that the horrors committed on Turkish women and children are passed over in silence, and they plead that they had no alternative *but* to use the irregular force at their disposal to put down an unprovoked insurrection fomented from abroad, the authors of which are responsible for the sufferings which have been entailed upon both Christians and Mahometans."<sup>1</sup>

Some of the fictions invented were quite picturesque and dramatic. These fictions and legends were not confined to Bulgaria, and Canon Liddon and a Rev. Mr MacColl carried off the palm for ingenious credulity. On the 2nd October 1876, Sir H. Elliot telegraphs to Her Majesty's Consul at Bosnia Serai: "Canon Liddon and a friend, who went to Servia by the Bosnian frontier, state that they saw examples of revolting cruelties practised by Turkish officers of the regular army, who have *impaled*, at all military stations along the frontier, men and women. Report as to truth of these statements." On the 5th inst. the startled Consul sends the following reply: "Everything known here would make statement in your telegram of 2nd inst. perfectly incredible, *but* for the name of your Excellency's informant. I will write of this by next post."<sup>2</sup> The statement of the distinguished ecclesiastic created a great sensation. It turned out, however, that he had obtained his information from passengers in a steam vessel on the Save, and that they had not travelled along the frontier at all, as Sir A. Buchanan, who first reported to Sir H. Elliot, had been led to believe. "The whole story, therefore," adds Sir A. Buchanan, "probably resolves itself, as suggested by Mr Holmes, to heads or even bodies having been exposed on poles, as I have myself seen hanging in chains during the British Protectorate of Corfu."<sup>3</sup> Mr Holmes, in his report, after demonstrating the absurdity of the story, politely adds: "Now, if Canon Liddon states that he saw what he describes, of course I can say nothing to the contrary; but if he has only been assured of these atrocities, it is most certain that he has been grossly deceived, with a view to make use of his voice and influence as a means of increasing and confirming public opinion in England, in

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 538.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 539.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 686.

the belief of the barbarous conduct attributed to the Turks, and in hostility to them."<sup>1</sup> These reverend gentlemen had evidently been the victims of, as Mr Holmes further says, "a monstrous joke," and he proceeds to explain the matter. "After much reflection, however, the matter is, I think, as clear as possible. Near most Bosnian farm-houses there are stakes, such as Mr MacColl describes, around which the haricot beans . . . are fixed up to dry with something above them to keep off the birds. . . . At the time of Mr MacColl's voyage down the Save, it is probable that most of the beans had been garnered, but a portion might have been left on one of the stakes which attracted his attention. This, on being pointed out to some practical joker amongst the officers of the steamboat, with its accidental likeness to a body, together, perhaps, with the previous conversation of the travellers, suggested the hoax, which, on seeing that it was seriously accepted, was kept up till the end of the journey."<sup>2</sup>

Another and most probable explanation of this astounding story was that what Canon Liddon and his friend really saw, "was a watchman who had mounted on his stake, probably to look at the steamer descending the Save."<sup>3</sup> Anybody may be mistaken, even distinguished ecclesiastics; but what, in such quasi-sacred persons was scarcely to be expected, was the tenacity with which they stuck to the impalement theory, after it was exploded in the minds of all impartial persons. Even high dignitaries of the Church don't like being laughed at.

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey*, Incl. in No. 687.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Incl. in No. 961.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 2, 1877, Incl. in No. 179.