

FRASER'S MAGAZINE

EDITED BY

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE, M.A.

NEW SERIES. VOL. III.

JANUARY TO JUNE 1871



LONDON
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
PATERNOSTER ROW

MDCCLXXI

FRASER'S MAGAZINE.

JANUARY 1871.

ON THE CAUSES OF THE CRIMEAN WAR.

By F. W. NEWMAN.

THE recent behaviour, of Russia in announcing that she does not intend to keep the solemn engagements made by her in 1856 in order to obtain a peace that delivered her from intolerable suffering and threatening dangers—has naturally excited great disquietude. At the same time it has given currency to very erroneous representations of the causes of our war with Russia, by which those who have come to manhood since it was fought are liable to be deceived. A survey of those events seems therefore to be not untimely.

The rise of Russia to the rank of a Power pre-eminently great and formidable to Europe was brought about by her absorption of Poland. The dominion of the Polish monarchy reached to the mouth of the Dnieper on the Black Sea, and to the Gulf of Livonia on the Baltic. Its eastern boundary went even beyond the Dnieper, including the Palatinates of Witepsk and Moghilev, making Smolensko the Russian frontier. The Eastern league afterwards known as 'the Holy Alliance' was really made when Russia, Prussia, and Austria combined to appropriate Polish territory. The theatre of war was too distant for Western Europe to reach. France was sinking towards decrepitude, England was quarrelling with her American colonies.

Presently France fell into a terrible revolution, and England was pre-occupied by watching her agonies. Spain was effete, and Italy priest-ridden. Russia therefore was enabled to carry out her daring game, and take to herself the chief spoil, while bribing Austria and Prussia by portions large enough to implicate them in the common crime. The French Revolution induced the war of Europe against France. Germany had begun it, England had applauded it; but it soon appeared that French enthusiasm and the genius of Bonaparte were too much for them. The allies were glad to call in the aid of Russia; and only by her aid, and after the French retreat from Moscow, were they able at last to confine French ambition to its own soil. Of course that was no time for us to complain of Russian encroachment: moreover, Alexander I. was an amiable man, who professed constitutional doctrines and Evangelical religion. Nevertheless on the fall of Napoleon a severe shock was at once given by Russia to the feelings of her allies. She had been allowed or requested during the war to occupy Finland and the duchy of Warsaw for military convenience. At its close she refused to go out; and without a new war, to expel her was impossible. At such bad faith well might statesmen be

appalled: yet it was agreed to let her keep Finland, and to 'compensate' Sweden by giving Norway to her at the expense of Denmark, who (as having been an ally of France) might decorously be plundered. But to concede the duchy of Warsaw to Russia was very offensive to Austria and Prussia; and a war against Russia was actually impending in 1815, when Napoleon broke loose from Elba. He found in the Tuileries the secret correspondence between the allies against Russia, and sent copies of it to the Emperor Alexander, saying in effect, 'See what your allies are planning! Be rather my ally, and I will consent to your keeping Warsaw.' But Alexander preferred another policy. He showed to his allies the offer of Napoleon, as if to ask on which side they desired to have him. Thus pressed, they were forced to purchase him by acquiescing in his demands. It was a terrible warning to the two weaker members of the Holy Alliance of what stuff their mighty leader was made.

The Holy Alliance proceeded to root up constitutional government in the two states in which it had been established by English counsel and aid—in Sicily and in Spain. Naples, by secret treaty with Austria, gladly undertook the first; the Holy Alliance sent French armies to execute the second. Lord Castlereagh's rival, Mr. Canning, becoming Foreign Minister of England, separated us publicly from all complicity in the dealings of the Holy Alliance, and protested in vain at Verona, by the mouth of the Duke of Wellington. The Greek insurrection against Turkey found sympathy in all Christendom. When it had lasted into a seventh year, and had become a general nuisance by the piracy which rose out of anarchy, Mr. Canning brought about the Treaty of London (1827), which undertook to terminate it, not in

the interest of Greece, but in the interests of Europe. The four powers England, France, Austria, and Russia were called mediators, and professed no hostility to Turkey. Exactly at that moment the Sultan, chiefly by the energy of the Pasha of Egypt, had got together a powerful fleet, which apparently was competent to recover the dominion of Greece. But the allies (chiefly English) sailed into the Bay of Navarino, where the Egyptian fleet was lying. No one knows who fired the first shot—possibly the Turks, conceiving themselves to be assailed—and a general engagement followed, in which the Turkish fleet was destroyed. Russia was one of the mediators. The Emperor Nicolas had succeeded his brother Alexander in 1825; and no sooner had we destroyed the Egyptian fleet than he forthwith declared war upon the Sultan. The fighting on the Danube was very severe; Varna on the Black Sea was not taken without bribing the Pasha: yet, after two years of war, the Russians crossed the Balkan and forced the Sultan to sign the Peace of Adrianople. By this peace he counted that the Sultan was virtually his subject-ally, in the same sense that an Indian prince is subject to England as the paramount Power. Lord Aberdeen regarded the terms of peace as so destructive to Turkish independence that he made a most vehement protest, which remained secret until he himself published it during the Crimean war.

In consequence of this humiliation to the Sultan (1829), his own Pashas despised him. The powerful and distant Pasha of Bagdad withheld his tribute, and in 1831 the Pasha of Aleppo was ordered to subdue him. A terrible plague in Bagdad and an inundation of the Tigris thoroughly disabled the revolting Pasha before his rival approached. But a far worse disaster followed in the insurrection of the

Pasha of Egypt, who by his son Ismail at length invaded Syria, and after several years' warfare might have broken the empire in two. Nothing seemed more auspicious for the Russian game. With Christian subjects disaffected, and Turkish Pashas ambitious, the Sultan was sure to be submissive to the Czar, and likely indeed to need his aid, which would have been given as zealously, as afterwards to Austria against Hungary. It so happened that the French, who had devoured in imagination the whole north coast of Africa, ever since 1830, when they conquered Algiers—were equally delighted at the successes of the Pasha of Egypt; apparently because they supposed that if he tried to stand up against the Sultan he would need French support. In fact the Egyptian victories reached the point at which the Porte absolutely needed aid from without. In such a condition of things Russia appeared to find her opportunity; but unless actually driven to despair, the Turkish Government would not accept so dangerous a protector, and preferred to ask aid of England. It was granted immediately, energetically, and successfully. Lord Palmerston, then Foreign Secretary, was regarded as the chief author of the policy; and its defence lay in the assertion that it was necessary to prevent Russia from becoming the Sultan's protector. The irritation in France was extreme, and all but involved us in war with her; yet Palmerston seemed to have succeeded in delaying the day at which the Turk should receive orders from St. Petersburg.

Five years later the Emperor Nicolas paid a visit to England (1845) with the express object of sounding the new Cabinet; for Sir Robert Peel had displaced the Whigs since 1842. It is rumoured that on one occasion he startled Lord Aberdeen, then Foreign Se-

cretary, by the frank remark, 'I can easily understand that you would like to have Egypt, and perhaps Cyprus or Crete, and to that I shall have no objection.' If it be uncertain whether we ought to believe such rumours, it is an unquestionable fact, which transpired in the opening of the Crimean war, that he left with the Ministry a secret document, embodying the results of their conferences as he interpreted them. Of course they found it expedient not to understand its meaning; but when it was published, no man of common sense doubted that it proposed our connivance in the dismemberment of Turkey. When in 1848 the revolution which ejected Louis-Philippe from Paris excited insurrection in Berlin and Vienna, even the distant Danubian Principalities were moved to entreat or demand of the Sultan various important reforms of a popular character. The Principalities are not Turkish possessions, nor are Turks admissible to their executive government; they are only under Turkish protection. The Sultan readily granted to Wallachia all that was asked, and probably would have done the same to Moldavia. But a Russian army presently invaded the latter province, and Fuad Pasha marched into Wallachia to save it from like invasion. Nevertheless, to avoid war with Russia, the Sultan consented to reverse his word and withdraw his reforms, and—a more galling humiliation still—to banish the patriotic men, the choice spirits of Wallachia, who had headed the movement for reform. Nor was this all. The Russian army of 20,000 men, roving freely through both the Principalities, threw itself into Transylvania to aid Austria, which had already entered into an unrighteous war with Hungary, begun by the foulest treachery. To the questions of Lord Palmerston the Russian Minister replied, that the army had entered Transylvania

without orders from St. Petersburg, in the cause of humanity only, namely, to save the Transylvanians from the atrocities of the Hungarian General Bem. The atrocities were a fiction, and no one believed that the Russian general acted without orders. General Bem drove out the Russian troops, inflicting on them terrible loss; but we never heard of any reproof from St. Petersburg incurred by the Russian commander.

Yet by this proceeding Russia felt the pulse of the West. When it appeared that no strong resentment was excited, she knew that she could safely count on Western inaction: hence, when the Austrian armies, 150,000 strong, retreated from Hungary, disastrously overthrown, Russia came zealously to the rescue, pouring in 192,000 men as the grand total.

As it appeared that no State in Europe would acknowledge Hungary as belligerent, even after she had conquered Austria in a cause transparently just, the Hungarian general Görgey despaired for his country, played the traitor, and forced a surrender of his whole army to the Russians, fancying that this was *not* to surrender to Austria. The Russians treated the Hungarian generals with marked distinction and honour until they had gathered all who seemed likely to surrender: thereupon they were handed over to the Austrians, who hanged them for the instruction of Hungarian patriots. At the same time Louis Batthyani, late Prime Minister of Hungary under the Austrian Crown, who against the advice of Kossuth had gone with a flag of truce to the Austrians, in hope of effecting some compromise which should reconcile the quarrel and save bloodshed, but had been thereupon seized and imprisoned by the Austrians, was now brought out and shot, to warn Hungary that no virtue and no moderation, no goodwill to the dynasty, could

atone for the offence of counting national law more sacred than the caprice of a foreign cabinet—for such was the Austrian Cabinet to Hungary.

No event had moved England so profoundly since the peace of 1815. The overthrow of the Spanish constitution by French armies in 1823, at the bidding of the Congress of Verona, was a deed having some outward similarity; but the case of Hungary had great peculiarities. The liberties of Hungary were as old as those of England. Her position towards Austria was conservative, and her contest fundamentally legal. She demanded nothing but that the dynasty should keep treaties, execute the law, observe the coronation oath and the solemn personal contract which was added to it; and that the King should not usurp the powers of government before he was legally invested with them. Also, the Diet disowned the deposition of their lawful king, Ferdinand, effected only by the private act of the Austrian Cabinet. It was believed that he had been deposed *because* he conscientiously refused to perjure himself by making war upon Hungary, and that Francis Joseph, a youth of eighteen, was put on the throne because he was sure to do what his mother the Archduchess Sophia bade him. The Hungarian Diet claimed to see the document by which Ferdinand was said to have abdicated, and did not believe that he had ever executed it, since no attempt was made to convince them of it.

Hence, until the entrance of the Russians, they fought against the Austrians in the name of their legal king, Ferdinand of Hungary, illegally deposed by an Austrian Cabinet. Moreover the war had been begun by the most outrageous perfidy of that Cabinet. The King was in fact almost imbecile. The Cabinet stirred up Jellachich, Ban

of Croatia, to make war upon Hungary, and also by secret agents excited the Hungarian Serbs (a small immigration from Turkish Servia) to make marauding inroads on the Hungarian villages, which they burnt by night. The Archduke Stephen, Palatine of Hungary, gave solemn assurance to the Diet that such things went on without his cognisance, and urged the Hungarians to arm against the insurrection. The Emperor at Vienna, on the application of the Hungarian Prime Minister, Louis Batthyani, issued a proclamation denouncing Jellachich as a rebel and outlaw. Nevertheless, the Hungarians intercepted despatches from Jellachich which thanked the Austrian Minister for his supply of money, ammunition, and officers: nay, they captured Austrian officers fighting at the head of the Serbs with Austrian commissions in their pockets: finally, when Jellachich was defeated, he fled to the protection of an Austrian general, who received him openly as an ally. This exposure of their perfidy forced the Austrian Cabinet to throw off the mask, and to enter war publicly against Hungary, for which they had prepared; armies being in position already, to march in from five points. But Ferdinand, though an imbecile, understood that this was wrong, and refused to sign the necessary documents. Hereupon the Cabinet deposed him; put on the throne, not his brother, but his brother's young son; and denounced the Hungarians as rebels, for fighting against insurgents in the war, to which the Austrian Archduke, representative of their king, had solemnly called them.

The effect of such outrageous proceedings was to cement all orders of Hungary, except a few of the nobility who had become denationalised. The mass of the peers, all the commoners, rich and poor, Magyars and Slovacks, Catholics and Protestants, Jews and Gipsies,

were united in defence of their hereditary laws and of treaties bought by rivers of blood. As Lord Palmerston confessed in Parliament, beyond question it was a *national* war. Moreover it so happened that Hungary was in many respects like to England, and intensely admired England. In Hungary, as in England, a great aristocracy survived many struggles, which the King could not deprive of independent political action. In Hungary, as in England, a national hierarchy retained vast estates. One would have expected the English aristocracy to be shocked at seeing the Hungarian nobility ousted from their hereditary rights by the treacherous conduct of the Crown; yet, strange to say, the peerage and the official statesmen were the only part of England which did not sympathise with Hungary. *Two* peers are known to have come near to Kosuth while he was in this country—no more. Besides, the Hungarians were eager for free trade with England, and had abundance of corn to sell; while the avowed policy of Austria was to keep her poor—to 'choke Hungary with her own fat,' as an Austrian statesman expressed it. In Hungary Protestants and Catholics lived harmoniously, but Austria was an hereditary persecutor. On every ground, therefore, the utmost indignation was natural in England at the events in Hungary. While the war went on, petitions innumerable were made to Lord Palmerston to recognise Hungary as belligerent; but the Ministry had been forewarned by Lord Ponsonby, their ambassador at Vienna, that Russia was in the background to aid, if Austria required it; and that (as he expressed it) 'the Russians would march into Italy, if necessary,' to suppress the Roman Republic. Our Ministers were too much afraid of a Russian war to be willing to do their plain duty as ministers of peace—I say their plain

duty; for England and Holland had been mediators of the Peace between Austria and Hungary in 1710-12, which Austria had now perfidiously broken. Kossuth, as Governor of Hungary, called upon England in November 1848 to resume our position as mediators. Had we done so, we might have shamed Austria into more decent behaviour, and prevented a calamitous war; or, at any rate, the moment we acknowledged her belligerence, the United States and Turkey would have done the same; Hungary would have been able to buy arms of Turkey (the only thing that she wanted); Görgey would never have been a traitor; and the Russian armies would have been defeated as ignominiously as those of Austria. Or rather, if Görgey had pursued the beaten Austrians, as Kossuth bade him, Austria would have been forced to make peace in Vienna before the Russians could enter Galicia. But Lord John Russell (then Prime Minister) was frightened, it must be believed; and Lord Palmerston had an axiom that 'a strong Austria was a European necessity'; which he so interpreted as if to make Austria's tenure of Hungary depend on Russian arms would keep up Austria as a bulwark against Russia. He therefore refused to receive Kossuth's envoy, giving as reply that 'he had no knowledge of Hungary but as a province of the Austrian Empire.' Lord Palmerston was not ignorant of history. Any one who asked for the *Corpus Juris Hungarici* (two volumes only), in the British Museum, might see that Leopold II., on succeeding his brother Joseph II. as Emperor of Germany and King of Hungary, rescinded all Joseph's lawless proceedings, and solemnly acknowledged that Hungary is a separate kingdom, not subject (*non obnoxium*) to any legislation but her own. He might see also that every king of Hungary, on his coronation, entered

into personal treaty with the nation in order to receive his right to govern; moreover that England, as mediator, reconciled the two belligerents, Austria and Hungary, nearly a hundred years before the 'Austrian Empire' was heard of. But English statesmen are not above resorting to fiction when convenient.

Resentment sank deep into all England when two Emperors could thus conspire against the only remaining constitution on the Continent which was coeval with our own. The freedom and laws of Castile, Arragon, and Valencia, of Sicily and Naples, of various Italian cities, of Bohemia, and of Austria itself, had been suppressed by the perfidious usurpations of the Austrian ruling house; and now Russia, with unapproachable deserts of frost as her rearguard, was beginning the same career with far vaster resources. At her bidding the constitution of Spain was overthrown. All Italy was kept under local tyrants, because it pleased Austria to sustain them. Austria herself in turn, when her misrule and violence were all but brought to a natural end by the high-spirited nation whom she had cursed for three centuries, found a protector in the Czar. Nothing was too distant to escape him. 'His armies were ready to march into Italy, if necessary:' that is to say, he was a universal and deadly enemy of European freedom. The perfidy by which he kept Finland, the plausible pretences of a constitution by which he beguiled the Polish nobility of Warsaw in 1815 (a constitution which he tore up in 1817), the ferocity with which he punished the Polish nobles in 1831, sending them to labour in the Ural mines as slaves, for daring to take arms against the lawless tyranny of his brother Constantine, warned everyone that, unless resisted, he would leave no freedom on the European continent; and in that

case, if England were isolated, we had little chance for our own liberties.

In consequence, when Kossuth came to England in the autumn of 1851, all England stood up to honour him, except the statesmen and the peerage. At Southampton, where he landed, he had a cordial greeting; but pre-eminent was the zeal of the metropolis itself. The rich men of the City of London, for the first time in the memory of men alive, stood foremost in a popular cause, and received him at a splendid banquet; and the zeal of the lower people fully equalled that of the wealthiest merchants and traders. At Charing Cross he received an ovation which would have been honourable to the Queen. Manchester, Birmingham, Edinburgh, rich and poor, vied in welcoming him. One hundred and thirty-seven municipalities (if I may trust memory) passed votes of sympathy and solicited a visit from him. Nothing but the pressure of time (for he was hurrying to America) hindered his making royal progress from end to end of Great Britain. In vain did hostile newspapers retail spiteful personalities against him. However much the people might respect Kossuth the man, yet their display of sympathy was intended to honour the cause of Hungary—to express their detestation of Austrian perfidy, and their indignation at the interference of Russia to overthrow national law.

Without duly considering these events, no one will understand the causes of our Crimean war. We had to fight Russia because our aristocracy crippled *Hungary* from fighting her. In 1849 the vast chasm which separates Whigs and Tories from the English nation, in their sentiment concerning foreign affairs, first became manifest. It was shown alike in the events of Rome and in those of Hungary. In *Sicily* the Ministry of Lord John

Russell *wished* well to the constitutional cause; but they resolved to act in harmony with the President Louis Napoleon, and therefore their action did but betray the Sicilian patriots. In Naples they *wished* well, yet they acted for Austria. But our nation was for freedom. Until this schism shall be healed, England must seem to foreigners—and probably must be in fact—treacherous to every cause which she espouses. If it be a dynastic cause, the nation will not make sacrifices for such an object; if it be the cause of foreign freedom, our Ministers, whatever their personal wishes, do not choose to offend dynastic influences and the desires of the Court.

Scarcely had Kossuth quitted the shores of England, when Europe was horrified by Louis Napoleon's perjurious usurpation. Attention was for a while drawn off from Russia: it was believed that Napoleon would seek glory and popularity by an invasion of England. The Parliament itself was in panic: Joseph Hume implored members to say nothing that might irritate Napoleon personally. Our defences (as usual) were declared to be insufficient, and six hundred thousand pounds were unanimously voted to build a fleet of screw steamers of war against French invasion. They were the first we ever built, and they answered beyond hope. That very fleet, built against France, sailed in alliance with the French fleet to block up Russia in the Baltic.

On May 14, 1851, Kossuth spoke his last speech in Boston, which was an elaborate exposition of the state of Europe. In it he said, 'Since the fall of Hungary, Russia is the real sovereign of all Germany. For the first time Germany has a foreign master. And do you believe that Germany will bear *that* in the nineteenth century which it never yet has borne?—bear *that* in fulness of

age which it never bore in childhood? Soon after, and through, the fall of Hungary, the pride of Prussia was humiliated; Austrian garrisons occupied Hamburg; Schleswig-Holstein was abandoned; Hesse was chastised, and all that is dear to Germans purposely affronted. Their dreams of greatness, their longings for unity, their aspirations of liberty, were trampled in the dust; and ridicule was thrown upon all elevation of mind, upon all manifestation of patriotism . . . Can you really believe that the moral feeling of such a people as the Germans, stamped in the civilisation of which it was a generating element, can be killed, or that it can bear for a long while such an outrage? . . . They broke the power of Rome and of Paris: will they agree to be governed by St. Petersburg? He added: 'It is my fear that this month or this year Russia will attack Turkey, and we shall not be entirely prepared; but though you do not give us material aid, still we (Hungarians) *must* rise when Turkey is attacked, because we cannot afford to lose her 400,000 soldiers. The time draws near when you will see more the reason I have to hasten these preparations, that they may be complete whenever (most probably by a war between Russia and Turkey) we need to take time by the forelock.'

Shortly after, speaking in Syracuse, in New York State, he yet more pointedly declared that Europe cannot remain free while Germany is under the pressure of Russia, and that Germany cannot shake off that pressure until Hungary is again free; and that the opportunity of Hungary will come with war between Turkey and Russia. Russia was sure not to throw away her opportunity. For this she had fought the Hungarian war, to make Austria her *protégée* and minister; and at that crisis the jealousy of England against the usurper Napoleon

seemed to make an alliance of the two Powers impossible.

The Coalition Ministry of Lord Aberdeen and Lord John Russell seemed to give a new advantage to the Czar, who, immediately after his compliments on its definitive appointment, entered into secret conferences with our Ambassador, Sir Hamilton Seymour, with a view to sound our policy. This was not known to the English public for two years. But, meanwhile, his personal conference with the young Emperor of Austria was popularly interpreted as an invitation 'to finish the port (Porte) together;' and the quarrels got up concerning the Eastern Church were understood by all except by the English Ministry, who thought it their duty *not* to understand. When at last, in July 1853, the Emperor Nicolas took the fatal plunge, and invaded Moldavia, there was naturally great excitement in England, and many bold words would have been spoken in Parliament but for the deplorable policy of the Ministers, who thought that dissimulation could keep Europe at peace. They entreated the Parliament to keep silence as the only way of avoiding European war; whereas, if Parliament had spoken, the Czar would have been warned of English feeling. In the Ministry opinion was divided. Lords Aberdeen and Clarendon spoke in a tone widely different from Lords Palmerston and John Russell; but Clarendon as Foreign Secretary, and Aberdeen as Prime Minister, were by far the superior influence. Our Ambassador at Constantinople forbade the Sultan from occupying Wallachia, and saving it, as it might have been saved, from Russian invasion. This monstrous denial of the right of Turkey to defend herself (while performing her duty to the Principality of which she was protectress) was to the Turks *a pledge of our alliance*; for it could only be interpreted to mean, 'We

know better than you how to defend you. It is *our* part to preserve the peace of Europe. Trust to us: let the Russians march in, and we will engage that you shall not suffer.'

But what did the phrase mean, 'We must not have a European war'? It meant two things: (1) 'We must cleverly manage to make the Turks yield peaceably, not perhaps all that Russia asks, but enough to satisfy Russia—for *this time*. (2) We must not drive Turkey to despair by refusing to support her, lest Hungary join Turkey, and Austria be overthrown.' Kossuth may have forgotten that what he spoke in Boston would be heard in London, but in due time he was made disagreeably aware that his close relations with the Sultan's Cabinet were no secret to the English Ministry. Lord Clarendon, in the 'Secret Correspondence,' gave as one reason to the Emperor Nicolas why her Majesty's Government deprecated warlike operations in the East, that there were great European Powers which had recently suffered internal agitation, and could not stand under its renewal. In other words, he knew that Austria would enter the war as an ally of Russia (the Czar had plainly said to Sir Hamilton Seymour, 'You need not ask what Austria thinks about it: whatever I wish Austria wishes'); he knew also that *if* Austria entered the war, Hungary would infallibly become the ally of Turkey. To prevent this was the first object of Lords Aberdeen and Clarendon. They desired, no doubt, to save Turkey, but so to save her as not to allow Austria to fall by her own ambition. This superfluous patronage of Austria involved Lord Aberdeen in virtual treachery to Turkey, and finally drifted him into the war against his will.

But the English public was not in sympathy with the Ministry, nor was the Turkish public to be managed by the French and English

Ambassadors. After the ignominious termination of the discussion upon what was called 'the Vienna note,' when the Russian Minister closed by avowing that the Turkish interpretation of it was correct, and that the French and English Ministers (who, forsooth, meant to please Russia and keep the peace) were decidedly wrong, the Turks saw too plainly that their Western allies were cheating them. In consequence popular feeling pressed on the Sultan so vehemently that he had no choice but to accept the war. Russia had for nearly three months been in hostile occupation of Turkish ground when the Sultan declared war. It was remarked that the Czar had intended to act with the utmost caution. He had sounded England eight years before, and deposited the sacred document in London. He had held secret conference with Sir Hamilton Seymour, and received high compliments from Lord John Russell, and much cordiality from Lord Clarendon (who succeeded him as Foreign Secretary), without any sign of moral abhorrence, or anything to indicate that the execution of his purpose so frankly revealed might call us into active hostility. When the French Emperor discerned the Russian designs, and ordered his fleet to the East, Lord Clarendon solemnly protested, and compelled him to recall it. For this deed Nesselrode paid a warm compliment to the English Government, fully believing that it was playing into the Czar's hand, since it had been so plainly warned of the Russian purposes. When France was found backing up the English interpretation of 'the Vienna note,' it seemed that we had won over France also to our pacific counsels; that is to say, into the policy of schooling Turkey to yield without war. Of Austria the Czar was sure, and of Prussia he had no fears. He had sounded all the Cabinets, and knew them to the

bottom. But two things escaped him—what the Turkish people and what the English people were thinking—and this turned his caution into folly; for the war that followed is the only war since the overthrow of Napoleon which was emphatically a people's war in England. It is marvellous how any persons can be so blind as to fancy that we were entangled in it by the craft of Napoleon.

The two Western Powers, on learning that the Sultan had declared war under pressure of his people, were highly displeased. M. Drouyn de Lhuys wrote a despatch, which Lord Clarendon countersigned, to the Admirals of the Western fleets (which had sailed into Turkish waters *ostensibly* for the defence of Constantinople against the Russian fleet), to explain more definitely to them for what purpose they were sent. The words ran thus: The fleets are sent 'not to fight against the Emperor of Russia, but to deliver the Sultan from religious enthusiasm and fatal auxiliaries.' *Religious enthusiasm*—that is to say, the patriotism of the Ottoman nation resenting Russian invasion; *fatal auxiliaries*—that is to say, from the Hungarian nation, which undoubtedly was ready to fight by the side of Turkey against Austria. The Turks certainly despaired of English and French aid, as only betraying their cause; for the Seraskier sent to Kossuth in London, bidding him to come to Constantinople and sign the treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, between Turkey and Hungary. But the English Ambassador was too well served by his spies to be ignorant of this. He demanded a private interview of the Sultan, and extorted from him (*without the knowledge of his Ministry*) a private promise that if Kossuth came to Constantinople, he would imprison him. Such is the mode in which an English ambassador teaches con-

stitutional government to a foreign potentate. In a despatch a little later Lord Clarendon says that the Turks must not be allowed in their own self-defence to involve 'Europe' in war. Nevertheless the Western Ambassadors brought the catastrophe on themselves swiftly. They would not permit the Turks to send war ships with their transports along the Black Sea; and Lord Palmerston soon afterwards in his place in Parliament explained why. Anger against Russia, it seems, made him speak truth indiscreetly. We had accepted from the Czar a secret promise (when, and through whom, was not stated) that he would confine his war to the Principalities; and it seems we were simple enough to suppose that he would therefore allow the Turks to carry supplies of war along their coasts. Apparently the Russians interpreted their promise to be contingent on the Turks abstaining from every warlike operation in the Black Sea. Be this as it may, the Turkish transports went out without sufficient escort, and were frightfully destroyed by the Russians in the battle of Sinope. Only a week or so earlier our Ambassador had introduced to the Sultan in public divan the Admiral and chief officers of the fleet, as 'sent by the Queen of England to defend him from unjust aggression.' Naturally after the battle (if battle it should be called, and not rather massacre) the Sultan called on the Admirals of the Western Powers to defend him; but to their utter shame and ignominy, they had to confess that they had received orders *not* to fight against the Emperor of Russia!

Thus it was that the Aberdeen Government entangled itself in war by its own double-mindedness and folly. Conduct of the same kind it was, when war was declared, to ask of Parliament money to take the troops to Malta *and back*; as if

wholly careless to veil their duplicity, or as if wishing to warn the Russians that we did not mean to fight after all. Whatever Mr. Kinglake or others may say, it was not the Emperor Napoleon who entangled us by his craft; he was far more open than we. He had not read the Secret Correspondence, yet he discerned the designs of Russia without it, and frankly sent his fleet to the Sultan's aid. If we had, in that stage, done the same, Russia would have been warned in time, and never would have undertaken the war; but when our Ministers, knowing she had 'ulterior designs,' protested to France that it was merely an ecclesiastical quarrel, we made Russia suppose that she had our secret support, though we thought it decorous to affect to side with our ancient ally. The French Minister also was less eager against Turkey in the affair of the Vienna note; nor is it likely that, but for us, Napoleon would have cared so sensitively for Austria, at the expense of Hungary and the Sultan.

In the Emperor Napoleon's autograph letter to the Czar, which was the last attempt to avert war, the battle of Sinope was put forward as the unendurable disgrace of the Western Powers, in whose hearing, almost, the cannon had sounded against the ally for whose defence they had come. The Czar was implored to recede from his position before it was too late to avoid mutual calamities; but the arms of his Russians had met with nothing but disaster on the Danube, and until he should re-establish his military credit he did not dare to make peace, for fear of his own subjects. Our Ministers, we must suppose, understood the case, and hence came the celebrated request for money to carry the troops to *Malta and back*: hence also it was, that Lord Raglan was said, by private and public report, to reite-

rate 'You need not be afraid, for we shall not fire a shot in the East.' The first aim of the allies was to draw Austria into the war *on our side*; although we knew that she had previously been pledged to do whatever Russia wished. Austria took advantage of this to stipulate that she should be allowed to 'occupy' something—Serbia if possible; if not, then Wallachia. The natural and rightful mode of proceeding for the allies of Turkey was to aid in driving out the Russians from the Principalities, to recall the Wallachian exiles, and stimulate the provincials to exertion by promising them the political reforms of which Russia had so unjustly deprived them. But this would have been intensely disagreeable to Austria, who feared the proximity of freedom to Transylvania. Therefore she desired to 'occupy.' In fact, the lukewarm allies of Turkey *would not allow Omar Pasha to succour Silistria* until the Sultan consented to the Austrian occupation of Wallachia. He had to eject a Grand Vizier to bring it about! The English Ministry clearly *desired* Russia to re-establish her military credit. They were disappointed that she could not take Silistria, and remained wholly inactive in hope that Russia would make peace. By duplicity they entangled themselves in the war, and by duplicity they risked its utter failure. Russia did make peace after obtaining one piece of success at Kars.

The English people felt all along that it was necessary to our *political safety* to repress Russian encroachment, and those who knew how disgracefully we were sacrificing the interests of Turkey which we affected to defend, felt that the war had become necessary to our *honour*. Nor did the zeal and endurance of the nation ever relax, deep as was the trial from the wonderful and wholly unexpected incapacity of our officers. When Lord John Russell

was dismayed at the discovery that Austria could not be won into the foul disgrace of changing sides, and that we could get nothing out of her but neutrality, the English public was *not* dismayed, simply because they had never conceived the bright thought that Austria would dare to get into war with Russia while hated and despised by Hungary. In our worst distresses, when the heart of the Ministry fainted, the people remained firm, and their firmness at length triumphed. No word of murmuring was heard against the necessary war-taxes, though grief for precious lives was made deeper by a sense of the terrible mismanagement. But when our victory seemed to be won, there was great disappointment that so little was exacted of Russia. The nation wanted, while its hand was in, to take securities that it should be the last war with Russia, exactly as Germany now feels towards France.

To an *after-war* we had, and we have, an insuperable aversion. To enforce upon Russia the restoration of Poland seemed the only thing that could really bind her over to keep the peace: that our Government did nothing in this direction caused much dissatisfaction. It is more than possible that Prussia was here the great impediment. Old Lord Lyndhurst was not in the Ministry, and therefore he could more freely utter invective. His bitter assaults on Prussia (utterly useless and unwise as they were) perhaps denoted his knowledge that Prussia would have joined her arms to Russia if the Polish question had been touched. Without sure knowledge of secret facts, it would be rash to blame Lord Palmerston's Government for flatly refusing to introduce the question of Poland into the war when Napoleon proposed it; but when, as a consequence, Napoleon insisted on making peace at once, it caused much discontent

in the English nation. It was universally felt that a promise from Russia was of no avail.

What could have been a milder imposition upon a beaten enemy? He had built a fleet and fortified a pirates' nest, for no other purpose than to terrify Constantinople. He had unjustly invaded the Turkish dominions; and he was punished by being required to keep no war fleet in the Black Sea, and to give up a strip of territory and the great fortress of Ismail, by aid of which he had infested the mouth of the Danube. He was not even required to pay to Turkey the expenses of her war, much less the expenses of the other allies. To the English people, for a little time, it seemed that we had fought a war with vast sacrifices, and been defrauded of its fruits by the incapacity or connivance of the Government.

Yet, after all, a great work was done, and the very work for which the war had been undertaken. Russia has been *repressed*: for full twelve years she had no practical voice in the councils of Europe; and in three years the consequences of this began to appear. First came the Franco-Italian War, which crippled Austria, made Italian freedom possible, liberated Milan, Parma, Placentia, Modena, and Tuscany, and sent Austria to meditate what a thing it was to have Hungarians and Croats disaffected. Next year came the actual union of the remainder of Italy and Sicily under the Sardinian Crown, except Rome and Venice. The example was kindling to Germany, and Prussia felt able to act without thought of Russia. The Prusso-Austrian war made German unity possible, restored Venice to Italy, and forced Austria to reconcile herself to Hungary. Now therefore the whole aspect of Eastern affairs *to us* is changed. In 1853 we saw a weak Germany, a disunited Italy, a crippled Austria, a down-trodden Hun-

gary, and the Danubian Principalities in a sort of anarchy. Now we have a powerful Germany, a Hungary loyal to Austria, and the Principalities united under a Prussian Prince. Even if Russia become mistress of Constantinople, her position there will not enable her to give law to Europe, which undoubtedly was to be feared twenty years ago. One advantage of her recent scandalous and pernicious renunciation of a treaty signed to get rid of the intolerable oppression of war, is, that it will assuredly reconcile Hungary to the German nation, and compress the whole Danubian power into close political sympathy with the Teutonic race; probably into an alliance, offensive and defensive. If this be the result, Europe will have nothing to fear from Russia. On the other hand, Russia herself has made European war against her utterly absurd, if victory in the war is to stop short of dismembering her. For suppose that after vast sacrifices we lay her prostrate: what are

we then to do? To take a promise from her again? But that would be mere infatuation. Nothing is to the purpose but to take away from her permanently the coast of the Black Sea; which, if we were ever so victorious, would be to England physically impossible. If we could re-establish a great Poland, and restore the Crimea to Turkey, our immediate problem might be solved; but only the joint force of Austria and Germany, with Turkey and perhaps other allies, could possibly succeed in schemes so vast—schemes which would in any case be lavish of blood and treasure beyond all wars yet known, and would, after all, be of very uncertain benefit, if successful. Those Powers which are nearest to the Russian frontier must now take the initiative against Russian lawlessness. If the rulers of England try to play any but an avowedly secondary part, it is certain that the nation will refuse to make sacrifices where success itself would be barren.

