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Diplomatic background of the Crimean war

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DIPLOMATIC BACKGROUND OF THE CRIMEAN WAR

by

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I. INTRODUCTION:

The Ottoman Empire

For centuries there has been an Eastern Question. At different times, the problem has assumed various aspects, but in all ages the basis of the question is the same --- the conflict in creed, race, language, social customs, and political aptitudes and traditions between the East and the West. The essence of the problem is then the presence of an alien race, the Ottoman Turks, in Europe.

Long after the western part of the Roman Empire had disintegrated, the eastern part continued to maintain itself. For centuries the Eastern Empire was battling for existence against the Slavic hordes from the North who were invading the Balkan region, and especially against the Mohammedan tribes from the East who seized the Asiatic possessions of the Empire and were constantly making attacks on Constantinople. Finally in 1453 that ancient citadel was captured --- an event of great importance, since it marks the actual beginning of Turkish control in the Balkans, which has furnished one of the most intricate problems
European statesmen had ever had to consider --- the Eastern Question.

From Constantinople, the Ottomans continued to advance and the height of their power was attained with remarkable activity during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566). But before the end of the sixteenth century, its zenith was already passed. With the defeat of the Ottomans at the gates of Vienna, 1683, the advance of the Moslem was finally arrested. For two and a half centuries the Turks had been the scourge of Christendom and had seriously threatened the security of the European countries. The menace was now dissipated forever.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the fundamental point at issue in the Eastern Question was the future of the Ottoman Empire. This vast empire had been for some time in a state of political decay and disintegration, and, during this period, was in danger of being conquered by foreign powers. Russia had since the time of Catherine II been pushing her way southward, by seizing Turkish soil. At one time it seemed as
if Russia and Austria would divide the spoils between them, at another that Napoleon would direct his restless activity in the direction of the Eastern Mediterranean. But the interests of European politics had kept those powers otherwise occupied, and had frustrated whatever designs they had had upon the Sultan's possessions. But there was another menace. The immediate danger was not from without but from within.

The government of the Sultan was inefficient, its mechanism of control of its agents deplorably defective. The result was that in various parts of the empire those agents were using their power to found for themselves virtually independent states, as for example Tunis and Algiers. In European Turkey, Ali of Janina was endeavoring to accomplish the same thing in Albania. The military system of the empire, once the terror of Europe, was now in decay, and the main object of a century had been defense not offense; yet even that was beyond the competence of the government.

Full of contempt for those whom they had conquered, the Turks made no attempt to as-
similate them into one nation. They were satisfied with reducing them to subjection, and with exploiting them. They left them in a kind of partial independence as far as administration was concerned, allowing them local autonomy. These subjects were permitted the free exercise of their religion, contrary to the teachings of the Koran. But while they enjoyed certain privileges they possessed no rights. Their property might be confiscated, or even their lives taken in any moment of anger or suspicion on the part of their rulers. The Turks neither crushed nor conciliated their alien subjects.

This inner decay of the Ottoman Empire, together with the rise of Russia, and the far reaching effects of the French Revolution, resulting first in the rise of the Serbs in 1804-1830, and later the struggle for Greek independence 1821-1829, brought the attention of the statesmen of Europe to the development of events in Turkey.

The Purpose of the Thesis

It is the purpose of this thesis to trace briefly the advance of the Russians, as may
be seen from the important treaties, during the last part of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth; the Napoleonic period in its effect upon the Near East; the struggle for Greek independence and the interest taken in it by the European powers; the activities in diplomacy of the powers during and after the rise of the Sultan's vassal, Mehemet Ali of Egypt; the growing distrust between Great Britain and Russia; and the long series of diplomatic negotiations immediately preceding the Crimean War. With this last involved topic, this thesis will be chiefly concerned.

II. TURKEY AND RUSSIA - TREATY RELATIONS 1774-1813

The Treaty of Kutschuk-Kainardji

The most fundamental and far reaching of all the treaties signed by Russia and Turkey was the treaty of Kutschuk-Kainardji, 1774. Upon this important text, all the other treaties, executed by the two Powers, rest. In 1852 on the eve of the Crimean War, Nicholas I appealed to this treaty in his attempt to retain the influence of the Greek Monks in the guardianship of the Holy Places. Its provisions may be, for our purposes, briefly stated.
(1) Russia restored to the Porte most of the territories she recently occupied: Bessarabia, Moldavia, Wallachia and the islands of the Archipelago, but only on the condition of "better government in general, and of particular privileges in regard to diplomatic representation, and above all to religion. In regard to the territories the Porte (Arts. XVI, XVII and XXIII) definitely promised 'to obstruct in no manner whatsoever the free exercise of the Christian religion, and to interpose no obstacle to the erection of new Churches and to the repairing of old ones!'".  

These provisions, according to Russia, gave her a treaty right of intervention in the internal affairs of Turkey. (2) For herself, Russia gained a foothold on the Black Sea, as well as (3) Trading rights and commercial navigation in the Black Sea and the Danube "with all the same privileges and advantages as are enjoyed by the most friendly nations whom the Sublime Porte favours most in trade, such as the French and English". (Art.XI)² (4) In regard to diplomatic changes, Russia was to have a

1. Marriott, p.153
permanent ambassador at the Porte who was made protector of a Greek church which Russia received the right to erect. In addition, Russian subjects were to be allowed to make pilgrimages to Jerusalem and the Holy Places; and the Sultan undertook to "protect constantly the Christian religion and its churches". The Porte also allowed "the ministers of the imperial court of Russia to make upon all occasions, representations as well in favour of the new church at Constantinople as on behalf of its officiating ministers, promising to take such representations into due consideration as being made by a confidential functionary of a neighboring and sincerely friendly power". (Art XII - XIV)

The pre-eminent significance of the Treaty of Kainardji cannot be minimized. It marks the beginning of real Russian influence in Turkey; upon it Russia based her claim, however vague, to exercise the guardianship of the Christian races and Orthodox Church.

The Treaty of Jassy

From the time of Peter the Great, it can be clearly seen that Russia had designs on

1. Holland p.44.
Constantinople, whose great claim to fame lies in the fact that it is the gateway to the east. To achieve this goal, the Turks must be driven from Europe. Such was Catherine's dream. The support of the Austrians, however, was essential to its realization. After the expulsion of the Turks, the partition of his possessions would be a simple matter. It is interesting to note that the principle of nationalism is entirely lacking in the scheme. The project was not realized, however, but in 1783 Catherine annexed the Crimea and fortresses were immediately erected.

Russian agents, meanwhile, had been stirring up discontent among the Greeks, Slavs and Roumanians. Of course the Sultan Abdul Hamid was alarmed, and when Catherine in formulating her immediate demands, forced him to surrender Bessarabia to Russia, and to permit the establishment of hereditary governors in Moldavia and Wallachia, his anger was fully aroused. He issued a manifesto condemning the advance of Russia, particularly the seizure of the Crimea in time of peace. In August 1787 he declared war on Russia.
At this point, a new phase of the Eastern Question was presenting itself -- the concern of the European powers in the development of events in the Near East. France has always been interested, if only for commercial considerations, in the Levant; Prussia was in the process of formulating a diplomatic system; while England who had so far been curiously disinterested in Eastern Europe, under the younger Pitt now began to realize the importance of English interests in the Near East and to perceive that those interests might be in danger with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. The formation of the Triple Alliance in 1788 of which Great Britain, Prussia and the United Provinces were members, had as one of its motives, the desire to circumscribe Russia in the Near East.

To return to the war in the east -- Austria in keeping with her Russian alliance declared war on the Sultan in February 1788. The campaign continued with strategic gains on the part of Russia in the capture of Oczakov, and on the part of Austria in Belgrade and Semendria. A combination of events, however, disposed the bel-
ligerents to peace. Selim III succeeded Abdul Hamid in 1789; the accession of Leopold in Austria in 1790 changed the policy of that country; and more important, the French Revolution diverted the attention of all the European governments. As a result, Austria and the Porte concluded peace in 1791 whereby Serbia and the "status quo ante" were restored. The treaty of Jassy was signed by Russia and Turkey in 1792. The famous treaty of Kainardji, together with the commercial treaty of 1783, was confirmed; Moldavia was restored to the Porte on condition that the Sultan maintain the terms of the preceding treaties in regard to it, Oczakov was transferred to Russia, and the Porte submitted to the annexation of the Crimea.

The treaty of Jassy brings to a close the advance of the Russians into the Balkans in the eighteenth century: "Russia is firmly entrenched upon the shores of the Euxine, and is already looking beyond them. Kherson and Sebastopol have been transformed into great naval arsenals; — to the north of the Euxine, Turkish territory ends at the Dniester, and the border provinces between the Dniest-ter and the Danube are retained only on sufferance."
Upon the lands to the south of the Euxine the Turkish hold is already loosening. 'I came to Russia', said Catherine, 'a poor girl; Russia has endowed me richly, but I have paid her back with Azov, the Crimea and the Ukraine'. Proudly spoken, it was less than the truth.¹

The Influence of Napoleon

For the next twenty-five years, the whole of Europe was occupied with the march of events brought about by the French Revolution and the insatiable ambitions of Napoleon. The most important result of the period insofar as the Eastern Question is concerned is the new spirit of national consciousness that was awakened in the peoples of the Balkans by the democratic ideas which were spread throughout Europe by the French Revolution. As for the designs of Napoleon, from the very beginning his goal was England which was to be reached, not across the Channel --- a direct invasion would be fatal to the French --- but through Corfu, Zante, Cephalonia and Egypt, stepping stones to India. Finding himself in a precarious position in Egypt after Nelson's victory of the Nile, Napoleon returned to Europe and having effected the coup d'etat proceeded to detach Russia.

¹ Marriott, p. 163-164.
from the coalition against France. The destruction of British power in the Far East was still his ultimate aim. The Tzar Alexander I, who in 1801 had succeeded his half-crazed father Paul, was drawn into an alliance with Napoleon after the Peace of Tilsit whereby in exchange for Russian aid in the campaign against England, France would compensate Russia with Finland and the partition of the Ottoman Empire. The actual apportionment of the Empire, however, was not specified; and the question of the possession of Constantinople was left dangling. It is quite clear that Napoleon was tempting Alexander with grandiose schemes in the East in order to secure Russia as an ally, which, in view of the vigorous policies of Canning and the English activities in Portugal and Spain, France was sorely in need.

In the meanwhile, the Sultan found himself involved in one of the most difficult crises of his reign. The seed of the French Revolution, together with the military experience earned in their struggles against Napoleon, brought about insurrection among the Serbs in 1804 against the Janissaries, the insurgent military agents of the Sultan. Russian support was given the Serbs, and
the Sultan found himself beset on all sides. He, having been informed of Alexander's intrigues in the Tilsit conspiracy, violated his treaty agreements with the Tzar and deposed the native rulers of Moldavia and Wallachia. The Tzar retaliated by sending his army to occupy the principalities.

Thereupon war was declared in 1806. But the Sultan found it necessary to temporize with Russia, because of his problem with the Serbs. In this Serbian revolution, incidentally, we have the first national uprising in the modern history of the Balkans. In 1830, after internal jealousies among the Serbs themselves, long negotiations, and foreign complications, autonomy was granted to them.

To return to the alliance between Napoleon and Alexander, the conflict of objectives of the two emperors --- the Tzar wanted Constantinople and Napoleon wanted the humiliation of England --- gave rise to strained relations between them. At their second meeting at Erfurt in October 1808, the larger plans of the partition were put aside, but the Danubian Principalities were promised to the Tzar. It will be remembered that the Russian army
had been occupying them since 1806. In 1809 war was resumed between Turkey and Russia which was continued in a fitful manner by both the belligerents.

The Treaty of Bucharest

But a new factor is to be considered, one of immense significance for our diplomatic study, since the Eastern Question now definitely enters a period wherein the personal influence and activities of the ministers are of tremendous importance. At this most difficult moment in European history, when a state of warfare existed all over the continent --- since Napoleon controlled it --- there came to the Porte as English Ambassador Sir Stratford Canning, first Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe, whose personal prestige at Constantinople through times of severe strain, laid the foundation for that influence which England has since been able to exert there. His task was a momentous one. Proceeding entirely upon his own initiative and without instructions from home, he was in general to induce Turkey to prefer the influence of England to that of France at a time when France meant nearly all of Europe, and when

1. See page 13.
Napoleon was making a desperate effort to secure the support of the Sultan in his recently formulated Russian Campaign. Specifically, he was to effect a reconciliation between the Tzar and the Sultan in order to set Russia free to repel Napoleon's invasion of Russia.¹ The former was desirous of peace for financial and political reasons. On the other hand, the Sultan, difficult under ordinary conditions to placate, was even more so at this moment because of Napoleon's offer and also because of the recent successes of the Turkish army on the Danube, although the balance of victory was decidedly on the Russian side. Yet Stratford gradually won his way into the confidence of the Sultan by stressing the effect of the successes of Wellington in the peninsular Campaign upon Napoleon's position. At length the Porte granted him unusual powers by inviting him to open negotiations with the Tzar's plenipotentiary at Bucharest.

For a time it seemed as if it would be impossible to affect a reconciliation. Russia wanted peace on the basis of the cession of the principalities, and Turkey hoped to get out of the

¹ See Lane-Poole, Chapter IV, for Stratford in 1813.
difficulty without losing land. Stratford, however, held a master key. He had obtained a secret paper in which France and Austria proposed to join Turkey in an attack on Russia. More than ever did Russia desire peace. But Turkey would make no concessions. Stratford had still another weapon --- a secret paper, planning the invasion and partition of Turkey drawn up at Vienna with Napoleon's knowledge and approval. With this final stroke, the problem was solved and peace was signed at Bucharest May 28, 1812.

The terms of this treaty are not important in themselves. The only territorial gain by Russia was the acquisition of Bessarabia, which extended her southern boundary to the River Pruth. In regard to the principalities, the stipulations of better government as provided for in the Treaties of Kainardji and Jassy, were to be observed. The true significance of the Treaty of Bucharest lies in the fact, that since it was brought about through the efforts of Stratford, it established English influence at the Porte, but more important it enabled the Russian Army of the Danube to be concentrated
in Russia to aggravate the discomfort of the French army in its retreat from Moscow.

On the surface, it seems that the events of the quarter of a century from the Treaty of Jassy to the Treaty of Bucharest are of little value. The under currents of revolution, democracy, and nationalism brought forth by this period are intangible, yet the importance of them can be clearly seen in the struggle for Greek independence --- the topic to be considered forthwith.

THE STRUGGLE FOR GREEK INDEPENDENCE

With the causes of the revolt in Greece, and with the steps in the actual attainment of independence we shall, of necessity, be unconcerned, except insofar as they affect the diplomatic relations of the European powers. In 1821 occurred the initial rising of the Greeks. During the following six years, with utter atrocity on both sides, the war continued, ineffectually prosecuted by Turkey which seemed at some moments almost within grasp of victory; while on the other side the Greeks were unable to coöperate with one another. Handicapped by her own incompetence, Turkey called for aid from Mehemet Ali, Pasha
of Egypt and vassal to the Sultan, the significance of which request will be seen later. Under Ibrahim, son of the Pasha, the well-trained and disciplined army of the Egyptian ruler succeeded in capturing the Greek strongholds, Missolonghi and Athens.

At this low tide of misfortune, the Greeks were rescued by the decision of the foreign powers to intervene. If it had not been for this intervention, the vassal of the Sultan would no doubt have rescued the Ottoman Empire from dismemberment.

**Interest of the Powers**

The action of the powers in the intervening in the struggle was due to several reasons. The sympathy of cultivated people, notably Lord Byron, had been aroused for the Greeks; Philhellenic societies were founded in all countries; and it seemed that public opinion would get beyond the control of the governments. In Austria, Metternich the opponent of revolutions in any country, was able to prevent intervention for several years. In Russia, Nicholas I succeeded Alexander in 1825. His reactionary ideas were entirely different from 1. See page 25.
his liberal predecessor. Further, he did not feel bound by the Holy Alliance; and although he desired intervention in favour of Greece, he preferred his own cause to theirs. In France, both liberals and conservatives favored the Greeks, because they believed that by the creation of a new state, the Holy Alliance, so humiliating to France, might be undermined. Commercial interests in France as well as in England were also concerned. In England, the Philhellenic sentiment was strong, but more important, the foreign office came under the control of George Canning who had his heart set on liberation of the Greeks, without the use of force, however. On the other hand England did not want Russia to move alone. Stratford Canning, cousin to George, on his way to the Porte after an absence of twelve years, stopped off at St. Petersburg to confer with the Tzar on the Greek question and to persuade him to follow George Canning's policy of no coercion. Although he did not see Nicholas, he was able by his judicious conversations with Count Nesselrode, the Russian foreign minister, to prepare the way for the Protocol of St. Petersburg, April 4, 1826. By this dispatch the two powers offered mediation to the Porte.
The Treaty of London

But the Sultan, having tasted victory through the aid of Mehemet Ali and Ibrahim, and left master in his own house by the overthrow of the Janissaries, refused mediation that was not backed by force. The condition of the Greeks was desperate. Accordingly, the three powers, Russia, England and France drew up the Treaty of London, 1827, whereby they, on the grounds that the conflict was of general concern owing to the injuries to commerce in the Levant, agreed to demand an armistice of Mahmud II and his consent to the erection of Greece an autonomous state under Turkish sovereignty. The Sultan refused.

Then occurred the famous battle of Navarino! The English and French admirals had manoeuvred their vessels into Navarino Bay to remonstrate with Ibrahim who, since the foreign vessels cut him off at sea, was prosecuting war on land with great atrocity. The Turks fired on an English ship and the struggle was on. Before nightfall the Turko-Egyptian fleet had disappeared. Both Wellington, who became Secretary of Foreign Affairs on the death of George Canning, two months before,
and Stratford Canning at the Forte disapproved of the action at Navarino. The Sultan was indignant and demanded reparations and apologies. Although these demands were refused, the British Government attempted to smooth things over by conciliatory statements.

**Wellington's Unwise Move**

The succession of Wellington to the foreign office caused an about-face in the policy of England in the difficulties in the East. His policy was hesitating, hazy, and unwise. No attempt was made to enforce the Treaty of London and things were allowed to drift. Turkey, of course, benefitted. She was "encouraged to persist in her attitude towards Greece, and to renew her quarrel with Russia. Russia was permitted, and even compelled, to engage single handed in war with the Turks. Thus all the fruits of years of diplomacy on Canning's part were carelessly dissipated in a few months by his successors".¹

**Russian-Turkish War 1828-29**

In the meantime, the Sultan issued an imprudent manifesto to the Tzar which gave Russia

¹. Marriott, p.221.
the pretext of the war of 1828-1829 though Nicholas denied any projects of territorial aggrandizement and professed merely to maintain the status quo in the East. The execution of the protocol between France and England in July, 1828, providing for immediate action against Ibrahim in Greece, was, through the "hands-off" policy of Wellington, carried out by the French alone. This is of importance since it afforded France an opportunity to establish herself in the good graces of the Pasha of Egypt --- which had its influence on the French policy in Egypt in the next decade.

The Treaty of Adrianople

Turkey was at the mercy of Russia in 1829 and the Treaty of Adrianople, drawn up in that year, is of particular significance because of the distrust and antagonism it aroused on the part of the other European powers, who feared the increased influence of Russia at the Porte. The terms of the peace granted practical, but not nominal, autonomy to the principalities under Russian protection, the free navigation of neutral vessels in the Black Sea, and the acceptance by the Porte of the Treaty of

1. See page 25.
London, in regard to the independence of Greece.

Certain important conclusions are to be gleaned from the facts just related. "For the first time the future of the Ottoman Empire was recognized as a matter of profound concern not merely to the Porte itself, to Russia and to Austria, but to Europe as a whole, and not least to Great Britain. For the first time an Ottoman Sultan of exceptional vigour and disposed to reform, had been compelled to call to his aid an ambitious vassal, and despite that assistance to consent to terms of peace dictated by the Powers and involving the partial dismemberment of his European dominions."¹

IV. THE POWERS 1830-1841

In the quarter century following the Treaties of Adrianople and London, the Conservative System established by the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and upheld by the Holy Alliance, suffered many attacks. Throughout the period it is most interesting to watch the changing conditions, the gradual substitution of liberalism for conservatism, and

¹ Marriott, p.224
the shifting jealousies and new alliances among the European powers.

In the first place, the French Revolution of July 1830 aggravated the situation in Europe. In the face of this new uprising, the Holy Alliance showed a want of power which can be attributed to the fact that the neighboring countries of France felt safe from the terrorism and military invasion that followed the revolution of 1789, because the question at issue was merely one of liberalism. Further attacks on the system of 1815 may be seen in the uprisings in Belgium and Poland. In the case of Belgium, war between France and England was averted through the skillful diplomacy of Lord Palmerston, who in exchange for French consent to the independence of Belgium, as a neutral state, the recognized/new monarch, Louis Philippe, established by the revolution of 1830. In the revolt of the Poles against Russia, England refused to aid its ancient ally of 1815. France favored the Poles, and even Austria, because of her Catholic interests, remained neutral. Hence we have Russia alone following the reactionary policies laid down by the Congress of Vienna.
Mehemet Ali

In the East, the Sultan was faced with a new humiliation — the rise of Mehemet Ali. As compensation for his aid to the Sultan during the uprising of the Greeks, the Pasha of Egypt received Crete. But a little is frequently too much. Mehemet Ali demanded more, and attempted to make himself master of Egypt and Syria. He had had valuable military experience in the Napoleonic period. The first step in his plan was the invasion of Syria, November 1831. In the war between the vassal and the Sultan, that was subsequently declared/May 1832, the weakness — military, naval and political — of the Ottoman Empire was once more revealed. Sultan Mahmud’s hatred of Mehemet Ali and his inability to bring about peace forced him to appeal to the powers for aid.

In the difficult years of the early '30's, however, no power but Russia was willing to offer him aid. France had been friendly to Mehemet Ali since the Protocol of 1828¹ and also considered the creation of a new state in Egypt beneficial to her trade in the Levant. Austria, still under

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¹. See page 22.
Metternich, preferred to leave the Turks to their own fate. As for England, the democratic reform of 1832 occupied her attention. Stratford Canning from his post at the Porte urged the support of his government. At home, Palmerston was convinced of the ability of the Sultan to put his house in order and was well aware of the importance of retaining the Turkish Empire as a barrier between Russia and the Mediterranean. But the government, especially in the precarious domestic situation in which it was placed, refused to risk the breach with Russia and France. Consequently in his desperate need, the Sultan was forced to accept Russian aid.

On her side, Russia had definite reasons to assume again the leading role in the East. Her ancient ambitions at the Porte were her primary motive, but, in addition, she feared for the security of the rights and privileges already attained, in the event of the success of Mehemet Ali. Accordingly, twelve thousand Russian troops and a naval squadron were dispatched to Constantinople.

The Western Powers were alarmed at this new advance of Russia, and their ministers at
the Porte sought to dissuade the Sultan from accepting the Tzar's assistance. But what could the Sultan do? The admonitions of the Western Powers were not substantiated with military force and Mehmet Ali refused to cease threatening Constantinople until he received Syria, part of Mesopotamia, and Adana.

The Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi

By the Convention of Kutaya, April 1833, Mehmet Ali's demands were granted, but Russia was still to be paid off. Through the negotiations of Count Orloff, recently appointed plenipotentiary at the Porte, the Tzar exacted in return for his support to the Sultan, the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi which practically placed Turkey under the protection of Russia. Turkey granted Russia the right to interfere in defense of the Porte, the Dardanelles were closed to ships of war of other Powers, and the Black Sea became a Russian lake.

No treaty in the history of the relations between Russia and Turkey ever caused such a furor among the Western Powers, especially England, as was created by the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi.
The true designs of Russia were placed before the minds of the statesmen of Europe, Palmerston in particular, either the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, or better still, the continuation of it under Russian control. Palmerston, in vain, protested against the treaty at both St. Petersburg and at Constantinople, and even sent the Mediterranean squadron to cruise in the Dardanelles. War seemed imminent; but in 1833 the Western Powers could not support such a conflagration and contented themselves with the assurance of the Tzar that in spite of the rights conferred upon him by the treaty, he had no desire to use them against the Powers in the West. Nevertheless, the question remained an open one. Growing distrust of England toward the Russian policy of aggrandizement in the East became more evident.

Although Sultan Mahmud yielded to his vassal in 1833, he was eager to be revenged upon him. He constantly thwarted Mehemet Ali's attempt to establish stable government among the Syrians by stirring up revolts among the tribes. On his side, Mehemet Ali, made no secret of his desire to
found a hereditary dynasty. Relations became more and more strained, and in 1839 the war for the reconquest of the Syrian lands began.

In Europe the situation was as usual quite complicated. The alliance formed by England and France, after the establishment of the July Monarchy, gave evidence of weakness and mutual distrust. With Palmerston, ever since the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, the maintenance of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was a dogma, and Mehemet Ali was looked upon as a menace to that integrity. But France, although she was anxious to prevent the Russian control of the Bosphorus, was equally concerned in establishing Mehemet Ali in Egypt. Nicholas on his side was unwilling to submit the issue to a conference, as was suggested by Metternich, because he realized that the Powers in concert would take from him the privileges he had gained in the straits.

The Egyptian Rebellion

Under these difficult circumstances, the news came to Europe that the Egyptian had again overrun Syria, delivered a crushing blow to the Turks at the battle of Nezib, and by the treachery of the
Turkish admiral, had obtained possession of the Ottoman fleet. The Sultan, without army or navy was saved from his dilemma by the decision of the five powers, Austria, England, France, Prussia and Russia, to act in concert on the Eastern Question.

But the five powers could not agree in the settlement — the cause of which lay in the increasing alienation between France and England. A crisis was again at hand. Mutterings of war were heard in London and Paris. Russia was eager to join in an alliance which would break down the cordial understanding between England and France. Hence Nicholas, to satisfy England, declared abolished the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi. Even though many of the English cabinet feared a break with France, Palmerston, in his calm way, assured them that Louis Philippe and Thiers, President of the Ministry, would not fight, nor would Mehemet Ali resist the combined powers. Under these conditions Palmerston found it necessary, July 15, 1840, to enter into an alliance with every power he suspected and accordingly the Quadruple Alliance of England, Russia, Prussia and Austria was concluded. France found herself
isolated as in 1815 with Europe arrayed against her.

By the terms of the Convention of 1840, the Sultan agreed to confer upon Mehemet the hereditary Pashalik of Egypt, and for life, the administration of Southern Syria; and the powers agreed to carry out the treaty without France, and if necessary against France. The treaty had been signed without the knowledge of France and of Thiers, who, when he learned of it, was prepared to lead France into war. However, "constitutional states possess this advantage, that they can easily escape from an embarrassing position by a change of ministry. A Cabinet which has compromised the country is succeeded by another; and, as the new ministers are ordinarily chosen from among those who have turned out the previous ones, the latter find it easy enough to effect their retreat. That is what took place in France". 1

The Treaty of the Straits, 1841

Palmerston was right: Louis Philippe would not fight. In the following year, France under the conciliatory leadership of Guizot was allowed to join the powers. The Egyptian Question

was soon settled. Mehemet Ali was recognized as hereditary ruler of Egypt under the suzerainty of the Sultan; the straits were closed to ships of war of every nation; and Turkey was placed under the protection of the Powers. The Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi was wiped out. "The European crisis was successfully surmounted, thanks partly to the pacific disposition of Guizot and his bourgeois King, thanks even more to the incomparable self-confidence and undeviating firmness with which Lord Palmerston had conducted a series of difficult negotiations."¹

V. THE POWERS 1841-1852

At the close of the difficult period described above, it can be seen that Nicholas, in his effort to abase France and satisfy England, had lost all the rights and privileges that he had gained by the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi; and realized, more strongly than ever, that the Eastern Question was one for all the powers of Europe to settle and not for Russia alone. He was convinced that the attainment of Russian interests at the Porte could only be completed in alliance with England. He resolved

¹. Marriott, p.244.
frankly and honestly to present a solution of the Eastern Question to England.

**Nicholas' visit to St. James 1844**

With this in mind, he paid a visit to England in 1844, supposedly to congratulate Victoria on her accession to the throne, but really to come to an agreement with Great Britain on the Turkish Question. It was on this occasion that Nicholas made his first suggestion for the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. A memorandum from Count Nesselrode to the British Government, based on the communications of the Emperor Nicholas during his stay in London, is quite clear on this point.¹ The Tzar declared that in regard to Turkey, he had no idea of territorial conquest; and that his primary interest was to maintain the status quo in the Ottoman Empire as founded on treaties and to preserve the religious and political privileges granted to the Christians of the Empire. He recognized that the interests of England were equally concerned with these principles and suggested that the English Cabinet should associate itself frankly with him in order to guarantee the maintenance of Turkey and to

preserve the general peace. For this purpose, it is necessary "to allow the Porte to live in peace without agitating it by diplomatic worries, and without interfering in its internal affairs."\(^1\)

(It will be noticed later that the Tzar did not refrain from "interfering in its internal affairs" on the eve of the Crimean War.) Two difficulties present themselves in effecting Turkish integrity: (1) The Porte must be shown that it cannot free itself from treaty agreements as it has in the past by relying on the mutual jealousies of the Christian powers, that the cabinets will unite in forcing the Porte to fulfill its obligations to one or all of the Powers. (2) The difficulty that prevails within the Turkish Empire to unite the opposing interests of religions in Mussulman law and Christian interests in regard to the sovereignty of the Sultan must be removed.

The Tzar, however, believed that there were evidences of dissolution within this empire. "The danger which may result from a catastrophe in Turkey, will be much diminished if, the case occurring, Russia and England understand one another as to the course to be pursued by both in common."\(^2\)

2. " " " " " 13
With such an agreement and with the assent of Austria, which was an accepted fact with Nicholas, France would be obliged to concur with the three powers and all possibility of conflict and the ensuing disruption of the peace of Europe would be averted.

It is interesting to ponder upon the result had these plans been followed through. Certainly it cannot be denied that England, when the division of the Ottoman Empire was eventually accomplished after the last great war, received the lion's share.

But to return to the visit of Nicholas at St. James in 1844, his proposals, although they were not approved, were not actually condemned. Nesselrode's Memorandum on these negotiations, sent to England, was filed without protest in the archives of the Foreign Office and remained there for ten years. It was evident that the pacifist Lord Aberdeen was impressed. This has a particular significance. Nicholas was predisposed to count on the extreme cordiality of his relations with the English court. He also assumed that Cobden and Bright had made the English a pacific nation. "The Tsar had
drawn from his conversations in London an inference, even more erroneous: that under no circumstances, so long as Lord Aberdeen controlled its destinies, would Great Britain draw the sword. In these mutual misunderstandings we have, perhaps, a warning against 'amateur' diplomacy. That they were, in part, responsible for a most unhappy war cannot be denied."

Turkish Reform

In the next five years, all the powers involved in the difficult Eastern Question were occupied with internal affairs. The Porte was concerned with reform under the leadership of Reshid Pasha who in turn was influenced by the Great Elchi, Sir Stratford de Redcliffe. The Sultan had been attempting to put his house in order, a movement which was destined to failure even though many statesmen of Europe, Palmerston in particular, believed that reform was highly probable. The Hatti-Sherif of Gulhane, proclaimed by the Sultan in 1839, had promised to all Ottoman subjects, without distinction of race or creed, security of life, honor, and property, the equitable distribution of taxes, the public trial of prisoners, and the right of all to

1. Marriott, p.248
devise property. Yet justice was not done to Christians, and their lives, honor and property were not safe. The attempt to put Christians and Moslems on an equality, instead of decreasing discontent, only served to aggravate the agitation of the old religious jealousies.

The Revolution of 1848

Russia was still jealously watching the activities in Turkey, but was forced to postpone her designs in that direction because of the outbreak of the revolutions of 1848 on the continent. The ideas, the tendencies, the principles of 1815, disappeared with the men who had created and maintained them up to the crisis of 1848 --- all but in Russia where the old reactionary tendencies remained immutable. In that lay her radical error. The real direction of repression had passed out of the hands of Metternich into the grasp of the Emperor of Russia. Everywhere he came to the assistance of threatened authority, encouraging terrified monarchs to resistance, promising to those who held fast to the edifice of 1815, the ultimate aid of his own servile serfs. The Imperial Cabinet stiffened itself in its resistance to bind together the conservative
elements which were threatened on all sides. The army was put on a war footing and was placed at the disposal of Germany and Austria.

When the revolution broke out in Hungary, the Tzar's two hundred thousand Cossacks were sent to the aid of the Austrian Emperor, Francis Joseph, and saved his throne --- a debt that was never paid. Nicholas' purpose in maintaining the status quo --- which to Liberals and Conservatives alike spelled the Congress of Vienna --- in Austria was perfectly obvious. In spite of its imperfections, the edifice of 1815 was better suited to the interests of Russia than the chaotic state of affairs produced by a revolution; and Austria bound to Italy and to Germany was a less dangerous neighbor than Austria freed from these ties and reduced to her aspirations in the East.

To the European nationalists of 1848, it was a blow to view the failure of the insurrections of that year to free themselves from the system of Metternich. But it was more irksome to realize "that the system was no longer dependent on its founder; that in Metternich's old age a new champion had risen to perpetuate his work; and that
this champion was none other than the most powerful sovereign in Europe.¹

But the revolution that had strengthened so ominously the powerful position of Nicholas had introduced a new figure into the family of European rulers --- Louis Napoleon, President of the new Republic of France and destined to combat and take part in the defeat of the invincible Russian.

In England, throughout the revolutions of 1848, Palmerston's sympathies were sincerely on the side of the oppressed nationalities. His attitude was definitely on the side of the constitutional principles as opposed to absolutism. His attitude in regard to the new government in France was to acknowledge any rule that had in it evidences of permanency. In this liberal stand, Palmerston earned for himself an increased hatred on the part of Nicholas.

The Question of Hungarian Refugees

At this point, the attention of the European powers was again turned to the Porte. After the collapse of the insurrection in Hungary, Kossuth and three thousand Hungarian and Polish

¹ Simpson, p.6-7.
followers took refuge in Turkey from the vengeance of the Austrian oppressors, aided by Russia. Russia and Austria demanded their extradition. The Porte, under the advice of France and England, refused, making the whole matter a question of dignity. The result was a crisis which might have brought about the war that actually occurred five years later.

The Sultan sent an army into the principalities, ostensibly to keep peace, but really to counterbalance the Russian army. Thereupon the Tzar issued an ultimatum that the escape of a single refugee would be taken as a declaration of war. The Porte appealed to the Great Elchi who took the responsibility of advising resistance and allowed the Sultan to understand that in the event of war, Turkey would have the support of England and France. The crisis became more pronounced when the Russian ambassadors broke off relations with the Porte. At this critical moment, Palmerston obtained the consent of the cabinet to make friendly negotiations with Austria and Prussia to persuade Nicholas not to press the Sultan to submit to an action, which had been made a matter of dignity. He also procured the
consent of the cabinet to send the English squadron up the Dardanelles with orders to go to the aid of the Sultan if he should need it. The Tzar submitted.

The crisis was soon passed. A compromise was effected whereby the refugees were sent into the interior of Turkey beyond the reach of the Austrian and Russian frontiers, and the Sultan's army was withdrawn from the principalities. But further consequences can be seen. The whole incident accustomed France to the idea of relying upon England against Russia in the East, and Russia was confirmed in the illusion that it could depend upon a community of action on the part of Austria.

The Establishment of the second French Empire

The reaction that followed the Revolution of 1848 everywhere can be explained by the fact that the revolutionists went further than conditions permitted. France was ripe for a democratic republic but not for socialism which the revolutionists attempted to establish. Austria was ripe for moderate constitutional monarchy and for limited home rule for various races, but the revolutionists desired a
democratic republic and complete autonomy. In
Prussia and in Germany generally the middle and
working classes were not yet numerous enough to
dominate the country.

But our concern at this moment is with
Louis Napoleon and the effect upon Europe of his
coup d'état of 1851 and of 1852 in establishing
himself first as President for ten years and later
as Emperor. Both of his acts were approved by
plebiscites. The chief reason for this approval
by the French nation was that the property owners,
bourgeois and peasant, badly frightened by the June
days, were convinced that democracy would inevitably
lead to socialism and confiscation, and they looked
to Napoleon as the strong man who would suppress
the socialists as his famous uncle had suppressed the
Jacobins. Yet another important reason was that the
name "Napoleon", the source of the new Emperor's
power and his sole claim to fame, evoked memories
of grandeur and desires for dominance.

The official verdict of France in the
approbation of the coup d'état of 1851 was hardly
more unanimous than the verdict of Europe. Austria
and Prussia immediately congratulated the President
on his extended term of office; even Nicholas himself approved, believing that Louis Napoleon's present recourse to repressive measures argued a permanent inclination to his own reactionary ideals. But he warned Louis not to seek the title of Emperor too.

England was the only power who hesitated in recognizing the new position of Louis Napoleon. Public opinion was divided. On one side commerce was alarmed at the very idea of a rupture with France; on the other, the name "Napoleon" together with Louis' suppression of parliamentary government, the idol of the English people, alienated the sympathies of the English. Palmerston, who had been high-handed and independent in his method of carrying on business, was removed from office because of his immediate and indiscreet approbation of Louis' deed in an unofficial conversation with Count Walewski, the French Ambassador. The dismissal of Palmerston had its effect upon the Eastern Question, for after 1851 there were many and rapid changes at the British Foreign Office. Granville, Malmesbury, Russell and Clarendon occupied the position within the next two years. To these changes can be attributed
the lack of clearly defined British policy in the negotiations preceding the Crimean War.

But the revival of the French Empire in 1852 was a far more serious challenge to Europe as a whole than the prolongation of the presidency in 1851. To recognize Napoleon III was by implication to recognize not only Napoleon I but also Napoleon II, and to submit to the restoration to the French throne of a member of the dynasty which all the Powers were pledged by the Treaty of 1815 to resist.

The resistance, however, was not forthcoming. The Treaty of 1815 had been maintained by the Holy Alliance, which, as we have seen, England had withdrawn from, and Austria and Prussia were too weak to maintain it in its strict legality. Further, when the coup d'état of 1851 had been accomplished, the opinion of the British Cabinet became modified and Lord Granville, successor to Lord Palmerston in the Foreign Office, made it felt that England would resign herself to recognizing Napoleon under no matter what title. In addition, England was concerned in maintaining the neutrality of Belgium and feared that Louis Napoleon, with just cause, might avenge
himself against his weak neighbor who had become the focus of the intrigues of the French refugees. Consequently, it seemed expedient to recognize the Empire and assume friendly relations with it. With the action of England in accepting the new Empire, the weaker powers fell into line, but Russia continued in her protests.

Since the beginning of 1852, Nicholas had protested the assumption by Louis Napoleon of the imperial title. He wrote him a letter on November 30th urging him to consider the consequences "of the false position in which he was about to place himself" by the number III. But it was too late; the Legislative Assembly had already granted Louis the title. The letter from the Tzar remained unanswered for Louis could not salute Nicholas in the imperial style until the Russian government had recognized the new title.

Strictly speaking, it would have been necessary for Russia to protest earlier, and not to have recognized Louis as President. Once acknowledged as such, the rest was only a question of a title about which it was not worth while to disturb the general

peace. Hence, due also to the fact that England had already officially recognized the new empire, Louis was able to keep his title without much diplomatic strain.

The Tzar, therefore, presented his tardy credentials. But in doing so, he addressed the new Emperor as "Mon cher ami" instead of the customary salutation used by reigning monarchs, "Sire, mon Frère". Historians have claimed that this diplomatic insult by Nicholas was the origin of the personal grudge entertained for him by Louis Napoleon which culminated in the Crimean War. To my mind, this has received undue stress; more important reasons will be presented later.¹ Yet it appears evident that the reactionary attitude of Nicholas caused Napoleon III to seek the company of England in firmly establishing his position and the prestige of the French Empire on the Continent.

V. THE CRIMEAN WAR.

Let us consider for a moment by way of recapitulation the situation among the Powers of Europe on the eve of the Crimean War. France had

¹. See page 47, 49.
gone through a period of change in government, but the new emperor was still bound by the treaties of 1815. He felt that, in keeping with the ancient glories of his name, he must restore the prestige of France which had suffered at the hands of the alliances not only in 1815 but also in 1840 through the foreign policy of Louis Philippe. Any attempt on his part to bring glory to himself and to France in Belgium and the Rhine frontier would antagonize England and be fatal to French interests. Consequently Napoleon's attention became focused in the East. England had been aware of the significance of the Near Eastern Question to her interests for some time and had been successful in limiting Russian influence at the Porte by the Treaty of London in 1841. Russia still held to her designs upon the Christian subjects at the Porte, and the control of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. "Pour la Russie toute la fameuse question d'Orient se résume dans ces mots: de quelle autorité dépendent les détroits du Bosphore et des Dardanelles; qui en est le détenteur?"1 She had almost attained her goal by the Treaty of the Unkiar-Skelessi which Palmerston destroyed.

Since that time Russian ambitions had by necessity been postponed. As for the smaller countries —— Austria and Prussia were still preoccupied by the effects of the crisis of 1848-49, and Italy was not yet to be considered. But the fundamental point at issue, and one which is unfortunately lost sight of in ascribing the Crimean War to Nicholas or Napoleon or Stratford, was the future of the Ottoman Empire.

The Question of the Holy Places

The three cornered dispute between France, Russia, and Turkey over the question of the holy places of Jerusalem opened a breach which served as the issue out of which the Crimean War arose. The privileges of the Latins in the Holy Places dated back to the Capitulations of 1740 between France and the Porte by which the rights acquired by them were expressly confirmed. But after the reign of Louis XV, France was occupied internally and showed no interest in the Holy Places until the time of Napoleon III. The Greeks, however, were always sure of Russian aid.

When Louis Napoleon became President, the chief of the Holy Places, the Holy Sepulchre, the great church at Bethlehem, the grotto of the Nativity, and the tomb of the Virgin at Gethsemane had fallen
into the hands of the Greeks. Kingslake claims that "stated in bare terms, the question was whether for the purpose of passing through the building into their Grotto, the Latin monks should have the key of the chief door of the Church of Bethlehem, and also one of the keys of each of the doors of the sacred manger".  

The quarrel between the Greeks and Latins had been going on for some time. There can be no doubt that it was Napoleon who "applied the match to this highly inflammable material". He desired the support of the clericals in the elections. He, therefore, decided to intervene in the dispute of the Holy Places invoking the Capitulations of 1740.

The Porte replied that she was ready to recognize her obligations but that subsequent events must be taken into account. She consented, however, to the appointment of a mixed commission composed of Greeks and Latins to inquire into the relative claims of each in the dispute. This concession aroused deep resentment on the part of Nicholas who held that the anterior secular rights of the Greeks, not to speak of the numerous facts posterior to 1740, had established

2. Marriott, p. 252
their right to the possession of the Holy Places, and concession of any kind to the Latins was unjust.

Accordingly, the Tzar sought to intimidate Sultan Abdul Medjid by representing to him the wrong he would do to himself in the face of the immense majority of his subjects and by infringing a state of things consecrated by time. He also intervened at Paris stressing the danger of raising religious questions which in the existing state in Turkey might have the most disastrous consequences. The Sultan finding himself between two fires pursued the characteristic Ottoman diplomacy. In the temporary absence of M. de Lavalette, the French ambassador, the Porte issued a firman on January 1852 favourable to the Greek interests, granting concessions to the Latins in minor considerations, but practically maintaining the status quo. But upon the return of M. de Lavalette and under the leadership of Reschid Pasha and Fuad Effendi, Turkish reform leaders, a second firman was sent to France, containing no mention of the pronouncement sent to Russia, but placing the Latins at an advantage in the Holy Places.

By this time Nicholas was incensed and the affair took on immense proportions. Not even
Napoleon's recall of his bellicose representative at Constantinople would satisfy him. He mobilized fifty thousand men on the Pruth, and dispatched to Constantinople in March 1853 a special ambassador, Prince Menschikoff.

**Nicholas' Plans**

Menschikoff was charged not only to secure full satisfaction in regard to the Holy Places, but, more important, he was to demand from the Sultan a secret alliance whereby in exchange for the permanent support of Russia the Sultan would grant "an addition to the Treaty of Kainardji, whereby the Greek Church should be placed entirely under Russian protection without reference to Turkey". An acceptance by the Sultan of such a proposal would have meant abdication of sovereignty over twelve to fifteen millions of Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire. In demanding these guarantees, Nicholas held that the Treaty of Kainardji had given him the right to intervene in any manner on behalf of the orthodox Church in Turkey. By Article VII of that Treaty the Sultan promised to protect the Christian religion in his States. To Nicholas these vague terms implied

1. Lane Poole, Vol.II, p.248.
2. See page 7.
that Russia had the right to see to the protection of not only the Russian subjects residing in Turkey, but also all the orthodox subjects of the Sultan. He insisted that some further guarantee was necessary in order to validate the famous treaty of 1774.

The Tzar counted on the neutrality of Austria, whom he had aided in the crisis of 1848-49, and Prussia. In regard to England, the Tzar felt assured of friendly action, basing his belief on the impression he had received during his visit to St. James in 1844, and on the theory that with Palmerston's fall from office he had nothing to fear from Aberdeen. Hence in January 1853, he had a series of interviews with Sir Hamilton Seymour, British ambassador at St. Petersburg. He claimed that the demise of the sick man was close at hand and attempted once more to draw England into an agreement whereby a partition could be effected. The European territories of the Porte could be formed into independent states, and British interests could be safeguarded by the occupation of Egypt and Crete. For herself, Russia would insist that no great power should be installed at Constantinople; she would support the status quo as long as possible, but she would not allow a pistol
to be fired for the reconstruction of the Turkish power. The British Government politely declined these overtures, declaring that "nothing is more calculated to precipitate a Turkish catastrophe than the constant prediction of its being close at hand". 1

In spite of this rejection by the British Government, it seems certain that until the war broke out, Nicholas was still under the impression that England was not opposed to the destruction of the Ottoman Empire. He counted on Lord Aberdeen's friendship and sympathy with his ideas. 2 "That they were refused", says Marriott, "was due largely to the mistrust inspired among the ministers by the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, much more to the popular detestation of Russia aroused by her treatment of the Poles, and most of all to the part played by the Tzar in the suppression of the Hungarian insurrection in 1849". 3 Palmerston, who had taken the Home Office in Aberdeen's Cabinet 1852 and whose influence in the Cabinet was great, foresaw that the Tzar would use the result of the trouble over the Holy Places for his own advantage later. In a letter to Clarendon,

2. Diplomatic Study, p.158.  
May 22, 1853, Palmerston wrote, "the Russian Government has always had two strings to its bow ---
moderate language and disinterested professions at Petersburg and at London; active aggressions by its
agents on the scene of operations. If the aggressions succeed locally, the Petersburg Government adapts
them as a 'fait accompli' which it did not intend, but cannot, in honour, recede from. If the local
agents fail, they are disavowed and recalled, and the language previously held is appealed to as a
proof that the agents have overstepped their instructions."¹ There are, no doubt, evidences of truth
in this criticism. The Tzar frequently professed his intention to respect the integrity of the Ottoman
Empire, but he was clearly formulating plans for its partition and disposition.

It will be remembered that a part of Menschikoff's mission --- the proposed Russian Alliance with Turkey, involving the Christian subjects
of the Porte --- had been kept a secret. Although Stratford and Palmerston had penetrated the Tzar's
designs, the Cabinet at London was asleep and remained so for eight weeks because Baron Brunnow,

Russian representative at London, by the simple expedient of omitting part of Menschikoff's instructions, passed over in silence the proposed alliance, expressing only the desire of Russia to obtain "guarantees for the future" and at the same time a "reparation for the past" in connection with the preservation of the status quo of the Orthodox Church in the East. Even the Russian Official Publication admitted this reserve as very grave,\(^1\) for it alienated the so far neutral attitude of the British Cabinet, and together with the publication of the Tzar's proposal to Seymour aroused the English public opinion against the Tzar to a fever pitch.

**Stratford vs. Menschikoff**

On no account did the quarrel about the Holy Places require either the mobilization of the Russian army on the Pruth or the display of pomp and ceremony which marked the arrival of Menschikoff at Constantinople. The rough and overbearing ambassador arrived at the Porte accompanied by a large military retinue, after having quite ostentatiously viewed the Russian naval and military forces in the Black Sea. He refused to pay the customary visits

\(^1\) Diplomatic Study, p.163.
of courtesy to the Turkish foreign minister, Fuad Effendi of the Reform Party, and with studied insolence demanded and procured from the Sultan the resignation of his minister. The Turkish capital was in an uproar.

It so happened that neither the English nor the French ambassador was present at Constantinople. Colonel Rose, the English chargé d'affaires, on the grounds that Russia was making her troops advance towards Turkish territory and was ordering large supplies of provisions in the Principalities, without having yet presented her demands to the Porte, took it upon himself to summon Admiral Dundas, commanding the English squadron at Malta, to the Bay of Vourla. Because of the ignorance in which the British Government still remained as to the true instructions given to Prince Menschikoff, this order was promptly countermanded by Lord Clarendon, Minister of Foreign Affairs. But the effect of Rose's action on the Porte is important. It revealed the British hand to the Turks and they shrewdly took advantage of it.

But without waiting to hear whether the step taken by the British chargé d'affaires were ratified or disapproved, the Emperor Napoleon dispatched
a French fleet to the Bay of Salamis. He did not wish to allow England the sole honour of defending Turkey and sought possibly to force her hand. At any rate, the isolated action of France made it evident to the Tzar that it was hardly possible that France and England would unite against him. But, he was soon disillusioned, for at this moment, Stratford de Redcliffe, armed with a somewhat vague authority to order Admiral Dundas to hold his fleet in readiness to sail for the near East, arrived at Constantinople. Stratford was a notorious opponent and firm personal adversary of Nicholas.

(In 1832, the Tzar had refused to accept Stratford whom Palmerston had appointed Ambassador to Russia; and Stratford had refused to relieve the tension by resigning, hence forcing the Tzar to content himself for two years with a mere charge d'affaires. Certainly there was no personal affection between the two.)

"Stratford Canning was the last --- and with all his faults the greatest --- of that generation of English ambassadors to whom greatness was permitted."\(^1\) His personal influence at the Porte we

\(^1\) Simpson, p.225.
have seen in his management of affairs at the Treaty of Bucharest.\(^1\) His experience at the Porte and his own dauntless energy enabled him to dominate the entire situation which he found awaiting him at Constantinople. Kingslake expresses his part in this critical state of affairs thus: "The power to choose between peace and war went out of the courts of Paris and London and passed to Constantinople. Lord Stratford was worthy of this trust, for being firm and supplied with full knowledge, and having power by his own mere ascendency to enforce moderation upon the Turks and to forbid panic, even to keep down tumult, he was able to be very chary in the display of force, and to be more frugal than the government at home in using or engaging the power of the English Queen. \(---\) Entrusted with the chief prerogative of kings, and living all his time at Therapia, close over the gates of the Bosphorus, he seemed to stand guard against the North, and to answer for the safety of his charge."\(^2\)

Stratford arrived at the Porte on April 5, 1853. He had learned the future courses of both the governments at Paris and Vienna, having

1. See p.15,16.
visited at those places on his way to Constantinople. The crude Russian envoy was no match for the shrewd English ambassador who toyed with Menschikoff, affec-
ting to/nothing of Russia's real aims, and adopted immediately an ingenious line of tactics. He sepa-
rated completely the local question of the Holy Places from that of the general guarantees claimed by the Tzar. Accordingly the affair of the Holy Places was soon regulated in a satisfactory manner, April 22, 1853.

To allow this separation of questions was a fatal error to Menschikoff. He had accomplished the professed object of his mission and forced him-
self to place his country in an unfavorable light by producing openly the demand for the Protectorate which had been disavowed by the Tzar, at London particularly. Nevertheless the Russian demand in an ultimatum ad-
dressed to the Porte on May 5th was forced upon the Sultan, who, upon the advice of Stratford, rejected it. On May 21st, Menschikoff, with the whole diplo-
matic staff of Russia, left Constantinople.

The discomfiture of his minister aroused Nicholas to frenzy. After three months of fruitless negotiations, the guarantees which he had demanded were refused by the Porte at the instigation of the
Western Representatives. Such a serious check to the political position of Russia in the East was more than the extreme irritation of the Tzar could stand. In merely breaking diplomatic relations, the question would still be left open. Hence Nicholas decided on a display of force. He issued an ultimatum to the Porte, demanding the acceptance of Prince Menschikoff's claims within eight days. In case of a refusal, Russian troops would occupy the principalities; not to make war upon the Sultan, but to take possession, temporarily, of a material guarantee until satisfaction should be given to the Russian demands.

The Tzar then communicated his demands to the Western Powers, protesting that his act was prompted by motives entirely pacific. He hoped to restrain the Western Powers from demonstrations which, by encouraging the Turks in their resistance, might place Russia in an awkward position. Further, he desired to make sure of the assistance of his Austrian ally.

The English Foreign Office

Meanwhile when the news, communicated by Stratford, reached London, that Russia aimed at
a protectorate over the Orthodox populations of Turkey, which would affect the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire, the emotions of the whole country were aroused. Aberdeen's cabinet, formed in 18o2 and consisting of six Whigs, six Peelites and one Radical, was too brilliant to work together smoothly. Aberdeen, as premier, was working for peace, hoping to exert a moral influence over Russia but at the same time not wishing to doubt the pacific intentions of the Tzar. Palmerston, on the other hand, was all for action which he believed was the only way to avert war. Lord John Russell was in accord with Palmerston. Between these two extremes Clarendon had the double task of keeping peace between Russia and Turkey and of harmonizing the divergent policies of his colleagues. Nevertheless, the pressure of the war party grew. Clarendon attached much importance to the cooperation of France and on the eve of the occupation of the Principalities was willing to join with Napoleon in taking naval measures against the Tzar. Any effect that such measures might have had was destroyed by Aberdeen who failed to make the Tzar realize that the occupation of the Principalities would be deeply
resented by the English people. The prime minister still believed that the Tzar would make concessions and that the Turks would take every advantage of the assistance of the Western Powers. Hence, at the insistence of Aberdeen, the British Government advised the Porte not to consider Russia's action as a cause of war. Accordingly, Brunnow, deceived or deceiving, did not reveal the real British feeling to the Tzar.

It will be remembered the Emperor Napoleon had already sent his fleet to Salamis. In countermanding the order of Colonel Rose in regard to the British fleet at Malta in the early stage of the negotiations, 1 Aberdeen had placed himself at a disadvantage in the public opinion of his countrymen. But when the Russian ultimatum was made known, it became necessary for positive action to be taken in order to satisfy that public opinion and, more important, to effect a compromise between the two factions in the Cabinet. On May 31, 1853, the British fleet was ordered to join the French fleet at Besika Bay at the entrance to the Dardanelles. By this forward step the British Government committed itself more than it realized. Such a move was bound to influence the Turks to resist the Russian ultimatum.

1. See p. 56.
It also resulted in the Russian claim that her subsequent occupation of the Principalities on June 21, 1853 was necessitated by the advance of the Western fleets — which is untrue, since her threat to do that very thing had been made known to the Powers as well as to the Sultan. But Palmerston believed that the only chance of now convincing Russia that England was in earnest and thus averting war would be to order them up to the Bosphorus and even into the Black Sea. Aberdeen, however, insisted on the half measure, and on the adherence to the principles laid down in the Treaty of 1840, which would not be violated by locating the ships outside the Dardanelles. On the other hand, in case of an attack upon Constantinople by the Russians, the fleets would be too far away to help immediately. Perhaps a demonstration as Palmerston demanded would have staid the hand of the Russian Tzar.

The Occupation of the Principalities

Nevertheless, Prince Gortschakoff and thirty-five thousand Russian troops crossed the Pruth and occupied the Principalities on June 22, 1853 —- the immediate cause of the Crimean War. According to the common interpretation of international law, an act of war against Turkey had been committed.
The Vienna Note

The advance of the English fleet to join the French at Besika Bay showed Nicholas that the alliance between the two Western Powers, which he had thought was impossible was almost accomplished. But more significant, the Tzar was impressed at the unexpected violence of Austria's opposition to his occupation of the Principalities. Accordingly, he accepted the invitation of Count Buol, the Austrian Chancellor, to submit the question to the arbitration of the representatives of Austria, Prussia, France and England. Austria was anxious to avert war, fearing that the establishment of Russia in the Principalities would be a dangerous influence on her own Slav subjects. Her interests were, of course, Prussia's. England held to her old policy that the problem of the Near East was one for the Powers in Concert. And France could not be left alone hostile to Russia. The conference met in Vienna in July 1853, the result of which was the famous Vienna Note.

It is interesting to suppose the result had Turkey accepted Menschikoff's note and agreed to grant Russia, in terms which were vague and debatable, the right to intervene in the quarrels of the Greek Christians and the Ottoman Turks, which in fact she
had been doing right along. Perhaps this was the intention of the diplomats of the Four Powers, but at any rate the Note to which they unanimously agreed showed their obtuseness and insincerity by vaguely re-affirming the previous treaties.

In accordance with the Note, the Porte was to declare: "If at all times the Emperors of Russia have shown their active solicitude for the maintenance of the immunities and privileges of the Orthodox Greek Church in the Ottoman Empire, the Sultans have never refused to affirm them anew by solemn acts which attested their ancient and constant benevolence towards their Christian subjects --- the government of His Majesty the Sultan will remain faithful to the letter and spirit of the stipulations of the Treaties of Kainardji and of Adrianople relative to the protecting of the Christian worship, and that His Majesty regards it as a point of honour with him to cause to be preserved forever from all attacks either at present or in future, the enjoyment of the spiritual privileges which have been accorded by the august ancestors of His Majesty to the Orthodox Church in the East, and which are maintained and confirmed by him; and moreover, to allow the Greek worship to
participate in a spirit of high justice in the advantages conceded to other Christians by convention or special agreement."¹

Immediately upon receiving it, Russia accepted it. But to the common amazement, this Note, drawn up by the friends of Turkey and accepted by the uncompromising Nicholas, was refused by Turkey.

It so happened that the Note had been hurriedly drafted and in England Clarendon had seriously erred in agreeing to it without first being assured that the Porte would accept it as it stood: He instructed Stratford to accept it if no other arrangements had been made.² If there had been a telegraph perhaps there might not have been a war; at any rate, the dispute about its interpretation would not have arisen. The Vienna Conference might have reconsidered its Note in the light of the proposals that Stratford was in the process of formulating. Clarendon would not have placed his ambassador and his country in such an embarrassing position. Even the Tzar, who had accepted the Vienna Note as an ultimatum probably would have accepted one that had been drafted more carefully. But once having committed himself he in honour could take no backward steps.

1. Annual Register 1853, p.278.

Stratford Canning could not avoid carrying out the instructions of his home office to support the Vienna Note. Hence as ambassador he recommended them officially, but as a man he gave his personal opinion which was to reject the Note on the grounds that by its very ambiguities it granted to Russia the claims that Turkey had all along denied. This double interpretation of Stratford's was one of the highlights of the negotiations.

The Porte then proposed three amendments: first, "the maintenance of the immunities and privileges of the Orthodox Greek Church in the Ottoman Empire" was declared to depend, not upon the "active solicitude" of the Emperors of Russia, but upon the Sultans. Secondly, the Sultan would "remain faithful to the stipulations of the Treaty of Kainardji, confirmed by that of Adrianople, relative to the protection by the Sublime Porte of the Christian religion." And thirdly, the Greek Church was to share only in the advantages granted to the other Christians, "being Ottoman subjects".¹

The first impression caused by this answer of the Turkish Government was most unfavorable. The Vienna Conference accused the Porte of compromising

¹. Annual Register 1853, p.280.
the general interests of Europe by her obstinacy in insisting upon seemingly trivial modifications. But though verbally slight, the proposed amendments were not trivial. The most important was the addition of the words "by the Sublime Porte", which revealed the whole question at issue between Russia and Turkey.

Since, however, the alterations in the Note merely served to render explicit the loosely worded intentions of its authors, England now urged the acceptance of the revised version upon the Tzar. But Nicholas refused, as derogatory to the dignity of Russia, to accept the Turkish amendments to the Note/which he had already given his formal assent. So an effort was made to assure the Porte that no new rights were given to the Tzar by the Note, that the Treaty of Kainardji did not involve the immunities and privileges of the Greek Church; and that the Note could not be construed to mean the extending of privileges to several millions of subjects that had at various times been granted to foreigners. But Stratford, taking upon himself great responsibility and contrary to the wishes of the Four Powers, his own country included, encouraged the Sultan to insist upon the amendments.
Stratford was right, for at this point the Tzar proceeded to throw away all the advantage which he had gained by his prompt acceptance of the Vienna Note by explaining his reasons for accepting it.

In a dispatch of Nesselrode to Count Meyendorff, Russian Ambassador at Vienna, the Russian Chancellor revealed a reasoned analysis of Turkey's proposed modifications and Russia's grounds for rejecting them. The dispatch pointed out three advantages in the Vienna Note. (1) It recognized "that there has ever existed on the part of Russia active solicitude for her co-religionists in Turkey, as also for the maintenance of their religious immunities, and that the Ottoman government is disposed to take account of that solicitude, and also to leave those immunities untouched". (2) Its "terms, which made the maintenance of the immunities to be derived from the very spirit of the treaty (of Kainardji) were in conformity with the doctrine which we maintained and still maintain. For -- the promise to protect a religion and its churches implies of necessity the maintenance of the immunities enjoyed by them". (3) Russia could claim for the Greek Church
privileges similar to those enjoyed by the Latins under treaties between the Porte and Catholic governments. The Russian government professed satisfaction with the vague implications of the original Vienna Note and the Treaty of Kainardji since they enabled it to interpret them in accord with its own views.¹

This document was intended for the Austrian Emperor alone in order to make known the motives which led Russia to decline the Porte's amendments to the original Note. But quite mysteriously it was published on September 7th by a Berlin newspaper and the European press, which for the most part was hostile to Russia, stirred public opinion against the evident aggrandizement policy of the great Slavic nation.

In the face of the antagonism that the Russian interpretation had called forth, Nicholas felt it necessary to allay these suspicions by conferring with the Austrian Emperor, Francis Joseph, at Olmütz. In that interview, the Tzar insisted that he asked for nothing which could prejudice the independence or rights of the Sultan or which would imply a desire to interfere with the internal affairs of the Porte,

and that he desired only the maintenance of the status quo; but nevertheless stood by the Vienna Note without repudiating the interpretation given by Nesselrode. Notwithstanding, at the conference at Olmütz, the Austrian Emperor was impressed by the pacific explanations of the Tzar. The London publication, "Punch", depicts Nicholas I and Francis Joseph seated at a table, a bottle between them. "Let us finish the Port(e)", urged Nicholas.¹ The question was at a deadlock.

England and France declared that the Russian interpretation of the Vienna Note revealed the fact that Russia had read into the ambiguities of the original Note concessions not intended by its framers. Consequently, they refused to follow Austria and Prussia in urging the Porte to accept the original Note.

But Turkey at this time was growing out of hand. The finances of the Sultan's government were becoming exhausted by the expenses of the mobilization, commerce was paralyzed, and anxiety universal. Moreover the long delay of the negotiations was irksome to the impetuous Turk. At the beginning of October, the Porte, confident that Great Britain and France would not leave her to the mercy of Russia, sent an ultimatum to Prince Gortschakoff

¹ "Mr. Punch" Victorian Era, Vol.I, p.163.
demanding the evacuation of the Principalities within fifteen days; if this were not done, hostilities would begin at once. On October 23, 1853, Turkey declared war.

It happened that on October 22nd, at the instance of the French Government, the English and French fleets had passed into the Dardanelles, in the event of a Russian attack upon Constantinople. The Diplomatic Study\(^1\) states that this forward move not only encouraged the Porte to break all bounds by declaring war, but also was a flagrant infringement of the Treaty of the Straits. However, Simpson states\(^2\) that on October 10th Russia had replied to the Turkish ultimatum with a virtual refusal and that thereupon a state of war existed between the two empires.

Although the fleets of the Western Powers were in readiness in the event of a Russian attack upon Constantinople, hopes of a pacific issue were not dead. The Tzar announced that his troops would maintain a defensive attitude unless it became necessary to assume aggressive tactics; but that Russia would continue to occupy the Principalities as a guarantee until the Porte accepted her claims.

1. Diplomatic Study, p.222.
Attempts then were being made by the Powers in Concert to frame a new Note. Before any definite action could be taken, the Turkish army early in November crossed the Danube and defeated the Russians at Oltenitza in the first pitched battle of the war.

Sinope

The anger of the Tzar knew no bounds. On November 30th the Turkish squadron on its way from the Bosphorus to Batoum was entirely destroyed by the Russian fleet in the Bay of Sinope.

In the meantime, the diplomacy of the Powers had been attempting since October to find a formula to restore the peace between Turkey and Russia, and a second Vienna protocol signed on December 5th established an identity of views among the Four Powers, on the basis of which the Porte was asked to state its terms. By the second Vienna Note it was held that there were two conditions necessary to the European equilibrium: (1) the integrity of the Ottoman Empire; and (2) governmental independence of the Sultan. But the Sultan was to be asked to ameliorate the condition of his subjects.

But the efforts of the ambassadors were made futile by the force of circumstance. It was at once obvious that
Sinope and its immediate consequences had immediately increased the probability of a European war. When the news of the catastrophe reached the western capitals two weeks later, it was calmly received in Paris, but in England it aroused immense indignation. From this time on, it became evident that war was inevitable. Even so, Aberdeen's peace cabinet tried to stem the tide of public opinion to no avail. The Russian attack was looked upon as a breach of the Tzar's promise to refrain from taking the offensive; the continuance of the Russian cannonade long after the Turkish crews were completely defenseless, so that four thousand of them were killed, caused the Turk to be considered an abused and plucky fellow whom England should aid; but, most of all the action of the Russian fleet in destroying the Turkish ships, practically in the presence of the western squadrons was too severe a strain for English honour. The public clamored for war.

The whole of the machinery of the English government, however, was opposed to war: the Foreign Office, the Premier, the "Times", the Queen, and the Prince Consort himself. The "Times", the official conservative paper, along with Aberdeen, Victoria,

and Albert, hated the Turk, feared Napoleon III, as it had the first of his dynasty, and was against Palmerston. The "Chronicle" also supported Aberdeen. But the Radical papers raved for war, especially the "Morning Advertiser", Palmerston's organ, which had been bellicose from the beginning.

The tide of public opinion was not to be stemmed, however. Russia was obnoxious to the average Englishman because of its tremendous size, stretching over parts of three continents, and because of its oppressive measures. Kossuth, on his visit to England, had impressed the Liberals with the idea that there could be no freedom in the world until Russia was vanquished. One by one the opponents of the war fell into line. Soon the "Times" instead of leading public opinion, was led and gradually took up the cry for war.

In the cabinet, the schism caused further difficulty. Palmerston, not wishing to identify himself with a cabinet which public opinion had condemned, and opposed to the continued pacific measures of his colleagues after Sinope, resolved to resign. In accordance with the English usage, which does not permit of a change of Ministry on the question of foreign
policy, he chose as a pretext, his disagreement on the Electoral Bill, and resigned. To the English public it appeared that he had been forced to resign at the insistence of the pro Russian Queen and her consort, and the stability of the crown was endangered. Within a few days, the Cabinet was obliged to beg him back on his own terms, even though those terms meant war. It is curious, however, that the special act which provoked the declaration of war --- the sending of the allied fleets to take possession of the Black Sea --- was ordered by the cabinet during the interval of Palmerston's resignation.

In France, the state of affairs was quite the reverse. The people of England demanded war, but in France, the people wanted peace. After long years of discontent, the French people had obtained the government they desired, and wanted peace above all things. It was also distasteful to them that in this particular war, France's ally was the victor of Waterloo. Further, after Moscow of 1812 Russia was considered invincible. "It was a testimony to the immense hold which he had on French public opinion that the Emperor should have succeeded in rallying it to such an adventure in such company at all."  

Unfortunately, the French Emperor desired to do something showy with the fleets. Accordingly, the French Ambassador, Count Walewski, proposed at London an arrangement to furnish the admirals with definite instructions whereby the allied squadrons would enter the Black Sea and command all Russian ships to return to Sebastopol. The presence of the Western squadrons in the Black Sea would not only prevent a reoccurrence of Sinope, but also would serve as a guarantee to offset the occupation of the Principalities. Under the pressure of Palmerston's resignation and the popular indignation it aroused, the British Cabinet accepted the proposal, and by January 4th the Black Sea was emptied of Russian shipping.

The Answer of the Porte to the Second Vienna Note

In the meantime, on December 30th the Porte had replied to the Second Vienna Note with these terms on which it would make peace: (1) the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire; (2) the evacuation of the Principalities; (3) the renewal of guarantees given to the Porte in 1841; (4) respect for governmental independence of the Sultan. It will be noticed that this answer was
substantially a repetition of its original offer to Russia. Nevertheless the Vienna Conference accepted it and communicated it to St. Petersburg.

Unfortunately, the new Note reached St. Petersburg on the same day that Nicholas heard of the entrance of the Western fleets into the Black Sea. He had watched with mounting irritation the advance of the allied squadrons to Besika Bay, through the Dardanelles, and now the last step — the Black Sea. Readily would he have declared war on France and England, but he was not sure of his position.

Hence, the Tzar wanted to gain time. It was important for him to come to a definite understanding as to Russia's relations towards the two German Courts in the approaching crisis. For this reason, Count Orloff was commissioned to carry his proposals to Vienna, and Baron Budberg, to Berlin. By these proposals, the Tzar declared that Russia would by herself sustain the struggle against the two naval powers, and recommended their adoption of a strict neutrality as the attitude best suited to the interests of Austria and Germany. In defining this neutrality, the Emperor proposed to them an agreement containing the following stipulations:

(1) the two German Courts should remain neutral, and should repel if necessary, by arms, any attack intended to force them out of their neutrality. (2) In case of aggression upon the territory of the Confederation, Russia and her two allies would look upon such an act as if it were committed against their own territory. (3) If the war should bring about any change in the status of the Ottoman Empire, Russia undertook to conclude no agreement with the maritime powers, without coming to a previous understanding with her allies.

The efforts of the ministers at Vienna and Berlin, however, were unsuccessful. The Berlin Cabinet refused to engage itself in such a positive manner to neutrality, but King Frederick William declared that he would never permit himself to be drawn into war against Russia. He explained, although he did not disavow the principle of the Protocol of December 5th, that his participation had been simply for pacific reasons. In Vienna, the Cabinet definitely refused to bind itself to neutrality. It feared the French menaces in Italy, and also the dangers of Russian influence in the Principalities. It gave the Tzar "to understand that in such a case the Emperor
Francis Joseph reserved to himself the right of taking into account nothing but the interests of his Empire. ¹

Having failed in these negotiations, Nicholas sent his answer to the demands of the Porte in the Vienna Protocol of December 5th. His counter-proposals included a confirmation of the previous treaties since that of Kainardji, relating to the Principalities and Serbia; and a demand for a separate document defining the old and recent firmans relating to the religious liberty and immunities of the Orthodox Church. The Vienna Conference rejected these on the grounds that such demands would destroy the equilibrium of Europe, as agreed upon by the Powers in Concert.

The French Emperor then took it upon himself to take pacific measures. Undoubtedly, the attitude of the French public led him to attempt to play the important role of peacemaker thus consolidating his political position at home and abroad. On January 29th in an autograph letter to Nicholas, Napoleon proposed that hostilities should cease, the Russian armies withdraw from the Principalities and the allied squadrons, from the Black Sea, and that

Russia negotiate directly with Turkey a convention which would be submitted to the Vienna Conference for final ratification. These proposals, conciliatory in themselves, were accompanied by a purposely plain-spoken intimation that their rejection would force France and England to declare war. "The chief criticisms to which Louis' overture exposed him at the time were that it savoured of self-advertisement; that in seeking peace in this outrageously public manner he was departing from all the decent usages of diplomacy; that his action was theatrical, and displayed moreover a desire for a lion's share of the limelight. These criticisms are probably just."¹

Meanwhile, when the allied fleets had cleared the Black Sea of the Russian flag, the Russian government had instructed its representatives in Paris and London to demand the neutrality of the Black Sea, protecting thereby from attack Russian ports, no less than Turkish. Such a naval armistice would be acceptable to the Tzar, who would, nevertheless, reserve his freedom of action on land. In case of a refusal to this demand by the Western Powers, the Russian Ambassadors were instructed to break off diplomatic relations.

¹. Simpson, p.245-246.
The allies in reply refused to forbid the Turks free passage between Turkish ports, claiming that the only equivalent for a naval armistice in the Black Sea would be a military armistice in the Principalities.

This answer, together with Napoleon's autograph letter which had arrived at practically the same moment, proved too much for the temper and dignity of the proud Nicholas. In reply to Napoleon the Tzar scornfully rejected the offer, adding the taunt that "Russia would prove herself in 1854 what she was in 1812."¹ And upon the notification of the naval powers, at the beginning of February the Tzar withdrew his ambassadors from London and Paris. He did not declare war however.

The Ultimatum of the Western Powers

England and France now wanted to secure the support of Austria and Prussia and hence form a quadruple alliance against the Tzar. On February 22nd Austria, the great Power most immediately concerned by the Russian occupation of the Principalities, volunteered to support the Western Powers in demanding the evacuation of them. On the strength of this suggestion, on February 27th, France and England through

¹. Annual Register, p.246, 1854.
Lord Clarendon informed Count Nesselrode in an ultimatum that the Russian Troops must completely evacuate the Provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia by the 30th of April. Russian refusal or silence would be taken as a declaration of war.

Lord Clarendon was somewhat precipitous, however, in allowing the ultimatum to be delivered before securing a definite understanding with Austria that military assistance would be given by her in the event of Russia's refusal. When, therefore, the Tzar on March 19th informed the Western Powers that the demand was one to which he could return no answer, it became evident that Austria had given only diplomatic approval to the ultimatum. Prussia followed Austria's lead. The indignation of France and England was immense. The probable explanation of Austria's apparent trickery is that Prussia, unwilling to break with Russia --- because of the personal relationship between the two rulers and the pro-Russian attitude of the German Diet --- refused to join with Austria, and the latter, knowing that the best corps of the Russian army was being kept in Poland, declined the chances of a contest which would certainly encourage the Italian states to rise against her.
The Concert of Europe, which would have compelled Russia to yield, was broken; and the Western Powers were compelled without the support of the German Courts to declare war, March 27th and 28th, 1854.

VII. CONCLUSION

Summary

The presence of the alien Turk in Europe and the future of his Empire here presented the complicated problem, the Eastern Question, which has baffled European Powers for centuries. We have seen the condition of his Empire in the eighteenth century in the political decay and disintegration, and the injustice done to Christians, their lives and property. From this time it was evident that the merely problem of the Near East concerned, not the Balkan races, but the Powers of Europe, Russia in particular.

From the days of Peter the Great, Europe had recognized the interest of Russia in the East. The great Slavic nation was pushing her way southward, and by 1774, with the Treaty of Kutschuk-Kainardji, was not only firmly encamped upon the Black Sea, but also, and of more significance later, had procured
from the Sultan a promise to protect the Christian religion and its churches. For this vague claim to guardianship of the Orthodox subjects of the Porte, Russia, in 1852, proposed to substitute a definite right of intervention. Additional gains of Russia were made by the Treaties of Jassy, 1792, and Bucharest, 1812, by which Russia received the Crimea, the recognition of religious influence in the Principalities, and Bessarabia.

It is during this period that new factors enter into the problem. Napoleon, in his acquisition of the Ionian Isles, his grandiose schemes for an attack on British India, through Egypt, his colorful agreement with Alexander at Tilsit for the partition of the Ottoman Empire, --- definitely opened the eyes not only of the French but also of the English. The personal prestige of Sir Stratford Canning gained by him in his extraordinary activity in bringing about the Treaty of Bucharest in 1812, and the influence that England henceforth was able to exert at the Porte, also lend significance to this period.

The struggle for Greek Independence, for the first time really focused the attention of the English Cabinet as well as the English people on the
developments in South Eastern Europe. Hence-forward, the Eastern Question was recognized, not merely as the bone of contention between the Sultan and the Tzar but, by the awakened interest of England, as an international problem. George Canning, fearing that Tzar Alexander would take advantage of the insurrection in Greece to gain his own ends, attempted to secure an understanding with Russia, to join with her and France in settling the revolt, and to induce the Sultan to come to terms with his insurgent subjects. His untimely death, and the unwise actions of Wellington, destroyed the Concert of Europe. Both Stratford and Palmerston urged that Russia not be allowed to act alone in coercing the Porte, but nothing was done and England lost all that she had gained. Russia then was left alone to deal with the Turk and by the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829 secured protection of the Principalities and free navigation of the Black Sea. England was able to exert a decisive influence, however, and by the Treaty of London, Greece was established as an independent nation under the protection of the Powers. Two important results may be noted: (1) the distrust and antagonism on the part of the European Powers toward the increased influence
of Russia at the Porte, and (2) the significance of the assistance granted to the Sultan by his vassal, Mehemet Ali, during the insurrection.

In the decade following --- 1830-1841 --- the European Powers were concerned with the rebellions of Mehemet Ali. With the attempt of this powerful vassal to gain independent rule in Egypt, the Sultan was forced to appeal to the Powers. Only Russia was disposed to aid him and in return exacted the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi which practically placed Turkey under the protection of the Tzar. Among the Western Powers, and in England, especially, great indignation and distrust were aroused by this last advance of Russia. Palmerston protested in vain at Constantinople and at St. Petersburg; but his eyes were open to the aggrandizing policy of Russia and her hostile influence in Europe, and determined that at the first opportunity the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi should be torn up.

That opportunity came with the second revolt of Mehemet Ali in 1839. Because of the alienation with France over the Egyptian question, England through the negotiations of Palmerston joined with Russia in aiding the Sultan. Russia was eager for
the alliance because of her desire to break up the former cordial understanding between England and France. By the quadrilateral treaty of 1840, England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia agreed with the Porte to drive back the Egyptians and pacify the Levant. France was isolated and the probability of war, imminent. But the crisis soon passed, due to the firmness of Palmerston and the pacific disposition of the new French minister Guizot. By the Treaty of London, 1841, the Egyptian question was settled, the straits closed to ships of war of every nation, and Turkey was placed under the protection of the Powers. The Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi was wiped out, and by treaty agreement the exclusive protectorate over Turkey was destroyed. After 1841 Russia never successfully reasserted her claims.

After the success of Palmerston's strong foreign policy, Nicholas was convinced that the attainment of Russian interests at the Porte could only be achieved in alliance with England. He made two attempts to come to terms with Great Britain, one at the Court of St. James in 1844, and one on the eve of the Crimean War with Sir. Hamilton Seymour, English Ambassador at St. Petersburg. On
both occasions, he assumed that the demise of the Ottoman Empire was approaching and proposed to come to an understanding with Great Britain as to the partition of the inheritance. Both attempts were unsuccessful. But the refusal of the Aberdeen Cabinet even to consider these proposals formed one of the proximate causes of the Crimean War as Nicholas received the erroneous impression that he could count on the extreme cordiality of his relations with Aberdeen and the English Court.

During and immediately following the Revolutions of 1848, Nicholas was recognized as the most powerful monarch in Europe. His policy of reaction and repression saved the Austrian and Prussian thrones and his attitude toward the Hungarian refugees in Turkey created another crisis. Because of the intercession of Palmerston and the English Cabinet, Nicholas decided to bide his time in forcing his influence upon the Porte. But the distrust of the Liberals of Europe toward him was more bitter than ever. At this time also, his diplomatic insult to Louis Napoleon, in calling him "Mon cher ami" instead of the usual salutation of Emperors, "Sire, mon frère", created the personal hatred of the new French Emperor ---
which has its significance in Napoleon's desire to ally France with England against Russia in the Crimean War.

Undoubtedly Napoleon was the immediate fire-brand, and insofar as the Crimean War was the logical development of the dispute concerning the Holy Places, he must share a fair measure of the responsibility. This question was settled in April 1853 by Lord Stratford, to the satisfaction of all concerned. But the Tzar had taken advantage of the difficulties of the Sublime Porte to include in the charges entrusted to Menschikoff --- which had been separated from the issue of the Holy Places by Stratford --- a demand for the protectorate by Russia over the Greek Christians of the Ottoman Empire. When, upon the advice of the English Ambassador, this demand was refused, Menschikoff left Constantinople; and Russian troops occupied the Principalities (July, 1853).

The European Powers were alarmed at this action and joined to draft a document, known as the Vienna Note, which purported to recognize the legitimate claims of Russia without prejudice to the sovereignty of the Sultan. Since this note differed but little from that of Menschikoff's mission, it was accepted by the Tzar. But the Turks, again at the advice of
Stratford, refused to adopt it without certain amendments which changed the character of the Note by making it explicit that the Christians of the Empire were to be under the protection of the Sublime Porte. These amendments were in turn declined by the Tzar. The Four Powers would probably have stood by their original decision, had not a confidential dispatch of the Russian Chancellor, Nesselrode, been published which showed that the Russian interpretation of the Vienna Note was precisely in the sense that the Turkish modifications were designed to prevent, and contrary to the views and intentions of the Four Powers. England and France, therefore, refused to force the Note on the Porte.

Before further action could be taken, Turkey, confident that France and Great Britain would not leave her to the mercy of Russia —— for their fleets had been near the Dardanelles since early summer —— declared war on Russia, October 23, 1853. The Four Powers, still hoping to restore peace between Russia and Turkey before actual hostilities commenced, agreed on December 5th to the Second Vienna Protocol, on the basis of which the Porte was asked to state its terms.
Once again diplomacy was handicapped by the march of events. On November 30th a Turkish squadron in the harbor of Sinope had been destroyed by the Russians, and the answer of the Porte was substantially a repetition of its original offer to Russia. Nevertheless the Turkish note was adopted by the Vienna Conference and communicated to St. Petersburg. Unfortunately, on the same day the Tzar learned that the French and English governments, aroused to indignation by the "massacre of Sinope", had ordered their fleets to the Black Sea with instructions to prevent any Russian men-of-war from leaving port. His counter proposals were rejected by the Vienna Conference, but Napoleon III wrote an autograph letter to Nicholas proposing that the Russian troops should withdraw from the Black Sea, and Russia should negotiate directly with Turkey the terms agreed upon to be submitted to the Concert of Europe. This overture of the French Emperor was quite definitely rejected; whereupon, at the suggestion of Austria and on the understanding that she would support them, the Western Powers demanded the evacuation of the Principalities by April 30, 1854. But it developed that the Austrian support was
diplomatic only. The Tzar therefore made no reply to the ultimatum, and on March 27th and 28th France and Great Britain declared war.

**Responsibility for the Crimean War**

The responsibility for any war is a matter of relativity, nor is the Crimean War an exception. But it must be remembered that the fundamental point at issue, which is frequently lost sight of in attributing the war to Stratford or Napoleon or Nicholas, was the future of the Ottoman Empire. In the settlement of this question, each of the nations involved had its own particular motives which resulted in a diplomatic controversy, culminating in war.

It had been evident for some time that Nicholas intended to secure a protectorate, recognized by the Porte, over the Greek Christian subjects of the Sultan, and never receded from that programme. But understanding the certain opposition to this from the other powers, he sought to detach one or more of them from the Concert. As early as 1844, during his visit to St. James, he attempted to gain English approval; and again in 1852. Unsuccessful in this, he sought the neutrality of Austria and Prussia --- Count Orloff's mission to Vienna and Baron Budberg's to
Berlin ---. He failed to accomplish this also; but his pride, a belief in the justice of his cause, and high confidence in his military strength led him to refuse all concessions. He frequently professed his intention to respect the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, but he was clearly formulating plans for its partition and disposition. The principal cause of the Crimean War was then, the continued effort of Russia, after the question of the Holy Places had been regulated, to carry through a policy which would have profoundly disturbed the status quo in the Near East. Whether the diplomacy of the powers opposed to this policy was conducted in the manner best calculated to restrain the Tzar is another question.

There can be no doubt that Napoleon III contributed his share in bringing about the war by interfering in the disputes of the Latin and Greek churches. He definitely was the first to disturb the status quo and without his interference the quarrel would have been settled without drawing in the European Powers. Simpson claims, "that the prime responsibility for the Crimean War must rest upon Louis Napoleon: upon the proverbial sensitiveness of a parvenu personally affronted by the Czar's refusal
to call him 'Brother'; upon the political necessity of gaining support of the French clericals and the military necessity of blooding his army on some body other than French, all of these statements —— which have become truisms without ever having been truths. --- In reality the figure of Louis Napoleon is big enough to carry neither praise nor blame such as this."

After the dispute of the Holy Places had been settled, the diplomatic conduct of France became pacific and conciliatory. The impetuous ambassador, M.de Lavalette was recalled, and the French government submitted to the compromise demanded by Russia and recommended by Stratford. Throughout the long negotiations, the French Foreign Office sought to preserve the Concert of the Four Powers as the best means of exerting pressure upon Russia. Nevertheless, less moderation was observed by Napoleon, who urged that the English fleet join the French in naval demonstrations. In sending the autograph letter to Nicholas, the French Emperor probably wanted to keep in the forefront of great events and strengthen his position at home and abroad. If the ambition of the Tzar was the principal cause of the Crimean War, the policy of Napoleon, conciliatory enough in the diplomatic channels, but provocative

in insisting upon naval manoeuvres, made a peaceful solution difficult.

The cabinet in England "drifted" into the war for want of a more resolute and decided policy. Profoundly influenced by the doctrines of the peace party, Aberdeen was not strong enough to withstand the pressure put upon him by Sir Stratford Canning and Lord Palmerston. He was forced by the dissension within his Cabinet to resort to half measures which lost any effectiveness a show of real force might have had upon Nicholas. Both Aberdeen and Clarendon failed to make the Tzar realize, on the eve of his occupation of the principalities, how deeply English people would resent his aggression. Furthermore, the Cabinet allowed itself to be gradually drawn into a separate union with France and thus the chief security for the maintenance of peace, which depended upon the united action of the Four Great Powers, was destroyed. Two other serious errors were made by the Cabinet through Clarendon: (1) the hasty acceptance of the Vienna Note before ascertaining the attitude of the Porte and of Stratford; and (2) the precipitous ultimatum sent to Russia without first being assured of the military, as well as diplomatic, support of Austria.
In spite of these blunders, it seems evident that the Crimean War was not to be averted by diplomacy. Russia was resolved upon war long before it actually broke out. The English people looked upon Russia as a strong power trying to maltreat a weak one. They remembered the oppressive measures of the Tzar in 1848-49 and his interference with the Hungarian refugees. They also were influenced by a long standing dread of Russian expansion into regions too near the route to India. The war movement was popular and before long the pacifist element was carried along with the tide.

It is necessary to comment briefly on the exact role of Sir Stratford Canning, who has been looked upon as the instigator of the war by several historians of the period. What Stratford did was to make the war impossible to a moral state by inducing the Turks to grant the Russian demands so far as their ostensible object was concerned, but without giving the Tzar the preponderating influence in Turkey which was the real aim of his proposals. In so doing, Stratford had taken away from the Tzar every excuse for making war. If supporting a weak state against a stronger power caused the war, Stratford was so far responsible. His private approval of the
Turk’s rejection of the Vienna Note, one of the highlights of the negotiations, has earned for him a measure of responsibility. But that note granted precisely what had been all along refused, the Russian protection of the Greek Church in Turkey; and it was only the obtuseness or insincerity of the statesmen who drew it up that was to blame for its rejection.

Altogether, it is not an attractive picture of English policy, this period of the Crimean negotiations. The problem was handled in a wavering, inefficient manner, and reflects a great discredit upon those responsible for the steering of the English ship of state in the years 1853 and 1854.

The uncertain attitude of Austria was of no assistance to France and Great Britain in the final play. She failed to give them the wholehearted support which would have confronted the Tzar with the solid front of Europe and might have constrained him to moderate his demands upon Turkey.

It is customary to judge the Crimean War by its results as a failure; but a modification of that judgment is best. In so far as it was concerned to prevent Russian absorption of Turkey, it was not a failure. After two centuries Russia was forced to postpone indefinitely her hope of dominion over the
Ottoman Empire. Lord Cromer states: "had it not been for the Crimean War and the policy subsequently adopted by Lord Beaconfield's government the independence of the Balkan States would never have been achieved, and the Russians would now be in possession of Constantinople."¹

¹. Marriott, p.249.
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