

At last came a day of disclosure. Lord Derby received at the Foreign Office, on the 14th of July, a numerous and weighty deputation. They went there in the interests of peace, to which I cordially wish well, and of non-interference—a word which, in my opinion, must be construed, especially for the East of Europe, with a just regard to our honorable engagements, and to the obligations they entail. These gentlemen did not at all approve of the demonstration in Besika Bay. Lord Derby justified it, by admitting that a portion of Parliament and the public, who formed the Deputation, for the first time, to the knowledge of the truth. He stated that it was sent, at the request of Sir H. Elliot, for the defence of the Christians against a possible outbreak of Mahometan fanaticism. The country, or great part of it, felt relieved and grateful. But the mischief that had been done by the moral support, and I say boldly by the material support, afforded to Turkey during all those blood-stained weeks (the Servian war, too, was now raging) was not, and could not be, remedied. To repair, in some degree, the effects of that mischief is now a prime part of the peculiar obligation imposed upon the people of this country. For, in fact, whatever our intentions may have been, it is our doing.

And how are we, in this particular, to set about the work of reparation? Any reader who has accompanied me thus far will probably expect that I, at least, shall answer the question by recommending the withdrawal of the Fleet from Besika Bay. But such, I must at once say, is not my view of duty or of policy. I would neither recall the fleet, nor reduce it by one ship or man.

We have been authoritatively warned, that the condition of the Christians in Turkey is now eminently critical. The issue of the war is still hanging in the balances, which have wavered from day to day. The lapse of time, and possibly aid from without, may still do much to retrieve the vast inequality of chance, with which the brave but raw levies of Servia carry on the contest. We are told, with too much appearance of credibility, that if the fortune of war should veer adversely to Turkey, the consequence might be, in various provinces, a new and wide outbreak of fanaticism, and a wholesale massacre. My hope, therefore, is two-fold. First, that, through the energetic attitude of the people of England, their Government may be led to declare distinctly, that it is for purposes of humanity alone that we have a fleet in Turkish waters. Secondly, that that fleet will be so distributed as to enable its force to be most promptly and efficiently applied, in case of need, on Turkish