

A New Aspect of the Eastern Question.

Is the power of Europe so far weakened that what was possible and was done in 1860 is impossible now? This is the substance of a question proposed by the Times in discussing the subject of English interference in Turkey. The leading journal remarks that at that time Palmerston was Prime Minister, and was not predisposed to favor the designs of Russia; but, instead of leaving outraged humanity to the protection of that power, he joined England, France, and Russia together, and Turkey had to yield. Lord John Russell was Foreign Secretary, as proud of the honor of his country as any man. These two had come to manhood at a time when England faced an embattled world, and neither of them would for a moment think of anything that could detract from the memory of that matchless generation. In the aforesaid year of 1860 there was a frightful massacre of Christians in Syria. The number killed was not so great as those lately slaughtered in Bulgaria—not many more than four thousand males having been murdered. The "conscience of Europe" was horror-stricken then, however. At first the crimes were attributed to the sectarian fanaticism of the Druses overpowering the local force of the Turkish Government, but afterwards it was discovered that they were perpetrated by the Turkish soldiery themselves. The Turkish commander, Othman Beg, acted in Syria precisely as Sheket Pasha has done in Bulgaria, in treacherously entrapping Christians in their doom. But within three months from the date of the first murder, the British government, acting with France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, had secured the signature of the Sultan to a convention providing for the immediate despatch of European troops, not exceeding twelve thousand, to Syria, to re-establish tranquility. The Emperor of the French was to send at once six thousand to the scene, and if more were necessary they were to be furnished by the other powers. The Sultan sent his foreign Minister, Fuad Pasha, as commissioner-extraordinary to execute justice on the offenders; and the five powers sent special commissioners to inquire into the origin of the disturbances, to alleviate the sufferings of the Christians, and to make arrangements for the future government of Syria. Lord Dufferin was the British Commissioner. Under the pressure exerted by these commissioners Fuad Pasha hanged the guilty governor as if he had been an unknown Druse. The Turkish Minister tried his hardest to get him off, magnified the danger of outraging the sentiments of the fanatical Mohammedans, and offered to sacrifice any number of the rank and file instead. But the commissioners were inexorable. The troops of France were at hand, the governments of Europe were in earnest, and therefore justice was done; and, moreover, Lord Dufferin did not hesitate to attribute the outbreak to the dissatisfaction of the Turkish Government entertained on account of a certain amount of self-control those provinces had. The result was that peace was restored, and the commissioners somewhat increased the "autonomy" previously existing; so that from that day to this there has been comparative peace in those parts—that is, as much as could have been expected under the most wretched, mismanaged government ever known on the face of the earth.

In this way then were things arranged no longer ago than the year 1860, by men from whose political principles we should scarcely have expected so much. But now the cry is raised that the Turk must not be interfered with in the exercise of his undoubted right to govern just as he likes, because the "integrity of the Turkish empire" is not only a foregone conclusion, but must also be received as an axiom in diplomatic statesmanship. On this view of the case the Economist well remarks, that the emancipation of the negro was a great feat to accomplish, and so was the Irish Land Act, as well as the disendowment of the Irish Church, and the Abolition of Purchase in the army; but the idea of sending out a commissioner to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire under present circumstances, immeasurably surpasses all the rest in the sublimity and grandeur which the achievement would attain!

Old Ocean.

Now when we go back to even the nearer of those two eras we find that we must conceive of our ocean during that era as utterly unlike the seas which now encompass the earth. Its substance was the same, or nearly so, but its condition must have been altogether different. No water could for a moment rest upon the intensely hot surface of a globe raging with heat exceeding that of a smelting furnace. There could not have been during that era oceans of liquid water, though all the water of our present oceans surrounded the earth then as now. The water must at that time have existed in the form of mixed vapor and cloud; that is, it must have been spread through the air partly as pure aqueous vapour and partly in those aggregations of minute liquid globules and vesicles of water forming visible cloud masses. There must also

at that time, as now, have been various kinds of cloud-forms—an outside layer consisting of the light feathery cirrus cloud, below that a layer of the cumulus or 'woolpack' clouds, and below that again a deep layer of the densest nimbus or rain-clouds, from which perfect sheets of rain must at all times have been falling; not, however, to reach the glowing surface of the earth, but to be vaporized in their fall, and in the form of vapor to pass upwards again. We say that all this must have been; because, in point of fact, however doubtful we may feel as to many details of the earth's condition in the remote era we are considering, there can be no doubt whatever as to the general facts indicated above. We have only to inquire what would happen at the present day if the earth's whole frame were to be gradually heated until at last the surface glowed with a heat equal to that of a white-hot iron. To perceive that, whatever other changes might take place, the ocean certainly would be entirely evaporated—boiled off, so to speak.—Cornhill Magazine.

AFTER we have done our best in any good work, we sit down to contemplate it, and find it was very little after all. It was only our duty, and compared with what we might do, and what ought to be done, it is as nothing. And then, too, when we have felt upon going into it that it would cost us a great sacrifice, we have found, on getting through with it, that we were as well off as before. Time, strength, means—all these are left us after we have yielded cautiously to what we felt were depleting exactions.

Official Announcements.

- MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERIES
Huron.—The Presbytery of Huron will meet in Clinton on 2nd Tuesday of January, at 11 a.m.
Brookville.—The Presbytery of Brookville will meet at Smith's Falls, on the 3rd Tuesday of December, (19th inst.), in Union Church, at 11 a.m.
Chatham.—The next regular meeting of the Presbytery of Chatham will be held in Adelaide St. Church, Chatham, on the 3rd Tuesday of December, at 11 o'clock a.m.
Whitby.—The Presbytery of Whitby will meet in St. Andrew's Church, on Tuesday, 19th day of December.
Peterborough.—The Presbytery of Peterborough will meet in St. Andrew's Church, Peterborough, on the third Tuesday of January, at 11 a.m.
Kingston.—Next meeting to be in St. Andrew's Church, Kingston, on the 2nd Tuesday of January 1877, at 3 p.m.
Stratford.—In St. Andrew's Church, Stratford on Tuesday, 19th December, at 10 o'clock, a.m.
Barnby.—The meeting of this Presbytery will meet on the first Tuesday in March, 1877.
Owen Sound.—In Knox Church, Owen Sound, on third Tuesday of December next.
Hamilton.—The next ordinary and stated meeting will be held in Central Church, Hamilton, on the 13th Tuesday of December, at 11 o'clock, a.m.
London.—Adjourned meeting on 1st Tuesday of November, at 2 p.m., in 1st Presbyterian Church, regular meeting 3rd Tuesday of December, at 2 p.m., in the same place.
Toronto.—The Presbytery will meet in the usual place on the 1st Tuesday of January, 1877, at eleven a.m.
Ottawa.—The Presbytery of Ottawa will meet in St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, on the first Tuesday in February, at 3 o'clock.
Paris.—The Presbytery of Paris meets on Tuesday, the 13th December, at 11 a.m., in Knox Church, Woodstock.
Sauguenay.—The Presbytery of Sauguenay will meet in Knox Church, Harrison, on the last Tuesday of December, at 4 o'clock, p.m.

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