

TURKEY. No. 2 (1897).

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CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

INTRODUCTION OF REFORMS IN  
THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE OTTOMAN  
EMPIRE.

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*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.  
January 1897.*

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GORRESPONDENCE

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Correspondence respecting the Introduction of Reforms in the  
Administration of the Ottoman Empire.

No. 1.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.*

(Extract.)

*Foreign Office, September 23, 1896.*

I REQUEST that, on your Excellency's arrival in Vienna, you will take an early opportunity of seeing Count Goluchowski, and will explain to him that Her Majesty's Government still desire the preservation of the Ottoman Empire, but consider that this end can only be insured and justified by introducing reforms in the present system of Government. The task of inducing the Sultan to accept the changes necessary for this purpose would, in any case, be difficult, but unless an agreement between the Six Powers can be attained, it will become impossible.

You should inquire of Count Goluchowski whether he is willing to give instructions to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to consult with his colleagues on the reforms which it would be requisite to introduce into the Turkish Administration in order to secure better government, and to prevent for the future a recurrence of the frightful cruelties which have recently been committed in various parts of the Empire.

You may add that I propose, as a preliminary condition of this exchange of views, that if the Six Governments should, on consideration of the report of their Ambassadors, adopt any proposals as suitable and necessary for the purpose indicated, and if, on their being placed before the Sultan, His Majesty should refuse to accept them, measures should be taken by the Six Powers to enforce their acceptance, and that in case any Power should prefer not to take any active share in such measures, it should not offer any opposition to their being taken by the other Powers or any of them.

I shall be glad to learn the opinion of the Austro-Hungarian Government on this proposal, which I have not as yet mentioned to any other Government.

No. 2.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.\**

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 20, 1896.*

THE recent lamentable occurrences in Asiatic Turkey, succeeded by the massacre of Armenians in the streets of Constantinople, give evidence of a state of maladministration and insecurity in the Ottoman Empire which cannot fail to be a subject of great solicitude to the Powers who have joined in guaranteeing that Empire.

The successive periods of urgent peril through which the Ottoman Government has passed in consequence of its inability to provide the elementary conditions of good government for its Christian subjects have powerfully affected the political

\* Similar despatches, *mutatis mutandis*, were addressed to Mr. Howard, Sir F. Lascelles, Sir E. Monson, and Sir Clare Ford.

history of Europe during the present century. The European Powers have, in the interests of general peace, earnestly desired to maintain the fabric of the Ottoman Empire, at least in that extensive portion of it in which the mixed character of the population makes an autonomous Christian Government impossible. But they have sought with equal earnestness, by the constant exercise of their influence, and from time to time by the conclusion of special stipulations, to secure due protection in these regions to the Christian subjects of the Porte.

The Treaty of Paris of 1856, by Article VII of which the Great Powers bound themselves to respect the independence and territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and guaranteed in common the strict observance of that engagement, contained also the following Article:—

“Article IX.—His Imperial Majesty the Sultan having, in his constant solicitude for the welfare of his subjects, issued a Firman which, while ameliorating their condition without distinction of religion or of race, records his generous intentions towards the Christian populations of his Empire, and, wishing to give a further proof of his sentiments in that respect, has resolved to communicate to the Contracting Parties the said Firman emanating spontaneously from his sovereign will.

“The Contracting Powers recognize the high value of this communication. It is clearly understood that it cannot, in any case, give to the said Powers the right to interfere, either collectively or separately, in the relations of His Majesty the Sultan with his subjects, nor in the internal administration of his Empire.”

The preliminary Treaty of Peace concluded between Russia and Turkey in 1878 at San Stefano contained the following Article, pledging the Sublime Porte to carry into effect the necessary reforms in the provinces inhabited by Armenians:—

“Article XVI.—As the evacuation by the Russian troops of the territory which they occupy in Armenia, and which is to be restored to Turkey, might give rise to conflicts and complications detrimental to the maintenance of good relations between the two countries, the Sublime Porte engages to carry into effect, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by Armenians, and to guarantee their security from Kurds and Circassians.”

This Article was replaced in the European Treaty which resulted from the Congress of Berlin by one containing a pledge of a more stringent character to all the Signatory Powers, of which the following is the text:—

“Article LXI.—The Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds.

“It will periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application.”

The views of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the Treaty were set out by me in a despatch, in which, as one of the British Plenipotentiaries at the Congress of Berlin, I described its main provisions. I observed that by the action of the Great Powers rich and extensive European provinces had been restored to the Sultan's rule, while at the same time careful provision against future misgovernment had been made, which would, it might be hoped, assure their loyalty and prevent a recurrence of the calamities which had brought the Ottoman Power to the verge of ruin.

I added:—

“Arrangements of a different kind, but having the same end in view, have provided for the Asiatic dominions of the Sultan security for the present, and the hope of prosperity and stability in the future.

“Whether use will be made of this—probably the last—opportunity, which has been thus obtained for Turkey by the interposition of the Powers of Europe, and of England in particular, or whether it is to be thrown away, will depend upon the sincerity with which Turkish statesmen now address themselves to the duties of good government and the task of reform.”

The reforms promised in Article LXI of the Treaty formed the subject of discussions between the Porte and the Representatives of the Powers at Constantinople in 1880, but these discussions unfortunately led to no practical result.

In April 1883, Earl Granville, then Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, directed the Marquess of Dufferin, Her Majesty's Ambassador at

Constantinople, again to bring the subject before the Sultan. He concluded with these words:—

“Her Majesty’s Government are actuated by a sincere desire for the welfare and stability of the Ottoman Empire. They have pressed upon the Sultan the introduction of reforms primarily on behalf of the suffering populations, but also from the conviction that, without great improvements in general government, and in the administration of justice, there can be no content, and that with peoples of various nationalities and different faiths, such as those who inhabit the Asiatic provinces of the Empire, the maintenance of order is rendered doubly difficult by gross misgovernment, and a total absence of justice. In fact, the present state of Asia Minor is such that the grievances under which its inhabitants labour may at any moment bring about an insurrection which may lead to foreign intervention. It would then be not a question only of a further loss of territory in Asia, but the very existence of the Sultan’s Empire might prove to be at stake.”

Again, in 1886, a despatch was addressed by the Earl of Rosebery to Her Majesty’s Ambassador to the Porte, of which the substance was communicated to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs in August of that year. In this despatch a hope was expressed that the attention of the Sultan and his Ministers might be directed to questions of internal reform, and that, in the consideration of that subject, the means of improving the condition of the Asiatic provinces of Turkey might not be neglected.

Lord Rosebery continued:—

“Her Majesty’s Government have repeatedly pointed out the necessity for such measures. They have urged on the Porte the introduction of reforms in the collection of the taxes and the administration of justice, a more careful selection and supervision of the local officials, more effectual provision for the security of life and property, for the preservation of law and order, and for the protection of the industrious and peaceful portion of the inhabitants of the Eastern provinces from the depredations of the Kurds. All these reforms, in addition to their effect on public feeling, would operate to the advantage of the Imperial revenues, and any progress towards keeping the Kurdish tribes under proper control would also tend to remove a source of constant irritation and danger on the Persian frontier.

“The efforts of Her Majesty’s Government during the recent troubles have been directed to the maintenance of the settlement effected under the Treaty of Berlin in the sense most favourable to the peace and tranquillity of the Ottoman Empire. Their policy in this respect has been dictated by feelings of sincere friendship for Turkey, and of respect for Treaty obligations. It is from the same motives that they feel it incumbent upon them to urge whenever the opportunity offers the duty of fulfilling the engagements of the LXIst Article of the Treaty of Berlin. The absence of all serious attempt to introduce the reforms promised in that Article is, in their opinion, a source of danger to the future integrity of Turkey, and might at a critical moment tend to embarrass, and even paralyze, the friendly sympathies of the Signatory Powers.”

The massacre of Armenians which took place in the district of Sasun in the summer of 1894 brought the subject once more into notice, and showed the urgent necessity of steps being taken to secure the fulfilment of the promises which had been made seventeen years before. The result of a prolonged negotiation was the acceptance by the Sultan of a scheme intended to assure to the provinces where Armenians formed a considerable proportion of the population such institutions as would afford to them the elements of equitable government. Unfortunately, a few days before the consent of the Sultan had been obtained to this arrangement, a demonstration in the streets of Constantinople led to a disturbance in which, whether by the fault or the neglect of the authorities, numbers of Armenians, who cannot be held to have been guilty of any serious offence, were murdered or brutally ill-treated. This occurrence was followed shortly by sanguinary attacks on the Armenians in various parts of Asia Minor, resulting in the loss of many thousands of lives, enormous destruction of property, and widespread distress among the survivors. These attacks may possibly in some cases have originated in disturbances commenced by Armenian agitators, but it is impossible not to hold the Turkish authorities, civil and military, mainly responsible for them and for their effects. They have been succeeded by a massacre at Constantinople, in which it is estimated that between 5,000 and 6,000 lives of innocent persons have been sacrificed, and which has every appearance of having been in some way organized by authority, and which certainly

might, either wholly or in great part, have been prevented by timely action on the part of the Turkish military forces.

In the meanwhile, though the consent of the Sultan was given twelve months ago to the plan of reforms for the Armenian vilayets, no real progress has been made towards putting them in execution beyond the appointment of a few Christian officials.

It is impossible, on a review of these events, not to feel how great is the insecurity of the lives and property of the Christian subjects of the Porte, and how oppressive the misgovernment under which Christians and Moslems are suffering alike. The whole population of the Asiatic provinces is in a state of discontent and unrest, the soldiers and gendarmerie are suffering from want of pay, which is in many cases several months in arrear; the officials are powerless to exercise control. It seems that at any moment the fanatical feelings of certain sections of the Mussulman population may be excited into savage attacks on those who differ from them in creed, and that no reliance can be placed on the energy or good-will of those whose duty it is to provide for the preservation of the public peace.

The indiscriminate and wide-reaching slaughter of which the Turkish officials, and a portion of the Moslem population under their guidance or with their connivance, have been guilty, has had for its nominal aim the maintenance of the Sultan's Government. But it has had the effect of bringing the stability of that Government into greater peril than it has yet encountered. It has resulted either in exterminating or in driving away a large portion of the classes by whom the industry and trade of the country was carried on, and has reduced to the utmost extremity the material resources of the Government. Financial collapse threatens the military strength by which the Empire is supported, while the atrocious cruelty of many of those by whom the Government is administered has roused among Christian nations a sympathy and an indignation of unexampled intensity; and there is little probability that the Christian subjects of the Porte will submit again quietly to the oppression under which they have hitherto suffered. It necessarily follows that the causes which threaten the stability of the Empire are constantly gaining in force, while the forces which sustain it are melting away.

It is the common object of the European Powers that the Turkish Empire should be sustained, because no arrangement to replace it can be suggested which would not carry with it a serious risk of European conflict. The predominant importance of this consideration has led the European Powers to protect the Turkish Empire from dissolution, under the hope that the many evils by which the Ottoman rule was accompanied would be removed or mitigated by the reforming efforts of the Government. Not only has this hope been entirely disappointed, but it has become evident that unless these great evils can be abated, the forbearance of the Powers of Europe will be unable to protract the existence of a dominion which by its own vices is crumbling into ruin. It is difficult to say with confidence that any change that can be made will now prevent the threatened danger; but so long as the possibility of averting it exists, the Powers will feel it to be a matter of duty as well as matter of prudence, after satisfying themselves as to the changes which are the most urgent and best calculated to have a salutary operation, to provide effectively for those changes being carried through. Great authorities have up to this time been strenuously opposed to any measures by which Europe should become in any sense responsible for the internal administration of the Turkish Empire. The arguments against such a policy undoubtedly are very cogent, and nothing but the urgency and the imminence of the dangers which attach to a purely negative policy would justify us in disregarding them. All the Powers of Europe are at one in desiring to maintain the territorial *status quo* of the Turkish Empire, and those Powers whose territories lie nearest to that Empire are most strongly impressed with this necessity. Their convictions upon this point may be sufficient to guarantee the Empire from any possible shock arising from external aggression, but they will not save it from the effect of misgovernment and internal decay.

The consultation of the six Ambassadors at Constantinople appears to have been accompanied with a favourable result in dealing with the disorders of the Island of Crete. Their guidance is probably superior to any other that we can command, and I think we shall do wisely to commit to them the larger problem presented to us by the general condition of the Turkish Empire, and especially those portions of the Empire which are inhabited in considerable proportion by a Christian population. I propose that the Six Powers should instruct their Representatives to consider and report to their Governments what changes in the Government and



administration of the Turkish Empire are, in their judgment, likely to be most effective in maintaining the stability of the Empire, and preventing the recurrence of the frightful cruelties by which the last two years have been lamentably distinguished. But before those instructions are given, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that provision ought to be made that any resolution to which the Powers may, in consequence, unanimously come should be carried into operation. It is an object of primary importance that the concert of Europe should be maintained; and as long as any of the Powers, or any one Power, is not satisfied with the expediency of the recommendations that are put forward, no action in respect to them can be taken. But if any recommendations made by the Ambassadors should approve themselves to all the Powers as measures suitable for adoption, it must not be admitted, at the point which we have at present reached, that the objections of the Turkish Government can be an obstacle to their being carried into effect. I trust that the Powers will, in the first instance, come to a definite understanding, that their unanimous decision in these matters is to be final, and will be executed up to the measure of such force as the Powers have at their command. A preliminary agreement to this effect will greatly facilitate the deliberations of the Ambassadors, and will prevent much of the evasion and delay by which ameliorations in Turkish administration have on former occasions been obstructed.

I request that you will read the above despatch to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and leave a copy of it with him.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) SALISBURY.

## No. 3.

*Mr. Howard to the Marquess of Salisbury.*—(Received October 23.)

My Lord,

Paris, October 21, 1896.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch of yesterday's date, on the subject of the steps which, in your Lordship's opinion, should be taken to insure the maintenance of the stability of the Turkish Empire, and to prevent the recurrence of the recent frightful cruelties, I have the honour to report that, at an interview accorded to me this afternoon by M. Hanotaux, I carried out the instructions contained in that despatch.

His Excellency, in accepting a copy of the same, requested me to inform your Lordship that he would take it into his immediate consideration, and would return an answer at as early a date as possible.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) HENRY HOWARD.

## No. 4.

*Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.*—(Received October 23.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 23, 1896.

COUNT GOLUCHOWSKI, to whom I read your Lordship's despatch of the 20th instant, quite agrees with the proposals put forward, and states that his own views as to the expediency of general reforms in the Ottoman Empire have always been the same.

## No. 5.

*Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.*—(Received October 26.)

My Lord,

Berlin, October 23, 1896.

I CALLED upon Baron von Marschall this afternoon for the purpose of reading to him your Lordship's despatch of the 20th instant, containing your Lordship's proposals as to the instructions to be sent to the Representatives of the Six Powers at Constantinople to "consider and report to their Governments

what changes in the Government and Administration of the Turkish Empire are, in their judgment, likely to be most effective in maintaining the stability of the Empire, and preventing the occurrence of the frightful cruelties by which the last two years have been lamentably distinguished," and expressing the hope that the "Powers will in the first instance come to a definite understanding, that their unanimous decision in these matters is to be final, and will be executed up to the measure of such force as the Powers have at their command."

Baron von Marschall listened with the greatest attention to your Lordship's despatch, and, on my handing him a copy of it, said that he could not give me a definite answer without bestowing great attention and consideration on so important a document, but that he could tell me at once that the German Government would gladly join in any steps, on which the Great Powers might unanimously agree, with the object of maintaining the integrity of the Turkish Empire, and of improving the condition, not only of the Armenian, but of all the subjects of the Sultan, to whatever race or religion they might belong.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 6.

*Sir Clare Ford to the Marquess of Salisbury.*—(Received October 26.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, October 26, 1896.

THIS morning I carried out the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch of the 20th instant, relative to the affairs of Turkey, when I read the despatch to, and left a copy in the hands of, the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

His Excellency, after listening very attentively to the contents of the despatch, assured me that the Italian Government were very desirous that the accord of the Great Powers in the affairs of Turkey should be maintained with a view to the adoption of reforms both in the administration and in the government of the Ottoman Empire; and his Excellency stated that he was prepared to support Her Majesty's Government in the efforts which they proposed to make, in conjunction with the Great Powers, for the carrying out of reforms in the Ottoman Empire.

No. 7.

*Mr. Gosselin to the Marquess of Salisbury.*—(Received November 5.)

My Lord,

Paris, November 4, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report that a debate on the recent events in Armenia was raised in the Chamber of Deputies yesterday by M. Denys Cochin, a Deputy of the Right.

After depicting the scandalous persecutions to which the Armenians have been subjected during the last two years, and throwing the responsibility of the recent massacres on the Palace, M. Denys Cochin invited the Government to appeal to the "constant friendship" of Russia, in order that an end might be made of this reign of barbarism.

"The friendship of France entails corresponding duties, the first and most sacred being to know how to defend the weak, to take the part of the oppressed, and to make sacrifices on behalf of justice and liberty. Such is the price of the friendship of France. Pray explain it, M. le Ministre, to our friends."

M. Hanotaux, replying on behalf of the Government, after giving an historical summary of the Armenian movement, stated that in spite of the interest taken in Armenia by English diplomacy and Protestant Missions, Her Majesty's Government had seen, from the very beginning, the danger of isolated action. A scheme of reform was elaborated in the autumn of last year by the Ambassadors of England, Russia, and France; and, had it been put into immediate operation, perhaps the last disasters would have been avoided.

But for one reason or another the scheme of reforms was not enforced, and the massacres of last winter once more devastated these unhappy districts.

Last August the episode of the seizure of the Ottoman Bank was the pretext for excesses in the capital itself. Two duties then devolved on the Powers—to put an end to more deeds of violence, and to protect the European colonies. The measures taken to effect these ends were effectual, and “I can affirm that France made use of language, both to the Ottoman Embassy here and through the French Embassy at the Porte, which left no room for doubt as to its weight or its meaning.”

After a passing allusion to the successful negotiations with regard to Macedonia and Crete, his Excellency went on to explain the principles which should guide the Powers in finding a solution for the dangerous questions still pending; the first being “a firm and loyal agreement between all the Powers. The Governments are united in their efforts to find the elements of this agreement, and in order to consolidate it they are striving, at this very moment, to put aside or smooth away all that could divide them. The common action of the Embassies at Constantinople has shown, from the very beginning of the crisis, a most praiseworthy unanimity, and this united action, constantly strengthened by the approbation of the Cabinets, has obtained, specially in Crete and in Macedonia, the results to which I referred above.

“From the first principle arises directly a second, viz., that all idea of isolated action should be set aside. You have doubtless observed, Gentlemen, the public discussions on this subject in England, and have noticed the energy with which he who was till yesterday the leader of the Liberal party has preferred to resign rather than to place himself on this matter in contradiction with the formal declarations of the Head of the present Conservative Government.

“And, Gentlemen, there is yet a third deduction to make, and that is, that if the action of the Powers can and ought to make itself felt at Constantinople in order to obtain from the Sultan an improvement in the conditions of public and private life in his Empire, such action ought not to aim any blow at the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and to the state of affairs guaranteed by Treaties.”

His Excellency went on to say that there was no question of any direct interference (“immixtion directe”), nor of anything in the shape of a condominium. “This would be the most precarious and dangerous of expedients.” Rather should European diplomacy, acting with the Ottoman Government, seek a solution for improving the state of affairs in the Empire.

“Among the fruitful results of the visit of the Russian Emperor to Paris may be counted this, that, especially on the subject now before the Chamber, a precise exchange of views has taken place.

“We hope that united Europe will make herself understood by the Sultan; that she will warn him against evil influences; that she will know how to prove to him that there is no question of favouring this or that district or religion, but that all, Catholics, Armenians, Orthodox, and Mussulmans, are suffering from the same evils, and are asking for the same reforms. . . . She will ask him to put in force the reforms already granted; to extend them where necessary; to put an end to the deeds of violence, and to open the prison doors. He will be told yet more authoritatively, if necessary, that the existence of the European Colonies has been intrusted to him, and that he is bound to give security, public peace, and order not only to his own subjects, but to all residing in Ottoman territory. In a word, means will be found to show him that a strong and loyal policy such as this is the only one he can adopt, and that thus only can he and his find honour and safety.”

Eventually an order of the day was adopted by 402 against 90 votes, to the effect that the Chamber, approving the declarations of the Government, passes to the order of the day.

I beg to inclose the full report of this interesting debate as published in to-day’s “Journal Officiel.”\*

I have, &c.  
(Signed) MARTIN GOSSELIN.

\* Not printed.

No. 8.

*Mr. Gosselin to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 5.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, November 4, 1896, 7.50 P.M.

MY despatch of this day's date.

I have been requested by Minister for Foreign Affairs specially to direct your Lordship's attention to his Excellency's speech in the Chamber of Deputies.

M. Hanotaux hopes that it will be clear from it that the Government of the Republic are fully confident that Her Majesty's Government and all the Powers are acting with thorough disinterestedness.

European diplomacy, his Excellency believes, has not yet come to the end of its resources, and if a "solemn mandate" were given to the Representatives of the Powers, the Sultan would soon be brought to reason.

In his opinion, the end of the present régime would be the result of any further massacre, and he assures me that he has used much stronger language at Constantinople than was contained in his speech.

His Excellency also told me that he hoped within a few days to send a reply to your Lordship's despatch of the 20th October.

No. 9.

*Mr. Milbanke to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 6.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, November 6, 1896.

I BEG to state that I am told by Count Goluchowski that he is quite prepared to authorize Baron Calice to study, in conjunction with the other Ambassadors, the questions of Turkish reform as suggested by your Lordship, but that he is altogether opposed to the making of any further proposals of reform to the Sublime Porte, unless the Powers come to a distinct prior understanding that their execution will be insisted upon.

He was strong in his language as to the impossibility of the Powers being exposed to another rebuff.

No. 10.

*Mr. Gosselin to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 7.)*

My Lord,

Paris, November 5, 1896.

ON calling on M. Hanotaux yesterday, his Excellency's weekly reception day, I said that I had read with great interest his speech in the Chamber on the previous day on the Armenian question.

M. Hanotaux replied that he was glad I had mentioned the subject, as he was particularly desirous that your Lordship's attention should be called to his speech.

I assured him that I had already forwarded to your Lordship the full text, as reported in the "Journal Officiel."

M. Hanotaux said that he trusted his words would meet with approval in England; he had carefully weighed them (I should mention that the whole speech was committed to writing beforehand, and read to the Chamber), and he hoped they would go far to dissipate the distrust ("méfiance") of England, which it would be foolish of him to deny existed in some quarters.

"It is needless for me to add that I do not share this feeling myself, but none the less it exists."

I replied that the one point which did not seem quite clear in his speech was, what was to be done in the event of the Sultan still proving recalcitrant to the voice of "united Europe"? In this case, how were the recommendations of the Ambassadors to be enforced?

His Excellency answered that this, of course, was the chief point of your Lordship's Circular despatch of the 20th October, to which he had not yet sent a reply; before doing so, he wished that his speech should be read by the Porte and

the Powers, and, on learning the effect it produced at Constantinople and in Europe, he would be the better enabled to judge what further steps should be agreed upon in the event of the Sultan refusing to execute the promised reforms.

But his Excellency believes that European diplomacy has not yet spoken its last word; and has every reason to hope that, if what he designated as a "mandat solennel" were given to the Ambassadors, the Sultan would yield to the unanimous voice of Europe.

He went on to say that, in his opinion, any further massacres of Christians in Constantinople or elsewhere in Turkey would be the death knell of the existing régime; and he assured me that he had spoken much more strongly in this sense, both to the Turkish Ambassador here and at Constantinople, than he was able to do from the tribune of the Chamber.

On rising to take my leave, his Excellency added that he hoped shortly to be able to send an answer to your Lordship's despatch above referred to.

Both the German Ambassador and the Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires, whom I have seen since the debate, are of opinion that the French Government will with difficulty be brought to assent to a policy of coercion; and this opinion would seem to be borne out by the passage in M. Hanotaux' speech, in which his Excellency distinctly repudiates any "immixtion directe," or anything in the shape of a condominium.

The press are generally agreed in applauding the attitude taken up by the Foreign Minister; and, whatever may be the answer eventually returned to your Lordship's proposal, the debate of the 3rd instant, in which all parties agreed in reprobating the cruelties which have disgraced the Turkish Administration, must have its effect at Constantinople.

Hitherto the Porte may have been able to say that public opinion in France, as represented by the chief organs of the press, was indifferent to the fate of the Armenians; this, at any rate, can no longer be alleged, in view of the scathing condemnation indorsed by the Chamber of the treatment accorded to the Armenian subjects of the Sultan.

The amended analysis of the voting, as published in this morning's "Journal des Débats," shows that the order of the day accepted by the Government was carried by 363 to 126 votes, the minority being composed of seventy Radicals and fifty-six Socialists.

The latter, through their spokesman, M. Jaurès, had proposed a much more strongly worded order of the day, deploring the international jealousies which had prevented Europe from exercising a common action in the East, and expressing the wish that "the workmen of all countries" should unite in creating a movement of opinion in favour not only of the Armenians, but of all the populations of the Empire.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) MARTIN GOSSELIN.

No. 11.

*Mr. Goschen to the Marquess of Salisbury.--(Received November 9.)*

My Lord,

*St. Petersburg, October 27, 1896.*

ON the day on which I received your Lordship's despatch of the 20th instant, M. Chichkine was indisposed. I had, therefore, to wait until yesterday before I could carry out your Lordship's instructions.

After I had read the despatch to his Excellency, he observed that he could give no reply before the arrival at St. Petersburg of His Majesty the Emperor. He added that he did not think there would be any objections to your Lordship's proposal, "at least, on the part of the Imperial Government."

He said that, while not defending the Sultan, whose recent conduct had completely alienated every one's sympathy, he felt bound to state that His Majesty's position was very difficult, owing to want of funds.

He attributed the deplorable excesses committed by the Turkish soldiery chiefly to their want of the wherewithal to obtain the necessaries of life, and he maintained that, without the better and more regular payment of Government officials and employés, there could be no reform in the administration of the country. There

were no funds available for this purpose, and this, he considered, was the key to the whole situation, as he was sure that if the finances of the Empire could be put upon a sounder basis, and its revenues diverted into the proper channels, it would go far towards restoring order, and might possibly prove a remedy for the present acute phase of the Eastern question.

I have, &c.

(In the absence of Her Majesty's Ambassador),

(Signed) W. E. GOSCHEN.

No. 12.

*Mr. Goschen to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 9.)*

My Lord,

*St. Petersburg, November 4, 1896.*

AS His Majesty the Emperor returned to St. Petersburg on Saturday last, I called upon M. Chichkine to-day, and asked his Excellency whether he could now give me an answer to the proposal contained in your Lordship's despatch of the 20th ultimo.

I expressed, at the same time, the hope that his Excellency's impression that there would be no objection to that proposal on the part of the Imperial Government had been confirmed, and that I should be able to convey a favourable reply to your Lordship.

His Excellency answered that he hoped that some common ground might be found upon which the Powers might come to a complete agreement as to the best means of remedying the present state of affairs in the Ottoman Empire.

I pointed out to his Excellency, in reply, that the basis of such an agreement as his Excellency desired was to be found in your Lordship's proposal that the Ambassadors at Constantinople, as the best judges of what measures would best suit the occasion, should devise and submit to their Governments some remedy which would meet the views of all the Powers. It was, I ventured to submit, not necessary to go farther to seek a common ground upon which an agreement could be made.

His Excellency said that he quite agreed with your Lordship in thinking that the Ambassadors were the best judges of what was required for the amelioration of the state of affairs in the Ottoman Empire, and therefore he thought that they should be called upon to give an opinion on your Lordship's proposal and that which had been submitted by the Imperial Government; the latter being that the Commission of the Public Debt should take over the whole administration of the Turkish finances, and see that the money was spent in such a manner as to strengthen the Government of the country, and enable it to carry out the necessary reforms.

His Excellency added that such a measure would, he felt assured, remove the great obstacle in the way of reform—namely, the want of money.

I replied that such a measure might, or might not, have the effect desired, but that, in any case, it was one on the efficacy or adequacy of which the Ambassadors would be in the best position to form an opinion; and that, under your Lordship's proposal, this would be what they would be called upon to do, as it was clearly your Lordship's intention that such remedial measures should form the subject of their discussions and reports. A preliminary arrangement, however, on the lines proposed by your Lordship, would give weight and authority to such discussions, and a knowledge of its existence would go far towards convincing the Sultan that he could no longer evade the necessity of a thorough change in his method of government and administration.

Therefore, it would seem to be more satisfactory if, instead of submitting the two proposals to the Ambassadors at Constantinople, the Imperial Government could first give their adhesion to the arrangement proposed by your Lordship—to the principle of which his Excellency would seem to have no objections—and then, afterwards, in the event of a general agreement on the subject, also invite the Ambassadors to give their opinion on the remedial measures proposed by his Excellency.

As M. Chichkine seemed to express dissent, I asked him whether there was any particular point in your Lordship's despatch to which he took exception. He replied that it was the coercion implied in the last paragraph to which he objected, and he

added that the idea of having resort to coercive measures against the Sultan was extremely repugnant to His Majesty the Emperor.

I pointed out to his Excellency that once it could be unmistakably shown to the Sultan that all the Powers were in complete accord, and that they were one and all determined that the present misgovernment of the Ottoman Empire should cease, there was not much probability that coercive measures would be necessary. The mere idea that the Powers were united and in earnest would be quite sufficient; and that idea could be best conveyed to the Sultan by an agreement such as that proposed by your Lordship.

M. Chichkine replied that, at any rate, he could not give a definite answer as to your Lordship's proposal before he ascertained how it was regarded by the other Powers.

I have, &c.  
(In the absence of Her Majesty's Ambassador),  
(Signed) W. E. GOSCHEN.

## No. 13.

*Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 11.)*

(Telegraphic.)

*St. Petersburg, November 11, 1896.*

I WAS told to-day by M. Chichkine that he had read the report of your Lordship's speech in the Guildhall with the greatest pleasure, as there could be no longer any doubt but that England desired to act in concert with Russia and the other Powers at Constantinople.

His Excellency said, however, that as regarded your Lordship's definite proposal, contained in your despatch of the 20th ultimo, he thought a threat to employ coercive measures would weaken the Sultan's authority (and it was through him that the reforms must be ultimately carried out), and would be unnecessary directly His Majesty clearly understood that the Powers were united. However, they would have to consider what steps were next to be taken should the Sultan not listen to reason.

The Turkish Ambassador had just been told by his Excellency to telegraph to the Sultan that the era of paper reforms was past, that the Powers were all acting together, and that His Majesty must carry out their recommendations.

## No. 14.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.*

(Telegraphic.)

*Foreign Office, November 12, 1896.*

HER Majesty's Government have learned with much regret and some disappointment from your telegram of the 11th instant that the Russian Government decline to join in an undertaking that if a demand for any change in Turkish administration is made unanimously by the Powers, and is refused by the Sultan, the Powers will combine to enforce that demand.

An undertaking of this nature would prove to the Sultan the determination of the Powers to act together for the purpose of securing reforms. In its absence there will be nothing but general statements which have been made on previous occasions, and to which little value will be attached by His Majesty.

Unless such an undertaking is agreed to by the Powers, it is doubtful whether there will be much utility in further combined representations on the part of the Ambassadors. In case nothing comes of such representations, the effect on the Moslem population is unfortunate, as they receive the impression that the Christian Powers are being defied by the Sultan. His Majesty's authority does not appear to be questioned, and there is little danger of its being weakened by any such contingent undertaking on the part of the Powers.

But what requires very much strengthening is the Sultan's belief in the intention of the Powers to act together in securing reforms.

No. 15.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.*

(Telegraphic.)

*Foreign Office, November 14, 1896.*

THE French Minister conveyed to me yesterday a request from M. Hanotaux that instructions might be sent to your Excellency to support the efforts which are being made by the French Ambassador at Constantinople to obtain the practical and complete execution of the measures of relief and reform as to which the Sultan had recently given assurances to the French Government.

The French Minister was informed that the previous instructions sent to your Excellency would induce you to act in the sense desired by M. Hanotaux, but that I should have pleasure in repeating them by telegraph to your Excellency.

No. 16.

*Mr. Gosselin to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 16.)*

My Lord,

*Paris, November 13, 1896.*

IN a conversation which I had with M. Hanotaux on the 11th instant, his Excellency made the following observation with regard to your Lordship's speech at the Guildhall banquet on the 9th instant.

After assuring me of the interest with which he had read the speech, and expressing his thanks for your Lordship's kindly reference to himself, his Excellency said that he was delighted that your Lordship had laid so much stress on the necessity of maintaining the European concert, and had spoken so clearly against the imprudence of isolated action in Turkey on the part of Her Majesty's Government. These declarations would necessarily have an excellent effect on public opinion in Europe.

There was, indeed, if he might be permitted to say so, one point which struck him on reading your Lordship's speech, and that was the "extreme moderation" of the language employed with regard to the recent conduct of the Turkish Government.

I could not help expressing my surprise at his Excellency's remark, which, contrary to the charge so persistently brought against Her Majesty's Government for many months past, seemed to imply that your Lordship had been unduly lenient towards the Sultan and his works.

M. Hanotaux expressed his hope that I had not misunderstood the drift of his remark; he was fully aware that your Lordship and Her Majesty's Government reprobated the cruelties of which the Turkish Empire had been the scene, but he had in his eye the sterner language used by your Lordship at the Guildhall banquet last year, and all that he meant to imply was that the relatively moderate tone adopted this year might lead the Sultan to think that England was no longer so impressed as formerly with the enormities which have disgraced the Ottoman Administration during the last eighteen months.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) MARTIN GOSSELIN.

No. 17.

*Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 18.)*

(Telegraphic.)

*St. Petersburg, November 18, 1896.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's proposal of the 20th October, M. Chichkine, who saw the Emperor yesterday, told me to-day that His Majesty was not willing to agree to any undertaking which implied measures of coercion against the Sultan. His Excellency hoped, however, that the joint influence of the Powers would lead to an improvement in the situation.



No. 18.

*Mr. Milbanke to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 19.)*

My Lord,

Vienna, November 7, 1896.

HAVING had the honour to receive your Lordship's telegram of the 5th instant, repeating Mr. Gosselin's telegram of the previous day, I called yesterday upon the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and had some conversation with his Excellency on the subject of the introduction of reforms in the administration of Turkey.

Count Goluchowski told me that his present attitude was one of observation and of study. He was quite ready, as he had already informed Sir Edmund Monson and myself, to allow the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to join his colleagues at Constantinople in consulting upon the question, and as to the course to be pursued, but he had the most decided objection to the Ambassadors taking any action, that is to say, making any further proposals for the introduction of reforms, unless a distinct understanding were come to beforehand between the Powers that they should insist upon the Porte's duly executing whatever might be agreed upon. If this were not done it would be far better that no further action should be initiated at all.

On the other hand, were the Powers to agree upon the mode of enforcing their will, the actual adoption of coercive measures would probably not be necessary, but he was most strongly opposed to the Powers exposing themselves to the possibility of a further rebuff.

I remarked to his Excellency that from what he had said I was glad to see that his views seemed to coincide so closely with those entertained by your Lordship, as expressed in your despatch of the 20th ultimo.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) RALPH MILBANKE.

No. 19.

*Mr. Gosselin to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 21.)*

My Lord,

Paris, November 19, 1896.

I CALLED yesterday afternoon on M. Hanotaux.

His Excellency said he had received a telegram from M. Cambon, stating that Her Majesty's Ambassador had already carried out your Lordship's instruction, and had urged the Porte to execute the reforms promised by the Sultan, and he begged me to express to your Lordship his thanks for the timely assistance thus rendered by Sir Philip Currie to his French colleague.

Pointing to a paper lying on his table, M. Hanotaux said that it was a copy of the *Iradé*, authorizing the closing of the Extraordinary Tribunal, and he hoped to hear within the next twenty-four hours that the door of this dangerous Court had been finally closed, and that the legal procedure at Constantinople would be put once more on a normal footing.

He had further received satisfactory information as to the liberation of Armenians detained in prison. Out of some 1,900 prisoners, all except sixty had now been set at liberty.

Steps were already being taken for the election of the Armenian Patriarch; and M. Cambon had been instructed to do all that was possible to insist on the due execution of the other concessions promised by the Sultan.

If M. Cambon's endeavours in this direction are cordially supported by all the other Representatives, M. Hanotaux has every hope that these reforms will be adequately carried out, and the "bleeding wounds" of Turkey staunched. This, he said, was the pressing and immediate duty of all the Powers.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) MARTIN GOSSELIN.

*Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 23.)*

My Lord,

*St. Petersburg, November 12, 1896.*

I HAVE already had the honour to report to your Lordship, by telegraph, the substance of M. Chichkine's reply to your Lordship's proposal of the 20th ultimo.

In placing the matter before his Excellency, I said that I hoped his assurances of the pleasure with which he had read your Lordship's Guildhall speech would tend to recommend the present proposal, which was, in fact, very little different from the observations he had himself made to me on various occasions.

If, as he believed, the mere fact that the Powers were acting together would be sufficient to frighten the Sultan into compliance with any reasonable demands without recourse to coercitive measures, your Lordship would be only too pleased, but, at the same time, I reminded him that he seemed to have lost all faith in the Sultan's promises, whether verbal or written, and to be of opinion that unless he really knew that their violation would be attended with serious consequences nothing would be done, and no progress made. As regards his fear that the threat of coercitive measures would weaken the authority of the Sultan, he had admitted that his authority was so powerful over his Mussulman subjects that he had been able to stop the massacre at Constantinople, and to restore order, without the slightest difficulty, when he thought further excesses might endanger his Throne. It did not seem therefore probable that your Lordship's proposal would seriously loosen his authority. On the contrary, I thought there was far more danger of a series of fresh outrages if the Powers did not agree upon some common and energetic action. I earnestly hoped therefore that his Excellency would regard your Lordship's proposal not only in the light of contributing to bring about a better and most valuable understanding between England and Russia in regard to affairs in the East, but also as opening possibly the road to a practical solution of this vexed question compatible with the interests as well as with the civilizing mission of the united Powers.

M. Chichkine admitted that, in point of fact, there was now no great divergence of views between the two Governments, but at the same time he could not agree, at the present moment, at all events, to the employment, even conditionally, of coercitive measures.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 21.

*Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 23.)*

My Lord,

*St. Petersburg, November 18, 1896.*

I TOOK advantage of an interview with M. Chichkine on the 16th instant to read to him the substance of your Lordship's telegram of the 12th instant.

His Excellency hardly attempted to answer your Lordship's arguments replying to his previous remarks, and seemed to admit that perhaps the proposal was probably the only effectual means of putting the necessary pressure upon the Sultan. But as he had an audience next morning, and the Emperor read English as easily as Russian, he would like to give His Majesty a copy of your Lordship's telegram, and would let me know the result. In compliance with his request, I sent him the same evening a paraphrase of it, and called this afternoon, which is his usual reception day. He informed me that the Emperor had read very carefully your Lordship's telegram, but that he had told him it was impossible for him to agree to coercive measures against the Sultan.

As I had already used such arguments as I thought most likely to be effective for the desired end, and had pointed out that the fact that your Lordship had made it a stipulation that the reforms should be unanimously accepted by the Ambassadors before coming into execution left to each Power the option of objecting to any special proposal that seemed opposed to its interests, I did not attempt to continue the

discussion, and contented myself by saying that I would telegraph to your Lordship what he had said.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

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No. 22.

*Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 25.)*

(Telegraphic.)

*St. Petersburg, November 25, 1896.*

I CALLED upon M. Chichkine to-day, who told me that he had seen the Emperor last Monday. His Excellency stated that, after having given further explanations to His Majesty, he had been authorized to telegraph to the Russian Ambassador in London, for communication to your Lordship, and to inform me that, should the Sultan resort to his customary tergiversation in regard to the reforms which were recommended by the Ambassadors at Constantinople, the Imperial Government would not refuse to take into consideration your Lordship's proposal for the application of coercive measures, provided that there was unanimity among the Powers. His Excellency also said that he had just informed the Turkish Ambassador that your Lordship's proposal had been agreed to by the Russian Government, and that should the Sultan refuse to carry out the recommendations made measures of compulsion would be employed.

M. Chichkine, whose telegram will probably be read to your Lordship by M. de Staal, added that the adhesion of the Russian Government had likewise been communicated to the other Powers.

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No. 23.

*Mr. Gosselin to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 25.)*

(Telegraphic.)

*Paris, November 25, 1896.*

AT an interview I had to-day with M. Hanotaux, his Excellency told me that, in his opinion, all the Powers were still entirely agreed as to the policy of intrusting the task of supervising the execution of reforms to the Ambassadors at Constantinople, and added that the French Representative had been again instructed in precise terms to take energetic action in concert with the other Ambassadors.

I inquired what his Excellency thought would happen in case of a refusal of compliance on the part of the Sultan, to which M. Hanotaux replied that the Ambassadors must decide that question. With regard to financial pressure, he stated that he now considers this to be simply incidental, and to be less a matter of concern to Governments than to financiers.

A full answer to your Lordship's despatch of the 20th October will be sent shortly.

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No. 24.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 25, 1896.*

THE Russian Ambassador called at the Foreign Office this afternoon, and communicated verbally to me and to Sir Thomas Sanderson the contents of a telegram which he had just received from his Government.

It was to the effect that the information recently received by the foreign Representatives at St. Petersburg from their respective Governments showed clearly the existence of a misunderstanding as to the reception given by the Russian Government to the proposals contained in my Circular despatch of the 20th October. The repugnance expressed by the Russian Government to the principle of employing measures of coercion towards an independent Sovereign seemed to have been considered by Her Majesty's Government as implying a refusal to join in the common action at Constantinople which I had proposed.

The Emperor, however, had had no such intention. On the contrary, M. de Staal was instructed to declare that the Russian Government entirely adhered to the idea of intrusting to the Ambassadors of the Great Powers at Constantinople the task of examining and proposing to their Governments the measures calculated to contribute to the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire, while efficiently guaranteeing the security of the Christian population. The Emperor attached to this idea the greatest importance, and was anxious to render impossible in the future the recurrence of the terrible excesses which had so justly excited the indignation of the whole civilized world.

His Majesty continued to hope that firm and unanimous language on the part of all the Representatives, duly authorized by their Governments, would insure the adoption of the measures which might, by joint agreement, be decided to be indispensable. If, on the contrary, and against expectation, a refusal without justification, or the delays and evasions which had unfortunately been too often experienced, should interfere with the execution of these measures, the Russian Government would consent to discuss the methods of pressure to be chosen according to circumstances so soon as all the Powers had recognized that such measures were absolutely necessary and inevitable.

I expressed my satisfaction at receiving this statement of the views of the Russian Government, which went further than any communication I had yet received from them in recognizing the mode of action which the present condition of the Turkish Government had, in our judgment, rendered necessary, and I said that the intentions thus avowed by His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Russia would, in my belief, have an important influence upon the counsels of the Sultan. I could not, at the same time, avoid taking note of a certain indistinctness attaching to the closing words of the telegram, in which the necessity was recognized of resorting to "pressure" if the Turkish Government should refuse or evade compliance with the unanimous requirements of the Powers.

Such an accord on their part would not be arrived at lightly, and some interval might possibly elapse before it was attained in regard to any proposal which would be strongly repugnant to the prepossessions of the Ottoman Government.

I said that whenever such a state of agreement was reached I thought it would be a point of much importance that the resolution of the Powers to exercise material pressure in support of any proposal so agreed upon should be ascertained before the proposal was formally made to the Sultan's Government. The object of proceeding thus would be that His Majesty might not be induced to commit himself in the sight of his subjects to a negative or evasive reply by a fallacious reliance upon the possible disunion of the Powers in respect to the employment of such measures as might be necessary to insure his acceptance of their recommendations.

I was obliged, therefore, while accepting the present determination of the Russian Government with much satisfaction, to reserve to Her Majesty's Government the right, in case the consultation of the Ambassadors should result in such an agreement as I had indicated, to bring this particular question again under the consideration of the Imperial Government, with the object of obtaining a more precise expression of their views.

I have shown the draft of this despatch to M. de Staal, in order that there may be no doubt as to the exact purport of the statements made on either side, and have given him a copy of it, after receiving from him an assurance that I have accurately recorded his language.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) SALISBURY.

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No. 25.

*Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received December 7.)*

My Lord,

*St. Petersburg, November 25, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegram of to-day I have the honour to report that upon calling on M. Chichkine this afternoon he told me, as I entered the room, that he had an agreeable communication to make to me.

He had seen the Emperor on Monday, and he was authorized by His Majesty to tell me that the Russian Government agreed to the proposals contained in your Lordship's

despatch of the 20th ultimo, and that they would not object to advise as to coercive measures if the Sultan should prove recalcitrant, and refuse to accept the reforms unanimously recommended by the Ambassadors.

He thought there had been some misunderstanding, and he was glad to be able to clear it up. He had gone over the question fully with the Emperor, and had pointed out that from various quarters it was reported that the Russian Government objected to your Lordship's proposal, or at all events to that part of it relating to the possible application of coercive measures. This, His Majesty said, was not at all his wish. He was most anxious to give his support to recommendations made by the Ambassadors which were calculated to restore a better condition of affairs at Constantinople, and above all to prevent a repetition of the horrible cruelties of late days.

M. Chichkine then went on to say that he had drafted a telegram to M. de Staal in this sense, which he had submitted to His Majesty last night, and which had been approved and dispatched at once. It would probably be communicated to your Lordship to-day, and he trusted that its tenor would be agreeable.

In conclusion, he said that he had just told the Turkish Ambassador that the Emperor had now given his adhesion to your Lordship's proposal respecting the employment of coercive measures, and he begged the Ambassador to telegraph this to Yildiz Kiosk.

I expressed to his Excellency my satisfaction at hearing that the Russian Government was now so much nearer complete adhesion to your Lordship's proposal, and said that I would lose no time in informing your Lordship by telegraph.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

No. 26.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Milbanke.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 21, 1896.*

THE Austro-Hungarian Ambassador called at the Foreign Office to-day, and stated that he was instructed to inform me that his Government agreed in principle to the proposals made in my despatch of the 20th October to Sir E. Monson for joint action of the Powers, with a view to remedy the threatening state of affairs in Turkey.

Count Deym reminded me that Count Goluchowski had always been of opinion that joint action by the Powers at Constantinople was the only method of averting the dangers which threatened the Ottoman Empire, and consequently the peace of Europe, in consequence of the disorder prevailing in the internal administration of Turkey.

Count Goluchowski had also always been of opinion that the Ambassadors of the Powers at Constantinople should be instructed to consult together upon the measures of reform which they considered best adapted to bring about a normal state of things in the Ottoman Empire. They should report the result of their deliberations to their respective Governments, who should then, by collective pressure, induce the Porte, in its own interest, to carry out these measures of reform.

Count Goluchowski had great pleasure in signifying his complete concurrence in my view that, as a preliminary to any joint representations which the Powers might decide to make to the Porte for the improvement of the Turkish Administration, they should be agreed in principle to insist firmly on the execution of the reforms proposed, and even, if necessary, to make use of all the means of pressure which were at their disposal. As to the details of the measures to be adopted eventually by the Powers, Count Goluchowski considered that they might be discussed at a later period.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 27.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.*

Foreign Office, December 24, 1896.

Sir, THE French Ambassador called at the Foreign Office on the 18th instant, and was received in my absence by Sir Thomas Sanderson.

Baron de Courcel stated that M. Hanotaux had sent instructions to the French Ambassador at Constantinople for his guidance in the discussions which were to take place between the Ambassadors at that capital respecting the measures of reform to be proposed to the Sultan.

M. Cambon was directed to join with his colleagues in impressing upon the Sultan the importance of acceding to the recommendations which might be made by the Powers, and the serious consequences which would result from a contrary course.

In discussing the measures to be recommended, M. Cambon was instructed to bear in mind three points to which the French Government attached special importance. These were (1) the maintenance of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire; (2) that there should be no isolated action by any one Power; and (3) that there should be no condominium.

The French Government were of opinion that the reforms should be applicable to all the populations subject to the Sultan without distinction of race or creed.

These instructions were read to me by Baron de Courcel on the 21st instant, and received my general concurrence; and he stated to me that they had also been read to your Excellency by M. Hanotaux, and that, in reply to an inquiry made by you, M. Hanotaux had further stated that the French Government would not refuse to examine the methods of coercion to be employed with a view to obtain the reform of the Administration of Turkey, if all the Powers were agreed that resort to such measures was absolutely indispensable.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 28.

*Baron de Courcel to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received December 24.)*

M. le Marquis,

*Ambassade de France, Londres, le 23 Décembre, 1896.*

A LA suite de ma conversation d'avant-hier avec votre Seigneurie, je crois utile de vous adresser, ci-après, un résumé des instructions qui ont été transmises, le 15 de ce mois, à l'Ambassadeur de France à Constantinople, et qui ont fait l'objet de notre entretien. Elles avaient fait déjà, comme vous le savez, l'objet d'une conversation que M. Hanotaux a eue, le 16 Décembre, avec Sir Edmund Monson.

M. Cambon a été invité à se concerter avec ses collègues afin d'assurer la réalisation prompte et complète des réformes promises et nécessaires. Il a été prescrit notamment à l'Ambassadeur de France de tenir au Sultan le langage qui, de commun accord entre ses collègues et lui, sera jugé le plus propre à donner à Sa Majesté le sentiment exact des graves conséquences auxquelles elle s'exposerait si elle ne tenait pas compte du vœu unanime des Puissances et si elle rendait ainsi inévitable une intervention de l'Europe.

M. Hanotaux a expressément indiqué à M. Cambon que, dans l'opinion du Gouvernement Français, la condition préalable de l'action commune des Puissances était une entente sur les trois points suivants :—

1. L'intégrité de l'Empire Ottoman sera maintenue.
2. Il n'y aura d'action isolée sur aucun point.
3. Il ne sera pas établi de condominium.

Le Gouvernement Français est, en outre, d'avis que les réformes devront s'appliquer, sans distinction de race ni de religion, à toutes les populations de l'Empire Ottoman.

Pour ce qui concerne la question des mesures de coercition, le Gouvernement

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Français ne se refuserait pas à les examiner, le moment venu, si les Puissances étaient unanimes à en reconnaître la nécessité absolue.

Tel est, M. le Marquis, ainsi que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous le faire connaître de vive voix, le sens exact des instructions dont est muni l'Ambassadeur de France à Constantinople. J'ai constaté avec satisfaction, d'après ce que vous avez bien voulu me dire, que notre accord était complet sur tous les points visés dans ces instructions. Je serais très reconnaissant à votre Seigneurie de vouloir bien confirmer mon impression à cet égard, si elle considère qu'elle soit justifiée.

Veillez, &c.

(Signé) ALPH. DE COURCEL.

(Translation.)

M. le Marquis,

*French Embassy, London, December 23, 1896.*

AFTER my conversation of the day before yesterday with your Excellency, I think it will be useful to send you the following summary of the instructions which were sent on the 15th instant to the French Ambassador at Constantinople, and which formed the subject of our interview. They had already, as you are aware, been the subject of a conversation on the 16th December between M. Hanotaux and Sir E. Monson.

M. Cambon has been desired to concert with his colleagues in order to insure the prompt and complete fulfilment of the promised and necessary reforms. The French Ambassador has been particularly directed to hold to the Sultan such language as, by common agreement of his colleagues and himself, shall be deemed to be the best calculated to make His Majesty exactly sensible of the grave consequences to which he will expose himself if he does not take into account the unanimous wish of the Powers and if he thus renders a European intervention inevitable.

M. Hanotaux has expressly pointed out to M. Cambon that, in the opinion of the French Government, the preliminary condition of common action of the Powers was an agreement on the three following points:—

1. The integrity of the Ottoman Empire shall be maintained.
2. There shall be no isolated action on any point.
3. No condominium shall be established.

The French Government is also of opinion that the reforms should be applied, without distinction of race or religion, to all the populations of the Ottoman Empire.

With regard to the question of coercive measures, the French Government would not refuse to examine them at the proper moment, if the Powers were unanimous in recognizing their absolute necessity.

Such is, as I have had the honour of stating to you verbally, the exact sense of the instructions with which the French Ambassador at Constantinople has been furnished. I have noted with satisfaction that, according to what you were good enough to say to me, our agreement was complete on all the points referred to in these instructions. I should be much obliged to your Lordship if you would be so good as to confirm my impression in this respect if you consider that it is justified.

Accept, &c.

(Signed) ALPH. DE COURCEL.

No. 29.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Baron de Courcel.*

Your Excellency,

*Foreign Office, December 30, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 23rd instant, in which your Excellency is good enough to furnish me with a summary of the instructions which have been sent to the French Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject of the reforms to be proposed by the Powers for the improvement of the administration of the Ottoman Empire.

I have to thank your Excellency for this communication, and I have the honour

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to inform you that the instructions sent to M. Cambon appear to be entirely in harmony with the proposals made in my Circular despatch of the 20th October last.

I have, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 30.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir Clare Ford.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, January 2, 1897.*

THE Italian Ambassador has communicated to me the substance of a despatch, dated the 20th ultimo, containing the reply of his Government to my Circular despatch of the 20th October on the course to be pursued for the introduction of reforms in the Turkish Administration.

The Marquess Visconti Venosta observes that it appears clearly from my despatch that it is a fundamental principle of the proposal of Her Majesty's Government that the reforms to be introduced in the Ottoman Empire in order to preserve it from inevitable ruin must be the work of the unanimous concert of Europe. This is so completely in accordance with the views of the Italian Government, that Signor Visconti Venosta, in thanking your Excellency for your important communication, did not hesitate to declare that the views of the Italian Government on this point were identical with those of Her Majesty's Government. He informed your Excellency that the Italian Government attached the greatest importance to the maintenance of the European concert in regard to Turkish affairs, as being the only efficacious means for bringing about the practical adoption of indispensable reforms in the government and administration of the Ottoman Empire, and that they were accordingly prepared to join in the efforts which Her Majesty's Government proposed to make in this direction in concert with the other Great Powers.

As regards the proposals made in my Circular, Signor Visconti Venosta states that the Italian Government agree with Her Majesty's Government that it is urgently necessary in the general interest to bring about a better state of things in the Ottoman Empire. The horrible events in the provinces and in the capital itself, and the inability of the authorities to prevent them, or even to repress them, with the promptitude which every Government is bound to display in such circumstances, have revealed to Europe a condition of affairs absolutely incompatible with the principles of civilization and humanity. The Agents of all the Powers had, moreover, already been unanimous in calling attention to the grave disorders and the maladministration which have latterly rendered intolerable the sufferings not only of the Christian, but also of the Mussulman population, and have exposed the Empire to the risk of periodical disastrous agitations and dangerous complications. Nor does there appear to be any hope of finding an efficacious remedy in the reforms which were granted more than a year ago to six of the provinces of Asiatic Turkey, nor in their extension to the rest of the Empire. They have not sufficed to arrest and have scarcely even mitigated the evils which harass that country.

Experience has now shown that nothing but the moral authority of the European concert can insure that the necessary reforms shall be efficaciously applied, or that their effects shall be practical and really salutary. The proposal of Her Majesty's Government is the expression of a conviction which is general and undisputed.

The Italian Government are convinced that the firm and united language of Europe will induce the Sultan to accept any conclusions at which the Great Powers may arrive unanimously, as His Majesty has lately done in the case of the reforms in Crete. Her Majesty's Government, however, consider it indispensable that the Powers should enter into a preliminary engagement, by which the adoption of the reforms unanimously decided upon by them would be assured under all circumstances. In fact, they desire to make it distinctly understood that the Powers, in undertaking the important task which is imposed on them by a deep sense of their responsibility to themselves and to the cause of peace in general, do not intend that their work shall prove abortive. The Italian Government agree with Her Majesty's Government in considering it necessary that when the Government of the Sultan is informed of the conclusions arrived at by the Powers as to the reforms to be introduced in the Empire, that Government





should be made aware that Europe is unanimous not only in the advice to be given but also in the firm intention of seeing that that advice is acted upon. The failure of the diplomatic action for which Europe is now preparing might, indeed, be the signal for a crisis the consequences of which it would be difficult to foretell. The Italian Government accordingly declare that, so far as they are concerned, they are ready to accept on this point also the proposal of Her Majesty's Government.

They now await, with confidence, the speedy transformation of the proposal of Her Majesty's Government, so soon as it shall have obtained the adhesion of all the Powers, into a definite and unanimous agreement, on the basis of which it may be possible for the Ambassadors to undertake the preliminary examination which will be confided to them.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) SALISBURY.

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