

*HANDBOOKS PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
HISTORICAL SECTION OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE.—No. 154*

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THE CONGRESS OF
BERLIN
1878

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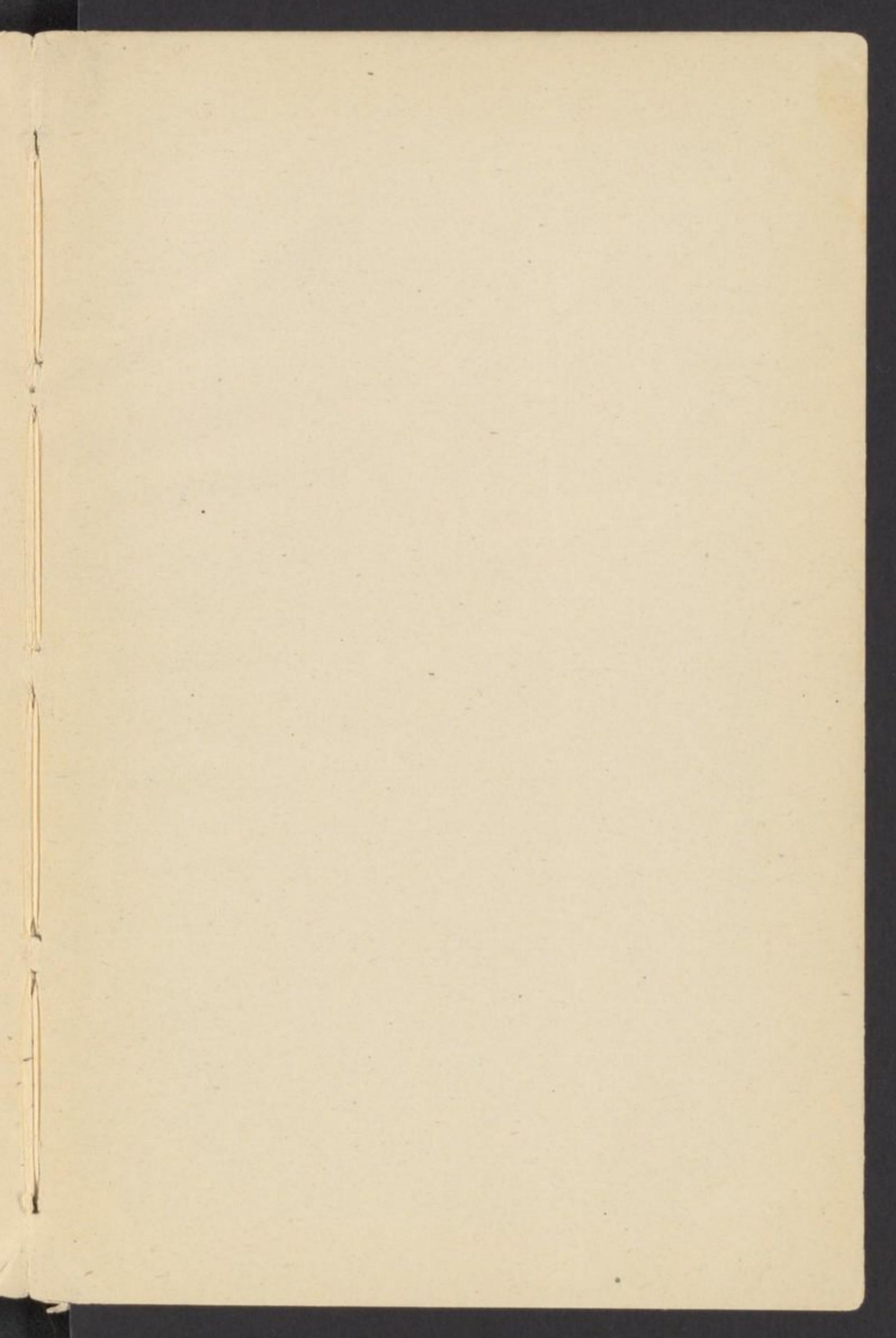
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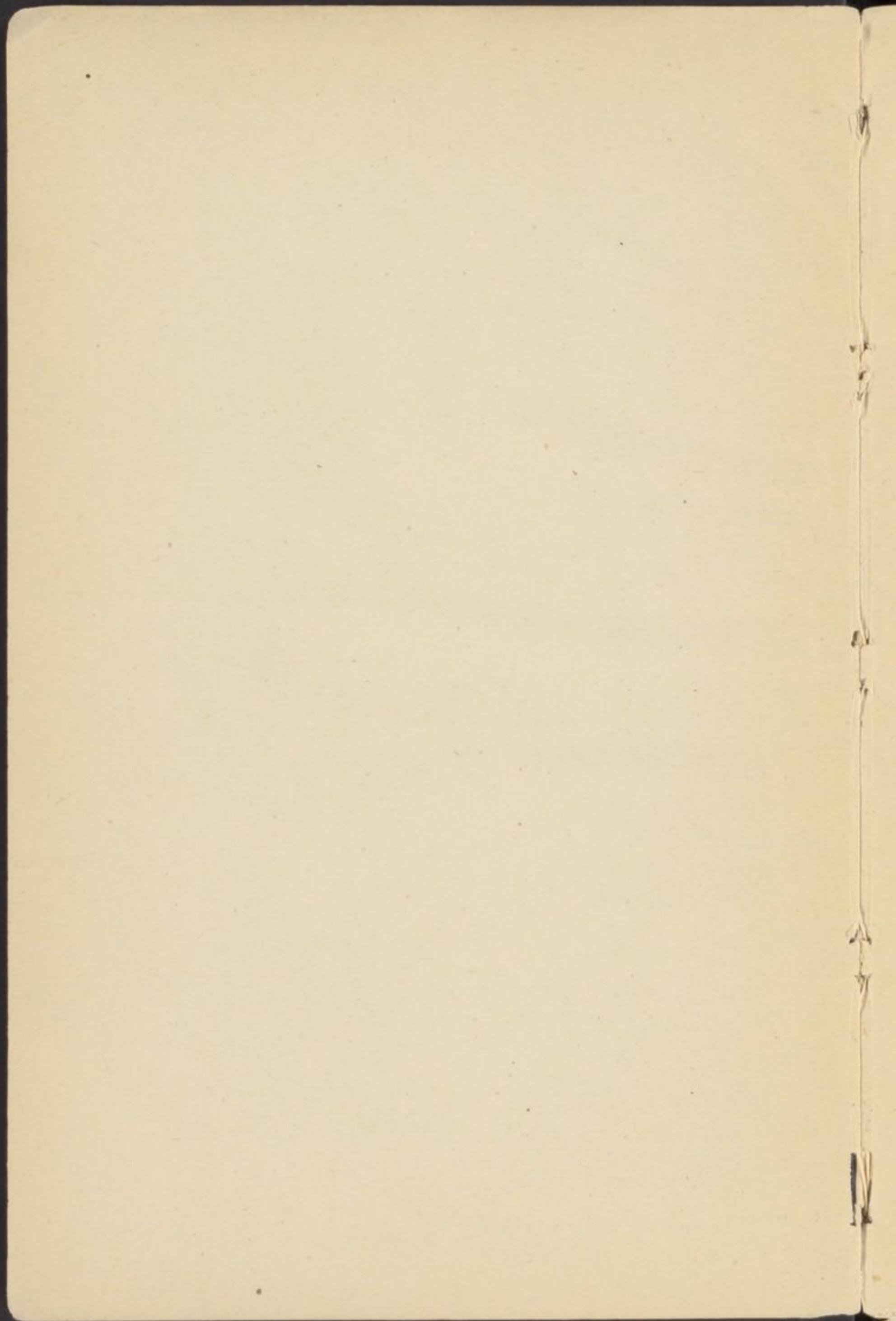


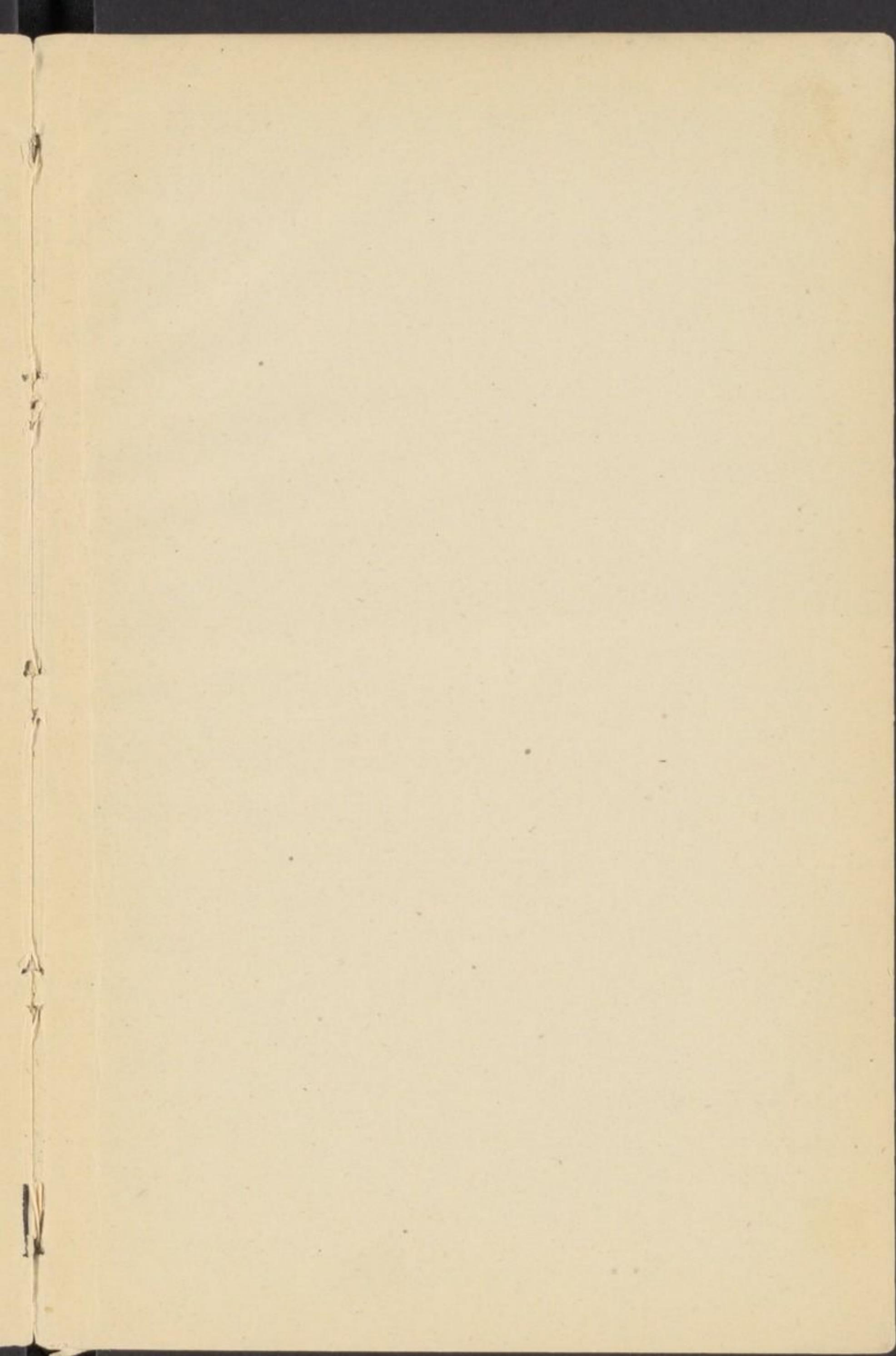


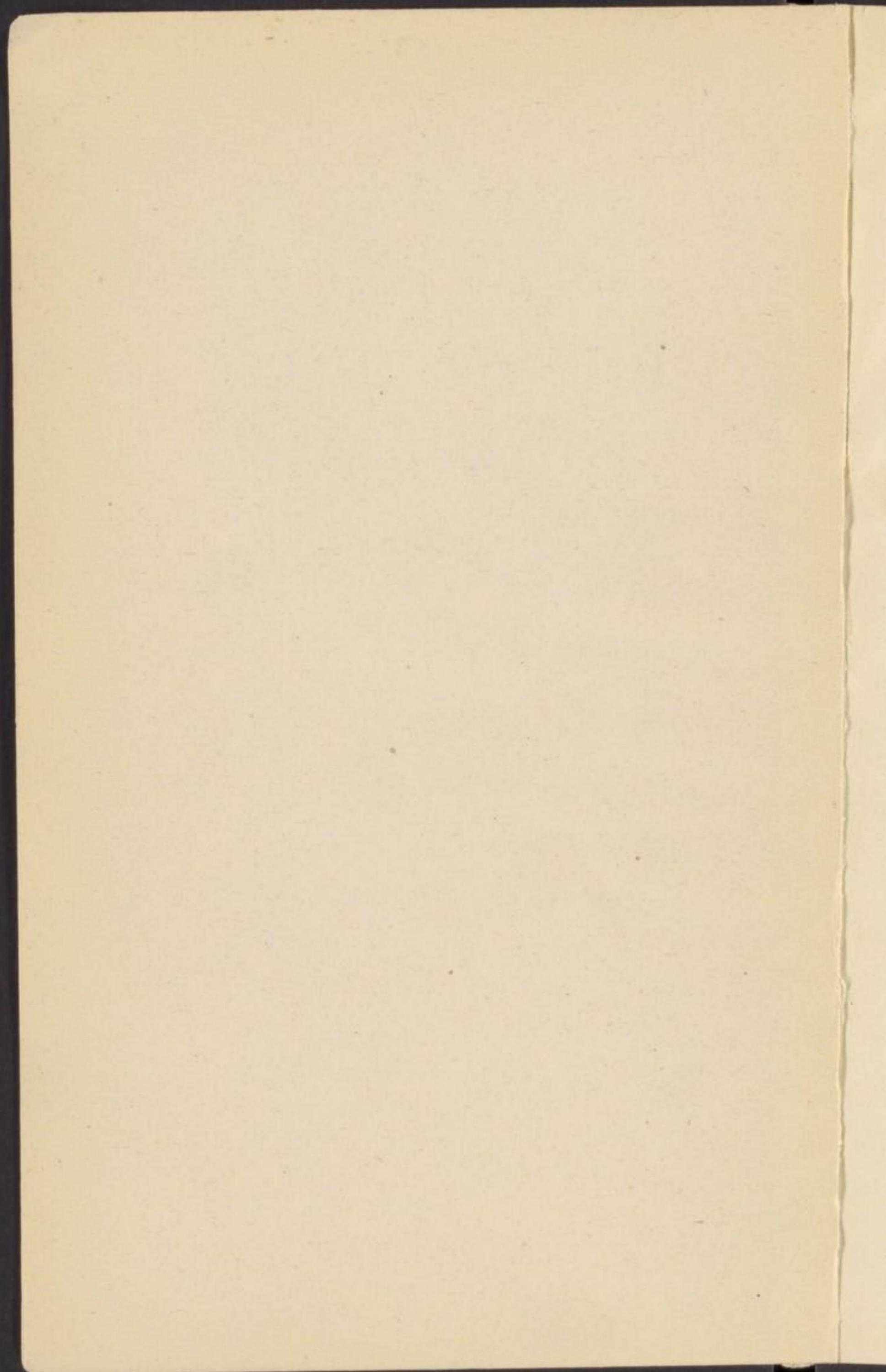
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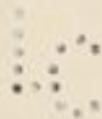
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THE CONGRESS OF
BERLIN
1878

BY

E. L. WOODWARD, M.A.

FELLOW OF ALL SOULS' COLLEGE, OXFORD



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PUBLISHED BY H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE

1920

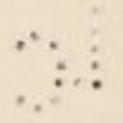
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EDITORIAL NOTE

IN the spring of 1917 the Foreign Office, in connection with the preparation which they were making for the work of the Peace Conference, established a special section whose duty it should be to provide the British Delegates to the Peace Conference with information in the most convenient form—geographical, economic, historical, social, religious and political—respecting the different countries, districts, islands, &c., with which they might have to deal. In addition, volumes were prepared on certain general subjects, mostly of an historical nature, concerning which it appeared that a special study would be useful.

The historical information was compiled by trained writers on historical subjects, who (in most cases) gave their services without any remuneration. For the geographical sections valuable assistance was given by the Intelligence Division (Naval Staff) of the Admiralty; and for the economic sections, by the War Trade Intelligence Department, which had been established by the Foreign Office. Of the maps accompanying the series, some were prepared by the above-mentioned department of the Admiralty, but the bulk of them were the work of the Geographical Section of the General Staff (Military Intelligence Division) of the War Office.

Now that the Conference has nearly completed its task, the Foreign Office, in response to numerous enquiries and requests, has decided to issue the books for public use, believing that they will be useful to students of history, politics, economics and foreign affairs, to publicists generally and to business men and travellers. It is hardly necessary to say that some of the subjects dealt with in the series have not in fact come under discussion at the Peace Conference; but, as the books treating of them contain valuable information, it has been thought advisable to include them.

It must be understood that, although the series of volumes was prepared under the authority, and is now issued with the

EDITORIAL NOTE

sanction, of the Foreign Office, that Office is not to be regarded as guaranteeing the accuracy of every statement which they contain or as identifying itself with all the opinions expressed in the several volumes; the books were not prepared in the Foreign Office itself, but are in the nature of information provided for the Foreign Office and the British Delegation.

The books are now published, with a few exceptions, substantially as they were issued for the use of the Delegates. No attempt has been made to bring them up to date, for, in the first place, such a process would have entailed a great loss of time and a prohibitive expense; and, in the second, the political and other conditions of a great part of Europe and of the Nearer and Middle East are still unsettled and in such a state of flux that any attempt to describe them would have been incorrect or misleading. The books are therefore to be taken as describing, in general, *ante-bellum* conditions, though in a few cases, where it seemed specially desirable, the account has been brought down to a later date.

G. W. PROTHERO,

General Editor and formerly

Director of the Historical Section.

January 1920.

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CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

- 1875 Revolt of Christian Peasants in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- 1876
- May Bulgarian revolt, followed by Turkish atrocities against Bulgarians.
- July Serbia and Montenegro declare war upon Turkey. Conference between Austria and Russia at Reichstadt.
- October Beaconsfield proposes a Conference at Constantinople.
- December Constantinople Conference meets.
- 1877
- January 15 Conference proposes reforms. Secret military Convention signed by Austria and Russia.
- March 18 Secret political Convention signed by Austria and Russia.
- April 9 Turkey rejects final proposals of the Powers.
- April 24 Russia declares war upon Turkey.
- December 1 Fall of Plevna.
- 1878
- January 15 British note to Russia concerning a Russo-Turkish treaty.
- January 24 Armistice between Russia and Turkey.
- January 31 Russo-Turkish preliminaries of peace signed at Adrianople.
- February 3 Austria sends invitations to a Conference.
- March 7 Austria sends invitations to a Congress.
- March 18 Treaty of San Stefano signed by Russia and Turkey.
- May 30-31 Anglo-Russian Memoranda signed in London.
- June 3 Germany sends out invitations to a Congress in Berlin.

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

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1878

- June 4 Anglo-Turkish Convention signed at Constantinople.
- June 6 Anglo-Austrian agreement signed at Vienna.
- June 13 First meeting of Congress.
- June 14 Anglo-Russian Memoranda published in the *Globe*.
- July 7-8 Anglo-Turkish Convention made public.
- July 13 Treaty of Berlin signed.

THE CONGRESS OF BERLIN

§ 1. INTRODUCTORY

THE Congress of Berlin can be studied as a point in the history of the Eastern Question, or as one of the main attempts of the nineteenth century by the Great European Powers to settle without a European war questions affecting all their interests in dangerously different ways.

The place of the Congress in the general history of the Eastern Question, and in the particular histories of the Balkan nations, has been dealt with elsewhere¹. In this paper it is proposed, primarily, to consider the Congress in its European significance.

Unlike the Congress of Vienna, the Congress of Berlin was not faced with the problem of re-making the map of Europe. Its decisions did not, like those of the Treaty of Paris (1856), follow upon a bitter war between four of the European Powers. It was rather an attempt to maintain—so far as possible—the territorial *status quo* in the Near East and the balance of power in Europe, to prevent the outbreak of a war similar to that of 1854-6, and, at the least ideal estimate, to find the greatest common measure of the ambitions of the Great Powers. But the manner of its summoning; its debates, decisions, and attendant circumstances; an analysis of the parts played by co-operation, jealousy, self-seeking, timidity, and a real desire for the welfare of civilization, offer examples of interest to any kind of Congress or other form of common action by the Great Powers.

¹ See No. 15 of this series, *History of the Eastern Question*; No. 17, *Albania*; No. 18, *Greece*; No. 19, *Montenegro*; No. 20, *Serbia*; No. 21, *Macedonia*; No. 22, *Bulgaria*; No. 23, *Rumania*.

It is proposed to deal first with the events immediately preceding the Congress; then with the sessions of the Congress, and its decisions; and finally with the precedents, encouragements, and warnings that it offers.

§ 2. EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE CONGRESS

The outbreak of war between Russia and Turkey in 1877 was the result of the failure of the Porte to carry out reforms in its own government. The defeat of the Turks by Russia a century previously had roused the Sultan to an attempt to re-organize his army and his administration. The military reforms were partially successful; but they depended on a centralization, and an abolition of religious and national franchises that was in itself incompatible with any increase in the liberty of the non-Moslem and non-Turkish subjects of the Empire. In spite of repeated promises of reform the oppression of the Christians had been aggravated by the complete incapacity of the reigning Sultan Abdul-Aziz. In 1875 the Christians of Bosnia and Herzegovina revolted, and Serbia and Montenegro joined them in a war against Turkey. In 1876 a Bulgarian rising and the revolt in Bosnia and Herzegovina were suppressed with such cruelty that public opinion became aroused throughout Europe. The Sultan, in 1875, had followed his usual practice of drowning any demands for a particular reform in a flood of magniloquent promises of general reforms to be granted everywhere; he tried to repeat the process in 1876.

In the meantime various influences were moving the Tsar to direct action. Chief among these influences were Orthodox and Pan-Slav sentiments among the masses; a feeling among the educated middle class that a war was necessary in order to bring about a revolution; a growing fear in the government lest Austria-Hungary and Greece should be the two Powers to reap, locally, the fruits of a complete Turkish catastrophe; the personal ambition of Gorchakoff¹, the Russian

¹ See below, p. 23.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, to rival the achievements of Bismarck; the traditional anti-Turkish and "mystic" policy of the Romanoffs; and, finally, the subterranean machinations of Bismarck himself. Great Britain had proposed¹ a Conference at Constantinople at which the signatories of the Treaty of Paris should consider the whole Eastern Question. The Porte, taking advantage of the known unwillingness of England to sanction any further revision of the Treaty of Paris, made impossible conditions for an armistice with its rebellious subjects. The Constantinople Conference opened at the beginning of December 1876, and on January 15, 1877, drew up a series of reforms. The new Sultan, Abdul-Hamid, who had been placed on the throne some four months previously, still trusted in the anti-Russian policy of England and the poor condition of the Russian army; he refused at the time of the Conference, and subsequently on April 9, to carry out any programme of reforms unless he were allowed to do so on his own initiative, and ostentatiously disgraced his constitutional minister, Midhat Pasha. Russia made no attempt to draw back; she demanded to know what action the Powers proposed to take, and announced her intention of acting, if necessary, by herself.

She felt herself safe in Europe. England might occupy the Straits, but she had no "armée de descente²." France did not wish to oppose a possible ally. Germany had expressed herself ready to repay the debt of honour incurred in 1866 and 1870³. Official Italy had been won over by Bismarck. Above all, Bismarck's friendly *laissez-faire* had brought about a secret agreement between Austria-Hungary and Russia. This agreement, which only came to light officially in 1887, was signed on

¹ Oct. 5 and Nov. 4, 1876. Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1877, No. 1, pp. 390 and 598 (C. 1640).

² Gorchakoff, Memorandum of Oct. 30, 1876, quoted in Goriainov, *Le Bosphore et les Dardanelles*, p. 325.

³ Gorchakoff, letter of March 20, 1876, quoted in Goriainov, *op. cit.* p. 316. Cf. a similar promise in a letter of the Emperor William to the Tsar, *op. cit.* p. 317.

March 18, 1877, and supplemented a military Convention of January 15, 1877. It was a corollary of the Conference of Reichstadt of July 1876; and was of capital importance, since, without it, Russia would never have gone to war. In it Russia promised, in the event of any territorial changes in the Turkish Empire, to permit Austria to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina, and allowed for the admission of the signatories of the Treaty of Paris into the peace negotiations; in return, Austria promised her neutrality, and agreed to allow Russia to occupy Southern Bessarabia¹. It is characteristic of the Austrian diplomacy of the time that Andrassy officially denied to Great Britain, on July 16, 1877, that any secret engagement existed between Austria and Russia. His denial was not altogether accepted, and he found it necessary to repeat it on January 3, 1878, when he stated his hope that "the idea of some mysterious understanding between Austria-Hungary and Russia will be finally dismissed from the minds of the British Cabinet."

At the end of March a final ultimatum was given to Turkey by the Powers and was answered by a blunt refusal.

On April 24, 1877, Russia declared war. Great Britain, with the other Powers, declared her neutrality. But she expressly added to her declaration that, in her opinion, Russia was violating the Treaty of Paris and the Protocol of London (1871), and could not have the "concurrence or approval" of Great Britain for any such violation of agreements².

The Eastern Question had once again brought the Great Powers to the verge of war. The position of Great Britain was clearly defined in a letter of Mr (afterwards Sir) A. H. Layard, the British Ambassador at Constantinople: "The policy which has hitherto

¹ Wertheimer, *Graf Julius Andrassy*, vol. II. chap. xv., esp. pp. 390-394. Larmeroux, *La politique extérieure de l'Autriche-Hongrie*, vol. I., pp. 42-44 and 60-61. Goriainov, *op. cit.* chap. xiv.

² State Papers, vol. 68, p. 843.

made us support Turkey for our own purposes and safety, and for no abstract love of Turks or their faith . . . was partly based on the belief that Turkey is a barrier to the ambitious designs of Russia in the East . . . and that the Sultan, the acknowledged (*sic*) head of the Mahomedan faith, is a useful . . . ally to England, who has millions of Mussulmans among her subjects . . . The Mussulman world, in a struggle for very existence, may turn upon England as the principal cause of the danger that threatens it¹."

There was opposition, but a majority in the country supported the government, and the fear of the Cossacks at Constantinople and an invasion of India was greater than any passionate remembrance of the Bulgarian atrocities. Lord Beaconsfield, in a speech at the Lord Mayor's Banquet of 1876, gave popular expression to the British preparedness for carrying through to the end a war in a just cause.

There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of the belief of the British Government that, whatever the faults of Turkey, Russia was of set policy bent on making things worse. Layard wrote in January 1878 that "Russian influence was for evil," and arrested the progress and improvement which were gradually but surely taking place in the condition of both Mussulmans and Christians. The British Ambassador at Vienna reported, about the same time, that the notorious *bashi-bazuks* had only been employed to suppress the Christian rebellions because pressure from the Russian embassy at Constantinople had prevented the use of regular troops.

The European war was avoided, and a long exchange of diplomatic notes, ending in the summoning of the Congress of Berlin, settled, or, at all events, brought about a peaceful adjournment of the burning questions. This diplomatic correspondence preceding the Congress was of greater importance than the actual protocols of the Congress in determining the final decisions. Con-

¹ Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 15 (C. 1952).

gresses were comparatively new and comparatively infrequent incidents in the history of the Great Powers, while the interchange of notes was part of the usual international routine. Hence "le gros de la besogne¹" was already done when the Congress met, and any changes in the decisions were rather the inevitable effect of certain dominant personalities in the sessions, than of any changes of policy on the part of the European governments.

§ 3. RUSSIAN DIPLOMATIC ADVANCE

On May 6, 1877, Lord Derby wrote to the Russian Ambassador in London that Great Britain could not view with indifference the passing of Constantinople into "other hands" and that she regarded the existing regulations of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles as "wise and salutary: there would be serious objection to their alteration in any material particular²." To this Gorchakoff replied that Russia had no aims at Constantinople; that the fate of the city "est une question d'intérêt commun qui ne peut être réglée que par une entente générale." As for the Straits—"il importe à la paix et à l'équilibre général que cette question soit réglée d'un commun accord³." Count Schuvaloff, the Russian Ambassador at St James', in presenting this note to Lord Derby, added that he was authorized to mention the question of peace. He suggested the formation of an autonomous Bulgaria from the Danube to the Balkans and asked that Russia should be allowed to regain the Bessarabian territory lost in 1856⁴. But a few days later Gorchakoff announced that Russia could not

¹ *Times* correspondent at Vienna. *Times*, May 25, 1878.

² Parl. Papers, Russia, 1877, No. 2. (State Papers, vol. 68, p. 867.)

³ *Ibid.* (State Papers, vol. 68, p. 868.)

⁴ Lord Derby to Lord Loftus, June 8, 9, 1877. Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 15 (C. 1952).

consider any separation of Bulgaria into two provinces¹. The Russian peace proposals—which included an increase of territory for Serbia and Montenegro—were communicated to Layard. He replied² that to suggest to Turkey the acceptance of such terms would result in the British losing all their influence and being considered traitors and false friends. The war therefore continued. Russia met with disasters in July, and was forced to accept the assistance of the Rumanian army. The campaign then centred round the siege of Plevna. Plevna fell on December 1, 1877, and the Russian forces advanced towards Constantinople. Their commander, the Grand Duke Nicholas, is reported to have said “J’ai l’ordre de ne m’arrêter devant rien, de marcher sur Constantinople, et je marcherai”; and again: “Si Dieu le veut, je fixerai sur les murs de Tsarigrad l’écu aux armes de la Russie.” The Tsar was no less enthusiastic: “Si c’est l’arrêt du Destin, que le Grand-Duc plante donc la Croix sur Sainte-Sophie³.” At the end of December the Sultan invoked, in vain, the mediation of the Powers. Great Britain, however, offered her assistance, and Turkey accepted the offer⁴. Russia was unwilling to accept any mediation, and desired to negotiate an armistice directly⁵. On January 9, 1878, a Russian council was held, at which the moderate councils of Gorcha-koff were abandoned in favour of the extremism of Count Ignatieff (former Ambassador at Constantinople). Ignatieff, with the support of the Grand Duke Nicholas, carried his proposals for the occupation of Constantinople and Gallipoli, and a settlement in the Russian interest of the question of the Straits. It was immediately clear that neither Austria nor Great Britain would tolerate any such terms. Since May 1877 conversations had taken

¹ Lord Derby to Lord Loftus, June 14, 1877. Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 15 (C. 1952).

² *Idem ad eundem*, June 13 and 19. *Ibid.*

³ Larmeroux, *op. cit.* vol. I. p. 70.

⁴ See Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 2 (C. 1906).

⁵ *Ibid.*, and Goriainov, *op. cit.* p. 359.

place between Austria-Hungary and England. Austria had expressly desired that the two Powers should not, openly, act together. She had stated her distrust of Russia, her objections to a large Bulgaria, to a Russian occupation of Constantinople, and to the occupation, by any other Power than Turkey, of Bosnia and Herzegovina. She did not regard the dislodgement of the Russians from Constantinople as a very difficult operation. Count Andrassy, the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, informed the Tsar's Government that Austria had no intention of giving up her claim to Bosnia-Herzegovina and that she demanded further concessions if Russia annexed any Turkish territory in Asia; in any case she objected to the conclusion of peace without the consent of the Powers. In an Imperial Council at Vienna Andrassy even went so far as to discuss war. Gorchakoff at once re-assured Austria, and expressed the Russian willingness for a conference to be summoned to ratify the Russo-Turkish peace, and to settle all general questions. The British Government was as firm as the Austrian. On January 15, 1878, Lord A. Loftus, the British Ambassador at St Petersburg, presented a note to Gorchakoff to the effect that Great Britain considered any Russo-Turkish treaty affecting the treaties of 1856 and 1871 to be invalid until it had received the consent of the "Powers who were parties to those treaties¹." The Russian reply (January 25) was, formally, satisfactory. "We repeat the assurance that we do not intend to settle by ourselves (*isolément*) European questions 'se rattachant à la paix².'" On January 30 Gorchakoff stated categorically that "questions bearing on European interests will be concerted with European Powers," and that the question of the Straits was one of those which Russia did not intend to settle by herself³. On January 29 Great Britain informed the Powers of her attitude, without mentioning the Russian reply of January 25⁴, and, on February 3

¹ Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 3 (C. 1923).

² *Ibid.*

³ Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 5 (C. 1925).

⁴ *Ibid.*

and 5, Austria issued an invitation to the Powers to attend an International Conference at Vienna, in order to establish "l'accord de l'Europe sur les modifications qu'il deviendrait nécessaire d'accorder aux Traités" of 1856 and 1871¹.

In the meantime Russia had, by the conclusion of an armistice with Turkey on January 24, without marching upon Constantinople, lost her chance of entering the city; the preliminaries of peace were signed a week later at Adrianople. According to the terms agreed upon, the Russian troops were not to advance nearer to Constantinople than a line drawn across the peninsula some twenty-five miles from the capital, nor were they to enter the Gallipoli peninsula. The British Government, which had, as a temporary measure before the signing of the armistice, sent its fleet into the Dardanelles, now felt unable to trust the Russian Government, and ordered Admiral Hornby to enter the Sea of Marmara. The official explanation of this move was the necessity for protecting British subjects in Constantinople. The Russian reply was that, in view of the necessity for protecting Russian subjects in Constantinople, Russia was obliged to have "en vue de faire entrer temporairement une partie de nos troupes à Constantinople²" (Feb. 11). Great Britain pointed out the difference between the proximity of a friendly fleet and the entry of hostile troops into a town in spite of the terms of an armistice (Feb. 14). The Russian Government gave way inasmuch as the Russian troops did not enter Constantinople, but encamped at San Stefano on its outskirts.

§ 4. PROPOSAL FOR A CONGRESS

The main actors who had appeared on the stage, so far, had been Russia, Turkey, Austria-Hungary and

¹ Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 24 (C. 1977).

² Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 14 (C. 1951).

England. France had accepted the invitation to the International Conference on the understanding that "le programme des délibérations serait limité et défini¹," or in other words—as she definitely stated in March²—that Egypt and Syria were not to be discussed. But behind Austria-Hungary, and deluding Russia, was Bismarck. It was Bismarck who had, in 1871, been the chief instrument in putting Count Andrassy in place of the anti-Prussian Count Beust; who had looked with favour upon the Conference of Reichstadt in 1876, the prelude of the secret agreements of 1877; and who—in spite of his famous indifference concerning the Eastern Question—was unwilling to see Austria debarred from her advance to the East. And if Austria knew that she could count on the support of Bismarck, Russia still imagined that she could find backing from the same source. On November 1, 1876, Bismarck had repeated, though in less categorical terms, his promise of the previous March that Prussia would repay her debt of honour³. A fortnight later, in conversation with M. d'Oubril, the Russian Ambassador in Berlin, Bismarck remarked that he had been able to overcome the difficulties arising from the attempts of the Kaiser's English relations to bring about German pressure on the Tsar⁴. Germany had ostentatiously refused to interfere in the dragooning of the Hohenzollern prince of Rumania. It seemed possible, therefore, to hope that Bismarck would persuade Austria to accept the Russian peace, as she had accepted the Russian war. On December 29, 1877, Gorchakoff had told the British Ambassador at St Petersburg that Russia placed "entire confidence" in Austria and Germany, and that England was "quite isolated." The famous speech of Bismarck in the Reichstag on February 19, 1878, when he spoke of Germany as an "honest broker," could be taken to mean

¹ French Green Book, *Affaires d'Orient: Congrès de Berlin*, p. 9.

² *Ibid.* p. 14.

³ See above, p. 3.

⁴ Letter of d'Oubril, 12/24 Nov. 1876, quoted in Goriainov, *op. cit.* p. 337.

that he would at least use his position to secure a good bargain for Russia¹.

Hence both Andrassy and Gorchakoff were willing to transfer the scene of the Congress to German territory; and an invitation was sent to the Powers to meet at Baden. On March 7 another invitation was sent, not merely for a Conference, but, in view of the serious questions at issue, for a Congress to be held at Berlin, "auquel prendraient part les Premiers Ministres (*leitende Minister*) des Grandes Puissances²." To this Great Britain replied (March 8-9) that, while she agreed to go to Berlin, "it would be desirable to have it understood, in the first place, that all questions dealt with in the Treaty of Peace between Russia and Turkey should be considered as subject to be discussed in the Congress, and that no alteration in the condition of things previously established by Treaty should be acknowledged as valid until it had received the assent of the Powers." On March 13 this declaration was made even more clear: "H.M. Government desire to state that they must distinctly understand before they enter into Congress that every article in the Treaty between Russia and Turkey will be placed before the Congress, not merely for acceptance, but in order that it may be considered what articles require acceptance or concurrence by the several Powers, and what do not." It was obvious, before the signing of the Treaty with Turkey, that Russia was unwilling to accept the British reservations. On March 12 Gorchakoff said that he "could only accept a discussion on those portions of the Treaty which affected European interests." A week later the Russian attitude was again given official expression. Russia intended to communicate the terms of the Treaty with Turkey to the Powers before the

¹ That this was the interpretation put upon it by Schuvaloff as well as by Gorchakoff is clear from their correspondence at the time of the Congress itself. See letter of Schuvaloff of 7/19 June, 1878, quoted in Goriainov, *op. cit.* p. 378.

² All quotations in this paragraph are taken from Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 24 (C. 1977).

meeting of the Congress. As for the Congress itself: "Le Gouvernement de la Reine, ainsi que les autres Grandes Puissances, se réservent au Congrès leur pleine liberté d'appréciation et d'action. Cette même liberté, qu'elle ne conteste pas aux autres, la Russie se revendique pour elle-même." By another week it had become clear what Russia meant by "liberté d'appréciation et d'action." The Russian Government "laisse aux autres Puissances la liberté de soulever au Congrès telles questions qu'elles jugeraient à propos de discuter, et se réserve à lui-même la liberté d'accepter ou non la discussion de ces questions" (March 26).

§ 5. TREATY OF SAN STEFANO

Meanwhile the Treaty between Russia and Turkey had been signed at San Stefano on March 18¹. In it Russia pushed her claims to the full. Montenegro, Serbia, and Rumania were to be recognised as independent. Bulgaria was to become an autonomous tributary Principality, under a Prince elected by the population and confirmed in his position by the Sultan "avec l'assentiment des Puissances"; the territories of the new principality included most of the present Bulgaria and nearly all Macedonia, with Pirot, Vrania, Usküb, Okhrida, Monastir, Koritsa, Kastoria, Yenitsa and Kavalla. The administration was to be organized by a Committee of notables under Russian and Turkish supervision. A Russian Commissary was for two years to supervise the introduction of the new regime, and, until the formation of a local militia had been completed, a Russian army of not more than 50,000 men was to occupy the country and, if necessary, support the Commissary. Russia claimed an indemnity of

¹ The Treaty of San Stefano is given in full in the Appendix to *History of the Eastern Question*, No. 15 of this series. It was officially published in Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 22, and in State Papers, vol. 69, p. 732.

1,410,000,000 roubles; in consideration of the embarrassed position of the Turkish finances, the greater part of the indemnity was to be paid territorially, that is, Russia was to receive the Dobruja, and territories in Asia including Ardahan, Kars, Batum, and Bayazid. She reserved the right to exchange the Dobruja for the Bessarabian territory added to Rumania by the Treaty of Paris. The future organization of Bosnia and Herzegovina was to be settled jointly by Turkey, Russia, and Austria, on the lines laid down by the Powers at Constantinople in 1876.

Russia had, as she somewhat naïvely acknowledged, nothing to conceal. It only remained for her to be disappointed. Bismarck would not exert any material pressure upon Austria. Austria at once protested against the Treaty, in the knowledge that she was supported by Great Britain, and—negatively, at least—by Germany. She asked (March 27), confidentially, whether she could secure a loan in Great Britain to cover the expenses of mobilization.

Great Britain had already brought the Malta and Gibraltar garrisons up to full strength. Lord Beaconsfield announced (March 28) the necessity for calling up the reserves. Lord Derby now resigned, and his resignation, though decided by another question¹, when coupled with Beaconsfield's firm action, made it clear that Great Britain was determined not to give way. On April 1 Lord Salisbury sent a circular² to the Powers giving the English objections to the Treaty of San Stefano. By the Treaty a strong Slav state was to be established, "under the auspices and control of Russia," with ports on the Black Sea and the Aegean; this State was to contain "a considerable mass of population Greek in race and sympathy," which viewed with alarm the suggested incorporation; a Russian Commissary was to supervise the reforms in Thessaly and Epirus; Constantinople was to be separated from its

¹ See below, p. 17.

² Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 25 (C. 1989).

Greek, Albanian, and Slavonic provinces, and the Turkish Government would find in this separation "constant difficulty and embarrassment"; the "compulsory alienation" of Bessarabia from Rumania, and the acquisition of Batum, together with the extension of Bulgaria, would make Russia "dominant over all the vicinity of the Black Sea"; Armenia was to fall under Russian influence; the territorial cessions in Kurdistan would place the Trebizond-Persia trade at the mercy of Russian interference; and the war indemnity was "beyond the means of Turkey to discharge." To this virtual ultimatum Gorchakoff replied¹ on April 9. As his reply dealt with the detailed points in the British circular, that is, with the questions raised by the Treaty of Stefano, as well as with the character of the proposed Congress, it tacitly acknowledged the British demand. Gorchakoff remarked that "M. le Marquis de Salisbury nous dit ce que le Gouvernement Anglais ne veut pas et ne nous dit pas ce qu'il veut." Great Britain continued her warlike preparations; and Russia had to make her choice. From the Russian point of view the defection of Bismarck left no alternative but surrender.

§ 6. ANGLO-RUSSIAN AGREEMENT

On April 8 Lord Derby in the House of Lords had made the reasonable suggestion that the Congress should "stand over until the way was smoothed by private and separate negotiations between the Powers concerned." Count Schuvaloff, who had been aide-de-camp to the Tsar, and exercised a considerable influence over him, took the same view, and on May 8 left London for St Petersburg, and travelled *via* Berlin. He took pains to make it clear that his mission was self-imposed, and that he had no instructions from his government. The result of his journey was a settlement of the crisis. He returned on May 23, bringing with him two Memoranda, in which

¹ Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 27 (C. 1995).

Russia surrendered on practically every point. The terms of the agreement were revealed by a subordinate official at the Foreign Office, and appeared in the *Globe* on June 14. But the substantial points had all been anticipated and discussed in the *Times* of June 11 and 12, and the actual publication of the agreement, in Lord Salisbury's words, did Great Britain "no serious harm." In the copy of the Memoranda published in the *Globe* the Russian signature appeared above the British signature. The Russian copy of the documents, therefore, was apparently the source from which the published copy was taken; and it has been suggested that Russia brought about the publication in order to sow distrust between Great Britain and Austria. The importance of the Memoranda was great, since they contained in miniature most of the decisions made, or rather registered, at Berlin. The first Memorandum consisted of eleven clauses: Bulgaria was to be divided; the northern portion, extending to the Balkans, was to be under a prince; the southern portion, which was not to reach the Aegean, was to be under a Christian governor, with a large administrative autonomy like that of the English colonies; the Turkish troops were not to cross the frontiers of the southern Bulgarian province; England as well as Russia was to guarantee the Armenian reforms; and the Powers—notably England—were to have a voice in the organization of Epirus, Thessaly, and other Christian provinces left under Turkish rule. Russia acknowledged that she had no intention of converting the whole war indemnity into territorial concessions, nor did she wish to obtain precedence over other creditors of Turkey. Great Britain expressed her profound regret at the Russian insistence upon the Bessarabian retrocession, but promised not to oppose it, since the other signatories of the Treaty of Paris would not support her in such action. She also promised not to oppose the desire of Russia to keep Batum and her Armenian conquests¹. In the second

¹ The paragraph in the Memorandum dealing with the annexations in Turkey in Asia deserves quotation in full, since it contained a

Memorandum Great Britain reserved the right to discuss at the Congress the participation of Europe in the organization of the two Bulgarian provinces, the duration and character of the Russian occupation, and the name of the southern province; the navigation of the Danube; and the question of the Straits. So far as these latter were concerned, Russia was to insist on the maintenance of the *status quo*. On May 31 a third Memorandum was signed in which Russia expressed her readiness to come to a secret engagement with Great Britain concerning her promise to restore Alashkert and Bayazid to Turkey, and to restrict her Asiatic conquests to Kars, Batum, and the limits defined in the Treaty of San Stefano.

Great Britain had thus acted independently of Austria-Hungary. It must not be forgotten that the persistent Austrian refusal to act in open co-operation with Great Britain of necessity made the latter Power suspicious. Great Britain not only distrusted Andrassy²; she was afraid of a *rapprochement* between Francis Joseph and the Tsar over Andrassy's head. In a secret despatch to Sir C. Elliot on June 3, Salisbury gave as the reason for the conclusion of the secret agreement that "H. M. Government have never been able, notwithstanding the assurances which they have on various occasions received from Count Andrassy, to acquire the conviction that Austria might not altogether desert them, and they have accordingly been forced to provide

veiled reference to the Anglo-Turkish agreement that could scarcely have escaped the attention and the suspicions of Russia. "...Le Gouvernement de S. M. ne se cache pas qu'il soit probable que de graves dangers menaçant la tranquillité des populations de la Turquie en Asie puissent résulter dans l'avenir de cette extension de la frontière Russe. Mais le Gouvernement de S. M. est d'avis que le devoir de sauvegarder l'Empire Ottoman de ce danger, qui dorénavant reposera d'une mesure spéciale sur l'Angleterre, pourra s'effectuer sans que l'Europe éprouve les calamités d'une nouvelle guerre." (See below, pp. 18-19.)

² Beaconsfield, Derby, and Salisbury had all passed unfavourable judgments on Andrassy previous to 1877-78. See Wertheimer, *op. cit.* II. 316.

against that contingency." Salisbury observed that there was not, in fact, complete community of interests between the Powers. England could not expect help from Austria on the question of Turkey in Asia, and English public opinion, on the other hand, would not tolerate a war on the question of the Serbian and Montenegrin frontiers.

It remained now only to call the formal meeting of the Congress. An invitation was accordingly sent out by Germany on June 3. This invitation—a draft of which had previously been submitted for the approval of Great Britain—contained the words "Le Gouvernement de sa Majesté [i.e. the German Emperor] en faisant cette invitation . . . , entend qu'en l'acceptant le Gouvernement . . . consent à admettre la libre discussion de la totalité du contenu du Traité de San Stefano, et qu'il est prêt à y participer¹." Bismarck told the Count de Saint-Vallier that he thought the sessions would only last three days; and Lord Odo Russell wrote to his government that "well-informed" persons in Berlin believed that all the business would be settled in ten days.

§ 7. THE CYPRUS CONVENTION

Russia had not only been deluded by Bismarck. A further disappointment was in store for her, though she had no definite knowledge of it until it was too late for her to change her policy.

The resignation of Lord Derby—apparently on the question of Great Britain's attitude towards the terms of the San Stefano Treaty—took place at the end of March. Three months later—after the conclusion of the Congress—Lord Derby announced in the House of Lords that the principal reason for his resignation had been that the Cabinet had decided to occupy the island of Cyprus². The advantage of occupying that

¹ Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 33 (C. 2014).

² *Times*, July 19, 1878.

island had long been clear to Lord Beaconsfield, who, so early as 1847, had in *Tancred* registered his view that "The English want Cyprus, and they will take it as a compensation.... The English will not do the business of the Turks again for nothing." The menacing attitude of Russia in the early part of 1878 had made this acquisition of Cyprus both possible and, from the strategic point of view, desirable. On May 30, the day on which he signed the first two Russian Memoranda with Schuvaloff, Lord Salisbury wrote to the British Ambassador at Constantinople that there seemed no prospect of bringing that portion of the San Stefano Treaty dealing with Turkey in Asia "into harmony with the interests of the other European Powers, and of England in particular¹." The effect of the Turkish defeat and the Russian conquests must be towards disintegrating the Asiatic dominion of the Porte. This, in turn, must affect the Oriental interests of Great Britain. And as Great Britain did not propose to go to war on the question, she must at all events be near enough to Asiatic Turkey to prevent any further acts of aggression. The island of Cyprus was the "most available" territory for this purpose. Accordingly the administration and occupation of this island were to be handed over to Great Britain; the Sultan was to bind himself to introduce reforms into the government of his Asiatic territories; and England was to defend these territories against any act of aggression by Russia. In the event of Russia restoring the conquests she had made in Armenia in the recent war, the island of Cyprus was to be evacuated by England, and the agreement to come to an end. A Convention, in these terms, was signed at Constantinople on June 4, 1878².

The existence of this Convention and of the negotiations preceding it was kept secret from Russia; but the Russian surprise ought not to have been very great.

¹ Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 36 (C. 2057).

² *Ibid.* and State Papers, vol. 69, p. 744. Cf. *Life of Lord Lyons*, vol. II, pp. 143-4.

Abundant indications had appeared in the press and elsewhere of what was happening. As early as March 5 the *Times* correspondent at St Petersburg wired to his newspaper that "in official circles here it is suspected that, in order to counterbalance [an] increase of Russian influence in the Black Sea, the British Government may purchase or seize the island of Mitylene and establish there a strong naval station¹." In a subsequent message, Gallipoli, Tenedos, Candia, and Crete were suggested². The Paris *Temps* had made a similar though less definite forecast³. On June 17 the *Times* had a leading article on a lecture⁴ by General Sir F. J. Goldsmid, in which the lecturer advocated the occupation of Cyprus as a point from which we could control a railway to the Persian Gulf. It has been shown that the first secret Memorandum of May 30 had left a loophole for such an occupation, when it expressed a belief that Great Britain could secure the future integrity of Turkey in Asia by measures not involving a European war⁵.

The Agreement was kept strictly secret until the Russian annexation of Batum had been discussed and agreed to in the sessions. Waddington and Bismarck were then informed of its existence, and it was immediately laid before Parliament. The British Government was uncertain how the news would be taken by the Powers. Bismarck was compliant; Austria had her own bargain; Russia had by her own action invalidated any protest; Italy objected, but was powerless; French opinion was hostile, but was quieted by official and semi-official pronouncements.

§ 8. AUSTRIAN POLICY; ANGLO-AUSTRIAN AGREEMENT

At the end of March 1878, the Tsar, alarmed at the possibility of a combined Austro-British attack, sent

¹ *Times*, March 6, 1878.

² *Times*, March 16, 1878.

³ *Temps*, March 30, 1878.

⁴ Lecture to the United Service Institution, on "Communication with British India under possible contingencies," June 14, 1878.

⁵ See above, p. 16.

Ignatieff on a confidential mission to Vienna. The choice of Ignatieff was not happy. Ignatieff had negotiated the Peace of San Stefano, and was known to be entirely in sympathy with the Pan-Slav extremists¹. In spite of conciliatory speeches to Andrassy, Ignatieff showed a complete misunderstanding of the position. He told Baron Ring, the Prussian Minister at Vienna, that, if his mission were unsuccessful, he could bring about Andrassy's dismissal. The Prussian Minister's reply was that if Ignatieff even mentioned such a possibility he would find himself leaving Vienna with a gendarme on either side². But Ignatieff was able to return to St Petersburg with a clear idea that Austria still held to the terms of her secret agreement of 1877³.

It seems clear that Andrassy, while negotiating with England about the possibility of war—he made in April another application for an English loan, to enable Austria to mobilize without warning—was not confident that Great Britain seriously intended war, and put little value upon the military assistance that she could give⁴. The journey of Schuvaloff to St Petersburg was still more disquieting to Andrassy, especially when it was followed by a notable decrease in the concessions Russia was willing to make to Austria. It was therefore with relief that Andrassy was able to count upon the support of Germany, of which he was again assured in categorical terms on May 20⁵.

When the Congress met, Andrassy could be reasonably satisfied. So far from fearing, any longer, the defection of England, he had secured the English consent to his designs. Early in April Count Zichy, the Austrian Ambassador at Constantinople, had secretly

¹ Beaconsfield described Ignatieff as "L'Alexandre Dumas Père de la Diplomatie" (*Times* correspondent in Berlin, *Times*, July 4, 1878).

² Wertheimer, *op. cit.* III. 94.

³ See above, p. 4.

⁴ See authorities given in Wertheimer, *op. cit.* III. 95.

⁵ Letter of Karolyi to Andrassy, May 20, 1878. Quoted in Wertheimer, *op. cit.* III. 101.

sounded the Porte about an Austrian occupation of Bosnia; and on April 24 Count Beust, at this time the Austrian Ambassador in London, had sent to the British Foreign Office a long memorandum to the effect that, even in the Turkish interest, it was desirable that Bosnia and Herzegovina should be annexed to Austria. In the British reply (May 4) Lord Salisbury remarked on the sudden change in the Austro-Hungarian point of view, but said that, in the event of a general Anglo-Austrian agreement, Great Britain would offer no objection to the Austrian plan. Count Andrassy then denied that the occupation of Bosnia had been agreed upon with Russia. A second proposal, of a less stringent character, was now made to the Porte that Austria should occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina upon the invitation of Turkey, the Sultan's rights of sovereignty being reserved. Great Britain advised the Porte not to irritate Austria by a hasty refusal.

Austria could be certain of German support¹. France had protested, privately, to Great Britain against the high-handedness and the bad example of the Austrian method of action, but had no interested objection to the annexations in themselves. Italy objected to the annexations in themselves, but was unwilling to stand isolated in Europe, and had no desire to see Russia as a Mediterranean Power. On April 3, 1878, Count Beust had offered to sign a Convention for common action with Great Britain. After a very considerable discussion, Great Britain authorized her Ambassador at Vienna to conclude such a Convention; it was signed on June 6. It is significant that the British Government finally gave its assent after Bismarck had warned England that Austria was afraid of being isolated by an Anglo-Russian agreement. In the agreement Great Britain promised to give her support to any proposition

¹ Ristić, *Diplomatische Geschichte Serbiens*, 1875-78, II. pp. 251-2, says that Bismarck was the original source of the Bosnia-Herzegovina annexation proposals. See also Wertheimer, *op. cit.* III. 123, footnote 3.

introduced into the Congress by Austria concerning Bosnia. In spite of Austrian pressure Great Britain would not make the same promise for Herzegovina. But the British support, once given, was complete, and the proposal for the occupation and administration of the two provinces by Austria was introduced into the Congress by Lord Salisbury. Bismarck had seen to it that the Bosnia-Herzegovina question should not be introduced until after the most difficult question of Bulgaria had been settled¹. There was then less time left for a discussion about Bosnia and Herzegovina, and no inclination on the part of the Great Powers to endanger the work already accomplished by disagreement on a minor question. Finally, by a secret agreement with Turkey, Austria saved the dignity of the Sultan by regarding the occupation as a provisional measure, and agreeing that the Sultan's ultimate rights of sovereignty should be reserved; the two Powers were to meet after the Congress to decide the details of the occupation².

§ 9. THE PLENIPOTENTIARIES³

The representatives at the Congress were for Great Britain, Lord Beaconsfield, Lord Salisbury, and Lord Odo Russell; for Russia, Prince Gorchakoff, Count Schuvaloff, and M. d'Oubril; for Austria, Count Andrassy, Count Karolyi, and Baron Haymerle; for France, M. Waddington, Count de Saint-Vallier, and M. Desprez; for Italy, Count Corti and Count de Launay; for Germany, Prince Bismarck, Prince Hohenlohe, and Herr von Bülow; for Turkey, Alexander Caratheodory Pasha, Mehemed Ali Pasha, and Sadoul-

¹ See below, p. 29.

² Larmeroux, *op. cit.* I. 160.

³ The official picture of the Congress by Werner is of particular interest since the painter received numerous directions from Bismarck. A good reproduction of this picture is given in Hanotaux, *Histoire de la France Contemporaine*, IV. 290.

lah Bey. The personalities of the British representatives need no description here. It may be mentioned, in passing, that Lord Odo Russell, the British Ambassador in Berlin, had by his charm of manner and open house made himself extremely popular in Berlin; and that he had been the British representative sent to the German headquarters at Versailles in 1871.

Reference has already been made¹ to Gorchakoff's desire to rival Bismarck, and to the manner in which his triumph was prevented largely by the defection of the Bismarck upon whom he counted for the repayment of a debt. Gorchakoff thus took part in the Congress with feelings of personal, as well as of patriotic, resentment, which his failing health and old age made it at times difficult to restrain². Bismarck, as little willing to spare old age as anything else, remarked upon his "colère sénile" and his "caprices de vieille femme³." But old as he was, Gorchakoff remained the clever, politically-learned diplomat, with an eighteenth century grace of manner; and the physical weakness that kept him, or was the pretext for keeping him, from attending all the sessions of the Congress did not prevent him from making eloquent and persuasive speeches on particular occasions, nor from taking a subtle and effective revenge on his enemies, personal and national, at the end of the Congress⁴. Count Schuvaloff has also been mentioned above⁵ as a personal friend of the Tsar, and more in his confidence than Gorchakoff. According to Bismarck⁶, Gorchakoff knew that the Tsar did not wish him to represent Russia at the Congress. At all events, the third Russian representative, M. d'Oubril, was, from the Russian point of view, of great value in bridging the difference of manner—to put it at its

¹ See p. 2.

² On one occasion in a fit of petulance he threw his paperknife into the centre of the table.

³ De Moüy, *Souvenirs d'un diplomate*, p. 116.

⁴ See below, p. 36.

⁵ See p. 14.

⁶ Bismarck, *Recollections*, trans. by A. J. Butler, II. 233.

mildest—that sometimes separated his two more illustrious countrymen¹.

The French representatives were well chosen; they had the difficult task of representing their country at a Congress held in Berlin under the presidency of Bismarck, only a few years after the Franco-Prussian war, and in which France had to play a part far less important than she had played at the arrangement of the Eastern Question in 1856. M. Waddington was not a professional diplomatist, but he knew the points at issue, and his judgment was good. His friend and colleague the Count de Saint-Vallier was a man of exceptional brilliance, resisting courageously the attacks of an incurable disease. Saint-Vallier's opposition to Napoleon's war policy in 1870, and the tact with which he had acted while attached as diplomatic agent to the German army of occupation in France, made his position less difficult with regard to Bismarck and Germany.

Of the chief Austrian representative, Count Andrassy, an observer has written, "Ses yeux, noirs et passionnés, . . . son visage un peu fatigué par une vie tumultueuse, ses uniformes écarlates, surchargés de torsades d'or donnaient moins l'impression d'un négociateur que celle d'un artiste ardent ou d'un capitaine héroïque²." He represented the new Magyar preponderance in the Empire (he had narrowly escaped hanging in the troubles of 1848); but he owed his elevation to Bismarck's dislike of Beust, and his very adventurousness and willingness to leave the traditional path of Austrian foreign policy established his position at the Congress in which Bismarck was doing his best to see that this traditional path was left. His colleagues, Count Karolyi and Baron Haymerle represented, the one the social éclat, the

¹ Andrassy records that he was taken aside during one of the sessions of the Congress first by Gorchakoff, and then by Schuvaloff, each of them remarking that he would favour the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, though his colleagues held the opposite view. (Wertheimer, *op. cit.* III. 131.) Hohenlohe also mentions a serious disagreement between the two Russians. (*Memoirs*, II. 215.)

² De Moüy, *op. cit.* p. 102.

other the technical erudition and experience necessary for their Empire's success.

Bismarck, both as President of the Congress and as chief of the German representatives, showed himself apparently in a new light. He was crowning in peace the success he had achieved in war. From his point of view he could afford to be tactful; he had set the Austrian machine in motion, and since all his less creditable actions were done before the Congress met, he could claim to be disinterested and indifferent. Before and during the Congress he went out of his way to show friendship to the French representatives; and his caustic tongue—though it played with freedom outside the Congress—was directed, in the actual course of the sessions, mainly at the Turkish delegates, one of whom he disliked personally. Turkey had not been happy in her choice. Her first representative, Caratheodory, was Greek by race and religion; but the motives for his choice were too obvious. Turkey thought that a Christian would be more acceptable to the other Powers, and at the same time had no wish that a prominent Mahomedan should be compromised in a negotiation that was obviously not destined to bring glory to Islam. But the Christian Powers knew equally well that a "rayah" would never have any permanent weight in Turkish affairs, and that a Mahomedan Government could easily repudiate a Christian's oath. The second Turkish representative, Mehemed Ali, was born a Prussian—a "gamin de Berlin" in Bismarck's words; he had deserted from the Prussian army and abjured the Christian faith. Whatever his personal worth, he was scarcely fitted for a place among such high dignitaries; and Bismarck, who was persistently rude to him throughout the meetings of the Congress, showed his spite in the words, "Me voilà obligé de placer, comme je le fais pour tous les plénipotentiaires, un factionnaire allemand à la porte d'un déserteur et d'un renégat¹."

The German people and government gave to the

¹ De Moüy, *op. cit.* p. 108. It should be noted that Hohenlohe criticizes Bismarck's manner more severely than does De Moüy.

members of the Congress a reception befitting the dignity of a meeting of the Prime Ministers of Europe. In the summer of a Berlin season the traditional social splendour of the Congress of Vienna was emulated, though on a less imposing scale. Diplomatically, the work of the Congress was narrowly restricted, and in itself scarcely needed such a gathering of great men. But instinctively it was hoped that, the great men being officially brought together, something might now be done—by a renewed collective manifestation of the Concert of Europe—to stabilise the relations of its component Powers.

§ 10. INSTRUCTIONS TO BRITISH PLENIPOTENTIARIES

In the instructions given to the British Plenipotentiaries two preliminary points were to be mentioned before the Treaty of San Stefano came up for discussion. The first of these was the "anomalous" position of the Russian armies, a position "full of practical hazard¹." The British representatives were, if necessary, to promise that a withdrawal of the British naval force would be simultaneous with the retirement of the Russian army. The second point concerned the representation of Governments not signatories of the Treaty of Paris. Great Britain desired to press for the admission of Greece and favoured the admission of Rumania and Serbia.

In the discussion of the Treaty of San Stefano, Great Britain had no vital interest in the frontiers of Serbia and Montenegro, and the arrangements to be made with respect to Bosnia and Herzegovina; on these points her representatives were to "support any legitimate proposals tending to benefit and strengthen the Austro-Hungarian monarchy," but opposition to the terms of San Stefano was not, on these points, to be pushed "so far as to break up the Congress." The proposed Russian

¹ This and the subsequent quotations in this section are taken from Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 39 (C. 2083), (Mr Cross to British Plenipotentiaries, and Lord Salisbury to Lord Odo Russell).

annexations in Asia were to be resisted, though little support or success in such resistance was probable. In the event of failure to move Russia, H.M. Government would "acquaint her representative" with the plan adopted. England wished to protest against the retrocession of Bessarabia as a violation of international law, but she could not alone attempt to restrain this retrocession by force¹. The Powers would not allow Russia exclusive right of consultation concerning the administrative institutions of Bulgaria, Thessaly, Epirus, and Crete. Great Britain was to support the Greek claims in respect to "some of these provinces." The province of Bulgaria was not to extend south of the Balkans; and while "every necessary safeguard" was to be provided "for the good government of the population" of the province south of the Balkans, the political and military authority of the Sultan was to be secured, and Turkish forces were to continue to occupy the Balkan passes. The Greek populations in the larger Bulgaria were to be preserved from absorption by the Slavs. Salonika and Kavalla were to be "kept at a distance from the jurisdiction of any State likely to fall under the influence of Russia." The numbers of the Russian army of occupation and its length of stay were to be reduced. Great Britain's position as a creditor of Turkey was not to be affected by the Russo-Turkish indemnity, and the indemnity itself was not to be paid in territory. The *status quo* of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles was to be maintained.

A comparison of these instructions with the actual terms of the Treaty² will make clear how little was left to be decided in the Congress, and what little change was made in the course of the sessions, in spite of a month of discussions, and the interplay of so many brilliant personalities.

¹ See above, p. 15, and below, p. 32.

² See below, pp. 33-35.

§ 11. THE PROCEDURE OF THE CONGRESS¹

The Congress met in the central hall of the Radziwill Palace, Bismarck's great house in the Wilhelmstrasse. The Plenipotentiaries sat at a horseshoe-shaped table to the right and left of the President in the alphabetical order of their nationalities. At each end of the table sat the secretaries. At the far end of the hall was a table for the books, documents, and maps for the use of the Plenipotentiaries.

After the customary politenesses, and the election of Bismarck as President, Herr von Radowitz, German Minister at Athens, was chosen as secretary to the Congress, with four assistants, one of whom, the Count de Moüy, was French, while three were Germans—Herr Busch, Baron Holstein, and Count Bismarck. The direction of the Archives was also entrusted to a German, Herr Bucher.

The President then announced, formally, the task of the Congress. The stipulations of the Treaty of San Stefano "sont en plusieurs points de nature à modifier l'état des choses tel qu'il se trouve fixé par les conventions européennes antérieures, et c'est pour soumettre l'œuvre de San Stefano à la libre discussion des Cabinets signataires des Traités de 1856 et 1871, que nous nous trouvons réunis. Il s'agit d'assurer, d'un commun accord, et sur la base des nouvelles garanties, la paix dont l'Europe a tant besoin."

Bismarck then made certain suggestions concerning procedure. All propositions and documents destined to appear in the protocols should be drawn up in writing, and read by those members of the Congress who had

¹ In this section all quotations and summaries of speeches are taken from the actual protocols of the Congress, and the Treaties of San Stefano and Berlin, unless otherwise stated. The Protocols are given in full in Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 39 (C. 2083), and in State Papers, vol. 69, pp. 862-1078. The Treaty of Berlin appears in Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 38 (C. 2081), and State Papers, vol. 69, pp. 749-768. The Treaty of Berlin has been published in an Appendix to No. 15 of this series, *History of the Eastern Question*.

initiated their introduction. As for the order of work, it seemed best not to keep to the order of paragraphs in the Russo-Turkish Treaty, but to deal with questions according to their importance, beginning with Bulgaria¹. At the fifth meeting Bismarck said, even more definitely: "On doit terminer d'abord les questions qui peuvent amener un désaccord entre les Cabinets." Bismarck thought that a certain interval should elapse before the second meeting, in order that the Plenipotentiaries should have "le temps d'échanger leurs idées." He assumed that the deliberations would be kept secret. Later on in this first session, after an unexpected encounter between the British and Russian representatives, he suggested that notice should be given at the preceding session of any proposal to be initiated at the meetings of the Congress. Further, while regarding it as an axiom that the minority should not be bound to accept the decision of a majority, it seemed expedient that a majority decision should, in non-vital questions of procedure, be taken as valid, whenever a minority did not register a formal protest. During the second session it was proposed that—to save time—the traditional reading of the previous protocol should be abandoned and printed copies of the text should be distributed before the meeting of the Congress; this printed text should be considered as approved, unless any modifications were suggested.

In the sessions this rule of unanimity of decision where demanded, though technically adhered to, was stretched very considerably in the case of Turkey. The Turkish proposal to adjourn the discussion of the Bulgarian question was met by a remark from Bismarck that it was not in the interests of the Porte to create difficulties in the progress of the discussions; and the equally legitimate refusal of the Turkish representatives, on the ground that they were bound by their instructions from Constantinople, to accept the settlement proposed for Bosnia and Herzegovina was dealt with in a still more cavalier way. Bismarck announced his

¹ See above, p. 22.

certainty that the Turkish Government would send fresh instructions; "le Protocole reste ouvert pour les recevoir."

Throughout the sessions Bismarck emphasized the need for working quickly. In the session of June 25 he announced that his health would not permit him to attend many more meetings of the Congress; and he always alleged a desire to hasten the work of the Congress when he proposed that any disputed questions should be settled by special meetings outside the Congress, or by subsequent committees. Thus at the second session he proposed, in order to secure a general agreement about the form of government of Bulgaria, "réunions particulières et intimes entre les Représentants des Puissances directement intéressées, réunions qu'il recommande sans se croire en droit de les convoquer."

A second method adopted to settle difficult points without lengthy and discordant debates in the sessions was to hand over the question to one of the Plenipotentiaries not directly concerned. Thus M. Waddington was asked to draw up a clause embodying a compromise between the British and Russian views on a Bulgarian frontier question, and Count Corti agreed to try and bring about an agreement between Russia and Austria on the constitution of the provisional government for Bulgaria.

In dealing with questions of detail, where the general principles had been laid down by the Congress, different methods were adopted. Thus a committee was formed, consisting of one Plenipotentiary for each Power, to draw up the terms of a treaty (based upon the decisions of the Congress) to modify that of San Stefano. A similar committee was formed to define in detail the Serbian frontier. This committee also dealt with the Montenegrin frontier; and on the motion of Count Schuvaloff, the exact delimitation of the Bulgarian frontier was assigned to it. On the latter question the delimitation committee was unable to agree. The point of difference was referred back to the Congress. Bismarck then proposed that the Congress should decide

the question at issue by a majority vote. After a discussion, a compromise was reached on the main difference, and the questions of detail were again left to the committee, there also to be decided by a majority vote. The actual decision was made by a majority of five against two.

The committee of delimitation was also asked to decide, again by a majority vote, on disputed points connected with the Asiatic frontier. Agreement in the committee was obtained when fresh instructions to the British and Russian members arrived from their respective governments. Owing to its ignorance of the ground, and to the lack of maps, the actual demarcation of the frontier in question was left by the committee to a Military Commission which was to be composed of a Russian, a Turkish, and a British officer.

Yet another method was adopted in order to secure an agreement between Austria and Russia on disputed points concerning the Danube. The sessions of the Congress were suspended for half an hour while one Austrian, one Russian, and one other Plenipotentiary conferred together, and came to an understanding.

The interests of individuals and of the smaller nations were affected by the work of the Congress. Individuals made known their interests by petitions; a *résumé* of such of these petitions as were properly attested and of a "certain intérêt politique" was presented to the members of the Congress; and the rule that no subject was to be discussed at the sessions unless formally introduced by one of the Plenipotentiaries, was held to apply to the petitions.

The interests of the smaller nations demanded a more extensive treatment. The smaller nations chiefly concerned, Rumania and Greece, though not represented directly at the Congress, had powerful friends who wished to use them at least as checks against the aggrandizement of the Slavs. So far as Greece was concerned, there was a general feeling that the interests of European peace as well as of Greece itself might be served by a "rectification of frontiers." It was agreed

therefore that a representative of the Greek kingdom should be admitted "à exposer les observations de la Grèce, lorsqu'il s'agira de fixer le sort des Provinces limitrophes du Royaume, et qui pourra être appelé dans le Congrès toutes les fois que les Plénipotentiaires le jugèrent opportun." Two representatives—the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Greek Minister at Berlin—were admitted during the ninth session of the Congress, and, from the places usually occupied by the secretaries, read a guarded statement of their case, and withdrew.

The position of Rumania was less fortunate, since, although she had played an important part in the Russo-Turkish war, Russia persisted in the adoption of a course of action hostile to Rumanian sentiment, as well as opposed to previous treaty stipulations. It was therefore with great unwillingness that Russia agreed to the motion of Lord Salisbury and Count Corti that the Rumanian delegates—who had petitioned to be heard—should be admitted even to state their case. Bismarck took up his usual attitude: "(il) hésite à penser qu'il soit bon d'accroître les difficultés de la tâche pacifique dévolue à la haute Assemblée," in introducing elements that "ne semblent pas de nature à faciliter la bonne entente." The two Rumanian delegates were admitted; but, in the words of an eyewitness of the scene, "ils avaient l'air fort triste l'un et l'autre, et n'accomplissaient assurément leur mission que par devoir et sans aucune espérance¹." Lord Salisbury wrote to his Government that the delegates were inaudible. Scarcely had they left the Congress when the Russian proposals were accepted, and the requests of the Rumanian delegates completely ignored.

§ 12. THE DECISIONS OF THE CONGRESS²

The Treaty of San Stefano had threatened the peace of Europe by a one-sided settlement of the Eastern

¹ De Moüy, *op. cit.* p. 131.

² See above, footnote to p. 28.

Question. The Congress of Berlin met to secure the peace of Europe by a settlement as far as possible in the interest of all concerned. It is necessary therefore to examine first the decisions of the Congress upon the points at issue in the East, and then to see how far these decisions tended to secure and maintain the peace of Europe.

The Bulgarian question occupied five out of the eighteen full business sessions of the Congress and twenty-two out of the sixty-four clauses of the Treaty of Berlin. The terms of the Anglo-Russian memorandum became the basis for the terms of the Treaty. The principality of Bulgaria was confined to the area between Serbia, the Danube, the Dobruja, and the Balkans, with the Sanjak of Sofia. The area south of the Balkans and between the Vilayet of Adrianople and the Pashalik of Seres was to be organized into a privileged province to be known as Eastern Rumelia—under the direct political and military control of the Sultan, but with administrative autonomy and a Christian Governor-General. The latter was to be nominated for five years by the Porte and with the consent of the Powers. Internal order was to be maintained in Eastern Rumelia by a native gendarmerie and a local militia. The Porte could garrison the frontier with regular troops (i.e. not with *bashi-bazuks* or Circassians). A European Commission was, with the Porte, to settle the organisation of the province.

The principality of Bulgaria was to be autonomous in government and only tributary to the Turkish suzerain; the Prince was to be elected by the population, and his election confirmed by the Porte with the assent of the Powers. The assembly of notables at Tirnovo was, before the election of the Prince, to draw up a form of government. In the election of the assembly the Turkish, Rumanian, Greek and other elements of the population were to be given a fair weight. Liberty of belief, and the equality of religions before the law, were definitely enjoined. Until the form of government had been drawn up, and for not more than six months, a

Russian Commissary supervised by Turkey and the Powers was to direct the provisional administration of the principality. Russian forces, not exceeding 50,000 in number, were to occupy Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia for nine months after the signing of the Treaty.

Montenegro was recognised as independent, and given an accession of territory, including Antivari, but she could have neither warships nor war flag, and her new coast line was to be policed by Austria. As in the case of Bulgaria, Serbia, and Rumania, recognition of independence was made contingent upon the establishment of full religious liberty.

Serbia was given independence and an increase of territory, but the chances of a greater Serbia seemed indefinitely postponed when the Turkish provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina were put under the provisional administration of Austria, and when Austria was allowed to establish routes and garrisons in the Sanjak of Novi Bazar.

Rumania was recognised as independent, with the provision that the portions of Bessarabia given to Moldavia in 1856 were to be restored to Russia in exchange for the Dobruja.

To Greece was promised an offer of mediation of the Powers, if Turkey showed herself unwilling to accept the rectifications of frontier suggested by the Congress. On the Danube the European Commission was maintained; its authority was to extend from the mouth of the river to Galatz, and it was to elaborate, with delegates from the riverain states, rules for the navigation of the river as far as the Iron Gates; from the Iron Gates to Galatz no fortifications or ships of war—except light police and customs boats—were allowed. The works of improvement at the Iron Gates were to be carried out by Austria to whom the other riverain states were bound to give any assistance required of them.

In Asia, Ardahan, Batum, and Kars were to be ceded to Russia; Batum was to become a free port.

Finally the Sultan promised to maintain the principle of religious liberty and equality of religions before the law throughout the Ottoman Dominions. The rights of France were specially reserved, and the *status quo* of the Holy Places was maintained.

The Treaties of Paris (1856) and London (1871), in so far as they remained unmodified by the new Treaty, were maintained.

No guarantee was given to the Treaty¹.

§ 13. INCONSISTENCIES IN THE DECISIONS

Bismarck remarked during one of the sessions that "Le Congrès ne peut faire qu'une œuvre humaine, sujette, comme toute autre, aux fluctuations des événements." The work was indeed intensely human in its inconsistencies. In accordance with the wish of the population Bulgaria was made into an independent principality; against the wish of the population the district of Eastern Rumelia and Macedonia were left under Turkey. The maintenance of a *de jure* vassalage together with a *de facto* independence of the principality could but increase the political unrest. Bosnia and Herzegovina were freed from the Turk, only to be made subject to another government of alien race. It had been objected to the Treaty of San Stefano that the greater Bulgaria created by it excluded the Sultan from any land routes to his other European dominions; the greater Bulgaria was now abolished, but a considerable portion of the Sultan's European dominions was taken away from him. Russia, while giving assent to the majority of population principle as "rational," "equitable," and "practical," deliberately took Southern Bessarabia from Rumania, in spite of this principle, and in spite of the wishes of its inhabitants as well as of the whole Rumanian people. With the lesson of the flouting of Europe by the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia

¹ See below, p. 36.

still clear in the memory, the Powers created for the Bulgarians a precisely similar temptation to break treaties. The Greeks were half encouraged, half discouraged in their ideas of Pan-Hellenism, and, at the same time, promised an increase of territory of great value; a promise that—especially in the circumstances in which it was given—could only give them a desire for more and a shrewd understanding how it could be got.

Finally the Treaty that was to secure, so far as was humanly possible, the peace of Europe had itself no guarantee. The Powers were afraid to commit themselves to any pledge by which they might by malevolence, design, or accident, become involved in war. "Comme si la logique et la vérité devaient avoir le dernier mot, ce cénacle allait être mis au pied du mur et révéler combien son appareil souverain cachait de timidité et de doute¹." Russia, who, as victor, felt the weight of most of the restrictive clauses of the Treaty even more than the vanquished Turkey, saw clearly her advantage in weakening its moral effect by asking the Powers for a guarantee, with a foreknowledge of their refusal. In the solemn speech in which he introduced his proposal Gorchakoff had no small revenge upon Bismarck, Andrassy, and Beaconsfield for his humiliation. The question of a guarantee was discussed in the following session. One of those present at the discussion says of Gorchakoff: "Son visage fin demeurerait immobile, mais je lisais dans ses yeux la curiosité discrète et maligne . . .²." Bismarck, as President, should first have asked the opinion of his colleagues, but he decided to cut the knot himself, and at once replied as the representative of Germany. He thought that, while the Congress had no intention of letting its decisions be flouted, it could not "à l'avance . . . paraître supposer que des résolutions prises solennellement par toute l'Europe unie ne seraient pas exécutées. Il faudrait attendre une infraction pour s'en préoccuper." Russia, however, insisted in bringing forward a definite motion. Great Britain adopted

¹ De Moüy, *op. cit.* p. 142.

² *Ibid.* p. 143.

Bismarck's point of view, Salisbury said that he knew of no more solemn or binding sanction than the signature of his government and the Russian motion was lost.

§ 14. EFFECTS OF THE DECISIONS UPON EUROPE

The reason for all this inconsistency, and for the cavalier treatment of the smaller nations, has already been given. The Congress was the alternative to a war in which at least three of the Great Powers would have been involved, and, fairly to appreciate its work, the evils that it averted must be kept in mind. The Congress succeeded in postponing war for a generation, and the Plenipotentiaries, nearly all of them old men, cannot be held responsible for what was left undone during the next thirty years. It has been mentioned above that the settlement of so serious a crisis by other means than that of war was in itself almost an innovation, and marked an advance in international reasonableness since the wars of the eighteenth century. If the main crisis were settled, the Plenipotentiaries could content themselves with a hope that minor inconsistencies would be resolved at a later and less stormy time. It was from these motives that the Powers acquiesced, for example, in the Russian re-occupation of Southern Bessarabia. Bismarck actually said that "*l'œuvre du Congrès ne saurait, à son avis, être durable, si un sentiment de dignité blessée subsistait dans la politique à venir d'un grand Empire; et quelle que soit sa sympathie pour l'Etat de Roumanie....*"

From this point of view, then, of the Great Powers, was the Congress a success in establishing an equilibrium of influence in the areas in which Russian chauvinists had wished to rule alone, and did it thereby lay the foundation of a durable peace? The question can best be answered by considering separately the gains and losses of each great nation.

Russia had not—even at San Stefano—secured a free

passage for her ships of war through the Straits. She had not obtained the Greater Bulgaria that she desired; the Slavs of Bosnia and Herzegovina had been handed over to Austria, and Austria had been pushed forward towards Salonika. Russia had scarcely secured the amelioration of the lot of the Christians still under Ottoman rule. And if, in Asia, she had obtained certain important advantages, her gains were neutralised by the British occupation of Cyprus. She had thus fought her war more or less in vain.

For these humiliations she was herself, in the main, responsible. While following a tortuous policy with regard to Austria, and distrusting her profoundly¹, she had expected that Austria would allow herself first to be deceived and then to be cheated of her bargain. While aiming at control in the Aegean and in Asia Minor, she had suspected that Great Britain would take practical measures to safeguard her interests²; yet in the Russian plans no allowance seems to have been made for the Anglo-Turkish convention. Russia had shown complete ingratitude to Rumania for her share in the war with Turkey; and yet she imagined, in spite, again, of plain warning of a more trustworthy character³ than the smooth words of Bismarck, that the latter would allow German policy to be deflected from its course, in order to repay to Russia the debt of honour. Further, the Russian counsels were at once autocratic and divided. Before the Congress Gorchakoff had opposed Ignatieff; and the latter, for example, knew

¹ Gorchakoff had written to Novikoff, the Russian Ambassador at Vienna, in 1876, "Ce n'est pas d'hier que je suis arrivé à la conviction que nous ne devons compter que sur nous-mêmes, tout en conservant l'apparence de croire aux protestations qu'on nous prodigue. C'est le cas en partie à Berlin, mais surtout à Vienne." Quoted in Goriainov, *op. cit.* p. 331.

² See above, p. 19.

³ After the Gastein interviews of 1871, Schweinitz, the German Ambassador at Vienna, had told Novikoff "Nous avons intérêt à maintenir son (i.e. Austria's) intégrité, plus nécessaire, selon nous, à l'équilibre européen que celle même de l'empire ottoman." Quoted in Goriainov, *op. cit.* p. 304.

nothing of the Austro-Russian convention of March 1877 until he was actually going to negotiate the Treaty of San Stefano; during the Congress Gorchakoff and Shuvaloff did not work well together¹.

It might have been possible for Russia to have kept the sincere friendship of Bulgaria. The reduction and division of the Greater Bulgaria in spite of Russian opposition should have made this friendship stronger. But Russia had not the necessary political lightness of touch. The Russian treatment of Rumania was not such as to encourage the friendship of a neighbouring small nation, and the behaviour of the Russian civil and military functionaries during the time of the occupation was not such as to make them popular². An observer of the occupation³ remarked "les Russes ne s'exprimaient à leur (i.e. the Bulgarians) égard qu'avec beaucoup de mauvais vouloir et de mépris, bien que la prudence politique leur imposât le devoir d'en parler avec plus de réserve." The Russians even praised Turkey, to show their antipathy for Bulgaria. The Grand Duke Nicholas is said to have remarked of the Bulgarians: "Ce sont des brutes⁴." The dislike was mutual; and the same observer gives the Bulgarian reasons. Their reserve "tenait moins à un manque de reconnaissance qu'à la crainte de perdre leur nationalité et leur indépendance, qu'ils croyaient menacées." They had said: "La Russie va nous délivrer des Turcs; mais l'Europe ne lui permettra pas de nous absorber⁵."

Great Britain had avoided war and had conjured away the nightmare of the Cossacks at Constantinople, but she had acquiesced in the establishment of the Austrians

¹ See above, pp. 23 and 24.

² It is interesting to notice that the Balkan country—Montenegro—which remained pro-Russian for the greatest length of time is the country which has never had any Russian officials of occupation.

³ Quoted by d'Avril, *Congrès de Berlin*, pp. 375-6, from the *Bulletin de l'œuvre des Écoles d'Orient*, Nov. 1879.

⁴ Wertheimer, *op. cit.* III. 103.

⁵ The part played by anti-Russian feeling in the subsequent history of Bulgaria is too well known to need mention here.

(with Bismarck behind them) on the road to Salonika and the East. On the principle of settling one crisis at a time she had been successful; but, clever as he was, Beaconsfield had been outwitted by Andrassy, when he allowed Salisbury to initiate the proposal that Austria should occupy and administer Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Austro-German policy of an eastward expansion had not yet created a critical situation; but the policy existed, and neither the British Government nor the parliamentary opposition realised its importance.

It is doubtful whether the British insistence upon the reduction in size of Bulgaria was really politic. Russia, as has been shown, could have been trusted to make herself as unpopular in Bulgaria as she had become in Rumania. British consent to the larger Bulgaria would have made Great Britain popular; and Lord Derby at the time pointed out the obvious fact that while the smaller Bulgaria was "absolutely inaccessible to Great Britain" the "larger Bulgaria reaching to the sea would be much more independent of Russian" and much more open to British influence¹. With regard to the British acquisition of Cyprus it must be borne in mind that Austria and Russia had made secret agreements relative to the partitioning of Turkish territory without consulting Turkey or Great Britain; that Russia had herself made an agreement with Great Britain that was secret from Austria, and Austria had made one that was secret from Russia; and that Russian opinion had—previous to the meeting of the Congress—imagined that Great Britain would adopt some measure to balance any Russian acquisitions.

The policy of occupation was criticized by Lord Granville in the House of Lords on the ground that Cyprus was no nearer the Dardanelles than Malta; that it was not of great use for the defence of the route to India; and that it was of no use for the defence of the

¹ Lord Derby, House of Lords, July 18, 1878.

Asiatic frontier of Turkey. On the other hand Lord Derby stated during the course of the debate that the "principal object" of the acquisition of the island was its importance relative to the "Euphrates valley railway¹," and neither Lord Granville nor any of the critics realised the full meaning of this fact, nor the possibilities of the railway.

The taking of the island from Turkey could not but have a bad effect upon British prestige in Turkey itself. It had been clear that the British support of Turkey was actuated by British interests rather than Turkish; but it was now clear also that Turkey could not regard her territorial integrity as menaced any less by Great Britain than by Austria and Russia. It was natural therefore that the Porte should accept the support which Germany was soon to become eager to give.

Of the Powers at the Congress, Austria-Hungary could claim to have won the most striking success. Without any loss of life or money, she had established herself, with the consent of the Powers, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and secured the control of a corridor leading to the Aegean. She had obtained a virtual control over the port of Montenegro. Her rival in the Balkans had been involved in a costly war, and had been deprived, in a European Congress, of those fruits of her victories that would have endangered Austrian ambitions.

The events of the last five years have made it difficult to see anything but ultimate disaster in these Austro-Hungarian victories; even before the effects of Andrassy's policy had begun to work themselves out, it was clear how grave a burden Austria had added to her many embarrassments. The actual occupation of the two provinces was a military task lasting more than two months, and, when it was completed, Austria had only increased by more than a million the number of her unassimilated Slav subjects. To obtain this dubious advantage she had put herself under the control

¹ See above, p. 19.

of Prussia-Germany, and had made reconciliation with Russia difficult. She had created a Jugo-Slavia *irredenta*, and done all that was possible to throw Serbia and Montenegro into the arms of Russia. The magnitude and the locality of the Austrian success made Italy—who had obtained nothing from the Congress—less ready to forget her own irredentist claims.

If the great period of modern Germany can be identified with the career of Bismarck, then, by the Congress of Berlin, German power had reached its zenith. For Andrassy was, on a long view, only playing Bismarck's game. Austria had now definitely given up all hopes of rivalling Prussia in Germany, and had accepted Prussian help to support her in the eastward advance; and in this advance the dangers and difficulties were to be met by Austria, while the fruits of success were to be shared by Germany.

In the choice between Russia and Austria, it was inevitable that Germany should choose Austria. But the manner of her rejection of the one, and the methods by which she supported her choice of the other Power were not inevitable, and in her action Germany had not chosen the path leading to her own safety. Her internal situation was not altogether satisfactory—Bismarck had not defeated Catholic and socialist opposition; and by an abandonment of Russia, Germany had herself opened the way to the Franco-Russian alliance which she so much feared, and from the results of which—worked out on her own logic—she has not been able to escape.

France and Italy had won nothing definite from the Congress; but the subsequent French occupation of Tunis, as a corollary of the British occupation of Cyprus, was bound to bring about a conflict of interests between France and Italy. The conflict came only three years after the Congress, and resulted in the adherence of Italy to the Austro-German alliance.

§ 15. THE EXECUTION OF THE TREATY

The general execution of the Treaty of Berlin, and the results therefrom, belong to the subsequent history of Europe. It is possible here only to touch upon the more or less immediate breaches of the Treaty.

The terms of the Treaty itself were not always clear. Thus, according to Article XXIII, the Porte was to introduce into the Cretan *Règlement Organique* of 1878, "modifications qui seraient jugées équitables." But it was not said whether the Porte, or Russia, or the Powers, or the Cretans were to decide upon the equity of any proposed modifications. This lack of clearness was however of minor importance, because Turkey violated not only the modifications but the *Règlement* itself, and Cretan nationalist sentiment was too strong to be damped down by promises of reforms, genuine or spurious. In 1885, 1889, and again in 1896, there were revolts in Crete. The troubles of 1896 resulted in the Greco-Turkish war of 1897, the intervention of the Powers, and, in 1898, the virtual independence of Crete under a High Commissioner.

Where the terms of the Treaty were in themselves clear, they were violated in some cases because they demanded historical or geographical impossibilities, and in other cases because of the plain unwillingness of those concerned either to make the sacrifices demanded of them or to keep their ambitions within the limits assigned by the Treaty. The division of Bulgaria was both an historical and a geographical impossibility. It is remarkable that the Bulgarians waited so long as seven years before following the precedent given by their Rumanian neighbours of a direct defiance of the Powers. In 1885 the union of Eastern Rumelia with Bulgaria was proclaimed at Philippopolis. England had, by this time, learnt greater wisdom, and supported the union. Russia, who now realised the full measure of her self-achieved unpopularity, desired a weak Bulgaria, but had

once more to submit to the decisions of Europe; and a Conference of the ambassadors of the Powers at Constantinople allowed the Prince of Bulgaria to become Governor-General of Eastern Rumelia.

The attempts to satisfy the Montenegrins demanded geographical impossibilities. Gusinye and Plava had been granted to Montenegro, but the Mahommedan Albanians who inhabited them refused to allow the annexation. A compromise proposed in 1880 by Count Corti restored a portion of their territory to the Mahommedans, at the expense of the Albanian Catholics. The result was to strengthen the alliance of Catholics and Mahommedans, already begun in the Albanian League (1879). In June 1880 a Conference of the Powers at Berlin decided to abandon Count Corti's proposal and to give to Montenegro Dulcigno, which was Mussulman, and a strip of sea-coast as far as the Boyana. To secure the acceptance of these demands by the Mussulman Albanians and the Porte, it was necessary for the Powers to organize a naval demonstration off Dulcigno, and to threaten to seize the customs house at Smyrna.

The Congress had left Greece to settle with Turkey her proposed "territorial readjustments"; the Powers could intervene in the case of a disagreement. The disagreement followed as a matter of course; a European Conference at Berlin in 1880 drew a frontier line which Turkey formally refused to accept; and though in 1882 a new frontier was agreed upon it was clear that the settlement was not final, and that the intransigence of both parties could only result in war.

The most ominous violations of the Treaty by open flouting of its terms were in the Turkish treatment of Macedonia and Armenia, and in the Austrian treatment of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Porte was ordered to apply to Macedonia, and the other parts of Turkey in Europe for which no special organization had been provided, the Cretan Règlement adapted for local needs. "La Sublime Porte chargera des commissions spéciales, au sein desquelles l'élément indigène sera largement

représenté, d'élaborer les détails de ces nouveaux règlements dans chaque province." Only after two years did the Porte take any action; and then it drew up, on its own initiative, a scheme of organization, which it submitted to the local commissions. However the scheme was not officially promulgated; reforms were again brought forward in 1896, but the Greco-Turkish war of 1897 afforded a convenient pretext for their postponement. The Macedonian question was thus left open; the dire consequences are but too well known.

In the Berlin Treaty, and in the Anglo-Turkish agreement of June 4, Turkey had promised to carry out reforms in Armenia. The reforms were not introduced; and Great Britain, who, by the terms of her occupation of Cyprus, had incurred responsibility for their introduction¹ was not near enough to exercise any local supervision. The terrible results of the Turkish neglect of duty are, again, well known.

The ambitions—and, in part, the fears—of Austria were too great to allow her to keep her promise that the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina would be a temporary "mesure de police." The introduction of conscription in 1882 was the beginning of a complete subjection of the Slav interests in the provinces to the Imperial bureaucratic system, and foreshadowed the definite annexation of 1908.

§ 16. CONTEMPORARY BRITISH OPINION OF THE CONGRESS

Of the various European countries, Great Britain most openly rejoiced at the achievements of the Congress. Russia and Turkey could not be expected to show any enthusiasm; the Italian press was hostile to England on the question of Cyprus and to Austria on the control of Bosnia, Herzegovina, and the Montenegrin littoral; the French press was more moderate in language, approved

¹ The Anglo-Russian Memoranda had stated that England as well as Russia was to guarantee the Armenian reforms. See above, p. 15.

of the Congress as a whole, but disapproved of the Anglo-Turkish agreement. Andrassy said that he was received on his return from Berlin with a welcome of "Katzenmusik¹."

The British people gave their representatives a triumphant reception, and the enthusiasm of London was reflected throughout the country. The attitude of educated opinion may be summed up in four quotations, the first of which is from a despatch sent from Berlin by Lord Salisbury, and accompanying the official version of the Treaty; the second from a leading article of the *Times*; the third from a speech of Mr Gladstone in the House of Commons; and the fourth from a speech of Lord Derby in the House of Lords:

"Whether use will be made of this—probably the last—opportunity which has thus been 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 on the sincerity with which Turkish statesmen now address themselves to the duty of good government and the task of reform." (Salisbury².)

"We may remember that it is just two and twenty years since a settlement of the Eastern Question, far less promising than the present one, was made. If the arrangements of 1856 have endured so long, we may trust that the arrangements of 1878 will be at least equally vital. If so, the Eastern Question, solved or unsolved, will at least have been pushed on safely through the present century. The next century, if it is not satisfied with what has been done, may take the matter up afresh and deal with it in its own way." (*Times*³.)

"Taking the whole of the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin together, I most thankfully and joyfully acknowledge that great results have been achieved in the diminution of human misery, and towards the establish-

¹ Wertheimer, *op. cit.* III. 141.

² Parl. Papers, Turkey, 1878, No. 38 (C. 2081).

³ *Times*, second leading article of July 15, 1878.

ment of human happiness and prosperity.” (Gladstone¹.)

“I hold this Treaty of Berlin to be so far good that it is infinitely better than war.... The most it seems to me that can be urged in its favour is that, as Sir Philip Francis said of the Peace of Amiens, ‘Although nobody is proud of it, everybody is glad of it.’” (Derby².)

¹ House of Commons, July 30, 1878, quoted in Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, II. 576.

² House of Lords, July 18, 1878, quoted in *Times* of July 19, 1878.

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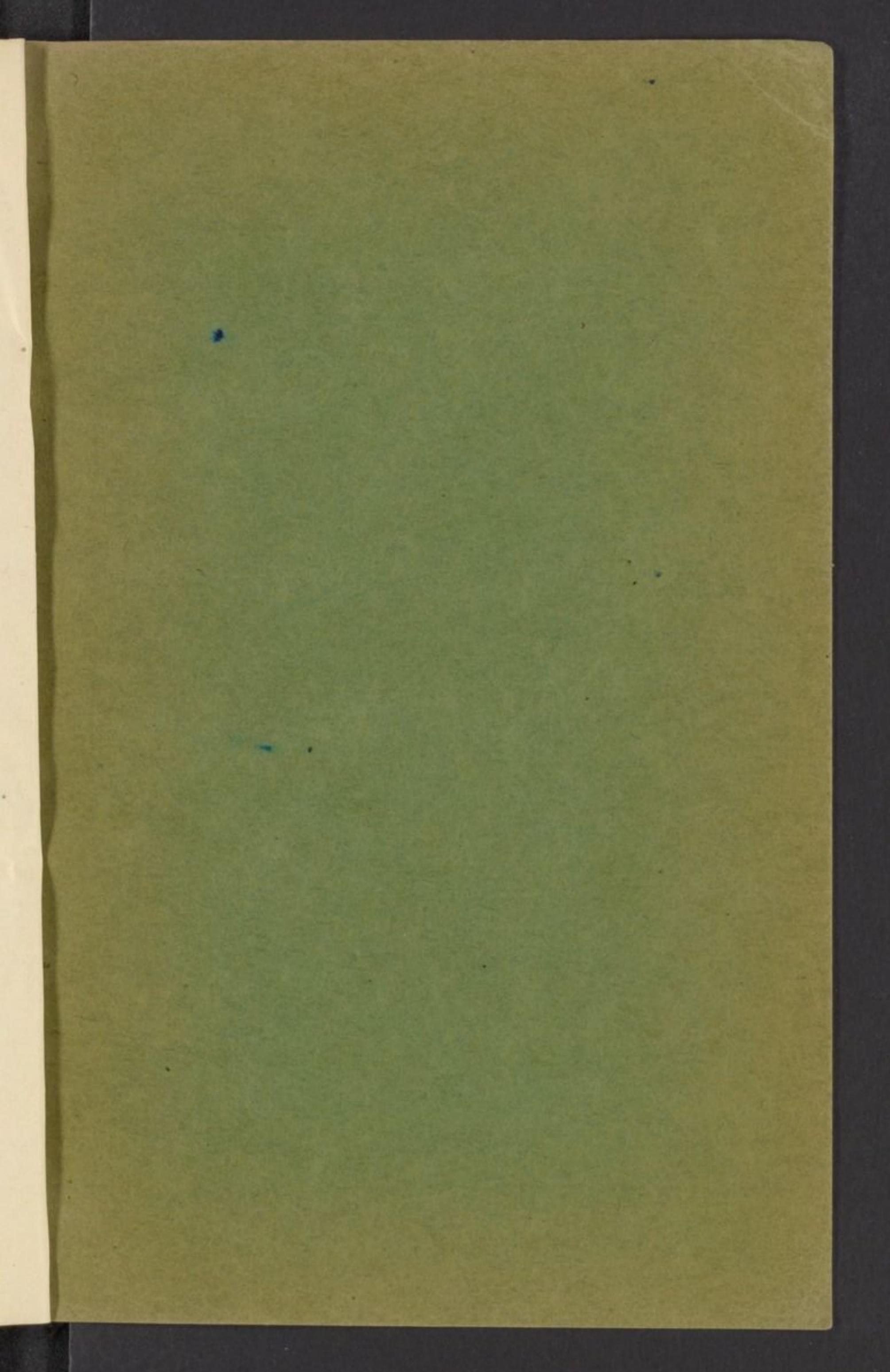
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