

May 10, 1856

Mr. Pluckett complied, but rather reluctantly, and wrote: "I agree to give you forty pounds, upon the condition that you deliver into my hands the person of Thomas Sparkes (who must be the person named in my instructions) within [Mr. Thompson here supplied the limit of time] one hour from this time.—JOHN PLUCKETT."

Mr. Pluckett handed the document across to Mr. Thompson.

"You have neglected," said Thompson, "to mention to whom this undertaking is addressed."

Mr. Pluckett volunteered to supply the omission.

"Never mind," said Thompson, "I'll do it," and he took the pen and wrote at the bottom of the paper, reading the words as he wrote: "To Thomas Sparkes, Esq., late of 90 Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road."

"That's the man!" exclaimed Pluckett starting up.

"And I, Mr. Pluckett," said Thompson, "am he—Thomas Sparkes, Esq., late of 90, Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road, at present residing, for greater security, with Mr. Pluckett, sheriff's officer of Chancery Lane, at your service."

"You! you!" said Pluckett, grasping for breath—"you are Sparkes, the man I've been hunting—the man I've been chased and sneered at about?" and Pluckett groaned with rage and shame.

"I am the man, Mr. Pluckett; and now having performed my part of the compact, I will trouble you for forty pounds."

"Forty pounds," groaned Pluckett. "O I would have given twice forty pounds, rather than this had happened. 'O! O! what will Levy say when he hears it? what will old Solomon say?'"

"Make your mind easy, Mr. Pluckett. I promise you never to disclose the circumstances; and you may depend upon me."

"O, Mr. Thompson—I mean Mr. Sparkes—if you will do that, my mind will be at rest. There—there are your forty pounds," and Mr. Pluckett counted out the notes on the table.

As Mr. Sparkes—we may now call him by his name—transferred the money to his pocket, the servant entered with a letter for him. It had a deep border of mourning. Mr. Sparkes tore it open, and learned that his aunt was dead, and had left him her money.

"My dear Pluckett," he exclaimed, turning and seizing the sheriff's officer by both hands, "I'm a man of property; my aunt's dead, I am happy to say—no, I don't mean that—but my aunt's dead, and left me all her money, and I shall only want your forty pounds as a temporary loan. Now take your prisoner!"

The matter was quickly arranged. Mr. Sparkes gratified Pluckett by allowing himself to be taken off to the lock-up in Cursitor St., but on the plaintiff's being informed that the debtor had been captured, and the debt and costs satisfied, he was set free, and returned in a few hours to his lodgings in Chancery Lane. That night Pluckett and Sparkes sat long over their hot gin-and-water, becoming more and more affectionate with every glass, until at last their vows of eternal friendship became at once fervent and inarticulate.

**TURKEY IN THE CRUCIBLE.**—The representatives of England, France, and Austria have presented to the Sultan their scheme of a new constitution for his empire—the Magna Charta of the Rayah population. The whole form and spirit of Mahomedan is thrown into the smelting pot, to be transferred when in a state of solution, to the mould framed by western politicians. It is exactly twenty-four years since the first newspaper was published in Turkey; it is just twenty years since regular posts were first established in Turkey; it is twenty-five years since Turkey liberated her Greek slaves; it is about fifteen years since the first pair of western trousers enveloped the understanding of a Mahomedan prince; and it is just one year since the Sultan dared so far to infringe on the ancient rights of the Mahomedan faith as to annex the mosques to the State, and depose that sacred and previously all-powerful personage, the Sheik-ul-Islam, for opposing the innovation. So, Turkish assimilation to the customs and ideas of the west has not been long in progress; nor, till within the last two years has the progress been very rapid. Yet it is proposed—and what is proposed under existing circumstances may be held adopted, in so far as documentary adoption goes—to haul up this old immovable empire with one strong pull, into a level in liberality with the most liberal European powers, without one particle of consideration for the ineradicable prejudices of race and religion, the peril of the Grand Turk's head, or the probability of another Milosh starting up in any of the provinces, whenever the opportunity occurs, to throw off, with Greek assistance, the authority of a disunited and exhausted power.

The document to which the Sultan is expected to subscribe, "in consideration of the services rendered to Turkey by her allies, and of her own well-understood interest;" proposes to establish civil and political equality between the Musselman and non-Musselm: in subjects of the Porte; to provide equal security for their persons and their properties; to allow for signers to hold landed property; to establish separate tribunals for Mahomedans and Christians and mixed tribunals for cases in which both are concerned; to abolish the exclusion of Christians from offices of State and military command; to give a Christian adlatu to every Mahomedan Governor and vice versa, with right to appeal on the part of either in case of difference, to the Council of state at Constantinople; the reform of the police of the empire; the reform of the financial system; the development of the industrial resources—agricultural and commercial—by the construction of works of communication; and the establishment of educational institutions—elementary, literary, and scientific. In fact, every means of thoroughly reforming the whole Turkish system has been proposed by the benevolent gentlemen who attend the Conferences at Constantinople. Nothing could be more admirable—nothing more proper than the proposals which they so modestly submit to the Sultan, with this small objection, that to force upon an independent State a system entirely at variance with the genius of its people, the spirit of its religion, the whole of its traditions, and the historical character of its laws, is a feat in diplomacy that has never yet been accomplished since the world began. The Mahomedan, with his hopes of eternal happiness, and an extensive harem of celestial houries, dependent, in a great measure, on the aversion to Christians and Infidels, must stand in an attitude of hostility to all these innovations—the attitude the more resolute, and the hostility the more intense, in proportion to the sincerity of his faith and the verity of his patriotism. We know that the first pair of trousers almost occasioned a revolt within the last twenty years; and that five years ago a Greek could not pass through Constantinople without the risk of being spit upon by the very beggars; that the Rayahs were so oppressed by the sumptuary laws, that they affected poverty so far as to live in old tumble-down houses, which looked like a ruin without, while within they were filled with every conceivable luxury. We know furthermore, that by the very fundamental principles of Turkish law, every one who accepts a public office gives the Sultan an arbitrary right over his life and inheritance. Yet we expect the Turk to see the object of his aversion and scorn exalted to a level with him, without feeling "all the angels in his beard" outraged by the circumstances; while we provide for the Greek achieving a position which subjects him legally to certain unpleasant contingencies, which, should they occur, will inevitably bring his protectors about the Sultan's ears for a breach of his engagements.

This method of attaching Turkey to the European system seems to us to be, as we have said again and again, the most certain course imaginable to detach her from it entirely, and create revolution throughout the whole of the Asiatic part of the empire. What respect will the Kurds, the Turcomans, and Arnouts, feel for the commander of the Faithful, when they find him the obedient instrument of the Franks; and what success can attend the administration of laws that are at variance with the theoretic principles of the whole system of national jurisprudence! It has been often said that the Rajahs do not want any such privileges as the three powers wish to provide for them, for the reason that the concession would be, to all practical purposes, merely nominal, while it would inevitably intensify tenfold the existing jealousy and hatred with which they are regarded by their fellow-subjects. The Greeks, Armenians, and Jews have among them the whole commerce of Turkey, and they know that no law can repress the insults of an adverse and uncompromising religion, especially when the Government itself trembles before fanaticism which is its most powerful weapon abroad, but the most perilous one at home. The Sultan would never have dared to dispose the Sheik-ul-Islam if the cannon of the Allies had not been at his back; and who imagines that an empire like Turkey can maintain its integrity, after its vital element of cohesion is squeezed out of its political constitution? You may admit Jews, and Turks, and even Buddhists to participate in all the rights and privileges of a British subject, without in any degree affecting the constitution of the country. But once admit either Christian or Jew to the rights and privileges of a Musselman in the Turkish state, and you utterly annihilate the great fundamental religious principle on which the constitution of the state is based, revolutionize it from top to bottom; and, from being a religious form of

government, change it to be one purely political.—These proposals are all in their May blossom and look very fine just now, but the fruit will soon ripen. A few years will see it first in perpetual disturbance, then in massacre and revolt, and the ruin of the Turkish empire. Russia knows that well. She knows that, under the proposed system, the fall of Turkey in Europe is a question of time—that the Allies have inserted the wedge; and it remains for Russia to drive it home, when it best suits her convenience.

Russia took one way of solving the great Eastern problem—we are taking another; and our method is to make old intolerant Turkey the most liberal and tolerant power in continental Europe—to cram it into a system cut and dry, and theoretically adapted to one set of circumstances, without any possible relation to others of more vital and imperative importance. If we want Turkey as speedily as possible out of Europe, we have taken the surest way of accomplishing our object. She is exhausted by war; and we now elevate to power and influence within the empire, a race equally hostile to Turkey and to ourselves—widen the channels of corruption—and intensify the sources of strife; and we call this attaching Turkey to the European system.—Experiment on these things as we may, politics will never overcome religion, nor any foreign civilization take root in a people whose faith is at variance with its principles and its character. To be a Musselman is to be a fanatic, necessarily and essentially. To be a Musselman without being a fanatic is to wear a religion for political purposes, without principle of truth, and to be open to every corruption, and the tool of every well-paying oppression. The true Musselman cannot be our friend; and we make our terms with the false, to be sold in our turn when the time comes. This is our policy with Turkey. While we provide a certain means of expediting the inevitable fall of Turkey, we have strengthened Austrian influence along her frontier, and we propose to leave Russia sufficiently powerful in that quarter to give the Eastern crisis, when it occurs, such a direction as will bring the condemnation of the whole world on the diplomacy just now in progress both at Paris and Constantinople.—Aberdeen Journal.

**A VOICE FROM ENGLAND.**—A recent letter from London, written by "a gentleman of political position and not unknown in literary circles," to the Boston Advertiser, contains a great deal of speculative but valuable information. Let us try to catch its contents in a condensed form.

There is a general conviction in England that a war with America, on some subject, is not far off—that the two nations must measure their strength before reason will be the arbitrator between them. The opinion is also general that the dispute ought to be left to the decision of some non-maritime power as umpire. Lord Palmerston has been waited upon by a deputation from Manchester, urging the necessity of closer commercial relations with Brazil. He received the cotton lords superciliously, but eagerly caught up their ideas on the subject, and is already acting vigorously in the matter. A British Mission to Rio Janeiro is evidently not far distant. Every one is remarking the increased vigor of action and clearness of thought, in the foreign office since the absence of Lord Clarendon.

England was the only positive objector to admitting Prussia to the Conference. France is less eager for peace. The policy of Count Buol is now supported by all classes. Great difficulties are expected in the course of the Conference. Russia already demurs to what she knows to be the purpose of the allies. England, Turkey, and Sardinia insist upon the dismantling of Nicolaieff. France does not push it, and is very unwilling to make it a sine qua non. Austria protests against it, and in opposition to England insists that it is not "on the Black Sea." France uses the arguments of England, but is influenced by Austria. Uneasiness exists in England as to the firmness of the British negotiations, when France and Turkey are both so pliable. Turkey seconds England in a demand for indemnification to the former for the expenses of the war. On this subject France is quiet and Austria strongly protests against such injustice to the Czar. France and England are united in reference to the Aland Isles. The former is no doubt kept up to the mark in this matter by Sweden. Russia demands that, consenting to the demolition of Northern Sebastopol and the non-fortification of the Aland Isles, that she be allowed to retain Kars. England and Sardinia alone oppose the arrangement. It is said the Western Powers have yielded to Austrian importunity not to insist upon the neutrality of the eastern coast of the Black Sea. Russia to be allowed to build forts there and employ armed vessels of a certain rate

for coast purposes. No help or countenance to be given to the Circassians, and the Western Powers to recognise the claims of Russia to the whole Circassian territory. This concession is said to have been arranged between Austria and France, and Turkey was cajoled by the latter to consent.—England and Sardinia were thus compelled to agree to this concession when demanded. The great struggle will be Nicolaieff, which, if Russia be permitted to maintain, and to erect fortifications on the shores of the Sea of Azoff and on the eastern side of the Black Sea, will leave her as powerful as ever, although no ships of war are ever seen in that quarter. These advantages once secured Russia would be even stronger than before, as to Turkey, Persia and Asia. It is whispered that the French politicians have no objections to see England menaced in Asia, and that they consider the growth of Russian power in the direction of Persia a healthy counterpoise to England. This is indicated, but not openly avowed, and the Russian and Austrian diplomatists assume its existence in their diplomatic proceedings.

The English Cabinet, firmly as it appears to be established, is uneasy at something in the doings of home parties, difficult to penetrate. A few evenings ago, your correspondent was the last man that left either houses of parliament, except George Hatfield, the executive M. P. for Sheffield. Your correspondent, without being an eaves-dropper, had opportunity of watching the manoeuvres of Mr. Hayton, the Secretary of the treasury. He is, with his man Friday, Joseph Brotherton, the M. P. for Salford, the collector of votes on emergencies. We never saw Mr. Hayton play the Lion's Jackall so actively before. Not for immediate votes, but for some question to come, and concerning which his face and manner were all earnest.—Col. Bentick, for some reason or other, seemed to watch his movements while the other seemed as eager to escape his observation from lobby to lobby and hall to hall, they seemed to eye one another with suspicion. No cat ever seemed more eagerly after a mouse than Hayton after the members as they left the house. This is always a sign of something important on the tapis.

There is no subject which at present excites so much interest in the mind and heart of all classes, in connection with public affairs as the report of Sir John McNeal and Col. Calloch, concerning the catastrophe of the Crimea. This report inculcates especially the Earl of Lucan, the commander in chief of the cavalry, and the Earl of Cardigan, as to the suffering of men and the loss of horses in the light cavalry. It inculcates Gen. Airey, the quarter master general, and his deputy the Hon. Col. Gordon (son of Lord Alexander) as to the utter neglect and mismanagement of the quarter master general's department. We believe that the report has not disclosed one half of the villainy of these men. Never was heartlessness so cold nor indifference so cruel. Selfish indolence, and base interest characterised the management of the cavalry and the quarter master general's department. Yet all these men were promoted and decorated, and most of them placed in new positions of emolument. The fault of all this is Lord Hardinge.—He and the late Lord Raglan were the sources of half the jobbing in the army. Gallant men as ever drew a sword, but proud, selfish, overbearing, jobbing, and utterly contemptuous to poor officers and to the men. It is notorious that Lord Hardinge is the prime favorite with the court, and that the promotion of aristocratic personages, irrespective of their merit, does not dispense a certain Prince who visits the Horse Guards more frequently than is good for poor officers who are not high born. The government is unable to control the Horse Guards clique. The Prince and Lord Hardinge are too strong for the reforming tendencies of the premier and the minister of war.

The public is however thoroughly roused on the abuses of the army, and the Horse Guards will be swept away as an institution altogether, unless the government can put into effect speedily very decided and extensive reforms.

**INSURANCE QUIBBLES.—A GOOD JOKE.**—The N. Y. Mirror of the 10th inst says: The agent of the Transatlantic Telegraph Company (Mr. F. N. Gisborne) has just returned from England with a flea in his ear. It seems the lost cable was insured in England, but when application was made for the payment of insurance, the company declined, on the ground that the cable was exactly where the parties wanted it—at the bottom of the ocean!—These British insurers must have taken a hint from the story of the negro sailor cook, who approached the captain one morning with an anxious face and said, "Massa, be anything lost when you knows where 'tis?" "No, you fool," said the captain. "Barry glad to hear it," said Cuffy, "coss our new coffee tea kettle just fall overboard. But tant lost, Massa, coss we know where tis."