

## ENGLAND AND ARMENIA.

AN apparent crisis in the relations of France, Russia, and Great Britain to Turkey has been brought on by the Porte's refusal to agree to the reforms in Armenia demanded by the envoys of those Powers. But the situation can have but one ending. The more the Sultan resists, the stronger and more imperious will be the demands made of him, and he will have to come down as gracefully as he may. What is most to be feared is, that he will play his old game of assenting to reform, promising to reform, and then letting things go on precisely as before while he amuses himself with the leisurely exchange of diplomatic notes. However, the envoys are guarding against that event by insisting upon the appointment of a commissioner to supervise the execution of reforms, and the creation of a permanent committee of control at Constantinople.

Why is England bound to keep her hand on the Sultan's throat till he grants the desired reforms? What responsibility has she towards Armenia, and what grounds, in addition to the general motive of humanity, for interfering with Turkey and taking a sure bond against a repetition of the Armenian massacres? These are questions to which the answer is not entirely clear to many people. They should turn for light to the pamphlet by Canon McColl on "England's Responsibility Towards Armenia," prepared

for the meeting in St. James's Hall on May 7, and just brought out in this country by the Messrs. Longman. The Canon is an old-time fighter in the Turkish controversy, and is versed in all the ins and outs of the warfare. He boasts that he is the only man in England, unless it be the Duke of Argyll, who has read *all* the Blue Books on Turkey from the beginning. Certainly he has an enormous store of fact and citation at command, and is a redoubtable antagonist.

What he sets out to show, and does show by an overwhelming array of evidence, is the studied atrocity of Turkish rule over Armenia, and the imperative obligation resting on the signers of the Treaty of Berlin, particularly on Great Britain, to wrest from the Sultan those reforms in government which he solemnly promised to execute. The sixty-first clause of that treaty stipulates that the Porte shall carry out reforms in the provinces inhabited by Armenians, and in particular that it shall guarantee the security of the Armenians against Circassians and Kurds, the Sultan engaging, furthermore, that he "will periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application." Nothing of the kind has been done, and that clause has remained the deadest of dead letters. Now England's unique responsibility lies in this: By the treaty of San Stefano, between Turkey and Russia, effectual provision was made for reforms in Armenia. Russian troops were to remain in the country till such reforms were put in execution. But England insisted, alone of European powers, that the treaty of San Stefano must be submitted for revision to a European congress. The Berlin congress was convened, and the effective provision for reform in Armenia, with soldiers on the spot to see it executed, was expunged, and the vague and lying promise of the Sultan substituted for it. Fifteen years have passed, and England has not lifted a finger in aid of the Armenians, except the leaden finger of diplomatic remonstrance. Her Jingo statesmen and writers have been sounding the alarm about Russia's advance on the Armenian boundary, but have overlooked the deliberate preparation made by the Turkish government for the late Armenian massacres.

Those portions of Canon MacColl's pamphlet which set forth this deliberateness, which show that massacre and pillage and outrage are not accidents under Turkish rule, but a planned and necessary part of the system itself, make painful but thrilling reading. He masses Turkish and foreign testimony to show that the Armenians are not allowed, theoretically or practically, the rights of human beings, much less of citizens. Their property, their lives, the honor of their women, must be surrendered on demand to the ruffianly officials who descend upon their luckless villages with worse than savage ferocity. When, in spite of all, they become too numerous and powerful, the old resource of Turkish statesmanship—a wholesale massacre—is brought into play. Canon MacColl adduces good presumptive evidence to show that the raising of Kurdish regiments in 1891 was precisely for the purpose of turning them loose on the Armenians, as was done later on. More than one British consul warned his government, three years in advance, of what was coming, but nothing was done. This Sultan was a man of the modern world, wise and humane, and the Bulgarian horrors could never come again with a man like him on the throne. But he and his ministers have proved themselves the same cruel and treacherous savages that all their predecessors were, and Great Britain, responsible beyond any other Power for the continued holding together of the unwieldy mass of corruption and crime that passes for the Turkish Government, must either stand one side and let the whole thing fall, or see to it that English guarantees mean

something more to Armenia than a general license to the Turk to glut his lust and greed and bloodthirstiness.

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