

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR MASSACRE.

The British Minister at Constantinople has taken measures for securing an investigation of the Armenian massacres. The Turkish Government at first interposed an indignant denial of official statements made by a British Consul, but subsequently agreed to order a full and impartial inquiry and to call to account the Governor of Bitlis and other Pachas implicated in the atrocious outrages. The Porte is not unmindful of the obligations which it voluntarily assumed in the Treaty of Berlin. It binds itself in Article LXI to carry out "without delay those ameliorations and reforms which local needs require in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and guarantees their security against the Circassians and the Kurds." Exposure to the raids of these wild tribes reduced the Armenians to a state of impoverishment that rendered tax-gathering impracticable and brought about the revolt, which has been suppressed with extraordinary barbarity. All the promises made sixteen years ago by the Porte have been broken, and the catastrophe is a recital of fiendish horror, which challenges immediate action by the Powers represented at the Congress of Berlin.

It must not be forgotten, however, that while the Powers assumed in 1878 the moral obligation of watching over the application of the reform measures which the Sultan agreed to introduce in his dominions, England assumed special and direct responsibility for the reformation of abuses in Asia Minor. Before the Treaty of Berlin was signed Lord Beaconsfield negotiated a secret convention with Turkey by which Cyprus passed under English rule. This treaty committed Great Britain to a defensive alliance with the Porte if any attempt should ever be made by Russia to extend its frontier in Armenia or to enlarge its conquests in Asia Minor. The Sultan, in addition to the cession of Cyprus, promised in this convention to introduce necessary reforms for the protection of Christian subjects in Armenia and elsewhere in Asia. Great

Britain not only obstructed by this alliance the expansion of Russian rule in Armenia, but it also undertook a form of special guardianship over Armenia and the Christians in Asia Minor.

This guardianship has been worth as little in practical reforms during the last sixteen years as the treacherous promises of the Porte. Whether it will be more effective and valuable now, when all Christendom is recoiling in horror from the wanton savagery and barbarous butchery in Armenia, remains to be proved.

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