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THAT'S NOT TROUBLE.

Some years ago, in a town in Pennsylvenia, a number of women had assembled in one of the neighbours houses, for the purpose of confering with each other, and to devise some means whereby they could assist in stemming the tide of iniquity which flows from the traffic in intoxicating drinks. Some of them of them were young, others were of middle age; but all were the wives or widows of men who were or who had been the victims of intoxication. It was evident from the appearance of each that they had passsd through great anxiety, toil and suffering in consequence of this terrible vice. Before proceeding with the business of the evening, it was proposed that each should recite some of the incidints which had occurred in her past history; and oh, what tales of suffering did each unfold, of the wretchedness and misery which had been brought into once happy homes? What fair prospects did each have in view as they left the home of their childhood, with their whole affections centered in the manly form of the one who had solemnly promised to be their guide and protector? But alas, the intoxicating cup had blighted their fond hopes; their domestic joys had been changed into intense sorrow; their husband's love had been alienated; drink had transformed them into demons; and the once bright and happy homes became the scenes of poverty, wretchedness and strife.

The recital of each tale of woe excited the deepest sympathy in the breasts of all present; and at the close there was only one whose eyes were not wet with weeping. This was an aged woman, whose hair was white, and on whose forehead were indelibly stamped deep furrows, which showed very conclusively that she had passed through more than her share of trouble. She sat apparently unmoved, as if she had not been interested in what had been taking place around her. At length one of them, addressing her, said, dear sister, cannot you say something on this important question; you have seen and felt something of this direfull evil; let us hear your experience.

The old woman then said, I have listened with considerable pain to the recital of your sufferings and woe, and I trust you will forgive me if I say that though you have endured great hardships, not one of you have seen trovble. I will relate to you my history, though in doing so it will bring up past memorics which I would much wather were buried in oblivion; and though it will wring my heart stringsto do so, I will tell you.

My father was a prosperous and wealthy farmer, and mp mother was one of the loviliest of women; and our home was surrounded with almost every comfort and luxury which wealth could command; domestic peace, joy and love reigned supreme. At an early age I was sent to school, and soon made great progress in my studies; and after a few years, when I returned home, I became acquainted with a young man, whom I soon loved with all the favor which my youth could command. My love was reciprocated; and after some months he sought and obtained my parents consent, and I was married to as brave and noble a young man as any woman could wish to love and call by the endearing name of husband. Soon after we were married, my husband purchased a farm in a thinly populated part of the State, where only a few pioneers had settled; a cottage was erected on a rising slope, at the foot of which ran a broad but shallow stream. When all was ready I cheerfully left my parents and friends, to start in life in a very humble way; but with my fond husband, I covld brave all the dangers of a pioneer life. By incessant toil and perseverance, we succeeded in a few years in attaining a position of comfort and independence. Our farm was well filled, and our farm yard was amply stocked with fine cattle; and the future appeared bright and prosperous. At this time we had been married about fourteen years and we were blessed with three boys, one about twelve years, another ten, and a baby a few months old. They were the darlings of my life, and the joy of my soul. How devotedly I loved them; and if ever a mother felt happy in this world I did.

But, unfortunately, this state of things was soon to come to an end, as the sequel will show. It was now the season of the year when the autumn rain began to fall, and for three days and nights there was a steady down-pour with no signs of abatement. The fourth day there was no improvement. On the fifth day the stream was rushing past our home in torrents, carrying with it whatever object came in its way, and we began to have grave fears for our safety as we had never experienced a storm like this. The rain was still coming down, and it was evident that in a few hours it would reach our home; and if it did, nothing could save it from being swept away. My husband became greatly alarmed for our safety; and at length it was decided that our only hope was to cross the stream and seek shelter and protection on the hill, where it was thought the water could not reach us. I put on my shawl, and wrapping up my babe, I pressed it to my heart, and commenced to cross the stream, which reached my waist. Many times I fell and was carried down the stream, but on each occasion I caught some passing, or stationary object and regained my feet. I started again and again with the same result, until my courage failed, and I began to despair. But inspired with hope, I tried again, and at length reached the rising ground in a very exhausted condition. As soon as I recovered a little, I became very anxious for the safety of my husband and sons; how earnestly I prayed for them that they might be saved. As the last rays of the dull light was dissappearing, I saw two objects struggling in the water; and as they came nearer, I could see that they were my two brave boys trying to come to me. How intensely I watched them, when a wave larger than usual swept them off their feet, and I saw them disappear. But in a few seconds I saw them again and this time they were farther in the stream; but like brave heroes they were nobly struggling for life. I spoke to them words of encouragement, telling them to persevere; and I heard their feeble voices as they called, mother. They struggled on, but made little progress as they neared the middle of the current, and I was afraid the water would be too deep for them. Several times I saw them dissappear and rise again, but when they were half way across the stream I began to cherish the fond hope that my boys would be saved. Just at this time I saw in the distance a large object coming down the stream. I soon discovered it was a huge tree, and that it was floating towards the spot where my boys were. I tried to warn them of this danger, but I could not utter a word; my tongue refused to move, and I stood completely paralysed. But it swept on, and on, and as it came nearer I could tell that my boys knew that it was coming towards them; for I saw them make a desperate effort to get out of the way. How bravely they struggled for dear life, as if suddenly endowed with super-human strength. But as it neared them they gave a loud cry, and I saw them throw up their arms in despair; the large mass came upon them; they sank, and I saw them no more. But that was not trouble.

When I returned to consciousness it was quite dark, and my babe lay crying at my side. I took it up and pressed it closer to my heart, to protect it from the cold; and seeking the shelter of a tree, I prepared to spend the night. When daylight came, what an awful scene presented itself. The water was still rolling past in torrents; sweeping away cattle, trees and every object which came in its way but the rain had ceased. During the whole of that day and the following night, I was compelled to retain my uncomfortable position, my clothes still dripping wet; and I soon began to feel the pangs of hunger, while the terrible scene that I had witnessed was racking my brain and driving me to madness. That last struggle, and the piercing cry of my brave boys, which is still ringing in my ears I shall never for get. On the following day, the water had so far receded that I determined to make an effort to reach my home and ascertain what had become of my husband, who had remained to protect our dwelling and cattle. I succeeded in crossing the stream, and started for home; but, oh God, what a fearful sight presented itself. A few timbers only marked the spot where a few days before stood our happy home; cattle and everything had been swept away byul the unmerciful current, and my noble and heroic husband lay dead beneath a mass of fallen timber. In protecting our home he had nobly sacrificed his life, our home was swept away, my hussband and two sons had perished, and I was left alone with my babe. But that was not trouble.

I made my way to the nearest neighbor, which was about two miles distant. Here I was provided with clothing and food; but I was completely prostrated by the ordeal through which I had passed. For two days I lay unconscious of what was going on around me. When I had recovered sufficiently to attend to my babe, how precious it was to me, now all that was left of my once happy home. I loved it as only a mother could under such circumstances. My whole affections were centered on it and I resolved to devote my life and energy to the welfare of my only child. After my husband had been buried, and I had sufficiently regained my strength, I removed to the nearest town, where I soon procured some needle work, and by this means I was enabled to provide a home for myself and boy. As soon as he was old enough I sent him to school where he made satisfactory progress with his learning, and became a favorite with his schosl mates. How I idolised my boy, and with what pleasure I looked upon him as the supportor of my declining years. After he left school I procured for him a situation in a mercantile house, and here he made the acquaintance of a number of boys older than himself, who were in the habit of visiting one of the taverns in the neighborhood; and I knew to my sorrow tnat my boy drank intoxicating drinks. How earnestly I prayed for him, and entreated him to give it up; but it was all to no purpose; the accursed drink had hardened his heart, and blighted his affections; and before he had reached the age of twenty he was a drunkard, and used to spend his evenings in a tavern, drinking and gambling with associates as bad as himself. One night they were drinking and gambling, and at the close of one of the games a quarrel ensued. From words they came to blows; and my son, whose passions were inflamed with liquor, drew a knife and plunged it into the heart of his drunken companion. He fell dead at his feet; and my son was a murderer. But that was not trouble. He was taken before a police magistrate the next day. and committed to stand his trial for wilful murder. Every day I visited him in his cell and took him what my slender means could afford; and as the time drew near I engaged eminent counsel to defend him. When the day arrived, I begged permission to be near him to comfort him with my presence. How attentively I watched the proceedings, and listened to every word as they fell from the lips of the witnesses, as they recited the facts as they occurred on that fatal night. When the evidence was completed, the counsel arose and made an able and eloquent appeal for mercy. The jury then retired to consider a verdict; and when they returned into court, a death like stillness prevailed; not a word was uttered until the foreman arose and, with a voice trembling with emotion pronounced the word "guilty". The Judge then passed a sentence of death. I gave one loud cry and fell back insensiable, and was carried from the room. I remembered no more for several days. As soon as I was able I visited him in his cell, and he then appeared resigned to his fate, On the morning of the execution I visited him very early and I found him engaged in prayer. Soon after the minister came to give him spiritual advice and consolation; but our meditations were disturbed by the entrance of prison officers, having with them the executioner. In a few moments all was ready: the solemn procession was formed, and I walked by the side of my son until he reached the steps leading to the scaffold, where I gave him the last fondkiss. My brain reeled and I should have fallen, had not one of the officers caught me in his arms. For a few moments I was unconscious of what was going on, untill my attention was attracted by a dull heavy noise, which caused me to look up; and I saw my son, my only child, hanging between heaven and earth. He had paid the full penalty of the law. He had perished on the scaffold, and all through the accursed drink. Sisters that was trouble.

TIT FOR TAT.

So long as men are what they are, those who can hit will give blow for blow, literally or metaphorically as the case may be, and standers-by will delight in the passage at arms.

Certainly it is pleasant to hear a sayer of ill-natured things put down by an intended victim of his cynical tongue. "The great assembly," as Manningham terms it, must have greatly enjoyed the discomfiture of a certain Lord Paget, who, oblivious of his own mean origin, thought to extol his superiority by asking Sir Thomas White what he thought of the quality of the cloak he wore. "Truly," replied the worthy alderman, "it seems to be a very good cloth; but I remember when I was a young beginner, selling your lordship's father a far better, to make a gown when he was sergeant to the Lord Mayor; and he was a very honest sergeant."

Nor did those behind the scenes at a certain theatre fail to appreciate the situation when a prosperous equestrian's daughter observed to a retired actress: "After all, you were only a circus artist; my father recollects you well;" and the elder lady retorted; "I daresay he does, my dear; he used to chalk my shoes."

When Lincoln and Douglas stumped Illinois as rival candidates, the latter in one of his speeches declared he remembered his opponent when he served liquor behind a bar. "That's so," said Lincoln; but the judge has forgotten to mention that while I was serving the liquor on one side of the bar he was drinking it on the other." A mild bit of retaliation compared with that inflicted by Brougham upon his fellow-actor Burton. In reply to the first-named asking if he had read the last number of the *Lantern*, a comic paper in which Brougham was personally interested, Burton said he never read the thing unless he was tipsy; a compliment his questioner acknowledged with a bow and, "then, Mr. Burton, I am sure of one constant reader!"

It is well not to show contempt for a book to its author's face, as newly made sergeant Murphy learned when dining in company with the author of *Ten Thousand a Year*. He called across the table; "Warren, I never had patience to finish that book of yours; tell me what was the end of Gammon?" "Oh," said Warren to the lawyer, "they made him a sergeant, and he was never heard of after."

Charles Dickens turning over the leaves of a literary lady's album, came upon a page bearing the autographs of Daniel O'Connell and Joseph Bonaparte, and over against them read, in Southey's hand-writing:

Birds of a feather flock together;
But *vide* the opposite page;
And thence you may gather,
I'm not of a feather
With some of the birds in this cage.

Underneath the Laureat's lines the novelist wrote:

Now if I don't make
The completest mistake
That ever put man in a rage,
This bird of two weathers
Has moulted his feathers,
And left them in some other cage—

reflection upon the poet's poli tical inconstancy, that called forth a *quid pro quo* from one of Southey's admirers, who thought a man had as much right to change his opinions as to alter his style;

Put *his* first work and last work together,
And learn from the groans of all men,
That if *he* has not altered his feather,
He's certainly altered his pen.

Seeing that men of all sorts delight in girding at the professor of law and physic, it is strange that instead of making common cause together, lawyers and doctors rather cherish a mutual antipathy, which finds vent, in an amusing interchange of asperities. Cross-examining Dr. Warren, a New York counsel declared that a doctor ought to be able to give an opinion of a disease without making mistakes.

"They make fewer mistakes than the lawyers," responded the physician,

"That's not so," said the counsellor; "but doctor's mistakes are buried six feet under ground; a lawyer's are not."

"No," replied Warren: but they are sometimes hung as many feet above the ground." The advantage was with the doctor.

It was on the other side when, disputing as to comparative merits of their professions, Sir Henry Holland said to Bobus Smith, ex advocate-general: "You must admit that your profession does not make angels of men?" and the lawyer replied; "There you have the best of it; yours certainly gives them the best chance."

Said a pompous man of money to Professor Agassiz: "I once took some interest in natural sciences; but I became a banker, and I am what I am!" "Ah!" replied Agassiz, "my father procurred a place for me in a bank; but I begged for one more year of study, then for a second, then for a third. That fixed my fate, sir. If it had not been for that little firmness of mine, I should now have been nothing but a banker."

The money-dealer must have felt as small as the American judge who, finding his enforced bed-fellow by no means overwhelmed by the company of a person of his dignity, observed: "Pat, you would have remained a long time in the old country before you could say you had slept with a judge." "True for you," said Pat; "and yer Honor would have been a long time in the ould country, I'm thinking, before ye'd been a judge!"

Joseph Hume, the economical reformer. having occasion to visit Brussels when Sir Robert Adair was our representative there, mindful of the minister's repute as a host, lost no time in leaving his name at the legation. Remembering Hume's constant attempts to cut down official salaries, Sir Robert was inclined to ignore the hint; but taking a second thought, invited the troublesome economist to dine with him. Hume put his legs under the ambassador's mahogany in the expectation of tasting the choicest viands and the most exquisite wines, but had to content himself with poor soup and poorer sherry, roast mutton and light Bordeaux, a chicken and a salad; supplemented with Adair's apologetical observation when the banquet was over; "You see, sir, what these confounded Radicals have brought us to with their reductions. By-and-by, I daresay we shall come to prison diet, with pudding perhaps on Sundays."

Scribe the dramatist met his match in a nobleman ambitious of gaining a literary reputation by proxy; from whom he received the following curious epistle; "Sir—I have the honor to propose to you to associate with me in the composition of a drama. Your name will figure by the side of mine; you alone defraying all the expenses of the first representation. You shall have all the profits, I work only for glory."

Scribe replied: 'Sir I have never been accustomed to harness together in my carriage a horse and an ass; I am therefore unable to accept your very kind offer."

The nobleman closed the correspondence with: "Monsieur Scribe—I received your note of refusal to unite our literary labors. You are at liberty not to understand your own interest, but not to allow yourself to call me a horse."

Would-be wits are apt to have the tables turned upon them. At a dinner given in honor of Nick Denton, one of the staff of the Illinois Central Railway, his friend Jack Wallace, intrusted with the toasts of the evening, proposed it in this wise: "The two Nicks—Old Nick and Nick Denton!" Denton rose to respond, saying he appreciated the honor conferred upon him by connecting him with Mr, Wallace's most intimate friend, and scarcely knew how to requite the compliment; but as one good turn deserves another, he would give "The two Jacks—Jack Wallace and Jackass!"

Cham the caricturist turning into a resturant, chanced to take possession of the favorite seat of a stock-broker. Upon coming in and seeing how things were, the latter called the proprietor aside and inquired if he were aware that the tall thin stran[illegible] occupying his usual place was the executio[illegible]er. The horrified man hurried [illegible] and entreated him to go away, saying M. Halderich need not pay for what he had eaten if he would only leave at once. "Who told you I was the headsman?" asked Cham, without any surprise at what he had heard. The landlord pointed out his informant. "Ah," said Cham, as he rose to depart, "he ought to know me; I flogged and branded him at Toulon not two years ago."

Hood once took a proper revenge upon some practical jokers who upset a boat before he could get out of it, giving him a thorough ducking. Directly he was safe on land he began to complain of cramps and stitches, and at last went indoors. His friends rather ashamed of their rough fun, persuaded him to go to bed, which he immediately did. His groans and complains increased so alarmingly that they were at their wit's end what to do. Mrs. Hood had receivee a quiet hint from the sufferer, and was therefore only amused at the terrified efforts and prescriptions of the repentant jokers. There was no doctor come-at-able; and all sorts of queer remedies were suggested and tried; the poet shaking with laughter, while they thought he was shaking with ague and fever. One rushed up-stairs with a kettle of boiling water, another tottered in under a tin bath, and a third brought a quantity of mustard. Hood then gave out in a sepulchera voice that he was dying; and proceeded to give the most absurd instructions for his will, which his hearers could not see the fun of, for their fright. They begged him to forgive them for their unfortunate joke, and beseeched him to believe in their remorse; till unable to keep up the farce any longer, Hood burst into a perfect shout of laughter, which they thought at first was delirious frenzy, but which ultimately betrayed that the biters were bit.

General Charletie, known some thirty years ago as a capital talker, clever versifier, skilful musician, bold better, daring horseman, and dead-shot, was as cool as the proverbial cucumber. He once hired a Hertfordshire manor for the shooting-season, and in following his game was not particular about trespassing on the adjoining estate, belonging to a lord of high degree. The latter's keeper out with his master one morning, heard the General blazing away in the adjoining cover, and calling attention to the intruder's proceedings, was instructed to go and shoot one of the General's dogs and turn him off the ground. "You had better take the pony; you will get back quicker," said his lordship; and the keeper cantered away on a perfect treasure of a pony, that its owner would not have parted with for any amount. Upon reaching the spot, Charretie was blazing away at the pheasants, the keeper told him to get off the ground or, by his master's orders he should shoot one of his dogs.

"Very well," said the General; "shoot the old one; but if you do, I shoot your pony; and as I am not sure where my manor ends, I shan't stir."

The old dog dropped at a shot from the keeper; and before the man could turn round, the pony he bestrode was as dead as a dog.

"Now, my man," said Charretie in the mildest of tones, "if you shoot again, the next barrel is for yourself!"

the keeper took to his heels, told the doleful story to his master, who had not made up his mind how to act ere he receives a challenge from the General for insulting him by ordering his servant to shoot his setter Seeing the sort of customer he had to deal with, the nobleman thought it best to come to an amicable arrangement and accept the defeat.

The editor of the *Terre Haute Journal* had the impudence to write: "The reason why Lafayette doesn't build a rink is this. The ladies of that city have such big feet that no more than four or five could skate in a rink at one time; therefore the concern wouldn't pay." Whereupon the *Lafayette Journal* retorted: "It is a number eleven lie. The Lafayette ladies are celebrated for their pretty feet. All's well, you know, that ends, well, and the *Terre Haute* editor, afflicted with the daily exhibition of agricultural hoofs, is dying of envy. Goodwin of our city once made a pair of twenty-eights, for a Terre Haute belle. He built them in the back-yard on a sort of marine railway, and launched them. If ever an old woman lived in her shoe, it was down at Terre Haute."

Ladies know how to give tit for tat, as a politican learned when, piqued by a fair listener noticing a pet dog while he was holding forth to her on the Eastern Question, he asked how a woman of her intelligence could be so fond of a dog. "Because he never talks politics," was the significant reply.

An Englishman attached to the Washington Commission incautiously remarked to his pretty American partner at a ball, that although he had seen many beautiful women, he had never come across a handsome man in the States. "I suppose there are plenty of handsome men in England?" she observed, "Oh yes, lots," said he; provoking the poser: "Then why didn't Queen Victoria send some over here?"

THE WAR.

ENGLAND'S ATTITUDE.

LONDON, Dec.—The London correspondent of the Manchester *Guardian* telegraphs it was the gossip of all the political clubs on Monday that the Cabinet is divided about the measures to be taken to prevent a one-sided alteration of the Treaty of Paris, and that Lord Derby and the Marquis of Salisbury are opposed to the pet scheme of Lord Beaconsfield to summon Parliament much earlier than usual. It is exceedingly probable that Parliament will meet on the 17th January, to which time it was prorogued last week, but the means by which Lord Beaconsfield hopes to maintain British interests under the Treaty of Paris will require further deliberations. (NOTE—Parliament usually meets in February.)

A Northampton special says a Member of Parliament says the Government are awarding contracts in Northampton for the prompt supply of 300,000 pairs of boots and shoes. This is the largest order known since the Crimean war.

LONDON, Dec. 18.—The *Times'* Constantinople dispatch says England is in great disfavor here on account of Servia's treachery, which English influence in favor of Servia rendered possible. There is a strong impression that England will oppose the opening of the Dardanelles, which Turkey and probably all other Powers are prepared to concede. If the Turks refuse the concession, it will be because of the conviction that England will help them.

The *Standard* states the Cabinet have decided to ask Parliament to vote a grant of money for such increase of the British army as the present state of Europe demands.

The *Post* in a leading editorial also foreshadows a grant for military preparations, and after a reviewing the rumours current of late concerning the separate arrangements between Russia and Turkey, says:—

"To make England's words heard, to make mediation respected or intervention effective, it is necessary to appeal to the representatives of the nation for the requisite support. We cannot entertain the slightest doubt that Parliament will not only readily accord whatever moneys are necessary to put the national strength in a condition of active efficiency, but will heartily endorse the policy in accordance with the true interests of permanent peace and the noblest traditions of the country. It is certain the Cabinet is united in its resolve, and with the opening of the New Year we shall witness the inception of a clear and national policy."

The *Standard* in its leader explains the victory of the Russians is not the cause of the summoning of Parliament, but the license which is given to Russia by Germany and Austria to use the victory in her own way. This is what constitutes the danger to British interests. England can never consent to the quarrel being arranged on these terms. She may even have cause to demur to peace made directly between the belligerents. She claims a voice in the settlement and it is that she may be prepared to insist upon that voice that the Government is adopting those measures which Parliament will be invited to sanction.

The *Times* deprecates too much importance being attached to the early summoning of Parliament, and points to the numerous instances in which the Cabinet's action has been misinterpreted, even by their own supporters, as, for instance, sending of the fleet to Besika Bay. If any previous Cabinet had summoned Parliament this early, the natural inference would have been they were about to demand a grant of money to support some step taken by the Queen on the advice of her Ministers.

The *Times* thinks such a conclusion in this case would be far in advance of the truth. Parliament will not meet to enforce a resolution. By the time Parliament meets the Government will, perhaps, be able to show that our interests in some way are attacked, but for the present the country, however irritated at Russian ambition and Servian treason, cannot believe itself in any danger.

The *Daily News* says it cannot help fearing Lord Beaconsfield has summoned Parliament rather to obtain an indemnity for something actually done than to consult it as to his future policy.

ENGLAND EXCITED.

LONDON, Dec.—19.—The *Pall Mall Gazette* this afternoon in a leading article, says:—

"The Cabinet has come to a wise resolution. If in these days. after reading the history of the last ten years, after making the relations of the continental Powers, after learning the lesson which the conditions of Europe at this moment plainly teaches—if after this any man thinks a rich Empire can exist without ever asserting a disposition to fight for its possessions and existence, that man must be a fool. If without thinking so he maintains his point, then he must be some kind of a traitor, perhaps one who declares himself a humanitarian or a Churchman, first, and an Englishman afterwards. The summoning of Parliament probably means no more than a warning to the other Powers that England does not propose to allow the Eastern question to be settled by the three Emperors, and that she must have some voice in the disposal of her own future."

The *Financier* this morning says:—

"All sorts of statements, more or less improbable, were in circulation on the Stock Exchange on Tuesday. One might go on with an enumeration of the idle reports and discussions which are exercising men's minds, the multiplicity of which attests that universal interests felt in the questions at issue, and the general belief that another crisis in the war is reached. All that can be truly said is that an uneasy feeling prevails, the effect being visible in the drooping prices of public securities."

The Manchester *Guardin's* London correspondent says:—

"If Lord Beaconsfield's wishes had been fully consulted Parliament would have met at a much earlier date than January 17th, so that the benefit of the counsels of the nation in the proposed arrangements for peace. Lord Beaconsfield despairs of carrying a majority or the Cabinet with him in his Eastern policy. Two or three prominent members of the Cabinet take their stand on the plea that no questions which are beyond the competence of the Ministry have yet come before them. There is further fear that the Premier's influence with his party would bring upon them an uncomfortable pressure in favor of his personal policy. Instead of a December session, which the Premier was known to desire, Parliament meets three weeks earlier than usual. The date, however, will be too far off to assist the Ministry in the deliberations now engaging their attention. The mediation proposal is already dead, even though Turkey may yield to the pressure now long applied to her to accept the Conference proposals to the full instead of the present offer to place her own reforms under the guarantee of Europe. Russia is backed by the more influential Powers in her demand that Turkey's overtures for peace shall, in the first instance, be addressed to her. The real difficulty Lord Beaconsfield has to confront is a single-handed peace, which would not be objected to, provided it respected the views of the Cabinet. The labours of the Foreign Office of late have been directed, not simply to ascertaining what proposals beyond those of the last conference will satisfy Russia, but in what respect British interests, relating mainly to Armen annexation, the fate of the Turkish fleet, and the neutralization of the Dardanelles, though the Government are willing to forego their treaty right to hand in a settlement. If their views and interests be fully admitted, there is at present no sign from Russia that she will in any way bind herself. The Premier thus comes to be credited with a personal policy, of which the leading idea is to compel Russia to respect our interests in case of a single-handed peace. No one suggests Lord Beaconsfield would go to the extent of an immediate declaration of war, but he would enter on a course of warnings and threatenings which would inevitably lead to war if Russia did not give proof of unexpected moderation. It is this phase of the question which has recently occupied so much time during the Cabinet sittings. No little asperity has been shown in these discussions in consequence of what may be regarded as an act of flagrant party disloyalty by a very prominent member of the Ministry. It is stated one of the most active opponents of Lord Beaconsfield's policy has recently exchanged opinion with Earl Granville and the Marquis of Hartington respecting a coalition Ministry, in order to carry out the Gladstone-Salisbury policy. Two Liberal leaders are said to have thrown cold water upon the suggestion. At the present moment office is not particularly desirable."

The Liverpool *Post* (Provincial Conservative organ) printed a London special despatch yesterday, saying the absoluteness and almost insolent tone of Germany's reply made a deep impression in Ministerial circles.

A Vienna correspondent says it was thought for some time England might bring the Turkish note officially to the knowledge of the Russian Government, but according to the latest information the British Cabinet decided on Tuesday that in view of the difference of opinion among the Powers any attempt to mediate would be inopportune.

LONDON, Dec. 20.—The Mancherter *Guardian's* London correspondent says every attempt to strike out a new foreign policy for the Government revives the dissensions in the Cabinet. The retirement of Lord Derby is by no means improbable. Among a numbrr of rumoured projects necessitating the summoning of Parliament are increased armaments, a war vote and the purchase of the Turkish fleet.

Several financial articles in the morning's London journals note a marked firmness in Egyptian bonds yesteread amid the general depression, and ascribe it to political reasons.

A *Times'* leading article throws out strong indications of the writer's belief that Parliament will be asked to vote money for the purchase of a further interest of some kind in Egypt, There are two purchases possible, namely the Khedive's remaining interest in the Suez canal and the Porte's suzerainty over Egypt.

The *Journal des Debats*, of Paris, states that there is no doubt that England has earnestly sounded the Powers to ascertain whether it is possible to organize common diplomatic action with the view to peace.

Meetings at the Cabinet are held daily, and the settled impressions is that preparations for war are intended, At Woolwich and other arsenals orders have been received stopping the discharge of men and to take back those recently discharged. While war may not be intended there is absolutely no doubt whatever that England is to be put in readiness for war should that be necessary.

The *Times* says:—"We are not going to allow our interest to be bound up with the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire in its integrity or independence. It will be found when Parliament meets that the communications the Ministry will have to make in both Houses are not inspired by that terror which now disturbs the mental vision and distracts the judgment of so many."

A *Daily News'* leading article says:—"We think Parliament is summoned to approve of war preparations."

LONDON, Dec. 15.—Sulieman Pasha is fortifying his positions on the Lom.

A telegram from Athens says that speedy participation in the war by Greece is expected.

A Constantinople despatch says the circular note despatched by the Prote to the signatories of the treaty of 1871 commences by the statement that the origin of the present important events is perfectly known. The Imperial Government is conscious of having done nothing to provoke war. It has done everything to avoid it, and vainly sought to discover Russia's motives in her aggcessive campaign. The Porte has shown its desire for improvement by organizing its judicial system and devising reforms, without distinction of race or religion, according to a constitution which has everywhere been well received. Partial reform is of no avail. The adoption of improvements is one part of the empire only would be a premium to other communities to revolt.

Any doubt as to the execution of reforms should disappear before the solemn declaration the Porte now makes that a state of war simply retards such reforms, and is disastrous to the country generally, destroying agricultural interests, killing industry, and ruining financial reorganization. Independently of these arrangements for reform, what reason can there be for continuing war! Russia has declared that she is not animated by a spirit of conquest. The military honor of both sides must be abundantly satisfied; what object can there be in prolonging a contest ruinous to both countries? The moment has arrived for the belligerent Powers to accept peace, without affecting their dignity. Europe might now usefully interpose her good office, since the Prote is ready to come to terms. The country is ready to sacrifice all for independence and the integrity of the fatherland, but the Porte is desirous to stop further effusion of blood.

A Plevna correspondent telegraphs that he believes the Russians will not advance immediatily, but await the effects of the fall of that place. Heavy guns, which were already on the Sophia road between Plevna and the River Vid, have been hauled back, which would have been waste of labor if a speedy advance on the Balkans was intended,

A correspondent with the Grand Duke Vladimir shows that the Metschka affair was confined to skirmishers and cavalry with some field artillery practice. He thinks the Turks may have lost a thousand altogether, as they were much exposed, but the Russian loss was insignificant.

A Bucharest despatch says Osman Pasha has sent a short telegram to the Porte stating that he had neither received reinforcements nor provisions, but had nevertheless resisted as long as possible. He attempted to force a passage, but was defeated.

The Czar leaves for St. Petersburg on Monday.

A Constantinople despatch says the Chamber of Deputies has elected a Christian President.

A despatch from Bagot states that the Turks burned and evacuated on Friday. The Russians re-occupied it.

Prince Milan's proclamation recounts the Turkish atrocities and violations of faith since the treaty of peace last February, and concludes:—

"Let us move forward alongside the victorious banner of the Czar, the Liberator with Christian faith in God, the protector of the right, and success is sure.

"Given in the name of our country's welfare, Servia's independence, and her heroic people. It is God's will.

"(Signed) MILAN OBRENVITCH."

A Plevna correspondent describes Osman Pasha's reception by the Russians:—

"The Grand Duke Nicholas rode up to Osman's carriage and for some seconds the two chiefs gazed into each other's faces without utterance, then the Grand Duke stretched out his hand, shook the hand of Osman heartily, and said 'I compliment you on your defence of Plevna. It is one of the most splendid military feats in history. Osman smiled sadly, rose painfully, to his feet in spite of his wounds, and said something which I could not hear. The Russian officers all cried "bravo! bravo!" repeatedly, and all saluted respectfully. There was not one among them who did not gaze on the hero of Plevna with the greatest admiration and sympathy. Prince Charles of Roumania rode up, and repeated almost every word of the Grand Duke, and likewise shook hands with Osman, who again rose and bowed, this time in grim silence. He wore a loose blue cloak, with no apparent mark on it to designate his rank, and a red fez. He is a large, strongly built man. The lower part of his face is covered with a short black beard, without a streak of grey, and he has a large Roman nose and black eyes."

It was rumored in Constantinople on Monday that Osman Pasha was dead. The report was not credited here, as no information can reach Constantinople from Bucharest. The latest advices from Bucharest mention nothing amiss with Osman. The *Daily Telegraph*, however, asserts that despatches from Bucharest state that Osman poisoned himself, and it is believed he was actuated by the Mahomedan horror of amputation, which the surgeons informed him was necessary. The story is still doubtful.

The *Standard's* Constantinople special of Sunday asserts that Osman telegraphed to his family his wounds are progressing well.

The total Russian loss up to December 13th was 77,658.

A Belgrade despatch says Prince Milan has started for Alexinatz. The Servians, under General Legcbjanin, occupied with artillery the heights of Topolnitza and Zecanika commanding Fort Marrow, near Nisch.

A Verbitza special says 40,000 Russians leave for Orchanie on Saturday.

A Constantinople despatch says the Servians crossed the Turkish frontier at Pirot, and are marching on Kossova.

Mehemet Ali has arrived here.

A Copenhagen despatch says the report that the Russian Minister here was believed to be negotiating with Denmark with a view to proposing Prince Waldemar or Prince John of Glucksburg for ruler of Bulgaria, is declared unfounded.

A Paris despatch says a correspondent states that the Russian Minister of Finance has notified loan contracters that he has determined not to receive a second instalment of the war loan, amounting to fifteen million marks, the option of refusing which he had reserved.

LONDON, Dec. 16.—A Constantinople despatch says it is reported England has sounded Russia as to the conditions of peace. The Porte, however, has been informed that Russia desires Turkey to negotiate direct with her and mediation would only make the terms harder. The peace party seems to be gaining ground. Great discontent prevails among the population of Stamboul. Seditious placards are frequently found.

A Pesth despatch states that a meeting of eight thousand persons resolved that the Government should resist, if necessary with arms, a further extension of the power of Russia. The President of the Ministry refused to receive the deputation from the meeting, as it was accompanied by a crowd. The crowd becoming disorderly, the police cleared the streets.

A Constantinople telegram says several of the Powers have already acknowledged the receipt of the Porte's circular. The tone of Italy's reply was very conciliatory and friendly. It says Italy will endeavor to have steps taken, in concert with other Powers, for offering mediation.

Mr. Layard, the British Ambassador, denies that he sounded the Porte as to the conditions of peace it would be willing to accept.

The *Observer* states it has reason to believe the Turkish circular was dispatched at the instance of England.

The *Scotsman's* London correspondent says it is understood the English Government does not wish to act without the concurrence of the other Powers. It is most anxious to avoid complications which might lead to unpleasantness with Russia.

A Berlin correspondent telegraphs that Germany replied to the Turkish note that German participation in mediation depends upon Russia consenting to parley. The *North German Gazette* and *National Gazette* declare the Powers will not listen to Turkey's appeal.

A Pera correspondent says the Turkish Government obviously feels its capability of resistance exhausted, and would gladly make peace upon reasonable terms, but it appears they have no definite programme.

LONDON, Dec. 18.—It is reported the Roumanian troops decline to cross the Balkans.

It is reported from Constantinople that the Porte has granted autonomy to Crete.

A Constantinople despatch says it is officially explained that Turkey does not approach the Powers as a vanquished State, since she still has two lines of defence, which the Government believe she would be able to hold. The Prote, by its recent circular, desires its willingness to consider the proposal made by the Constantinople Conference to be known. As the war began owing to Turkey's refusal to adhere to those proposals the Porte thinks it might be terminated now on that basis.

An Alexinatz telegram states that Prince Milan, of Servia, has arrived there.

The report is confirmed that Servians have occupied Adlie. The place had been evacuated by the Turks.

A Bucharest despatch says Prince Gortschakoff has instructed the Russian representatives abroad to observe the greatest possible reserve relative to the conditions of peace which Russia might be disposed to advance.

A Bucharest correspondent reports that orders have been given in Russia for the immediate mobilization of 60,000 fresh troops. New battalions are contiually crossing the Danube.

A Belgrade correspondent says General Horvatovitch is advancing eastward from Adlie, and it is rumored he has already effected a junction with the Russians and Roumanians.

A Vienna correspondent says the intelligence from all sides leave no doubt that the Russians from Plevna have commenced a forward movement in every direction. There are several indications they are about to attack the Schipka Pass. There is great dissatisfaction in Constantinople with Sulieman Pasha, and his recall is probable.

LONDON, Dec. 19.—A Turkish circular is issued, complaining of a breach of neutrality on the part of Italy, in allowing volunteers to join the Montenegrins.

LONDON, Dec. 19—A Vienna telegram says Count Andrassy yesterday made a long speech in a secret sitting of the Finance Committee, and explained the policy of Austria in regard to the Eastern question.

A Ragusa despatch says 6,000 Turks from Podgoritza have compelled a Montenegrin corps to retreat into their own territory, and now marching to succour Scutari and Antivari.

A Belgrade despatch states the Servians have occupied Fort Mramor, near Nisch.

The St Petersburg *Gazette* announces that General Todleben has been appointed Commander of Rustchuk, with Prince Imeritinsky as chief of his staff.

A Vienna correspondent says the Porte intends to lay the whole question of negotiation before the Turkish Parliament, making further steps dependent on its decision.

A Berlin despatch says the impression prevalent here is that the German Government is desirous of a termination of the war, that it will adhere fully and freely to whatsoever conditions Russia may resolve to ask, and has resolved neither itself to advance any obstacle, nor, so far as it can help, to permit any other Power to hinder the extinction of Turkey as a European power.

A Belgrade telegram says she Servians have occupied Prokopolje unopposed.

A Constantinople despatch says it is said the Porte has instructed its Minister at Rome to ask for an explanation of the relations which are growing more and more intimate between Italy and Greece.

A Vienna despatch says Count Andrassy, addressing the Budget Committee to-day, said he had come to the conclusion he could under no circumstances whatever make the slightest alteration in the policy hitherto pursued, which consisted in maintaining

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