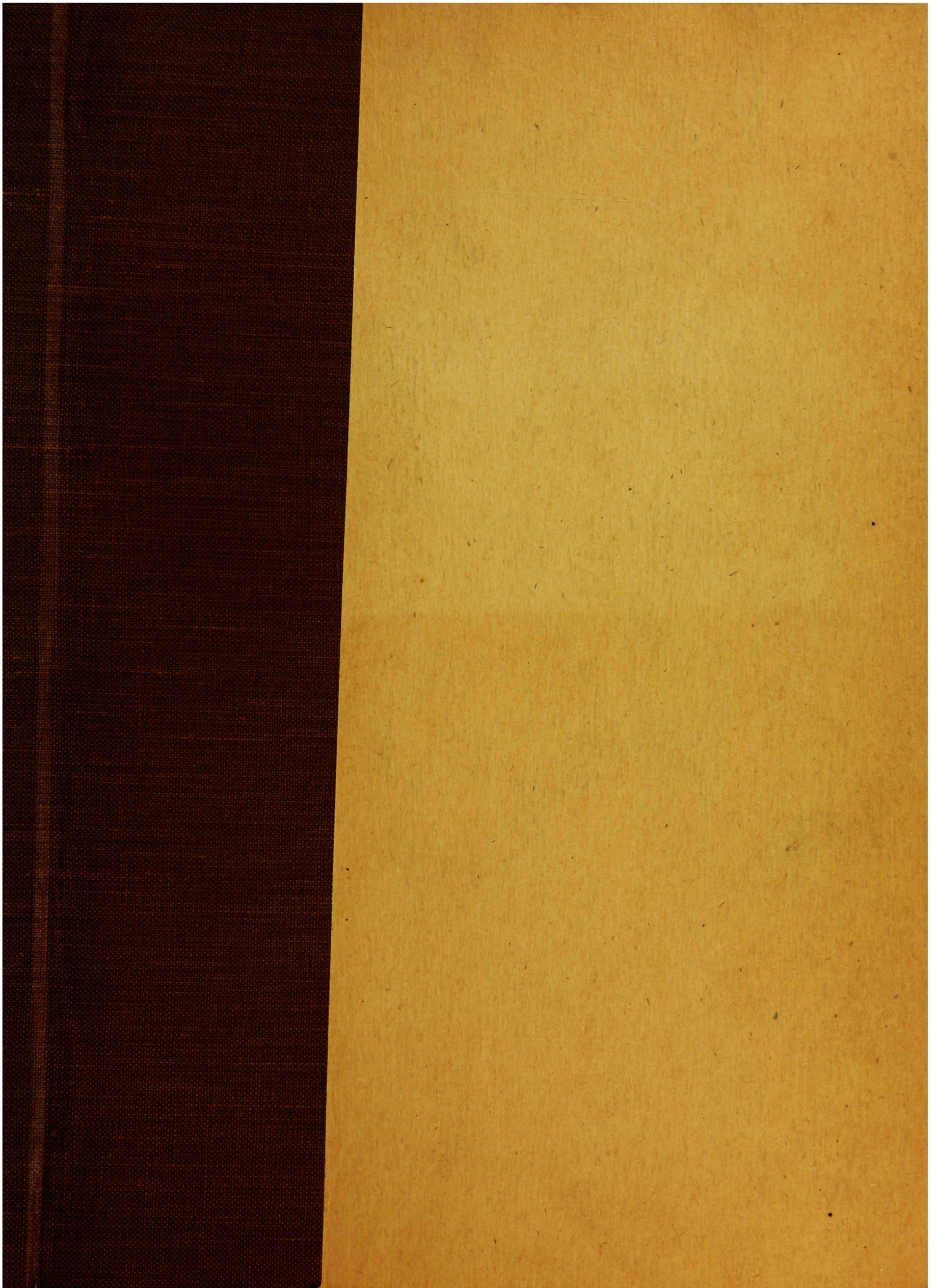




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GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH



THE ACTIVITIES OF DAVID URQUHART
IN BRITISH DIPLOMACY AND POLITICS
1830 - - 1841

Thesis submitted in
partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the
M.A. degree,
McGill University, by
Hereward Senior.

October 1950.

Acknowledgement

I wish to acknowledge the assistance given me by my tutor, Professor W. Stanford Reid of McGill University, whose encouragement and guidance were essential to the writing of this thesis. My researches were also facilitated by Professor E.L. Woodward, of Worcester College, Oxford, through whose kindness I was given access to the Urquhart Papers at Balliol. I also wish to thank Miss Blanche Belier, who offered me interesting and helpful information about D.^r Cesar Malan.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is an effort to trace the career of David Urquhart until the year 1841, as an illustration of an attempt to organise public opinion for the purpose of influencing foreign policy during the 1830's, and to examine the degree to which these efforts were successful. One biography of David Urquhart¹ was published by Miss Gertrude Robinson in 1920. This is a useful book since it presents a good deal of material from the Urquhart Papers. Yet Miss Robinson is obviously a friend of the family, and has refrained from making an effort at serious criticism. The same may be said of A Memoir of Mrs. Urquhart, written by Mrs. Bishop in 1897.² This second book contains a good deal of information about Urquhart, but Mrs. Bishop is principally concerned with the life of Mrs. Urquhart, née Harriet Fortescue, whom Urquhart married in 1853. Both books give more attention to the religious influences on Urquhart's life than they do to his efforts to play a role in politics. Although Urquhart remained a Calvinist, he had strong leanings towards Roman Catholicism during the last ten years of his life, and his wife became a Catholic convert after his death.

1. Robinson, G., David Urquhart. Oxford, 1920.

2. Mrs. Bishop, Memoir of Mrs. Urquhart. London, 1897.

Professor G.H. Bolsover has written an article on Urquhart during the years 1835 - 37, based on the use of Foreign Office records and the Urquhart papers at Balliol.³ This account, however, is written from Urquhart's point of view, and does not disclose the attitude of the Cabinet towards Urquhart. This omission has been supplied by Sir Charles Webster in an article in the English Historical Review. Professor Webster had made use of the hitherto untouched sources of the Palmerston Papers at Broadlands, which reveal the reactions of Melbourne and Palmerston to the activities of Urquhart.⁴

The secret commercial tour on which Urquhart was sent in 1833-34, has been described by Professor V.J. Puryear in England Russia and the Straits (1844-1850). But he overestimates the importance of Urquhart, and his account leaves the impression that Urquhart was first taken up, and later dropped by the Foreign Secretary for reasons of state.⁵ The circumstances of Urquhart's appointment, as revealed by his own account, which are quoted in Chapters II and IV of this thesis are sufficient to establish that this was not the case.

Urquhart is mentioned in a number of general works, none of which give much credit to his statements. Julius West and Mark Hovell give a brief statement of Urquhart's story of a Russian conspiracy among the Chartists, but make no attempt to

3. Bolsover, G.H., "David Urquhart and the Eastern Question", Journal of Modern History. VIII, No. 4, December 1936.

4. Webster, Sir Charles K., "Urquhart, Ponsonby and Palmerston." English Historical Review. LXII, No.244. July 1947.

5. Puryear, V.J., England, Russian and the Straits Question. Berkley, Calif. 1931.

6

trace the activities of the Urquhartites. Seton-Watson offers Urquhart's story of Palmerston's treason as an example of the degree to which human beings can hold mistaken judgments in politics.⁷ J.C. Bell, in his Life of Palmerston gives a brief account of the Vixen and the Portfolio incident from the point of view of Palmerston.⁸ There is no account, other than a chapter in Robinson, which deals with Urquhart's activities in 1839-40.

In giving an account of Urquhart, one is confronted with a mass of doubtful and in some cases fantastic assertions which could not be refuted or even stated within the confines of a single thesis. Most of these assertions are supported by scraps of evidence which gives them a faint suggestion of plausibility. Urquhart and his followers have left a good deal of material, under such labels as "notes on the history of our time", in the hope that some future historian would use it to vindicate their contentions. Unfortunately, however, the only purpose which most of this material can serve is to provide an example of curious misconceptions held by a minority of Victorians interested in foreign affairs.

The justification I offer for writing this thesis is two-fold. Firstly, it throws a light on the extent and limitations of the influence which could be exercised by a gifted and

6. Hovell, Mark, The Chartist Movement. London, 1920; Julius West, History of Chartism. London, 1920.

7. Seton-Watson, R.W., Britain in Europe. Cambridge, 1937.

8. Bell, J.C., Palmerston. New York, 1936.

CHAPTER I.

FAMILY, EDUCATION AND YOUTH

David Urquhart enjoyed much prominence during his lifetime as a Turcophil and an authority on the Near East. If his published works were collected they would fill some forty volumes, and his private correspondence even more. Most of this consisted of comment on subjects of current interest from his own point of view. While still a young man, his opinions were treated with respect by such men as Stratford Canning, Peel, Disraeli, Jeremy Bentham, and at times, even by Palmerston; and his wide circle of acquaintances included Cardinal Newman and Karl Marx. When he is remembered today it is usually as the man who spent the better part of his life in efforts to establish that Palmerston was a Russian agent, or as the man who first brought the Turkish bath to England.

It might be suspected that a man of such achievements would be something of a fanatic, and certainly an eccentric. Urquhart was both of these, yet such personal failings never have robbed men of their importance nor do they prevent them from holding clear views of a particular political issue. They do, however, place severe limitations on the sort of influence they exercise and on the type of follower they attract. Fanatics, by their very nature can only offer simple solutions to simple people and in the long run, can keep no associates who do not become disciples,

There was much in Urquhart's family background and early¹ education which might lead one to expect an unusual career. He was born at Braelangwell, Cromar⁺ in 1805, the second son of David Urquhart by his second wife, nee Miss Hunter. His mother who has been described as a remarkable woman with strong evangelic-
cal leanings, took him to the Continent in 1817. There he began his education by spending a year at a French military school and then going to Geneva where the well-known evangelist Dr. Caesar² Malan became his tutor. Malan taught at the Classical College in Geneva where he made special efforts to inspire his students with his own religious zeal. Although not a great theologian, he had a gift of arousing enthusiasm in others, and numbers among his achievements the composition of both words and music of count-
less hymns.³ Each summer Malan took some of his pupils on a walk-
ing tour through the Catholic Cantons of Switzerland, stopping in the villages to hold public meetings. Urquhart accompanied him on some of these tours, and delivered his first public speeches at the age of fifteen, denouncing the Catholic Church as anti-Christ.

1. The Urquhart family tree contained many eccentrics, one Thomas Urquhart, 1611-16, was author of a work tracing his ancestors back to Noah. D.N.B., LVIII, 46-47.

2. Robinson, G., David Urquhart. Oxford, 1920: pp. 32-34; also D.N.B. LVIII, 45.

3. Caesar Malan: I owe my information on Caesar Malan to Mrs Blanche Bielier, whose father, Merle d'Aubinge was a personal friend of the great evangelist.

4. Robinson, op. cit. p. 33.

This appears to have placed too great a strain on the evangelical leanings of his mother, who removed him from Geneva to travel in Spain with a tutor. It was hoped that the Catholic environment would balance the over-Protestant influence of Dr. ⁵Malan.

Urquhart returned to England in 1821 to spend six months learning the rudiments of farming. He then spent four months at Woolwich Arsenal as an ordinary workman, before beginning his university career in the fall.

He matriculated at St. John's College, Oxford on October 31st 1822. Here too his activity was exceptional. He set himself a harsh routine of study which allowed for only four hours of sleep. In addition to his regular studies, in which he seems to have excelled, he displayed a wide curiosity on a variety of subjects. ⁶ Among other things he undertook a study of minerology, and entertained his friends during their idle hours with lectures on that subject. His extraordinary diligence attracted the attention of Jeremy Bentham, who appears to have taken a considerable interest in him, and it is not improbable that Urquhart's excellent command of statistics and views on "free trade" were the result of this association. Bentham's regard for Urquhart can be established by a letter of introduction written to a Dr. Merton:

"Dear Doctor:

The bearer, David Urquhart, though rather too constitutionally born and bred, which he cannot help, poor fellow,

5. ibid. p. 34.

6. ibid.

is an intimate friend of mine in whom I have entire confidence. It would take a paper to explain his object in wishing to see you -- it is of the most extraordinary nature.⁷

Urquhart's friendship with Bentham survived his stay at Oxford, and there was some exchange of letters between them when Urquhart was in Greece.

The fragments of Urquhart's letters which survive from this period indicate that he took some interest in Roman Law and British Law, and there is one letter in which he discussed the "fallaciousness of patriotism". His tutor, Gerald Smith, who later became a country Vicar, appears to have been a close friend of his, and kept up a correspondence with him for some years after, while he was in the East. At least one early effort to establish relations with the press is revealed by a letter from a Richard Doane, dated May 18th 1824 which indicates that he and Urquhart were attempting to get a letter published in the Morning Chronicle with the apparent approval of Jeremy Bentham.⁸

The harsh routine of study which Urquhart had maintained ultimately had its effect on his health, and in the winter of 1825 he had to leave Oxford. In November of that year his mother wrote to him:

"I know that you are very ill, and that you conceal *your* state from us. Do tell me by return post frankly how you find yourself and whether you think it would not be better to quit Oxford and come to town."⁹

7. Bentham to Dr. Merton, M.D. Urquhart Papers.

8. Doane to Urquhart, May 18 1824. Urquhart Papers. The letters dealing with this part of Urquhart's life are almost illegible and the dates and names of senders are frequently obscured.

9. Mrs. Urquhart to David Urquhart, March 18 1824. U. P.

This ended his academic career, and he went to the South of France to recover his health.

There was an undeniable strain of fanaticism in the Urquhart family, and it would appear that the early influence of his mother and Caesar Malan did much to encourage this tendency. It might be thought that the influence of Oxford and Jeremy Bentham would arrest this line of development, but this does not appear to have happened. His curiosity, intelligence and earnestness seem to have pleased his instructors and their praise did much to swell his growing sense of self importance, which ultimately led him towards fanaticism.

While recovering from his breakdown in the South of France Urquhart became interested in the Greek War of Independence.
 10
 His half-brother, Colonel Gordon Urquhart, was already in Greece commanding Hydriot Marines. Lord Cochrane, whose departure for Greece had been delayed by a long wait off Italy for reinforcements which failed to arrive, put in to Marseilles. There he was joined by a few recruits supplied by the Paris and Geneva Phil-
 11
 Hellene Societies. Amongst them was David Urquhart.

Urquhart's service in Greece was not undistinguished. He won the friendship of his superior officer, Captain Thomas, by

10. Col. Gordon Urquhart of the Scots Greys had led a very popular and extravagant existence in London society. He managed to dispose of most of the family property, leaving only that which had been assigned to his brother. Mrs. Bishop, Memoir of Mrs. Urquhart. London, 1897. p.42.

11. Lord Cochrane: D.N.B., II, pp 172-3.

settling a dispute between the English and Greek elements of the crew, aboard the Brig Saveur to which he had been assigned. He saw action when the Saveur and the Perserverence, under Hastings, attacked and destroyed a Turkish squadron in Salona Bay. In this action steamers were used for the first time in naval warfare, and Hastings distinguished himself for his particularly effective use of hot shot.¹² The action at Salona involved a violation of a truce which Cochrane and Ibrahim had¹³ been forced to accept by Admiral Codrington, and was directly responsible for bringing about the battle of Navarino. Since the existence of the truce was unknown to Hastings and Thomas, they can hardly be held responsible for the engagement. But a curious remark which Urquhart is reported to have made in 1854,¹⁴ "I was responsible for the battle of Navarino", would suggest that this event left some mark on his conscience.

It is also possible that a challenge to a duel may have¹⁵ been the result of Urquhart's "moralising" about Salona. Shortly after he received this he wrote in his journal:

"I received from Captain Hastings a letter stating that he had written to me to obtain an explanation of some expression he had understood I had made respecting him. That, having received no answer, he requested that we should meet and settle this affair. Captain Thomas having gone to him from me stated he declined to state

12. A description of the action is to be found in David Urquhart's Spirit of the East. pp 22-31. *London, 1838*.

13. Ibrahim Pasha: Son of Mehemet Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt, and commander of the Turkish forces active in the Morea.

14. Mrs. Bishop, Memoir of Mrs. Urquhart. p. 45.

15. Hastings to Urquhart, March 23rd 1828. Urquhart Papers.

what he had heard and from whom he had heard, and said that was 'indifferent'. I told him it was equally indifferent to me and three days after we went over to Egina and Finlay, a friend to both parties, settled the business. The subject was his conduct at Salona, but the expression and the authority he persisted in keeping in the dark." 16

There is something in this dispute which happened time and again in Urquhart's quarrels. He appears to have been totally unaware of the cause of Hastings' anger. Then he makes the demand that the remarks concerned be quoted and the informant named. Urquhart appears to be technically in the right. But it is apparent the the quotation would have been painful to Hastings and that the naming of the informant would have involved a personal betrayal. In his later quarrels with Palmerston and Ponsonby, he was to display that same insistence on making his disputes public, but with less happy results.

Urquhart was granted the rank of Lieutenant by Cochrane and was transferred to the frigate Hellas. This ship joined Colonel Fabvier's expedition against the island of Ghios. While serving in this attack Urquhart was severely wounded, and spent the rest of the war recovering from his wounds.

This period of convalescence was spent on the island of Samos, where he studied Greek institutions and formed opinions on current Greek politics. When his half-brother was accidentally killed on the island of Karabusa, of which he had been appointed Governor, Capo d'Istria offered the post to David Urquhart.

16. MSS Journal kept in Greece (entry, June 8th 1828). U.P.

17. Capo d'Istria: Provisional President of Greece.

It is also reported that he had been offered the command of Hastings' ship the Perseverance.¹⁸ But he declined the offer and resigned from the Greek service in November 1828.¹⁹ The reasons for his refusal of these offers are not to be found, however, in Urquhart's want of ambition, but in the political situation in Greece at that time.

The English Phil-Hellenes, including Church and Cochrane were openly hostile to the policy of the Greek President. Their reasons were partly personal, and partly political. Capo d'Istria was a former Russian cabinet minister, and was considered to be closely associated with the policies of the Tsar. He had further paraded his Russian connections by arriving in Greece in a Russian frigate, and wearing a Russian uniform. Although the Greeks were ever ready to benefit by the success of Russian arms, they looked on Russian policy with great suspicion. There even seems some justification for their view, since it had been the policy of the Tsar to favour a weak and divided Greece, which would be dependent on Russia for continual protection.²⁰ In addition to his unpopular connections, the President had embarked on unpopular policies. His efforts to establish a regular army and civil service, although perhaps necessary in themselves, offended the irregular forces led by General Church, and were resented by the civil population as a new and unwelcome authority. Besides this he had a horde of disappointed office seekers, ex-soldiers, and envious leaders of political factions ready to

18. Mrs. Urquhart to Sir Herbert Taylor. Taylor Papers. p300.

19. D. N. B., LVIII, 43. London, 1913.

20. Crawley, C.W., The Question of Greek Independence.
~~Chan~~ IX pp 132 - 141. Cambridge, 1930.

make the most of his mistakes.

Urquhart was a strong partisan of the anti-Capo d'Istria point of view and a personal friend of Church and Cochrane. This no doubt explains his refusal to accept the offers held out to him. It was during his stay at Samos that he appears to have acquired the ideas on Greek municipal institutions which were to be the foundation of his political thinking. They were in all probability in some degree the result of his political opposition to Capo d'Istria, and may have been influenced by Colletti²¹ the Governor of Samos, who appears to have been a friend of his. But the most important element was perhaps the fact that Urquhart was of a temperament which required a political faith, and this particular creed was congenial to his tastes.

Under the rule of the Turks the Greeks had been left to run their own affairs. When they gave offence, their rulers would punish them with a massacre, but this in no way affected the structure of their institutions. They continued to run their self governing municipalities free from outside interference. There were no tariff ~~barriers~~^{barriers}, and trade was free. Taxation, or more correctly, tribute, was direct, collected by the municipal officials and paid to the Turks. Urquhart saw a higher political wisdom in this system and believed that it represented the principal of free trade. In point of fact, this policy of non-interference was the inevitable consequence of Ottoman administrative and financial incompetence. Yet, whatever its causes, this system was more agreeable to the merchant classes, than

21. Robinson, G., op. cit. p. 114 (note).

the bureaucracy established by Capo d'Istria, and for this reason many Greeks preferred to remain in territory still held by the Turks.

While developing these ideas, Urquhart was exerting all his influence to obtain a diplomatic post in Greece. He wrote to his mother on November 10th 1829:

"If any interest can be made for me, I wish it were directed to obtain me some diplomatic situation here, where I have every appearance of getting²² on at least better than elsewhere. My friend Dawkins²³ said to me that if an attache were given him he would be most agreeable if I were to fill the situation." 23

After the Treaty of Adrianople (September 14th 1829) had ended the Russo-Turkish war, Urquhart decided to visit Constantinople. He assumed the part of a minerologist and was in this capacity presented to the Grand Vizier, Reschid Mohammed, and to the Sultan. Unless we are to doubt his word, he won the confidence of both. On his way to Constantinople an incident occurred which marked the beginning of his admiration for the Turks. He described the incident twenty years later in a letter written to Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford:

"While yet a lad I was passing the night at a Turkish bivouac fire when some of the soldiers were narrating an incident which occurred previous to the breaking out of hostilities in 1828, which was that a small fortress had been enclosed by the advance of the Russians before the formal commencement of the war; on which I inquired how they could have suffered such proceedings. The answer was, how could we fire at them when war had not been declared.

The first impression on me went no further than amazement at their stupidity, which having not reservedly expressed, one rushed to his musket, and kissing the stock

22. Dawkins was the British Resident in Greece.

23. Urquhart to Mrs. Urquhart, November 10th 1829. U.P.

said, unless I use this blessed by God, it is put in my hands by the devil. Fortunately I was young enough for the sense of shame not to be extinguished; and not having passed through the ordinary routine of education, I had not learned to sneer at what was different from ourselves. I was consequently struck down with shame for myself and gained as it were the perception for the first time, of a human being, on beholding in untutored men a sense of right and wrong in respect to the grand field on which operates human passions. I had just before been engaged in the war between the Greeks and the Turks. I had therefore been and was a pirate, and had not so much as known it. What I suffered I can only portray, by saying that, with the feeling of a repentent felon I should have gone and offered myself to justice had there been a tribunal to take cognisance of such crimes. It was only toward the morning of a sleepless night that the sense came home to me of the condition of the whole of my countrymen being parallel to what my own had been, and not only my countrymen, but all European Nations; and it was then that the idea of a possible atonement presented itself.- From that hour I date my intellectual existence.

My first study was of the Koran which I found no longer to my surprise, contained elements of international law.-

I might have become a Mohammedan had it not been that my next study was the Bible." 24

This requires little comment, except that it is necessary to mention that in the letters which survive from that period there is no evidence of the high moral tone found in this letter to Bishop Wilberforce.

On January 4th 1830, Urquhart wrote to his mother from Constantinople:

"I will just hint at the probabilities which might induce me to remain in this country, the Minister to whom you have hitherto addressed my letters has told me that if an Attache was given him he would be glad to have one; If a European Prince was sent out, and a government established on a respectable footing - I might obtain an honourable situation, 25 if the project I have opened to my uncle should be approved.

In this letter he mentioned a projected visit to the entrance

24. Mrs. Bishop, op. cit. p. 47.

25. Urquhart to Mrs. Urquhart, January 4th 1830. U.P.

of the Black Sea to investigate coal mines, and requested his mother to send him certain books on minerology.²⁶

In the same letter of January 4th he gave an account of an interview with the Grand Vizier, whom he described as a young man of less than thirty, and very anxious to introduce European institutions into Turkey. He offered Urquhart horses and men, and invited him to see the country.

"He said he did not know what my views were but that if I succeeded in giving them any important information it might lead to something agreeable to me. - While we were there the young Sultan came in probably to see us, attended by black eunuchs and thirty children his own age - he is a fine but weakly boy of ten years intelligent as all Turkish children are and composed and mild in his manners as an old man." 27

There is another letter written from Constantinople at this time which was to lay the foundations for Urquhart's diplomatic career. Although written to his mother as a private letter, it is so highly political, that it is a temptation to think that it was not intended only for his mother.

"If the Sultan succeeds in loosening the bonds of superstition that hold together the Empire and support the throne, either the Empire will fall of itself asunder or some ambitious Pasha will put on a Dervish cap; and will rear at once the standard of rebellion and religion, will overturn the commitments that have already been made, and will postpone, if he cannot altogether check, their future accomplishments.

"The war with Russia instead of laying Turkey prostrate at his feet, has been the most fortunate event that could have happened to this country. She has lost (excepting the frontiers in Asia) what, from the use she made of it, was of no use to her. She has gained the all-important

26. loc. cit.

27. Urquhart to Mrs. Urquhart, January 4th 1830. U.P.

knowledge that she must not rely implicitly on the promises of European Cabinets - that there are errors which she must correct - that she has resources which she must improve." 28

This letter also contained an attack on Capo d'Istria's policy in Greece, from the English Phil-Hellene point of view. In one of the few non-political passages of the letter he suggests to his mother that she should come to Constantinople where he believes she could do pleasant and useful social work in caring for Turkish orphans.

Unknown to her son, Mrs. Urquhart sent this letter to Sir Herbert Taylor, the King's Secretary, who in turn showed it to the King. The views expressed suited the anti-Russian bias of William IV, and contradicted previous information which he had received from the Levant, much of which had come from Russian sources. The King had Urquhart's letter copied and sent to the Russian and French Courts.

Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg had just accepted the throne of Greece, and William IV therefore appointed Urquhart as British Commissioner to accompany him to Greece. But this came to nothing. Capo d'Istria, who had originally favoured Leopold's appointment, by pointing out the difficulties involved, succeeded²⁹ in discouraging the Prince who resigned on May 21st 1830.

The views which Urquhart expressed in his letter of February 1830 contained the essence of the doctrine which he was to

28. Urquhart to Mrs. Urquhart, c. February 1830. Taylor Papers.

29. Crawley, C.W., op. cit. Chap. XII, pp 182 - 188.

expound for the rest of his life. This was that Turkey, if left to herself, could reform and stand on her own feet, and that it was foreign intervention which was responsible for Ottoman weakness. These views might have had their origin in his friendship with M. Blacque, the editor of the official Turkish Gazette, Moniteur Ottoman, and high in the Sultan's confidence. It is evident from Urquhart's later writings that he was on good terms at this time with Blacque, who appears to have taken pains to instruct him at some length on the subject of Turkish politics.³⁰

After his visit to Constantinople Urquhart returned to Greece, arriving sometime in April 1830.

"In the early part of 1830" he wrote in Spirit of the East. "I was at Argos returning to England from Constantinople just as I was on the point of embarking, and bidding adieu to a land in the destinies of which I had been interested, but which now was stripped of its dramatic attributes and attractions, and was placed in honour and repose - a King's ship arrived carrying the Protocol." 31

The Protocol was that of February 1830 negotiated by Wellington and the Representatives of the Powers (Protocol of London, February 3rd 1830). By its terms Greece was to be denied territory north of the Gulf of Lepanto which formerly had been promised to her (Protocol of London, March 22nd 1829) and which was then occupied by her forces. Not only did this displease the Greeks, but it provoked considerable opposition

30. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. Reminiscences of William IV. p. 13. *London, 1891*

31. Urquhart, David, Spirit of the East. p. 3.

in England. It was at this time that Palmerston who had left the Wellington Cabinet with the Canningites made some of his first popular speeches in Parliament.

Urquhart set out for Volo with his friend Ross of Blandesbury on the 7th of May. He followed a route from Argos to Corinth, along the South shore of the Gulf of Janina, across the Straits sometimes called "the little Dardanelles", through Missolonghi, and then following a winding route overland, touching the coast twice, to the Gulf of Arta. From thence he went overland, North to Janina, then North-East over the mountains, and by a circuitous route to the Gulf of Volo. He thus covered the line from Arta to Volo which the Greeks expected to form their frontier. This journey occupied the whole of the summer of 1830. For six months he was out of touch with his friends at home and caused them a good deal of anxiety. But late in September 1830, Mrs. Urquhart received news of her son from a Charles Boyce assuring her "of his perfect health and enjoyment of his very interesting though³² entre-nous, romantic journey."

Urquhart's enterprising journey, of which he afterwards wrote an account, under the title of Spirit of the East, gave him a valuable knowledge of Albania, which did much to increase his rapidly growing reputation.

In 1831 Urquhart returned to England where, if we are to accept his own account of events, he was at once consulted by the King.

32. Boyce to Mrs. Urquhart, September 27th 1830. U.P.

"During my first visit to the East I worked myself into the inaccessible region of Ramis Chejlik, where the Sultan sat gloomily intrenched, fearing all that was internal, dreading all that was foreign, suffice it for the present to say that I gained his confidence. It was after all, but a flying visit, returning from Greece to England and taking Constantinople on my way.

"On returning to England I suddenly found myself at Windsor Castle as I had been in Ramis Chiflik.

"On the very morning after my arrival at 9:00 A.M. I received a summons to Windsor, and another to Marlborough House (King Leopold of Belgium)." 33

This part of the account would appear to be reasonably accurate. But Urquhart then proceeds to give a detailed account of conversations held with the King and others which cannot be taken at their face value. Nevertheless, the story is interesting and probably contains large elements of the truth, even though it was written over ten years after the events mentioned, and has no other authority than Urquhart's word.

"The debate opened that afternoon in the King's Closet the subject was not Russia but France." 34

Urquhart then told how he presented information which had been given to him by Blacque concerning Admiral de Rigny, the French Representative in the Near East.

"Admiral de Rigny was made Minister by M. Blacque; that is to say, that it was despatches written by his wonderful pen which have the signature of de Rigny. These documents made his position and caused him to be considered as a man of the highest order and capacity. But M. Blacque subsequently came to see through his character and purpose; and then, the consequences coming out, and failing to be able to counteract them through his cousin, Odéon Barrot, he

33. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 12.

34. ibid. p. 13.

bethought himself of England, and prepared me on the subject so that I might make the attempt. With this view he placed in my hands copies of those despatches."³⁵

The information which Urquhart offered appeared to be of special significance since it was thought that de Rigny was to be made Foreign Minister of France. In point of fact, he did not attain that office until 1835. During the Greek War of Independence Blacque had been editor of the Gazette de Smyrna, a journal strongly opposed to the policies of Capo d'Istria. Since de Rigny, in his capacity of Commander of French naval forces in the Levant, was frequently at Smyrna; it is not impossible that Blacque was the author of his despatches. Urquhart maintains that de Rigny was conspiring to bring Greece under Mehemet Ali and have the Pasha a vassal of France. If this were true, Blacque, who had become the editor of the Moniteur Ottoman the Sultan's official gazette, would have every reason to be opposed to a scheme so disastrous to his employer.

It is known that France had hoped to make use of Mehemet Ali to further her ambitions in Africa. It is also known that de Rigny was inclined to praise Ibrahim, and was particularly
36
irritated by the activities of Greek pirates. But there is no evidence other than Urquhart's to establish the existence of

35. ibid. p. 13. Barrot was later leader of the Left in the French Chamber. Robinson, G. op. cit. p. 115.

36. Dodwell, H.D., The Founder of Modern Egypt. Cambridge, 1931. pp 94 - 124; Hall, Major John, England and the Orleans Monarchy. London, 1912. pp 145-170; Argenti, P., The Expedition of Colonel Fabvier to Chios. London, 1933. This work contains most of de Rigny's official correspondence for 1827 - 28.

this particular scheme. It also must be remembered that Urquhart accompanied Colonel Fabvier's expedition to Chios, and the activity of de Rigny during that campaign was severely censured by the British Phil-Hellenes. Whether the story was true or not, however, it is safe to assume that Urquhart magnified its importance.

Urquhart's vanity and political immaturity are emphasised by the fact that he was not content to present his startling information and depart, but insisted on suggesting a line of action. "I was required to draw up a statement in writing which was accordingly done, the statement was submitted to Lord Palmerston." When this document failed to convince the Foreign Secretary, Urquhart asserts that the King had arrangements made for Urquhart to see that Minister. Urquhart describes the meeting:

"Lord Palmerston received me with a great expression of regret at the inconvenience I had been put to, and sat down evidently prepared to give me a hearing. I went over my subject, bringing out all the consequences to England and to Europe of the introduction into the French Cabinet of these schemes, and consequently, at a subsequent period into the minds of the French people. When at length he spoke, it was to use these words which have often since recurred to me in the dead of night

"How can the English Government prevent any particular man from being a Minister of France?" Urquhart replied: "The Government of England can do what the Government of Russia can do, and I do not see why England need have a Government at all if it can not do as much as this." 37

He then paraphrased some words of Chatham about not a shot being fired in Europe without the consent of England. At this point it is more than probable that Palmerston ceased to take him seriously.

"I will never forget the expression of Lord Palmerston's face, nor his cautious watchfulness of me when he gave utterance to the words. 'But to return to Turkey, what is it that you propose.' My answer was: 'Send a squadron through the Dardanelles.'" 38

If this interview is not pure invention, it would be reasonable to conclude that Palmerston formed his opinion of Urquhart then and there.

Urquhart did not confine his efforts to attempts to influence Cabinet circles, but at once established relations with the press. Church and Cochrane were still at odds with Capo d'Istria and Urquhart took up their cause, writing letters to the Times and a series of articles in the Courrier.³⁹ He was⁴⁰ in touch with Lady Church in England, and kept up a continuous correspondence with his numerous friends in Greece. This kept him supplied with information which could be used in the press. But in his writings at this time, in the views he expressed on Greece he was echoing the grievances common to most British Phil-Hellenes who had served in Greece, and as such they were in no way original.

The efforts of Urquhart to influence the public by means of the press at this time, however, demonstrated that from the very beginning of his political activity, he tried to combine

38. Urquhart to Flyer, Reminiscences of William IV.
op. cit. p. 14.

39. Courrier, September, October 1831.

40. Lady Church to Urquhart, September 8th, September 20th, 1831. Urquhart Papers.

newspaper publicity writing and government service. He desired a diplomatic post not to serve policy, but to make policy, and he did not hesitate to act independently of those who employed him. His conduct may in some degree be explained by the fact that independent action and insubordination were commonplace in the Greek War of Independence, where Urquhart had received his early training. He did not think it unusual to treat Palmerston's authority in the same manner in which Cochrane and Church had treated that of Capo d'Istria. The danger of employing such a man must have been apparent to the Foreign Secretary at once. Urquhart made it painfully clear that he was a dangerous ally and an impossible subordinate. He held pronounced views on policy and if overruled could be counted upon to appeal to the King or to the press.

It is, then, hardly surprising that the good will of the King which he had gained, won him no appointment at this time.

"From the first step I gained with the King I found myself in opposition to Lord Palmerston, but it was never open. At this period I was very anxious to obtain a diplomatic appointment. The King did his best to have me nominated, but did not succeed. Lord Palmerston using highly commendatory expressions in regard to me, but putting aside, I believe, without even replying to them the requests of the King. In the end of the year 1831, I was first employed; but it was not by Lord Palmerston, it was by Stratford Canning, which service I performed and the interest of the Sovereign might have been supposed fully sufficient to obtain for me an unpaid attache-ship, which was all I sought. This request was, however, as on former occasions, rejected by Lord Palmerston."⁴¹

41. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 15.

The reasons for Palmerstons reluctance to grant Urquhart an official appointment are fairly obvious. But it does not follow from this that the Foreign Secretary was in any way unwilling to benefit from the knowledge or the services which this unusual young man was prepared to offer. Although the Foreign Office could not take responsibility for the sort of spectacular enterprises which Urquhart was disposed to undertake, they were not without their place in politics. But they were suitable only to the politics of a civil war or in areas where there was permanent unrest. It would, however, be unjust to condemn Urquhart for personal characteristics held in common with such men as Church, Cochrane and numerous other insubordinate but useful adventurers, who have from time to time done much to advance British interests overseas. Yet to give their actions official sanction, would hardly be consistent with the interest of a powerful commercial Empire, whose prosperity depended so much on keeping the peace.

CHAPTER II

HIS MISSION FOR STRATFORD CANNING

In the fall of 1831 Urquhart received an appointment to accompany Stratford Canning on a special mission to Constantinople. The nature of this appointment cannot be understood without some examination of the state of the Ottoman Empire at that time.

The Sultan, Mahmud II, recognised that without reform and modernisation his empire would remain the prey of the superior military and economic organisation of Europe. He also recognised that reform of any kind struck at the roots of the privileged orders upon whose existence his authority rested. This left him with little choice but to play one powerful subject against another, while endeavouring to build up his independent strength by reform. Meanwhile, he also had to deal with the problem of conducting relations with European Powers. Although all Christian Powers were regarded with suspicion, Russia was the only Power which could be looked on as a direct and permanent menace. But for a monarch in the Sultan's position, there were frequent occasions when he feared his own subjects even more than the Russians. In spite of these difficulties, however, his efforts at reform had met with some success. The power of the Dere Beys, as feudal lords, had been broken, the

Janissaries were exterminated, and a number of powerful local Pashas had been suppressed.

The revolt of his Greek subjects had caused Mahmud II to call on his powerful Albanian and Egyptian vassals, for aid in suppressing the rebellion. When European intervention and the Russian War of 1828-29 had secured Greek independence, the Sultan was confronted, in spite of their efforts, with the new danger of these defeated and discontented, but still very powerful vassals. The Albanians, under Mustapha Pasha were the greater menace of the two, since they were in a position to threaten Constantinople. It was fear of Mustapha Pasha, more than fear of the enfeebled and disease ridden Russian Army which caused the Porte to conclude the Treaty of Adrianople with Russia in September 1829.¹

Stratford Canning was sent to Constantinople for the purpose of gaining the Sultan's consent to the new Greek frontier, between the Gulf of Arta and the Gulf of Volo, which had been agreed on by the European Powers.² Matters were complicated by disagreement among the Greeks, but it was hoped that the Sultan's difficulties with his other rebellious subjects would dispose him to grant concessions.

In this matter of gaining the Monarch's consent, the good

1. Temperley, H.W.V., England and the Near East, The Crimea. London, 1936. pp 54 - 56.

2. Lane-Poole, S., The Life of Stratford Canning. London, 1888. pp 493 - 94.

will of the Grand Vizier who was conducting operations against the Albanians was of special importance. Canning, with Palmerston's consent, decided to flatter this high personage by addressing a personal letter to him. The delivery of this message to the Grand Vizier was assigned to David Urquhart.³

While Canning travelled by way of Greece, Urquhart took the northern route through Corfu and Albania. He arrived at Scutari on the 2nd of December, and was granted an interview with the Grand Vizier on the same day.

When the letter was delivered, the Grand Vizier expressed his delight at the return of Stratford Canning, and after the interview, staged a sham battle for Urquhart's entertainment.

"The Grand Vizier, on his favourite white Persian charger, commanded every manoeuvre himself, led the assault, galloped over the field, hallowing, raising his sword, and appearing in the most boisterous spirits."⁴

During the next few days Urquhart was placed in the charge of a Greek secretary, who irritated him by endeavouring to lead him away from political topics of conversation. But his annoyance was in some degree balanced by the general courtesy of the Turks.

"Nor can I refrain from expressing my surprize and gratification at the improvement I observed in their manner. On no occasion was I reminded that I was a giaour, and in all details of Turkish ceremony I was everywhere treated as if I had been one of the faithful."⁵

³ ibid. p. 509.

⁴ Urquhart to Canning, incl. in Canning to Palmerston, Feb. 12 1832. F.O. 78/209.

⁵ ibid.

With some difficulty he succeeded in forcing a political discussion on the reluctant secretary, but he suspected that the man did not convey the results of this to his master. It does not appear to have occurred to Urquhart that the Greek might have been obeying orders.

"At my next interview with the Grand Vizier, I commenced by expressing my satisfaction at the favourable reception the observations I had addressed to his secretary had met with from His Highness, which the secretary translated: 'I was very much pleased with the Atesh Talin or sham fight.'" On hearing this, Urquhart interrupted him at once. "I said to the Grand Vizier, as well as I could make him understand, that I spoke of the conversation which I had had at his request with his secretary. Upon this the secretary approached his master, and, bending down, gave in a whisper some explanation which prevented enquiry. When the secretary resumed his position, he was of an ashy paleness. And although it was a piercingly cold day, large drops of perspiration trickled down his cheeks." ⁶

In the course of this interview, Urquhart explained the benefits to the Ottoman Empire of having for a neighbor a strong Greece united under a European Prince.

"Unless united by a foreign Prince Greece would infallibly split into democratic states, united by a federal bond, whose principles being in direct opposition to those of Turkey. ⁷

The Grand Vizier replied that until then negotiations had meant concessions. Urquhart answered this by comparing the position of Greece and Turkey with that of England and the lost American colonies, which seemed to please the Turk. ⁸

The importance of this mission cannot be denied. There

6. ibid.

7. ibid.

8. ibid.

was a real danger that the Grand Vizier's victorious, but restless army, might attempt to take advantage of the quarrels among the Greeks by a new invasion. In his report Urquhart stated that the letter to the Grand Vizier "has balked him so far as to prevent him from throwing obstacles in the way at Constantinople⁹."

Although the complete success of Urquhart's mission were thwarted by the intrigues of the secretary and the shortness of his stay, Stratford Canning's report is very favourable to Urquhart. He wrote to Palmerston on February 12th 1832:

"You will, no doubt, remember what passed between Your Lordship and myself, at the time I was preparing to leave England, as to the expecting of a communication being made to the Grand Vizier on the subject of my Embassy to Constantinople, and that Mr. David Urquhart, was the individual selected with your sanction to carry a letter from me to the minister. Mr. Urquhart travelled to the Continent from Corfu and after passing several days in the Grand Vizier's headquarters at Scutari, arrived here toward the end of last month. I have now the honour to forward herewith a copy of his report to me.

"This gentleman has, at least succeeded in effecting with diligence and secrecy a very labourious journey; and although he found that the inexpedient success of the Grand Vizier's had freed his army for the time from the embarrassments, on which we had particularly calculated for the effect of my communications, yet we may perhaps venture to infer from Mr. Urquhart's statement of what passed at Scutari that His⁽¹⁰⁾ Highness was by no means insensible to so marked a compliment."

On this occasion Urquhart appears to have won the admiration of his superiors, and have conducted himself in a manner beyond reproach. The only charge that may be brought against him on this occasion, is a certain lack of modesty in writing his report,

9. ibid.

10. Canning to Palmerston, Feb. 12 1832, F.O. 78/209; Lane-Poole, S., Life of Stratford Canning. London, 1888. I, 509.

and this is hardly a serious offence. After the completion of this mission, however, Canning does not seem to have found his services necessary, and Urquhart started home in March, carrying despatches to Vienna on the way.

A letter to his uncle written on March 9th, during this brief stay at Constantinople, reveals that he was full of hopes for an appointment:

"Should an Attache be added to the Legation in Greece I should in all probability receive the appointment-- I will return having been confidentially employed and recommended to the Foreign Office, so I cannot think my labour has been lost." 11

This letter is of some interest since it contains comment on Turkish reaction to the English Reform Bill of 1832, and ideas are expressed in it of Turkish institutions which were later to be developed into a complete political creed.

"We are pretty nearly all of opinion that you are only getting on at a snails gallop --

"It will perhaps surprize you to learn that many of the Turks take great interest and the reflections on it weekly given in their Gazette are read with the greatest avidity. In the _____ and especially amongst the enlightened and 'civilization party' about the Grand Vizier I was often delighted with the (illegible) and truth of their remarks and wished that some of our own critics had been there to hear but I must explain how the Turks are enabled to appoint and judge a question so foreign to them and so intricate to us. The affairs of every community of Rayas 12 who form the great majority or nearly the totality of the agricultural manufacturing and commercial classes are managed by a council of elders chosen from and by the people by custom; they are the arbitrators in all private disputes and in (questions of public) interest. 13

11. Urquhart to his uncle, March 9th 1832. Urquhart Papers.

12. Non-Moslem subjects of the Turks, usually Christians, e.g. Greeks, Armenians or Slavs.

13. Urquhart to his uncle, March 9th 1832. U.P.

Urquhart received the despatches mentioned above on March 29th, and he set off at once. It was his determination to distinguish himself as a dispatch rider. In a letter to his mother written from Selina on April 25th, he gave an account of this ride:

"From Constantinople to Belgrade are 200 Turkish Post hours -- a journey which I performed in five days and eight hours -- I lost eight hours at Adrianople without getting any rest.

"They tell me that the quickest courier within the last ten years came in six days -- the ordinary time is seven, and six and a half is very quick. The Post takes ten. I overtook the post which had left three days before me -- it attempted to race me and we were neck and neck for thirty-five hours, -- at length it gave in when one of the Tartars had a horse killed under him and the other had broken his arm."¹⁴

After the completion of this remarkable ride, Urquhart was sick for eight days, and the despatches for Sir Frederick Lamb¹⁵ at Vienna arrived later than the ordinary post.

When Urquhart returned from his mission with Stratford Canning he renewed his efforts to gain a diplomatic appointment. These were rewarded in the early part of 1833. A paper which he had drawn up on the Prussian League caused the King to propose to Palmerston that Urquhart should be sent to Prussia to examine the subject, at first hand. This led to a series of interviews with Sir Herbert Taylor, the King and Palmerston. One of these Urquhart described in a letter to his mother:

14. Urquhart to Mrs. Urquhart, April 25th 1832. U.P.

15. ibid.

"I have been today closeted with the King. He takes the deepest interest in Eastern affairs and questioned me in the minutest detail in points of geography, Navigation and my reception was most gracious you could conceive, he made me sit down, sent me to bring him some things he wanted, asked me about my father, - about my age and interest. I told him.

"This is most satisfying and encouraging as far as my personal interests are concerned but how different are other matters I have for congratulations -- I owe this notice to no service rendered or to be rendered, to no private information or recent intelligence, but to my opinions alone. I have had abundant assurance that these opinions will be henceforth embodied in our Eastern policy. I spent some time only this morning with Lord Palmerston, but he did not allow me to perceive how his opinions inclined, but the King was not so reserved. At the close of the conversation he said 'now you must put all you have said to me on paper,' and he called me back from the door to ask me the day I intended to leave Brighton -- and said 'you must write this for me before you go to London'." 16

Later in the day he saw Sir Herbert Taylor and was told that he could go to London to refer to documents if he chose, but Urquhart thought that his daily talks with the King's Secretary would "win him more indulgence than better document work
17
done in London."

It was not unnatural that this show of Royal favour increased his vanity and even perhaps began to turn his head. Only this could explain the reference to his opinions being "incorporated in our Eastern policy". The King, it would appear, was inclined to indulge Urquhart, and saw no reason for not granting this well-born and remarkably well-informed young man some official appointment. The Foreign Secretary, however, remembering
16. Urquhart to Mrs. Urquhart, undated. Urquhart Papers.

17. ibid.

perhaps, a former interview with this particular protege of
¹⁸
 the King, made no effort to flatter the young man, and without
 openly opposing the Royal wish, did what he could to evade
 granting the desired appointment. This could be done easily
 enough by raising the objections of Urquhart's obvious youth
 and inexperience. In another letter seven days later, this
 time to his mother, Urquhart offers additional evidence of this:

"I was twice at the Pavillion today without seeing any-
 one and returning home before dinner I found a note for me
 to call at four -- I went back at five and saw Sir Herbert
 for a moment. He told me to prepare to give Lord Palmerston
 in the shortest phrases the substance of the conversation
 I had with himself -- and I am to go to His Lordship tomorrow
 morning and afterwards would go to the Pavillion. He told
 me he had also heard about my (being) employed. He answered
 that it was difficult as I was not in the Routine." 19

This interview did not end satisfactorily and he received
 no appointment until months afterwards. He was later to allege
 that Palmerston was at this time raising technical objections
 to his appointment. Although this magnifies the importance
 of the question, it is probably not far from the truth. But
 Urquhart came to this conclusion years later, when he had been
 dismissed from office by Palmerston. His early letters show no
 marked hostility towards the Foreign Secretary.

Urquhart reacted to his disappointment by a new effort to
 win public acclaim, through publication. He commenced to write
 the book which was to make his reputation: Turkey and Its Resources.*

18. vide supra: p. 19.

19. Urquhart to Mrs. Urquhart, January 10th 1833. U. P.

* Urquhart, D. Turkey and Its Resources. London, 1833.

In August of that year he wrote to his uncle:

"I was recommended for a responsible situation, my youth and inexperience and my being unknown was objected. I instantly set to, and in six weeks at the rate of ten pages a day put together the volume you have read." 20

It can be seen that Urquhart wrote with an eye on Roral favour, by his dedication of the book to the King. This gesture was not without its reward.

"When I arrived at the Castle I met Shiffen who told me he had just left the King who had my book open before him and had got half through. These two days he has been heavy at it, Shiffen says he does not recollect him having spent so much time on any book. 21

The favourable reception of the book by the King and its popular success were not, however, to win Urquhart the sort of permanent employment he desired. In this same letter he told of a conversation with Sir Herbert Taylor, in which the King's Secretary had let him know, that it was impossible at that point, to "get me employment in the diplomatic line", and advised him not to think about it. But he was also informed 22 that he was being considered for a special mission.

His uncle, who was also his guardian, insisted that he should accept nothing less than permanent employment. Urquhart discussed this with Sir Herbert Taylor, explaining somewhat naively that he would gladly offer his services for nothing, except that

20. Urquhart to his uncle, August 7th 1833. Urquhart Papers.

21. Urquhart to his uncle, June or July 1833. U. P.

22. ibid.

his uncle and friends might think less of him. This argument was brushed aside by the King's Secretary, who told him that the mission was much too important to jeopardize its success by making such claims.²³

Two days after this interview:

"Lord Palmerston went out to Windsor. The King and he arranged my journey over the night, and Sir H. Taylor was commissioned to communicate to me my instructions. He took me with him to Windsor, every matter seemed perfectly arranged and I was ordered to hold myself in readiness. The next day I was to arrange with respect to money with Mr. Backhouse, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.--But for a whole week I was kept dancing attendance at the Foreign Office." ²⁴

Urquhart was asked for an expense account, and when he presented one, they found fault with it, and asked for another.

The same difficulty was raised about his instructions:

"I was at the Palace next Wednesday. Sir Herbert told me that the first thing the King asked Lord Palmerston was whether or not I was off (he knew I was not). Lord Palmerston said he was preparing my instructions -- I was to have no written instructions. Another week passed by." ²⁵

In the end Urquhart was allowed to draw up his own instructions, but no interview took place between himself and the Foreign Secretary at this time. The delay and confusion over the instructions might not have been caused entirely by Palmerston's reluctance to employ him. It must be remembered that the Whigs had taken office, committed to retrenchment, and therefore Ministers regarded any expenditure with an attention far beyond its importance.

23. ibid.

24. ibid.

25. ibid.

The instructions which Urquhart drafted, outlined a truly remarkable journey. He was to travel through the states of Germany, beginning by a visit to the Fair at Leipzig, and then to travel South through the Balkans to Constantinople. After this he was to tour the north shore of the Black Sea, to proceed across the Caucasus to Persia, and then, turning westward, to travel through Mesopotamia to Syria and to end with a visit to the Barbary States. This journey was to take eighteen months, during which time he was to be paid at the rate of six hundred ²⁶ Pounds a year. To disguise his character as a British agent he was to assume the role of a commercial traveller. And in order to have this appearance he persuaded the Board of Trade to provide him with British goods valued at five hundred Pounds.

26. Backhouse to Urquhart, August 24 1833. F.O. 78/249.

CHAPTER III

URQUHART'S VIEWS ON THE EASTERN QUESTION

By the time he had written Turkey and Its Resources in 1833 Urquhart had fully developed his ideas on Russia, Turkey and the Eastern Question. He offered two messages to England: firstly that the Turkish system was basically sound; and secondly that the evil policies of the Russian state were corrupting Europe. It was by the second of these that he explained the troubles of the day, whether they were to be found in Italy, Spain, Mexico or Central Asia. In the first he found the solution of all the evils of these countries. Russia was the complaint, and Turkey the cure.

He held that the Russian state, although not possessed of great military and economic strength, was strong because of the ability of her agents to corrupt and mislead the ministers of other states, by bribery, flattery and intrigue. Paradoxically enough he repeatedly accused the Russians of pursuing the sort of policy which he himself advocated for England. Few shared his extreme view of the "Russian menace", but there was enough suspicion of Russian intentions to win him a large and attentive public audience. Anti-Russian feeling in England at this time could be found in two places: among the ultra-Tories, who could if they liked, trace their enmity to Russia back to Pitt, and among the Radicals whose hostility sprang from the more recent Russian suppressions of

Poland, and the Tsar's opposition to liberal movements on the Continent. Urquhart had connections in both camps. The first gave him access to Court circles, and the second to the press.

No discussion of Urquhart's views and influence would be intelligible without considering his subject matter. This involves three things: the position of Russia in Europe; Palmerston's policy, and the "idea" of the "Russian menace" in England.

The defeat of France in the Napoleonic Wars gave Russia a position in Europe disproportionate to her military strength and her economic importance. This gave the Tsars a special interest in maintaining the status quo. The threat to the established order was considered most likely to come from one of two sources: Revolutionary movements, or French military power. Since these threatened not only Russian interests but also those of the Sovereigns restored by the Congress of Vienna, no Power on the Continent was prepared to risk reawakening them by too vigorous an opposition to the policy of the Tsar.

If Russian interests demanded maintenance of the status quo in the West, however, it was otherwise in the East. Here the traditional designs on the Straits and her expansion in Central Asia demanded a different policy. It was therefore the problem of the Tsars to direct their Eastward expansion in such a manner as not to jeopardise Russia's position in Europe. The outbreak

of the Greek War of Independence in 1821, was to put their ingenuity to the test.

During the first years of the war, although Russia was identified with sympathy for the Greek cause, the Tsar made no independent move to aid the rebellion. The Greeks themselves felt considerable indignation at this neglect, and looked more to Western Europe for help. A growing sympathy for the Greek cause made the policy of non-intervention adopted by the Governments increasingly difficult to maintain. There were besides other factors. The war was too dangerous for the expanding trade of the European Powers in the Levant. Moreover, Charles X saw in the Greek rebellion a chance to restore some of the lost military prestige of France, by a popular and respectable martial adventure.

In England, Canning devised a policy which was designed to gain Greek independence without advancing the interest of the Tsar. This was to be done by acting in concert with Russia. "I hope," he declared, "to save Greece through the agency of the Russian name on the fears of Turkey without a war." Since the late eighteenth century it had been British policy to regard the integrity of the Ottoman Empire as a necessary element in the European balance of power, and this modification of the traditional attitude did not have the approval of Wellington and the ultra-Tories.

1. Petrie, Sir Charles, Diplomatic History. London, 1946. II, 159.

Canning's untimely death, followed by the destruction of the Turkish Fleet at the Battle of Navarino, put an end to this effort. Wellington became Foreign Secretary and attempted to revert to the old policy. But this was impossible. The Turks had been infuriated by the Battle of Navarino, and mistaking Wellington's policy for encouragement, attacked the Russians. The Russo-Turkish War (1828-29) followed, which ended in the Turkish capitulation at Adrianople.

Before this, however, the King of France evolved an elaborate scheme for using the favour of Russia to modify French frontiers. This project provided for the partition of the Low Countries by France and Prussia. The King of Holland was to be compensated by the throne of a new Greek Empire conquered by Russian arms, and the Netherlands East Indies were to be offered to England. But news of the Treaty of Adrianople put an end to this ambitious design.

The Treaty of Adrianople went a long way towards advancing Russian interests. Russia was able to gain some prestige as protector of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire by securing the de facto independence of Greece and Servia. A large indemnity was demanded from the Sultan, and the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia were occupied as security. This latter concession was extremely important since it enabled the Russians to close the mouth of the Danube and strangle the grain export

of this area, which was a serious rival to the growing grain trade of South Russia. In Asia the Sultan was compelled to relinquish the ports of Anapa and Poti, the keys to Circassia, on the Black Sea coast between the Crimea and the Caucasus.²

Meanwhile Russian influence had made progress elsewhere. In 1827-28 a war had been fought with Persia. When this ended victoriously, Russia imposed the Treaty of Turkomanchai. Under its terms Persia agreed to pay an indemnity of two million Pounds sterling, to cede two provinces, and to renounce the right of maintaining a naval force in the Caspian Sea.³ There was also evidence of Russian infiltration into Central Asia, around the ancient Khanates of Khiva and Bukhura. These advances taken together gave the appearance to Anglo-Indians of a threat to India and were the cause of alarm in England beyond their importance.

After the French Revolution of 1830 the Tsar consolidated his alliance with Prussia and Austria, and was disposed to prefer the friendship of a Whig England to Orleanist France. In the East, the Tsar had already concluded that the immediate dissolution of the Ottoman Empire would not be to Russia's advantage. There were several reasons for this belief. A common frontier with Western Powers was considered to be undesirable for Russia. Even were the Dardanelles gained, Anglo-French sea

2. Hertslet, E. Map of Europe by Treaty. II, 841 et. seq.
London, 1878

3. ibid. pp 893 et. seq.

power could blockade them from the islands of the Archépele^ogo and jeopardise the important grain trade from Odessa. The Christians in Turkey had shown little disposition to accept Russian political leadership; and a Turkey forced back into Asia might consolidate her position and grow stronger. Russia had not abandoned her traditional ambitions, but for the time being peaceful penetration was to replace open hostility.⁴

When Palmerston took office in the Grey Ministry in 1830, the policy of Russia in the East presented one of many problems. There were also the questions of Belgium, Poland, Portugal, as well as difficulties raised by "liberal" rebellions in Italy and the States of Germany. Of these, the question of the Belgian revolution was by far the most important, since it involved the creation of a new kingdom in an area which had always been considered vital to British interests. The danger of war was more apparent than real, but all parties wished to avoid the odium of a diplomatic defeat. Austria was primarily concerned with maintaining her position in Italy and in the German States. The Tsar was occupied with Poland, and Louis Philippe, although anxious to avoid humiliation, was unwilling to go to war. Matters were finally settled at the expense of the King of Holland, but not without some concession to the Tsar.

The concession granted to Russia was financial. After the fall of Napoleon, the King of Holland had agreed to compensate

4. Gorianov, S., Le Bosphore et les Dardanelles. pp. lx, 27, 48, 49. *Paris*, 1910.

the allies for his acquisition of Belgium. Other Powers had withdrawn their claims in favour of the Russians. Holland then agreed to pay by installments the twenty-five million Pounds which the Tsar's Government owed to Messers Hope. England became a party to this Convention and agreed to pay a portion of this sum. After the loss of Belgium, Dutch payments ceased. But Palmerston, desiring to gain Russian agreement to the establishment of the new kingdom, undertook to continue English payments, concluding a Convention to this effect on November 16th 1831.

This gesture towards Russia was bitterly resented by the Radicals, who accused Palmerston of subsidising the suppression of the Polish rebellion and allying himself with despotism. There was also considerable irritation among the commercial classes because the Tsar had included Poland in the prohibitive Russian tariff system. In addition, the arrival of numerous Polish refugees provided a further source of resentment, and incidentally created a permanent source of anti-Russian agitation in England.

Palmerston, as a former Canningite, was not unmindful of the importance of public opinion, nor was he reluctant to oppose the ambitions of Russia. But no measures which he could take would have been of practical aid to the Poles, and he was not prepared to offend the Tsar by bombastic and empty threats. On other occasions he was prepared to court popularity by championing

"liberalism" abroad, but he took care to bully little despots and preferred to treat great autocrats with caution.

He and Grey had been friendly with Princess Lieven, the wife of the Russian Ambassador, and when Palmerston had taken office, she pronounced the Foreign Secretary "perfect in every detail".⁶ She was not, however, to retain this attitude for long. When Palmerston appointed Stratford Canning as Ambassador to St. Petersburg, the Tsar tried to prevent the appointment. The Princess conspired to persuade Grey to act over Palmerston's head. But the appointment stood. And when the Tsar declared Canning to be persona non grata, the office of Ambassador was allowed to remain vacant, and British affairs were conducted by Bligh, the *Chargée d'Affaires*. This resulted in the Lieven's being withdrawn from London, and the end of the political and social prominence of the Princess.

It was Palmerston's purpose to maintain superficially good relations with the Tsar, while taking what measures he could to oppose Russian designs. This resulted in an inconsistency between his practice and his public statements which was a continual source of irritation to his contemporaries. Nowhere was this more evident than in his policy towards the Ottoman Empire, during the Mehemet Ali crisis.

Mehemet Ali was an Albanian adventurer, who had made himself master of Egypt. His French-trained army was perhaps the most

6. Lieven Letters. London, 1902. p. 276.

efficient force in the Near East. Although he was nominally a subject of the Porte, European nations had carried on negotiations with him independently of Constantinople. He had made extensive, but not too successful efforts to industrialise his country, and enjoyed some reputation as an enlightened despot.

When the forces under his son Ibrahim had suffered at the hands of the allies in Greece, he sought compensation from the Porte. It was ambition rather than loyalty which had led the Pasha to intervene in Greece, and among the rewards he had been offered were Crete, the Morea and Syria. Of these he had only obtained Crete. But seeing the weakness of his sovereign, he resolved to take what he wanted by force. He provoked a quarrel with Abdoullah, the Pasha of Acre, and used this as a pretext to invade Syria (October 1831).

The Pasha of Egypt's revolt raised the question of the future existence of the Ottoman Empire. France was opposed to Russian ambition in Turkey, but not to Mehemet Ali. A large number of French subjects were in the Pasha's service, and France had a traditional interest in Syria. There was also a danger that the loss of prestige suffered by the Sultan as a result of his defeats in Greece and in the Russian war, together with the unpopularity of his reforms, would lead to a reactionary revolt from which Mehemet Ali could benefit. There was in particular a danger that the mob in the Capital, which had been the

instrument of so many palace revolutions, would be roused by agents of the Pasha. Two factors, however, were in the Sultan's favour: Russia did not wish to see the influence she had acquired at Constantinople destroyed by a victorious Pasha; and England decided in favour of the Sultan.

Stratford Canning, who was engaged in negotiations over the Greek frontier, had given warning of the danger from Mehemet Ali as early as March 1832.⁷ This was followed by other reports, and when the Ambassador returned to England he wrote a long memorandum in which he advised support of the Sultan's efforts at reform, and the sending of a squadron to Alexandria to intimidate Mehemet Ali. By these measures he hoped to strengthen the Sultan sufficiently to enable him to resist Russia.⁸ A similar, but less prominent report was written by Urquhart, and submitted to Palmerston by Sir Herbert Taylor.⁹

Meanwhile events in Turkey had taken an unfortunate turn. The forces which the Porte had sent to dislodge Ibrahim were routed at Konieh, and the Grand Vizier, whom Urquhart had visited a few months earlier in Albania, was taken prisoner. The Sultan twice appealed to England for aid, but Palmerston sent none. Russian help offered, was at first refused, and then fearing that the Pasha might march to the Capital, the Tsar's assistance was requested (February 1833). A last minute effort to settle the

7. Canning to Palmerston, March 7 1832, F.O. 78/266.

8. Canning to Palmerston, December 1832, cited: Crawley, op. cit Appendix V, pp237-45.

9. Taylor to Backhouse, February 12 1833, incl. F.O. 78/233.

matter without Russian intervention was made by the French Ambassador, Admiral Roussin. This came to nothing, however, for the negotiations which he was arranging were interrupted by the arrival of the Russian fleet. Mehemet Ali's progress was arrested, and he came to terms with the Sultan in May.

Under the Articles of the Convention of Kutaya, which arranged this truce, Mehemet Ali was permitted to retain his conquests, but remained a vassal of the Porte. This left him in control of the entire Syrian coast, and of Diarbekir at the headwaters of the Euphrates. He thus dominated the two most important routes from Europe to India, and that through Mesopotamia, the overland route through Egypt. This solution was satisfactory to France but not to England.

The Russians left the Straits that Summer, but they had exacted a price for their services. On July 11th 1833 it was announced that they had signed the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi with the Sultan. There was nothing remarkable about the open clauses of this agreement, which constituted an offensive and defensive alliance. But it contained a secret clause which freed the Sultan from the obligation to aid the Tsar in case of a European war, on condition that the Porte would close the Straits to all foreign warships in the event of war.¹⁰ The "secret" clause was known almost at once, but its exact interpretation remained a matter of some disagreement. This revolved around the question of whether the

phrase "all foreign warships" included those of Russia.

Metternich who had signed a Convention with Russia later in that year at Munchengratz (18 September 1833)¹¹ was convinced that the treaty excluded all warships. England and France were not.¹²

The attitude of Palmerston during the early phases of the Mehemet Ali affair has been a matter of some dispute. It is evident that British resources were occupied in Belgium and Portugal and therefore his scope of action was limited. But a series of pencilled remarks in the margin of Stratford Canning's report of December 17th 1832 have hitherto led historians to conclude that the Foreign Secretary had doubts about the wisdom of aiding the Sultan against the Pasha.¹³ A close examination of the handwriting in which these remarks were written, however, reveals quite clearly,¹⁴ that they were not the work of Palmerston. They cannot therefore be offered as evidence of his attitude at that time. If this evidence is excluded, it would appear that from the beginning, Palmerston was opposed to Mehemet Ali, and that his delay in acting was not caused by an uncertain state of mind, but by the fact that British resources were more urgently needed elsewhere.

There is ample evidence of Palmerston's suspicions of Russia and hostility to Mehemet Ali in his private correspondence.

11. Gorianov, op. cit. pp 51 - 52.

12. Palmerston to Ponsonby, 27 Aug. 1833. F.O. 78/221; cited in Hall, op. cit. p.165, and Headlam-Morley, Studies in Diplomatic History, p.227.

13. Crawley, op. cit. p.237-45.

14. This was called to my attention by M. Verite of the I.H.R. London.

On March 21st he wrote to William Temple:

"Roussin has settled capitally the Turkish dispute with the Egyptian, and has done well in sending back the Russian Admiral with a flea in his ear." 15

"----- His (Mehemet Ali's) real design is to establish an Arabian kingdom, including all the countries in which Arabic is the language. There might be no harm in such a thing itself, but as it would necessarily imply the dismemberment of Turkey, we could not agree to it. Besides Turkey is as good an occupier of the road to India as an active Arabian sovereign would be. We must try to help the Sultan in organising his army, navy and finances." 16

The Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi strengthened Palmerston's resolution to maintain Turkish integrity and increased his suspicions of Russia. The Mediterranean fleet was increased, and Admiral Malcolm was ordered to cruise in Levant waters.

"I have not" - wrote the Foreign Secretary - "however, yet authorised Malcolm to go up to the Dardanelles. The Cabinet meets the 3rd of November and then we must consider the Eastern Question, of course there is nothing to be done. But an insurrection is probable. If it produces civil war, the Sultan, at the head of one party, may call in the Russians to put down the other; and then comes the question, shall we let them return, or can we prevent them from doing so?----

"-----The turkish Government, threatened by Russia, may invite the English and French squadron to come up the Dardanelles to defend the Bosphorus. My own opinion is, that in such a case, they ought to go up." 17

The tone of this is entirely different from that which he used in answering questions in the House of Commons on July 11th 1833.

"If they had quietly beheld the temporary occupation of the Turkish Capital by the forces of Russia it was because

15. This was before Roussin's efforts collapsed.

16. Palmerston to Wm. Temple, March 21st 1833. Bulwer, H.L., Life of Palmerston. I, pp 284 -85. *London, 1870-74*

17. ibid. October 8th 1833. p. 292.

they had full confidence in the honour and good faith of Russia. The Russian Government in granting its aid to the Sultan had pledged its honour and in that he reposed the most implicit confidence." 18

In the Spring of 1834 Palmerston took an additional precaution against the Tsar's encroachment: ~~he~~ sent instructions to Ponsonby authorising him to call the Mediterranean Squadron to the Dardanelles should the Porte request assistance against
19
Russia.

At this time the general public could not of course have access to Palmerston's private correspondence, and therefore saw only one side of the picture. It is not then surprising that some were inclined to take alarm ~~at~~ the Foreign Secretary's apparent complacency in the face of an obvious danger. Since the country was more interested in domestic than in foreign politics, the number of people deeply concerned with the fate of Turkey was not very great and there was no danger in the early thirties that the Cabinet might be forced to resign on an issue involving the "Eastern Question".

As early as 1792 Pitt had been defeated by Parliamentary opposition when he sent ~~to~~ to oppose the advance of Catherine the Great to Ozackov, on the Black Sea. His reasons for this were not unsound. Russia and Austria had just been engaged in the partition of Poland, and he feared that the Ottoman Empire might suffer the

18. Hansard Parliamentary Debates, 3rd Series, Vol. XXIX, 578-81.

19. Palmerston to Ponsonby, March 10th 1834, Secret. FO 78/234. Hall, op. cit. p. 223.

same fate. But the Whigs insisted on treating the Russian menace as a "bogey" and Pitt's efforts were checked by the eloquence of Fox and Burke. The attitude of the Whigs towards Russia was to remain substantially the same during their long period in opposition. During the Napoleonic Wars, however, the Tories were little troubled by the opposition on the "Eastern Question." The Greek War of Independence had disposed the public to look with favour on Russia and to dislike the Turks. Nevertheless, there had been occasional articles written by travellers returned from the East and by Tories giving warning of the "Russian menace" which appeared during the 1820's, but these had little influence. It was the success of Mehemet Ali which had called public attention to Turkey and emphasised the danger from Russia. This prepared the way for Urquhart.

He found a public already alarmed by the growth of Russian power, and therefore, perhaps for the first time in English history, prepared to hear good of the Turks. Before this, Turcophil sentiment, although not unknown, had been given little publicity. The importance of Urquhart was not that he discovered, but that he popularised the Turks.

It must be remembered that his motives for doing this were far different from those of his associates or patrons. They favoured the Turks as a necessary evil; whilst Urquhart regarded the Turks as carriers of a very worthwhile political tradition. Some idea

of this difference between them can be gained by a comparison of passages from a report of Stratford Canning's with parts of Urquhart's book, Turkey and its Resources.

In March 1832 Canning wrote:

"It may be true that nothing is impossible to genius, and that the natural resources of the Turkish Empire are infinitely greater than those of Russia, when Peter the Great undertook to transform his barbarous hordes into a civilised nation. But although the character of the reigning Sultan is in some respects worthy of praise - it may well be doubted whether he possesses knowledge and capacity equal to the crisis, and bountiful as nature has been to this Empire in every capital point, yet such is the ruinous tendency of institutions raised on false principles, that the greatest natural advantages would seem to be unavailable, now that the circumstances which once gave an extraordinary impulse to the Turkish people have ceased to operate." 20

Canning concluded this account by pointing out that the defeats in Greece and elsewhere had produced loss of pride and confidence and that this was combined with a weakening of the influence of the Koran.

A year later in Turkey and its Resources, Urquhart wrote:

"The Greek revolution taught her (Turkey) that the Rayah was a man - the Battle of Navarino that a character in Europe is worth having. The Russian war made her doubt the height of the Balkans and the depth of the Danube." 22

The optimism expressed was not justified by future events. These "lessons" did not cause the Turks to change their ways, and they remained, on the whole, weaker but not less barbaric

20. Canning to Palmerston, March 7, 1832. F.O. 78/266

21. ibid.

22. Urquhart, D. Turkey and its Resources. p. 119.

than before. Urquhart's reason for holding this view, however, went deeper than his practical political judgment. It had its foundation in his almost fanatical admiration for their institutions. The substance of his belief has already been mentioned in a letter of his quoted in Chapter II.²³

Like many other barbaric and warlike people, the Turks had excessively simple institutions. Their law was based on the Koran, and their fiscal system on direct taxation. Such "institutions" were, of course, the inevitable consequence of the absence of secular learning, and of financial incompetence. But Urquhart assigned to them a special significance. They were in his eyes a survival of customs and laws which had been the rule during the European "Middle Ages." Since he held the view, not uncommon in his day, that the Mediaeval period had been the "golden age" of Europe, the Turks became in his eyes a species of superior and uncorrupted human beings. This led him to discount the corruption and inefficiency in the Ottoman Empire, which he did not deny, as the consequence of evil alien influences. Turkey served the same purpose in his scheme of things which America acquired for the commercial radicals.

This view ~~would~~ induced him to introduce amid a body of well organised facts and logical opinions a passage such as this:

"A man who would be considered perfectly ignorant, may be in Turkey, if he is only honest, an able and excellent administrator because he has no general questions to grapple

23. vide supra p. 27.

with, no party opinions to follow, no letter of the law to consult, because not only is he never called on to decide on and to interfere in questions of administration and finance, but his power is only honestly exercised when he prevents interference with the natural self-adjustment of interest. " 24

The expression of such unusual political conceptions could not have increased his prestige with Cabinet ministers, but ~~they~~ it did not in any way diminish the propaganda value of his writings. There are in fact, two suggestions contained in the above quotation which are not unflattering to the general reader: The exalting of honesty over knowledge; and the suggestion that by the process of subtraction, the removing of party systems, general questions, ^{and} the secular systems of law, governments might be "handed back" to people whose only recommendation was their goodwill.

It was, however, the abundance of useful information, and the vision of economic opportunity, which gave the book its popularity. Urquhart's views on "institutions", if they had any influence at all, served only to give the Turks a certain respectability, and counteracted the natural prejudice of the English public against a Power which was known to be Asiatic, Mussulman, and barbaric. If Palmerston, Sir Herbert Taylor and the King considered Urquhart's views on "institutions" at all, they must have dismissed them at this time as harmless irrelevancies. But they were not, He held these beliefs with a religious conviction, and for that reason found it impossible to make the necessary compromise with the inevitable opportunism of day to day policy.

24. Urquhart, D. Turkey and Its Resources. op. cit. p.121.

CHAPTER IV

THE COMMERCIAL TOUR

The object of Urquhart's tour, was to investigate commercial possibilities in Central Europe and the Near East. Although he was primarily concerned with the territories of the Ottoman Empire, the first part of his tour took him to Germany. He had left England on the 24th of August with the intention of visiting the Leipzig Fair. But because of a miscalculation he arrived six weeks before the Fair began. He spent these weeks in visiting Hamburg and Berlin, returning to Leipzig he visited the Fair, and then continued his journey Southward. He travelled by way of Vienna through the Balkans to Constantinople, stopping for a time in Serbia to visit Prince Miloch.

When he arrived at the Turkish Capital, British prestige had been weakened considerably as a result of the Russian intervention against Mehemet Ali and the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi. Lord Ponsonby, the British Ambassador, and brother-in-law of Earl Grey, had arrived only a few months before Urquhart, and was, on Palmerston's instructions, working to undermine the Russian ascendancy, and to restore British prestige. So low had British influence fallen that he was reduced to keeping in contact with the Porte by means of the palace physician, a court confidant, Vogorides, and the court jester. In these circumstances, the type of assistance which Urquhart had to offer could not be unwelcome.

Urquhart's commercial tour was to last a total of eighteen months, eight weeks of which were to be spent at Constantinople. Being thus limited in time, Urquhart at once hastened to renew contact with his old friends and acquaintances. The most important of these was M. Blacque, editor of the Moniteur Ottoman.

The publication of Turkey and its Resources had given Urquhart some prominence as an authority on Ottoman affairs. Translated extracts had been read with interest by high Turkish officials, and it had received particular attention from Blacque. He requested Urquhart to draw up a special report embodying the suggestions for reform contained in the book. Later it was decided to translate the entire work into Turkish, and to present its author to the Sultan.

Urquhart soon disclosed his official status to Ponsonby, who recognised his value at once. The Ambassador was then introduced to M. Blacque, which was in itself a considerable service. But the value of the work being done by the young man at this time had no relation to the importance he attached to it. In his own account of his activity he declared:

"Then commenced that series of operations upon the Turks which resulted in the complete change in their disposition towards us and which gave me a complete ascendancy over the councils of that Empire, whether regards its internal administration or its external policy." 1

This of course bears little relation to the truth. His recommendations were no doubt received with great courtesy, and not

1. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 16.

a little flattery, which he mistook for assent. It is highly probable that the Turks kept him informed of the negotiations which they were carrying on with the Russians, but it was obviously to their advantage to use such a convenient unofficial channel for communicating news to Ponsonby. The official secrets which he obtained were perhaps less secret than he supposed, and in any case he is unlikely to have procured information not open to Blacque. But the immense knowledge which he had gathered on Turkey and the contacts which he had established were in themselves sufficient to make his services useful. Even Palmerston was prepared to admit this. In May of that year he had written to Taylor:

"Thanks for this very interesting bit from Urquhart it covers little paper, but there is a great deal in it; and especially much zeal and enthusiasm in the pursuit in which he is engaged, those are valuable qualities. Pray tell him to employ himself in whichever way Lord Ponsonby may think the most useful." 2

The last line refers to Urquhart's request to prolong his stay in Constantinople, which had been made with Ponsonby's full approval. Not only did the Ambassador share Urquhart's views on policy, but he appears to have had similar ideas on how policy should be conducted. Ponsonby wrote to Urquhart on the 24th of April:

"You will have seen in the papers the summary way in which the Times journal disposes of me.

"I must admit that Lord Palmerston's speech ~~exposes me~~ to the reasonable suspicions of anybody that I have neglected

my duty.

" I have a sensibility to public opinion I hope it is an honest one -- a letter to the Times is likely to have much effect, perhaps more effect, than a speech in Parliament, provided the real strong ground be taken which the state of this country, and still more, the indubital designs of Russia demand." 3

This would indicate that Ponsonby too, was not averse from the sort of independent action and criticism of superiors which made Urquhart such a dangerous subordinate.

When summer came Urquhart suspended his activities in Constantinople to tour the shores of the Black Sea in the yacht Turquoise. In this enterprise he was accompanied by Captain Lyons, and the principal objective of the voyage was to be a secret visit to the coast of Circassia.

The territory known as Circassia lay between the Crimea and the Caucasus. Its inhabitants were warlike and uncivilised, and until 1829 had owed allegiance to the Sultan. Turkish rule, however, had been represented only by the maintenance of a Pasha at Anapa on the coast. Under the terms of the Treaty of Adrianople (1829) the ports of Anapa and Poti were ceded to Russia, but the Circassians would not recognise the Russians as their masters, and the country remained in a continual state of rebellion.

There were two awkward circumstances surrounding the Russian efforts to rule this area: firstly, England had not recognised

3. Ponsonby to Urquhart, No. 3; April 19th 1834. ibid. p.34.

and
the Treaty of Adrianople,^a therefore the de jure claim of Russia was open to doubt; and secondly, the Tsar's forces had not subdued the Circassians, and therefore had not established a de facto rule in the country. The Circassians maintained that the Porte had no authority to transfer them to Russia, and they were endeavouring to obtain foreign support for their resistance. To cut them off from any prospect of this, the Russians maintained a blockade of their coasts.

The principal Circassian Chief, Safer Bey, had been brought up in Turkey and had risen high in the Sultan's service. He had been captured by the Russians during the Russo-Turkish war, and afterwards had remained for two years in Russia. Urquhart visited him at Samsoun in Anatolia where he resided, and made arrangements to hold a secret meeting with two hundred Circassian Chiefs at Soujak Hale on the blockaded coast.⁴

The Turquoise managed to evade the Russian men of war patrolling the coast and landed at the rendezvous selected. He went ashore and spent the night in council with the two hundred Chiefs, who had collected to greet him. At this gathering a petition was drawn up which declared Circassia to be an independent nation. It was duly signed by fifteen Beys, and addressed to William IV. In the Circassian "Declaration of Independence" the King of

4. Urquhart to Palmerston, No. 7, August 18th 1834.
F.O. 78/249.

England was addressed in the same terms as they had formerly addressed the Sultan, and Urquhart was referred to as Doud Bey, one of the Beys of Europe.⁵

It is unnecessary to point out that Urquhart had arranged this episode, with no other purpose than to impress the King and the Foreign Office. In this he had Ponsonby's full support.

"Being convinced that Russia will seize this country and knowing that the possession of the Caucasus is the most important preliminary to seizure, I was glad to encourage Mr. Urquhart to visit that country."⁶

In this same report Ponsonby stated his opinion that Circassian independence was a necessary part of the European balance of power, and ended his report with a dramatic appeal worthy of Urquhart:

"Will England leave the Caucasus to the fate of the Poles? Or will England remember that in condemning those nations to Russian Serfage, The balance of power in Europe is changed, the commerce of Britain limited, and Turkey, Persia and India lost or endangered."⁷

Urquhart wrote two accounts of this voyage to Palmerston, one on August 18th when he had just returned, and another giving more details on September 11th. In this second report he made an effort to avoid the responsibility of giving encouragement to the Circassians. He declared that when the Beys had expressed their gratitude at seeing a representative of England he "told them that I feared that there was no chance whatever

5. ibid.

6. Ponsonby to Aplmerston, No. 147, September 16th 1834.
F.O. 78/249.

7. ibid.

of their receiving countenance from England!" They answered:
 "We have now seen what we never hoped to see, do not seek to
 deprive us of hopes which if deceived cannot be more dangerous
 than despair. You have spoken to us as no one has ever spoken
 to us before."⁸

The circumstances of Urquhart's visit to Circassia could
 have no other effect than to encourage ~~their~~ resistance to
 Russia. Even though he concealed his official connection, the
 fact that he described himself as a friend of the King, and
 carried a message, dictated in all probability by himself from
 them to that monarch, spoke for itself. Yet the Circassians
 perhaps hoped to compromise England through Urquhart and made
 it their business to appear unduly encouraged.

Between writing these two reports on Circassia, Urquhart
 had written another dispatch of an alarmist nature, in which
 he predicted dire consequences, unless England acted at once.
 He emphasised the hostility of both the population and the troops
 in Constantinople towards Russia, and maintained that they could
 not be trusted to fight against Mehemet Ali because they were
 convinced that the Sultan was in the hands of Russia. This
 report also suggested that the provinces were about to rise in
 revolt and bring about a complete dissolution of the Empire. All
 this could be averted, declared Urquhart, were a squadron to be
 sent to the Bosphorus.⁹

8. Urquhart to Palmerston, No. 9; September 11th 1834.
 F.O. 78/344.

9. Urquhart to Palmerston, No. 8; September 2nd 1834.
 F.O. 78/249

Ponsonby was in complete agreement with Urquhart, and wrote¹⁰ to the Foreign Office urging the same views. But neither Ponsonby nor Urquhart was content to confine his activities to writing reports to the Foreign Office. They both planned to present the case for their policy to the public. To this end, a pamphlet was prepared, which was written by Urquhart, corrected by Blacque and Ponsonby, and financed by Ponsonby.

In spite of this very close association, however, some disagreements arose between the Ambassador and Urquhart. The principal difficulty at this time concerned money which was advanced by Urquhart to the Circassians. Ponsonby wrote to Urquhart:

"...now without delay I must call to your mind the evident impossibility of my furnishing any money without special authority of the Government. That money so advanced by me would not be replaced to me is a trifling consideration; but the important matter is that I, the King's Ambassador, am bound not to do anything that can commit this Government. To give money to the Circassians who are in arms against Russia, would be committing His Majesty's Government in the strongest way, and it would be a farce to pretend to have it done by me as a private individual. Who could credit any such thing? As for the sum you disbursed, I have now, you know, heard for the first time that you imagined that you were acting under my instructions in that particular, but I can arrange the matter, I hope, by secret service money if the sum be not large.

"You know what Joe Hume is, and the fear Ministers have of him. I never like to speak of business except in the plainest terms, and have told you bluntly the fact..." 11

It is clear from the above that Ponsonby, although willing

10. Webster, op. cit. p. 339

11. Ponsonby to Urquhart, No.27; October 11th 1834. F.O.78/249.

to pursue an adventurous policy would not allow Urquhart to lead him into open indiscretions. But this reprimand from the Ambassador caused no change in their relationship.

The pamphlet which was entitled England, France, Russia and Turkey, was completed and sent to the publishers in London. On completing the pamphlet, Urquhart wrote to Blacque:

"The memoir is off! and that is not all, it goes direct to a person who has received orders to have it published separately.." 12

Meanwhile, Palmerston's reaction to the Circassian voyage was anything but favourable. In a letter to Ponsonby he expressed his displeasure, saying that Urquhart had consumed a good deal of Foreign Office money, that he was using his time for unauthorised activities, and that the quality of his reports was falling
13
off.

Ponsonby took Urquhart's side on this issue, writing to him on the 20th of November:

"What can I say but that curs will bark and rogues lie, and fools believe and time show the cowardice of the one, the falsehood of the other and vary the folly of the last. Who has concocted the contradictory charges against you? No matter, but do not despise them so much as not to refute them." 14

On December 7th Urquhart replied:

"It is with no less surprise than mortification that I learn by Your Excellency's note of yesterday that Lord Palmerston thinks that I am wasting my time here. I remained

12. Urquhart to Blacque, October 12th 1834; No. 28. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p.45

13. Ponsonby to Palmerston, Oct. 11 1834 Private, F.O. 78/239.

14. Same to Same, Nov. 29 1834, Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. ~~Nov. 21~~, p. 46.

by Your Excellency's desire. You, my Lord, must therefore, justify me in having done so." 15

But before this, Ponsonby had written to Palmerston:

"I have a few words to say in reply to your letter of the 10th, wherein you express some alarm respecting Urquhart's conduct towards the Circassians. It is evident to me that you have not attended to the facts, and I feel confident you will be quite at your ease when you have examined them -- the Circassians could not be excited to revolt, because they were at that time, and had long been, in arms against the Russians, and had just defeated a Russian corps.

"Urquhart counselled those who sought counsel from him to assert their right to independence by the declaration that they were not the subjects of Russia, had never been so, and would not be so. All of which, if maintained de facto, would be esteemed by many (the Circassians to wit) as sufficient grounds for treating with that country, and which in the case of South America, was held to be sufficient -- Urquhart is not a diplomatic agent of His Majesty's Government, he has no character whatever as a public servant. He, I believe has been employed merely to collect what may be called statistical information. His words nor his acts could implicate His Majesty's Government, and lastly it is wholly a secret to everybody that he is employed at all by the British Government.

"Now in addition to the above I have to add that I learned from Captain Lyons, who accompanied Mr. U., that so far from urging on the Circassians to encounter risks, he said the strongest things possible when replying to their efforts to persuade them to act with caution and the most careful attention to consequences dangerous to themselves from their isolated and destitute condition, and the hopelessness and improbability of their receiving aid from any foreign Power." 16

The charges against him led Urquhart to decide to return to England at once, to lay his ideas before the King and the British public. Ponsonby seconded him in this, agreeing that there was nothing more to be done, for the moment at Constantinople

15. Urquhart to Ponsonby, December 7th 1834; No. 3. *ibid.* p/ 47.

16. Ponsonby to Palmerston, October 11 1834, November 24 1834, F.O. 78/239.

It was arranged that he should return, taking with him some Young Turkish officers who were to be educated in England, and on his way visit the Princes of Moldavia and Wallachia.

"On leaving Constantinople," Urquhart related to Flyer, "I was charged by Lord Ponsonby with a mission to the Princes of Wallachia and Moldavia. On entering the first country, a messenger overtook me from Circassia, where operations, undertaken at my suggestion, had succeeded in surrounding and cutting off a Russian army. They delayed determining the course to pursue, -- until they referred the matter to me." 17

Both Princes, Urquhart maintained, were under the impression that England was an ally of Russia. This, he undertook to correct.

"After two or three days spent with the most influential men and with himself (the Prince of Wallachia) (one day the discussion lasted eight hours) there was a complete revolution effected in his feelings, which ended in his subsequently making direct appeals to Lord Palmerston for his support." 18

The Prince of Moldavia was holding a ball when Urquhart arrived, but that does not appear to have delayed the interview. He persuaded the Prince to spend most of the evening in political conversation, and by the time they parted, considered that he had made some headway.

"Next morning early I received a request to go immediately to the Palace. He told me that during the night he had received dispatches from St. Petersburg, and announced to me a change of ministry in England, with the Duke of Wellington at the head of affairs. He seemed overwhelmed at this intelligence and begged me to consider what had been said the night before as not having been heard by me. I was astounded, and I asked him if, because the first soldier of the age, and the

* 17. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. William IV. op. cit. p. 17.

18. ibid. p. 18.

man of greatest personal authority, had become possessed of power in England, he should withdraw his confidence. He replied: 'Little do you know the Duke of Wellington; He has been in power only to advance Russia's ends. His predilections and his friends are Russian and Russia has received his appointment as a triumph.' " 19

The Balkan Princes were undoubtedly anxious to sow seeds of suspicion among the Great Powers, and Wellington's policy of dealing directly with Russia, thus excluding the possibility of their playing such a role, was particularly offensive to them. Urquhart's visit offered an apparent opening for intrigue, which the Prince of Moldavia was reluctant to lose. Past experience, however, must have convinced him that the Duke would have none of this. Throughout Urquhart's writing there are accounts of numerous occasions when Asiatic and Balkan potentates denounced British policy as favouring Russia. It is of course, impossible to tell to what degree these were sincere. But it must not be forgotten that it was largely by playing on British fears of Russia that these people could hope to influence English policy. And moreover, Urquhart could not but be anxious to accept at their face value, witnesses whose testimony was so congenial to his opinions.

Some degree of intrigue was inevitable in this area of the world, and Wellington's policy tended to leave the field entirely to the Russians. This was perhaps unwise, but it would be unjust to ignore the motives of the Prince in attacking him, and Urquhart's

19. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. ibid. p. 19.

motives for allowing himself to believe and repeat these charges.

After these interviews Urquhart resumed his journey, according to his own account, in a state of anxiety and sleeplessness. At Brussels he saw King Leopold who gave him "hope that there were men in Europe who could see the designs of Russia and entertain the idea of opposing them."²⁰

When he returned to London he discovered that Palmerston, before leaving office, had appointed him Consul General at Constantinople in succession to Cartwright. Urquhart later denounced this as a plot to discredit him:

"If I accepted, then my career was over; He(Palmerston) no doubt conceived that such a post would be an object of ambition to me. He would further anticipate that the removal of such a man as Cartwright and the placing of me in his stead (standing as I did in direct opposition to the whole Frank population of Constantinople), would have led to vehement remonstrances against me, to probable interferences of his successors to cancel the appointment, that thereby I should be involved in a struggle with Mr. Cartwright and with the Conservative Government that would come in; that I should be lost in character by the desire of getting possession and probably fail in obtaining it after all.

"Namich Pasha, then Ambassador from Turkey, on hearing it, went down to the Foreign Office and said, that to offer me a consular appointment was to offer an insult to the Turkish nation as well as to me."²¹

Although the Machiavellian motives attributed here to Palmerston are very unlikely, the appointment would probably have resulted in the consequences which Urquhart described.

20. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. ibid. p. 19.

21. idem. loc. cit.

Ponsonby did not encourage him to accept the position, nor did
²²
 anyone else.

It is more than probable that the change in Cabinet was at first not unwelcome to Urquhart. He had no Whig connections, and the idea of having a soldier and a Tory as Foreign Minister was not unwelcome to his taste. But the Duke had a strong sense of hierarchy and was in no way disposed to encourage the pretensions of young men who presumed to give him advice.

On his arrival in London, Urquhart first tried to see Palmerston. This involved some difficulty, and Palmerston merely referred him to the Duke of Wellington. During the short interview which took place, however, Urquhart managed to lecture the Whig minister very briefly:

"I congratulated him and England upon his being out of office, and left my words a few seconds without explanation to see how he took it, then adding, 'Because you will now have time to study and master a subject on which hinges the well-being of this country and the world'" 23

The success of his pamphlet with the public, and the knowledge of his good standing with Sir Herbert Taylor and the King, perhaps led Urquhart to expect a friendly reception from the Duke. But it was otherwise.

"I was summoned to the Foreign Office, the Duke received me fiercely, and burst instantly into a charge of intriguing to supplant Cartwright! I was fiercer than he.

22. Ponsonby to Urquhart, January 1st 1835. No.36; ibid.p.49.

23. ibid. n. 19.

I have before me now the picture of his sudden collapse. He dropped into his chair, folded his arms, bent his head, and sat there. I left there walking out of the room without leave-taking." 24

The Duke called him back the next day for another interview. This time, if we are to accept Urquhart's account, Wellington made additional accusations against him, but, on these being denied, changed his attitude:

"His manner then altered as if nothing had occurred, and as if I had only just then entered the room. He was courteous and affable, moved forward a chair for me, and when we were seated, he said, 'Now begin your story.'

A lecture on the Russian danger, and how to avert it then followed:

"He repeated several times 'Turkey is gone' and on one of these occasions he had referred to Lord Grey as having sacrificed her. I was able to tell him on this, that that same morning Lord Grey had passed from the conclusion that Turkey was 'too weak' to be supported to the other conclusion that 'she was so strong that she must be put down.'" 25

In this account written many years after the interview Urquhart gives long reports of conversations which cannot be regarded as accurate. But it would be safe to conclude that during these interviews, Urquhart stated his case in a rather presumptuous manner, and that Grey and Palmerston listened politely and the Duke did not. But this rebuff from Wellington does not seem to have weakened Urquhart's position at Court.

"One day I was sent for to the Palace and found Sir Herbert in great agitation. He began by questioning me:

24. ibid. p. 21.

25. loc. cit.

'Are you', he said, 'quite sure of your ground?' meaning as to the conditions of Turkey. When I had told him that he might rest perfectly assured that every point was incontrovertable, administration, statistics, Diplomatic Documents -- he recovered his composure sufficiently to tell me what had so moved him, which he did in these words: --

'This morning when passing in to the King, the Duke of Wellington said to me with great glee, "Urquhart is answered;" putting into my hand a pamphlet which he had just got from Pozzo di Borgo'.²⁶ It was impossible for me not to be alarmed also; and I ran over in my own mind the whole case, to ascertain if on any point I had failed to verify the facts. It was therefore with fear and trembling that I sat down to a large bound and closely printed pamphlet. You may imagine the successive bursts of merriment and relief that ensued. It was the 'Manchester Manufacturer', Cobden! So, picking out some of the atrocious falsehoods and falsifications, I set Sir Herbert Taylor's mind more than at ease. From that hour, the support of the King had departed from the Duke of Wellington." 27

Again it is necessary to point out that this statement is supported by no independent evidence. And since no dates are supplied by Urquhart it is impossible to tell exactly when the interview took place.

Ponsonby too, found reason to dislike the Wellington administration, and this went much deeper than the fact that he was Grey's brother-in-law. On March 17th 1835, the Duke had cancelled the discretionary order, which until then had left the Ambassador at the Porte with the power to call the fleet to Constantinople, if faced with a new threat from Russia or Mehemet Ali. But as early as January 1st 1835, Ponsonby had expressed to Urquhart his feelings on the subject of the Duke:

26. A corsican adventurer in the Russian service. He came to England as Ambassador when Durham was sent to Russia.

27. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 21.

"I want nothing to settle my mind as to the question of the Tory ministry, for I am sure no such thing can be. We may have a revolution, I have never seen a stroke of politics which, in my opinion has so little judgment and sense in it, as this last stroke made by the Duke of Wellington and the Court." 28

And again a fortnight later he wrote: "Wellington has been the spoli child of Fortune, or rather the favoured lover; he is old, and she has perennial youth." ²⁹

While Wellington and the Tories were in office there was little that Ponsonby and Urquhart could hope to accomplish, towards influencing the Court. Their efforts were now to be directed mainly towards winning public support.

28. Ponsonby to Urquhart, January 1st 1835. ibid. p. 49.

29. Ponsonby to Urquhart, January 15th 1835. ibid. p. 50.

CHAPTER V

THE PORTFOLIO AND THE COMMERCIAL TREATY

When Urquhart returned from Constantinople in the beginning of 1835 he felt himself to be in a particularly strong position. His favour with the King and Sir Herbert Taylor had in no way been diminished by his exploits in Circassia; the popularity of Turkey and Its Resources secured his position with the press. While at Constantinople he had won the enthusiastic support of Ponsonby, and made numerous important contacts with important Turkish officials.

These factors, he hoped would be sufficient to enable him to accomplish the several objectives which he had in mind: He intended to have negotiated a commercial treaty drawn up by himself, between England and Turkey; to have an Anglo-French squadron sent to the Straits, on the invitation of the Porte; and to raise a loan in England for the payment of the Turkish indemnity owed to Russia under the terms of the Treaty of Adrianople.

There were two methods open to him for effecting these ends: ~~he~~ he could either use his influence with the King to bring pressure on the Cabinet, or he could make use of his connections with the press, to create a body of public opinion favourable to his programme. His early rebuff at the hands of Wellington left him no choice but to pursue the second course until the return of the Whigs to office.

In this he met with considerable success. The pamphlet England, France, Russia and Turkey which he and Ponsonby had written gained a wide circulation. It ran through five editions, and won nearly unanimous applause in the periodical and daily press. The pamphlet presented in popular form the same arguments which had hitherto been presented to the Foreign Office. In it, Russian policy was represented as being directed primarily towards acquiring Constantinople. Were this to be gained, the pamphlet maintained, the result would be Russian supremacy in both Europe and Asia. Austria, Prussia and Greece would then become the satellites of Russia, and the balance of power in Europe would be destroyed. In the East, Russia would gain the ascendancy in Persia and Afghanistan, and be able to exclude British commerce from Central Asia.

1

It has already been shown that in the 1830's Russian policy was not directed towards the acquisition of the Straits. And moreover, it is doubtful whether their conquest by this large, but very poorly organised Power, would have been a turning point in world history. But this was not apparent to the reading public in 1835.

Urquhart had little difficulty in winning support from the press. The Edinburgh Review had been pro-Turkish since 1833. The British and Foreign Review, originally named the Polonia, was founded by Polish exiles, and had a strong anti-Russian bias.

1. vide supra: Chapter III.

Previously other publications had been for the most part indiff-
²
 erent to the Turks. On August 14th 1835, Urquhart wrote to
 Ponsonby:

"During my trip to Scotland I have gained Blackwoods,
Tait's, and Chambers Journal (Tait's was on the point of
 commencing a series of articles against) also two zealous
 contributors converted. The next numbers of the Quarterly
the Foreign Quarterly, and British and Foreign (three
 articles now in progress). I hope also, but have not defi-
 nitely arranged for the Edinburgh. What do you think of
 this? Besides, a volume of extracts from the Moniteur ³
Ottoman is in the press, and I am busy with an introduction."

Two days earlier he had written to Achmet Pasha, Turkish
 Minister of Marine, (Capudan Pasha):

"The development of opinion in England, and now in
 France, in favour of Turkey and the cause of the Sultan,
 has been next to miraculous. While I congratulate you
 upon it, you may congratulate me. I believe I myself have
 been the means by which this has been brought about. If so
 I have rendered to Turkey the most important service that
 could be rendered her, one which in the actual crisis may
 be the means of saving her from perdition and prolonging
 her existence." ⁴

In this letter Urquhart reveals not only a characteristic
 lack of modesty, but also that he was endeavouring to use this
 press campaign as a means of exerting pressure on the Turks.
 And at times, when they showed reluctance to act on his advice,
 he would point out to them "that a character in Europe was worth
 having", and that only by following his advice could this be ^{gained} ~~had~~.
 Although it would seem that he was held in some esteem, at this

2. Bolsover, G.H., "David Urquhart and the Eastern Question." Journal of Modern History, VIII, No. 11; Dec. 1936. pp 463-65.
Edinburgh Review, LVIII (1832-33), 114-43; British and Foreign Review,
 I, (1835), 102-33; (1835), 65-89; 653-73.

3. Urquhart to Ponsonby, Aug. 14 1835, Reminiscences of William
 IV, op. cit. pp 68-9.

4. Urquhart to Achmet Pasha, Aug. 12 1835, ibid. p. 67.

time, by the Turks, they did not accept his opinions without reservations. Achmet Vefik, a famous Turkish writer, was to remark: "He is an advocate, not a critic."⁵ It is not unlikely that Achmet's statement reflects the real attitude of Turkish official circles towards Urquhart. They were not, of course, unmindful of the benefits an advocate might offer, but advice was not considered to be one of the benefits.

The unanimity of public opinion which Urquhart's efforts brought about was not to last. Cobden's pamphlet England, Ireland and America, came out in the same year, presenting an opposite point of view, and henceforth public opinion was to be divided. The argument presented by Cobden embodied a point of view which was more extreme than that of Urquhart. If the point of departure for Urquhart had been a general suspicion of Russia, with Cobden, it was a general suspicion of British aristocracy and of the Foreign Office. It was his contention that a Russian conquest of the Straits would result in an advance of civilisation and offer new opportunities for British commerce, and should the Russians engage in the barbaric practice of establishing tariff walls, they would simply undermine the basis of their own prosperity, and destroy themselves.⁶ The prohibitive tariffs actually maintained by Russia, and her policy of incorporating conquered countries, such as Poland, in her customs regulations, contradicts Cobden's line of reasoning. There was, however,

5. Bowen, H., British Contributions to Turkish Studies. London, 1945. p. 37.

6. Cobden, R., England, Ireland and America. London, 1835.

at that time considerable hope that the Tsar would reconsider his tariff policies.

Towards the end of the summer of 1835 Urquhart felt that he had done all he could in London to further the cause of the Turks, and was prepared to return to the East. But a new opportunity for propaganda led him to alter his decision.

"The very day I had fixed for my departure happily now postponed, brought me an accession of strength of the most extraordinary kind worth a hundred thousand men at least. No other than the dispatches "Ostensible", "Reserved", and "Tres Reservee" of Russia for three years, from Nesselrode to Pozzo di Borgo, Leiven, and Boutineff. Her policy laid bare, her intelligence, her extraordinary political intelligence -- established, the most taunting contempt, the most bitter sarcasm on our own and the French Ministry." 7

The documents referred to in Urquhart's letter have a curious history. The Tsar made a practice of sending important state papers to his brother the Grand Duke Constantine, the Governor of Warsaw. Some of these documents fell into the hands of the Poles during the rebellion of 1830. They were taken to England by Count Zamoyski, a lieutenant of Prince Czartoyriski. He placed them in the hands of Palmerston, who left them for a year, reading only a few before then returning them. After this they were shown to Sir Herbert Taylor. It is likely that Taylor's influence and the reputation Urquhart had gained as a Russo-phobe⁸ then induced Zamoyski to give them to him.

It would appear that Taylor and the King were inclined to

7. Urquhart to Ponsonby, No. 54, August 20th 1835.
Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 68.

8. Webster, Sir Charles K., "Palmerston, Ponsonby and Urquhart."
English Historical Review. Vol. p. 333.

favour a direct publication in order to embarrass Russia, but this objective was much too limited for Urquhart. He was determined to present them in a manner designed to create the greatest sensation, and to combine their publication with editorial comment favourable to his own political programme. But more important than this was the fact that he was anxious to compromise the Foreign Office by gaining the appearance of official sanction for his project. This was made considerably easier by the fact that he had been appointed to the office of Secretary of Embassy at Constantinople on October 3rd.

Palmerston does not appear to have been aware of Urquhart's intention of publishing Zamoyiski's documents, but the comment he made to Sir Herbert Taylor on the subject, should not have given Urquhart much encouragement. Taylor himself, however, let it be known that he personally favoured the publication of the documents. He wrote to Urquhart:

"His (Palmerston's) opinion was the same as mine, that they could only serve as information, certainly very valuable, but inapplicable at present, and not to be brought forward, considering the manner in which they were obtained, by any government as a means of injuring another, while at peace with it." 9

But in this same letter, Taylor discreetly stated his personal support for their publication:

"The more I consider the subject, the more I cling to the wish that these documents should be published and I am convinced that Z.(Zamoyiski) would obtain a large price for them. My own opinion is that Austria and possibly even Prussia have become very impatient at the sort of

supremacy which the Emperor Nicholas is disposed to exercise, and that the publication of Pozzo's letters would exasperate Metternich and fan the flame.

"I write to you confidentially, and I state my own views, but I am satisfied that I am justified as an Englishman and a Turk in entertaining them, although I could not, were I a Minister, or even situated as I am, avow them in any other shape. 10

Ponsonby, like Taylor, favoured a discreet publication of the documents.

"I am convinced", wrote Ponsonby, "that what you received from the 'Enemy' ought to be used publicly, though with care not to commit anybody, and with care to avoid any personal reflections on any Turk." 11

In spite of these warnings, Urquhart proceeded in his own way. A periodical called the Portfolio was created for the purpose of presenting the papers to the public. Then, in order to compromise the Foreign Office, he took many, but not all of the documents in question to Backhouse, the Permanent Under-Secretary, and Strangways, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office for approval. The former was extremely cautious, and simply returned the papers without comment. Strangways, however, submitted several of the documents to Palmerston, who stated that he saw nothing to be gained by their publication, and recommended that certain papers be definitely withheld. Of one document, Palmerston went so far as to remark:
 12
"I think it would be useful to publish the whole of this dispatch".

9. ibid. p. 78.

10. Ponsonby to Urquhart, October 14th 1835. No. 62. ibid. p. 81.

11. Minute by Palmerston, November 13th 1835, B.P. Webster, op. cit. p. 333.

Strangways was also responsible for offering certain advice on how the material should be presented. These facts were later offered by Urquhart as evidence that he acted under Foreign Office direction, and were used to support his claim that the Foreign Office should bear the expense of the publication.¹³

It would appear that Urquhart held the sincere belief that by his own initiative he was forcing the Foreign Office to take a strong stand against Russia. On one occasion he even spoke of the Portfolio as being the deliberate answer of the Foreign Office to the Tsar's policy.¹⁴ But if Urquhart were anxious to use the name of the Foreign Office, he showed no signs of following its direction. The papers were published in a manner which disregarded the councils of caution offered by Taylor and Ponsonby, and no effort was spared to produce a sensational effect.

The Portfolio was edited by Westmacott, a friend of Urquhart's since his appointment as Secretary of Embassy at Constantinople forbade his open participation. On November 23rd 1835 the first issue appeared, and Portfolio continued publication until June 1836.⁷ It contained not only Zamoyski's documents, but also papers stolen from the Saxson archives, which "exposed" Prussian designs for using Zollverein to control the German Confederation.¹⁵

13. Webster, op. cit. pp 333-37.

14. Urquhart to Taylor, December 20th 1835. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 87.

15. The means by which Urquhart obtained these papers is not exactly known. Palmerston, himself, without knowledge of Urquhart's possession of copies, thought them so important that he was arranging to have them published in English translation. Cartwright to Palmerston, 20 Aug. 1835, F.O. Germany. 50; Same to same, 24 Aug. 1835. B.P., Webster, op. cit. p. 332.

Later issues published the "Circassian Declaration of Independence".¹⁶ The papers were presented with alarmist comment and historical notes purporting to demonstrate the menace of Russia.

The appearance of the Portfolio produced the sensation for which Urquhart had hoped. There was comment in the Times and in the Morning Chronicle, and excerpts from its contents were reproduced throughout the periodical and daily press. Rumours were soon current that the Foreign Office was connected with the publication of the documents, and Palmerston received a protest from the Russian Ambassador.¹⁷

Ponsonby and Sir Herbert Taylor did not appear to be disturbed by the fact that Urquhart had disregarded their note of caution. The success of his enterprise won him their praise, and they did not choose to offer any criticism of his methods. The Cabinet, however, was much disturbed. Melbourne complained to Palmerston in February, when rumours of the Portfolio's connection with Urquhart had reached the press.¹⁸ Again in March, after the Foreign Secretary had confirmed these rumours, the Prime Minister wrote:

"You cannot conceive the alarm which exists in the Cabinet about Urquhart. This arises from his random way of talking and from his publications. They think Ponsonby sufficiently dangerous and that adding Urquhart to him makes some great and fatal indiscretion in that quarter quite certain. Is it impossible to do anything else with him? If you could give him any other destination it would be a great thing, and you would have no difficulty in explaining to him the reason.

16. Portfolio, Vol. I, No. 4, February 1836.

17. Times, January 7, 29, 1836; Morning Chronicle, whole of January and February 1, 4, 5, 9, 1836. Bolsover, op. cit. Journal of Modern History. Vol. VIII, No. 11, p. 458.

18. Melbourne to Palmerston, Feb. 17, 1836., B.P., Webster, op. cit. p. 336.

The Portfolio is sufficient of itself as was as his language respecting Russia and the opinion entertained of him in all parts. If he gets us into any scrape I do not know how we shall defend his appointment." 19

The nature of Melbourne's next letter indicates that Palmerston might have denied that the matter was important, and referred to the King's patronage, for Melbourne wrote:

"What he may do is not indifferent because, his engaging in these publications the moment after he was employed is a proof of such a want of sense, feeling and judgment as prevents any confidence being placed in him. I cannot think that the King would mind his destination being changed. 20

Urquhart does not appear to have been aware of the anxieties which he was arousing in the Cabinet, but it is doubtful that the knowledge of them would have restrained him. His confidence in his own superior knowledge of the East and an assurance of the King's approval would have outweighed ministerial uneasiness. The Portfolio, however, was not his only activity at this time.

His programme included the negotiation of a commercial treaty between England and the Porte, and he was determined to control these negotiations himself. He had two reasons for wishing to conduct these negotiations himself: In the first place, it was generally recognised that such a treaty was desirable, both by the British Cabinet, and at the Porte, but Urquhart feared that if he were absent his particular proposals would be ignored, and secondly, he feared that the official translators at the Porte - the Dragomans - were accessible to Russian influence, and

19. Melbourne to Palmerston, March 5th 1836 B.P., Webster, op. cit. p. 337.

20. Same to same, March 15th 1836, B.P., loc. cit.

would delay and confuse negotiations.

Before discussing the details of the treaty, however, it is important to consider British trade in the Near East in relation to British trade as a whole. The most important British markets were the German Confederation and the United States, but the tariff policies of these two countries left little hope of any spectacular expansion. Trade with Russia, Austria, France and the rest of Europe was strangled by prohibitive tariffs. In 1810 Russia had prohibited the import of all foreign manufactures, but this policy was modified by a new tariff which prohibited only 301 articles and placed a high duty on the rest. The Austrian tariff ordinance of 1835, which covered all Austrian lands, exclusive of Hungary, prohibited 69 articles and laid heavy duties on 1600. This picture was improved by the existence of regular smuggling routes through the Low Countries and the German States into the heart of Europe and across the Austrian and Russian frontiers.²¹ There were, on the other hand, less important but rapidly expanding markets in the tropical areas of the world where there were no effective customs barriers. Moreover, French, Russian and Austrian manufacturers could not hope to compete successfully with British goods in a free market. Unless some special restriction existed, English merchants with their less expensive mass produced goods could take the cream of the trade and leave the milk for others.

21. Clapham, J.H. The Economic History of Great Britain. London, 1933, I, p. 460.

Russia was in a particularly poor position ~~as~~ far as the export of her few manufactured articles was concerned, and it was only in China and in the Central Asian states that her merchants were able to make any headway. Her prosperity was derived from the export of raw materials, a considerable portion of which went to England. Were the development of Turkish resources to result in Ottoman produce replacing that of Russia in the English market, it would have been a severe blow to the Russian economy. It would have meant a particular loss to the powerful landowning class which profitted by the export of grain. But it must be added that such a development of Ottoman resources which at that time included, with the exception of Greece, the whole of the Balkan Peninsula, such as Urquhart advocated in Turkey and its resources was a project and not a reality.

Urquhart's program implied that it was the object of British policy at this time to strike a blow at Russian economy, but this was not the case; there was hope in some quarters that a change in Russian tariffs might be effected, and were Britain to incur the complete hostility of Russia, she would become too dependent on the maintenance of good relations with France.

Considered in their local Near Eastern context, Urquhart's arguments had considerable strength. The value of British imports from Russia averaged over four million Pounds annually during the years 1832 to 1836. In these same years English exports to Russia averaged two million, three hundred thousand Pounds.

British exports to Turkey over the same period, averaged approximately two million, seven hundred thousand Pounds, and British imports from Turkey about eight hundred thousand Pounds.²²

The basic idea which Urquhart incorporated in his proposed treaty had been suggested as early as 1833 in Turkey and Its Resources. There he had pointed out that the potential resources of Turkey were such that if properly developed, Turkey could supply to England, grain, tallow, hemp, copper, iron, lead and wax at cheaper rates and in greater quantities than Russia.²³

Under the tariff arrangements then existing, the Turks were very much at a disadvantage. Import duties on English goods were fixed at 3% ad valorem. Under these conditions, for every 100 Pounds of English goods sold in Turkey, the Porte exacted 3 Pounds in customs duties, while at the same time English import duties on Turkish produce of equal value ^{were} ~~was~~ as high as 60 Pounds. This picture is altered in some degree by the fact that numerous Turkish internal duties frequently raised taxation on imports as high as 15%.

In October 1834 the Turks sent a request to Ponsonby for permission to raise their tariff from 3% to 5%. Some new commercial agreement was necessary since the previous arrangements had expired in May of that year. The reasons which the Turks

22. Bolsover, G.H., op. cit. p. 460. (n.85).

23. Urquhart, D. Turkey and Its Resources. op. cit. pp142-4.

for their request was that they would require the additional revenue to pay for their military forces.

When Urquhart saw this note he asked Ponsonby to allow him to ask the Turks to withdraw it. He appears to have accomplished this, and to have persuaded the Turks to send a note embodying some of his principles. Neither Blacque nor Ponsonby appears to have given him much encouragement, but this did not disturb him. In his own account he declares that:

"On my departure the Turkish Government wished me to be their representative in London, for the purpose of presenting a treaty of commerce to England, by which all the internal duties should be abolished, all monopolies laid aside, and the duties returned to their ancient conditions, and that a request should be made to England to benefit Turkey by a reduction of her own taxation on Turkish commerce." 24

The degree to which Urquhart managed to influence the Turks on this question is difficult to estimate. There is some evidence that they first followed his lead and then changed their minds. It was his idea to have the treaty negotiated in England, so that he might be able to dominate the proceedings himself. The Turks agreed, and sent a new Ambassador, Nourri Effendi, to England empowered to open negotiations. Urquhart claimed that:

"A Turkish Ambassador had arrived in England charged with the negotiations of the commercial treaty, and having for his only instructions to be guided by my advice." 25

Although this is clearly an overstatement, it would appear that Nourri may have been prepared to accept Urquhart's guidance.

24. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 17.

25. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. ibid. p. 23.

The Ambassador arrived in England in April and presented his proposals to the Foreign Office.²⁶ These included a hint that English duties on Turkish goods should be lowered, and there is much in their general tone which suggests Urquhart's influence. But a note from the Reis Effendi, Turkish Foreign Minister, soon arrived in England, despatched after Nourri had left, which offered contradictory proposals, and which indicated that the Porte wished the treaty to be negotiated in Constantinople.²⁷

When Urquhart tried to take charge of the negotiations he found that his proposals were being treated with polite evasions. He attributed this to Russian influence over the Dragoman whom he considered were plotting against him.

"I had the severest struggle to maintain against Pozzo di Borgo through his, Nourri's Dragoman and through the English Dragoman who was an intermediary between him and the English Government it was only by taking the course the most direct that I attained the presentation of my project." 28

In fairness to Urquhart it is necessary to point out that there is evidence that the Dragomans were plotting against him. There is a memorandum from Salome, the English Dragoman, of a conversation between Nourri Effendi, Vogerides, the Turkish Dragoman, and himself. In this Vogerides accused Urquhart of making inconsistent proposals, of attempting to prevent Nourri from seeing the Russian Ambassador, and of giving the impression

26. Nourri to Palmerston, No.1., May 11 1835. F.O. 78/268.

27. Memorandum on questions of the Turkish tariff, 11 May 1835. F.O. 78/268.

28. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 23.

that he had official sanction. Salame replied to Vogerides that Urquhart had no status and that the only thing he knew of Urquhart was that he had attempted to obtain the office of Consul-General at Constantinople, and had been rejected. Next to this statement he noted in red ink that Mr. Backhouse had corrected him on this point. After this conversation, Nourri²⁹ is reported to have been greatly relieved.

Since Palmerston mistrusted the Dragoman as much as Urquhart it is doubtful if this effort at calumny damaged his reputation. Stratford Canning had discovered in 1826 that his chief Dragoman³⁰ had betrayed confidential information to Russia. Dislike of this system of official translators, was undoubtedly one of the reasons which made the Foreign Secretary less reluctant to appoint Urquhart Secretary of Embassy at Constantinople.

In his efforts to influence the Turkish Ambassador Urquhart drew up ten different proposals, and at last found a form to which Nourri raised no objection. After that he succeeded in exploiting what he thought to be a promise from Nourri to present the treaty to the English Government when he should give the word.

This final draft was then shown to Sir Herbert Taylor and to Backhouse, and received their approval. Urquhart then offered it as his own suggestion to a number of Levant merchants who

29. Salame to Palmerston, Memorandum of a conversation held at the levee, 15 July 1835. F.O. 78/268.

30. Lane-Poole, op. cit. I, 412.

urged him to present it to the Government.

31

"I then communicated it to Mr. Porter, Chief of the Statistical Branch, and to Mr. Hume, the Assistant clerk and really the working man of the Board of Trade; in both cases it met with their entire approbation.³² I then had a short conversation with Mr. Poulet Thompson.³² I considered one or two objections which he made, and left him, as it appeared to me, inclined to object but not knowing how."

"The moment I got Nourri to engage to present the note as I had written it, I would have urged its presentation, but dreading that some preliminary obstacles might arise, and also, indeed, having engaged myself to him to be assured of the favourable disposition of the Ministry before I should present it, I took those steps which I have enumerated above. But the very instant that I thought that we had sufficient grounds to judge or to act on, I went to Nourri Effendi and told him the time was come. He was thrown into a state of alarm and confusion. I insisted on the grounds which had led him to see the advantage of the proposal, I insisted on the engagement he had taken. The poor man seemed quite lost and bewildered, but I insisted on the fulfillment of his promise on the faith of which I had taken the preliminary steps, and having fully made up my mind as to the consequences, I told him that unless within a couple of hours the note was presented, I found myself under the necessity of interrupting all further communications with him. He held me by the sleeve and coat, but I made the best of my way out of the room; the note has not been presented, and I have not seen him since." 33

Urquhart gives his reasons for provoking the crisis as the plots of the Dragoman, which he hoped to frustrate by forcing

31. Porter was to become a complete "Urquhartite" and a bitter enemy of Palmerston. He went far beyond Urquhart in his attacks on the Foreign Secretary, and claimed that Princess Leiven had instructed the keeper of a gambling house, a Jew - Hart, to permit Palmerston to win 20,000 Pounds. The only evidence offered in support of this story was that Hart, a man of notorious character was allowed to hold the post of Consul at Danzig. Urquhart would not endorse this story himself, but he allowed the "Free Press" which he controlled to repeat it. Seton-Watson, R.W., Britain in Europe. Cambridge, 1937. pp 255-56.

32. Thompson, later Lord Sydenham, then President of the Board of Trade.

33. Urquhart to Flyer, Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 26.

the opening of negotiations.

"Moreover, Nourri had written to Constantinople, and from the spirit in which I knew he had written and the character of the people there, I had not a doubt that the answer would be unfavourable. Therefore it seemed to me necessary to use every and the last effort to decide the question at that moment; and failing that, to break off with *éclat*, and to let the quarrel come from my side, and not from his.

"Still I think I should have succeeded had I hastened the crisis, but the weakness of the office outstripped my calculations; just at the moment I got Nourri Effendi warmed on the question, Lord Palmerston knocked him down by telling him that it was a Russian proposal; and when a few days afterwards, I had assured him on the faith of Mr. Backhouse's assertion, that Lord Palmerston was favourably prepared for the proposal, a message comes from Lord Palmerston to Nourri Effendi telling him to make no communication whatever with me. This occurred about an hour before I sent to him to propose sending the note. I, knowing what communications through Dragoman are, soon perceived how this had been brought about."³⁴

After this rebuff from the Turkish Ambassador, Urquhart gave up hope of effecting the negotiations of the treaty in England. He would have returned to the East at the end of the Summer, had not the Portfolio kept him in England.³⁵ In spite of this, however, he continued to try. He sent a letter to Achmet Pasha, the Turkish Minister of Marine, denouncing Nourri's behaviour in England.³⁶ When this had no effect, he placed his hopes in the new Turkish Ambassador to France, ^{ash}Reid Bey, whom he had known at Constantinople.³⁷ Meanwhile he did what he could by using his influence with the King.

Since it was no longer possible to present his draft of a commercial treaty as a proposal presented by the Turks to England

34. ibid. p. 73.

35. Urquhart to Ponsonby, No. 54, Aug. 20 1835. ibid. loc.cit.

36. Urquhart to Achmet Pasha, 12 Aug. 1835 (inclosure in No. 54)

37. Urquhart to Flyer, ibid. p. 25.

everything depended on his winning the approval of the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade. In this he met with some success. Palmerston himself did not discuss the treaty with Urquhart, but turned it over to Poulett Thompson, President of the Board of Trade. The early discussion between Thompson and Urquhart seems to have left him with the impression that all was going well. In a letter to Taylor, written in December, Urquhart mentioned that his tariff was "admitted by the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade", but this may have been nothing more than an attempt to provoke a definite statement from Taylor. There are, in addition to this, several letters from Backhouse to Urquhart, in which the Under-Secretary inquires about the draft of a treaty which the latter was preparing for the Board of Trade.³⁸ But there is no mention of a complete draft being submitted.

Urquhart's hopes of winning complete approval before he left England were to be crushed by Poulett Thompson. The occasion for this was an article in the Portfolio which pointed out how a commercial agreement with Turkey could be used as a weapon against Russia. It is unlikely that Thompson formed his opinions on the basis of this article alone, but he appears to have chosen to make it the excuse for denouncing the treaty. Thompson stated quite plainly that he did not consider it in British interests to damage Russia, and that the numerous commodities purchased by England from Russia were "guarantees of the peace of Europe".³⁹

38. Backhouse to Urquhart, Feb. 11, 13, 18, 1836. F.O. 78/279.

39. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 28.

This infuriated Urquhart who lost no time in denouncing Thompson to Backhouse. This he put in the form of a letter in which he stated that Thompson's opposition to his proposals sprang⁴⁰ entirely from his fear of harming Russia.

"This letter", wrote Urquhart, "was put in circulation in the Cabinet. Poulett Thompson declared that he must resign or that I must be displaced. I was not displaced, and substituted for his resignation the adoption of the obnoxious treaty." 41

Beyond this statement by Urquhart, there is no indication that the King forced Thompson to accept the treaty. It is true that Thompson ceased to speak to Urquhart. It is also true that the Treaty of Balta Linan (1838), signed after Urquhart's dismissal, embodied a good many of his proposals. He was given credit for⁴² this by Palmerston in 1848. What is most probable is that the desire to get Urquhart out of London was the deciding factor, and Urquhart was allowed to depart without any definite decision having been reached.

The Portfolio and the Commercial treaty were not Urquhart's only projects at this time. He also made efforts to arrange the sending of an Anglo-French squadron through the Dardanelles. The method by which he endeavoured to bring this about was rather involved.

40. Urquhart to Backhouse, Private, May 16 1836. F.O. 78/268.

41. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p.28.

42. Hansard, 3rd Series, XCVI, 1132 - 1142; March 1st 1848.

Among Cabinet members and high circles in England Urquhart was known as an authority on Turkey, and one who had friends at the Porte. Therefore, when he claimed to know the mind of the Turks, it was difficult to contradict him. Likewise, among the Turks Urquhart was known as a confidant of the King, and the associate of Cabinet ministers and Ambassadors, and they too had difficulty in estimating his importance.

The question of sending a squadron to the Straits was one on which no responsible official was anxious to be committed. Therefore, when Urquhart insisted on raising it, he usually received evasive answers. He would then interpret these evasions as a conditional assent. He would quote the Turks to the English as being willing to invite a squadron if they were sure of the invitation's being accepted, and then inform the Turks that if they would send an invitation to have a squadron sent, the English Cabinet would not refuse. This rather naive, and rather dishonest plan was a complete failure.

In numerous conversations with Taylor and the King and in some with Palmerston, Urquhart had raised the question of having a squadron sent to the Straits. Several objections had been put forward, the most important of which was the fact that the Turks, being bound by the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, would not consent.

"It was admitted that the position would be entirely reversed if we could obtain the admission of an English squadron to the Black Sea; but that it was hopeless to expect that the Turks would consent to this. I asserted that it was the hope and desire of the Turks, and I offered to obtain a request from the Turkish Government itself to

send up a squadron to the Black Sea. This was admitted of course to be conclusive, but not believed to be practicable."43

Urquhart hoped that the coming of Reshid Bey whom he had known at Constantinople would enable him to obtain the desired request from the Turks. He wrote to Taylor:

"It would certainly be a grand hit if Lord Palmerston would send me up the Dardanelles in a line-of-battle-ship; This would be arranged through Reshid Bey at their own suggestion, Lord Palmerston may accept or not." 44

In February he went to Paris to obtain his request from Reshid Bey. Had he not been appointed to an official position there would have been nothing remarkable in the trip. But he does not appear to have understood that, once appointed to a public office he could no longer act independently.

By his trip to Paris he hoped, not only to obtain Turkish consent for a squadron to pass the Dardanelles, but also to obtain a post for a Tunisian friend of his, D'Ghies, in the Turkish service. He wrote to Taylor:

"In none of these objects do I require the slightest support from the Government, indeed, I doubt if it would appreciate any of them. Do you think they are worth a trip to Paris?" 45

He went to Paris in February and there held two political conversations, one with Reshid Bey in which the best he could obtain was the rather cautious statement that the Turks would

43. Urquhart to Flyer, February 1842. ibid. p. 25.

44. Urquhart to Taylor, No. 63. December 26 1835. ibid. p.91.

45. ibid. loc. cit.

agree to his request only if they received prior assurance that the squadron would not be refused. The other conversation was with a member of the French Foreign Department, Desay, in which he gained nothing more than the vague suggestion that the French Government feared Russia but was opposed to war. The results of these interviews were written up and submitted to the Foreign Office.⁴⁶

This brought immediate action from Palmerston who sent him a reprimand on March 23rd which stated that although he admired his zeal and appreciated his motives, he disapproved of unauthorized negotiations.⁴⁷ There is another note which states in plain and direct terms that it is not the business of subordinate officials to embark upon unapproved policies. This is marked as having been read by Urquhart.⁴⁸

The remaining project which Urquhart embarked upon at this time was that of raising a loan to pay the Turkish indemnities to Russia. He interested a few British merchants but the project came to nothing when the Board of Trade refused its support.⁴⁹ His followers and admirers also claimed that Urquhart was in some degree^{responsible} for the increases in the navy which took place at this time, but this is unlikely. He had in fact planned a series of

46. Notes on conversation with Desages, Chef de Bureau, of the French Foreign Department, Paris, Jan. 18 1836. F.O.78/279.

47. Palmerston to Urquhart, Mar. 23 1836, Private. F.O.78/279.

48. Palmerston to Backhouse, Mar. 7 1836. F.O. 78/279.

49. Urquhart to Strangways, May 11 1836. F.O. 78/279.

commercial treaties, one with Austria, one with France, and one with Persia, but these, however, remained nothing more than projects.

When he had been recalled in October 1834, one of the complaints against him had been that he was wasting public money. There was also the fact that he had undertaken expenses for which he had expected to be reimbursed. On his appointment to the office of Secretary of Embassy at Constantinople, he pointed out that the salary which his post carried was not sufficient for him to make the necessary impression on the Turks. He suggested that the office of Oriental Secretary should be revived so that he might have the income of the posts of both Oriental Secretary and Secretary of Embassy. Urquhart also repeated his claim for expenses incurred during his commercial tour.

Palmerston pointed out to him that the Foreign Office could not be held responsible for unauthorised expenditure, but as a special concession granted the payment of his expenses. Urquhart received 200 Pounds for expenses incurred during the Circassian voyage, plus an additional 350 Pounds for expenses incurred on his return journey from Constantinople. The sum of 600 Pounds a year originally granted for his commercial tour was to be continued until his salary as Secretary of Embassy should begin. His suggestion of the revival of the Oriental Secretaryship was rejected.⁵⁰

50. Foreign Office draft on David Urquhart, February 18 1836. F.O. 78/279.

When Urquhart set out on his last journey to the East as a Foreign Office employee, he had received a recognised public appointment, carried on a successful campaign in the press, and maintained his prestige with the King. But he had made a nuisance of himself with the Cabinet, and this last was his undoing.

CHAPTER VI

URQUHART AS SECRETARY OF EMBASSY

Urquhart's time in office as Secretary of Embassy at Constantinople is remarkable for two things: the "Vixen" Affair and his quarrel with Ponsonby. The first of these was the cause of an international incident and the second was the immediate cause of the end of Urquhart's career as a diplomatist.

He left England for Constantinople in July 1836 accompanied by Sir John MacNeil, who had been associated with him on the "Portfolio" and who was then en route to Persia. On the way Urquhart had an interview with King Ludwig of Bavaria, visited the Prince of Wallachia, met a delegation of Bulgarians and made an unsuccessful effort to see Metternich.

The King of Bavaria was father of young Prince Otho, who had been made King of Greece, under a Regency Council, while still in his minority. In describing the interview, Urquhart wrote:

"The King received me in the most insulting manner and after an earnest conversation of half an hour in which these words were used 'explain to me then the objects of Russia' it ended by these words pronounced by him: 'I hope you will have reason to be satisfied with me for the future.'" 1

This assertion of a personal triumph is impossible to prove or

1. Urquhart, D. MSS narrative of the journey to Constantinople. n.d., Urquhart Papers.

disprove. But it is possible that Urquhart's fluent speech and extraordinary knowledge of Turkish affairs made a temporary impression on the King.

Urquhart's efforts to gain an audience with Metternich were naive. Just before the publication of the Portfolio, he had sent the Austrian Chancellor a letter in which he said that until he had read the private correspondence of 1828 (later published in the Portfolio) he had never really appreciated Metternich's² diplomacy. When the Portfolio was published, therefore, the Austrian Chancellor knew at once who was responsible.

In describing his efforts to obtain the desired interview, Urquhart wrote:

"Prince Metternich is without an idea of anything connected with the East except the most superficial position of Russia -- but no sense of the prospect of her action and consequently of the means of resisting her." 3

Urquhart had hoped that his companion Sir John MacNeil would be able to arrange an interview with Metternich, since Sir John had to see the Chancellor on official business.

"He (MacNeil) told me he found not merely a dread of seeing me in reference to Russia, but what he thought was a personal disinclination to see me, but that considering it so important that I should have in such a moment as this an opportunity of trying him and acting upon him Mr MacNeil had departed from his ordinary caution in pressing my presence upon him and in pressing upon him his own conclusions of the importance of a discussion with me upon the internal conditions of Turkey-- this last attempt was again met by evasions, and Sir John MacNeil was of the opinion that the

2. Lamb to Palmerston, 21 February 1837; B.P. cited in Webster, C.K., op. cit. p.344.

3. Urquhart, D. MS⁸ Narrative, op. cit.

door was closed in regard to Prince Metternich. In making this observation of Prince Metternich, it, of course will be understood that I rate him infinitely beyond any other public man in Europe." 4

After leaving Vienna, MacNeill and Urquhart proceeded together down the Danube until they reached Wallachia. There they parted, MacNeil going directly to Constantinople, and Urquhart turning off towards Bucharest. After a brief visit to the Prince of Wallachia, he proceeded southwards to Silestria. Here he was entertained by the Russian forces of occupation, and met a deputation of Bulgarians. This meeting took place in the chamber of the Russian Commander. Where Urquhart claims, he carried on a conversation with the Bulgarians in Greek, which the Russian Commander did not understand, in which he denounced the designs of Russia to the deputation, before the eyes of the Russian.⁵

Before Urquhart arrived in Constantinople an incident occurred which placed Ponsonby in a difficult position with Turkish officialdom. A British merchant named Churchill was charged with having wounded a Turkish Bey, and was placed in irons without trial. This caused the Ambassador to cease communication with the Turkish Foreign Minister, and ^{with} Achmet Pasha, a friend of Urquhart's whom he considered responsible for this act, and insisted on dealing with the Porte through Kiahaya Bey

4. loc. cit.

5. loc. cit.

a chief of the Turkish Home Office. Ponsonby demanded that the Sultan should dismiss both the Foreign Minister and Achmet Pasha, and wrote to Palmerston that they were tools of Russia.⁶ In June, just before Urquhart arrived, the Foreign Minister had been removed by the Sultan on grounds of ill health. This did not satisfy Ponsonby, and the dispute was ~~to~~^{not} to be settled until February 1837 when Palmerston decided to accept the dismissal of the Foreign Minister as a sign of good faith, and not to press for the dismissal of Achmet Pasha.⁷

While Ponsonby was enduring these necessarily strained relations with the Turks, Urquhart reached Constantinople with several projects in mind, and prepared to resume relations with his Turkish friends. Considering the circumstances, it is not remarkable that the Ambassador received his new subordinate with a certain reserve. This coolness was apparent to Urquhart from the moment of his arrival.

On his first day at the Embassy Urquhart sat up until two in the morning in conversation with Ponsonby and MacNeil. When MacNeil took his departure, the new Secretary accompanied him to the steamer, and reported having held the following conversation with him on the way:

"After a period of silence MacNeil asked: 'Well, what do you think of your reception?' I cannot detail this conversation, suffice it to say that he attributed Lord Ponsonby's change towards me solely to jealousy and offended vanity.

6. Ponsonby to Palmerston, 14 July 1836; No. 110. F.O. 78/276; see: Bolsover, G.H., "Lord Ponsonby", Slavonic Review Vol. XIII, No. 37, July 1934. p. 109.

7. ibid. p. 110.

He said to me, 'You have an opportunity of showing yourself in a new light - you have been urgent and insistent, now be patient, and submissive; annihilate yourself to nothing, say nothing and reconquer his confidence. It is necessary for the success of the objects we have in view and besides it is your duty to yield even to the weakness of men that are placed over you.'

"After enduring for I think about six weeks of the most supercilious and at the same time insidious bearing of Lord Ponsonby towards me while resident in his house I asked leave to absent myself, and during I think nearly eight months, remained in a state of total and perfect seclusion, the effect of these incidents being on my health such as to bring about a physical state analagous to my mental suffering. But during this time I feel I made great progress in the knowledge of the East. My residence in one of the primitive Turkish villages on the Asiatic side familiarized me in a manner which perhaps no other circumstances could have conduced to with the habits and thoughts of that people. And it was this time that I acquired amongst them far more importance than any that I had previously succeeded in attaining. During this period jurisdiction was given to me by the Sultan which I exercised on one occasion by ordering the infliction of the bastinado."⁸

The Turks were probably confused about Urquhart's status. He was careful to let them know that he was a favourite of the King, and his air of self importance must have impressed them. It is probable that they were grateful for the compliment that he paid them by adopting their ways, and praising their institutions, but the honours they paid him also suited their policy. Ponsonby's efforts to gain redress for the Churchill affair, gave the Turks, and Achmet Pasha in particular, a motive for honouring Urquhart. They could by this means give the appearance of dealing with the British Government without dealing with the British Ambassador. Thus, honouring the Secretary of Embassy

8. MSS Narrative of events, 1836, by Urquhart. Urquhart Papers.

could have been a subtle attempt to humiliate Ponsonby.

In the following account, Mr. Loti a friend of Urquhart, gives testimony which supports this:

"He (Urquhart) gained so much ground, that a general order was given in all the forts and fortresses that whenever he came, a guard was turned out, and he was received as if he had been a Field-Marshal.

"There is a kind of officer sent by the Government to see that there is no riot. He was stationed in the hall of the Palace. When the Ambassador came through, he would take no notice, but if Mr. Urquhart came, he jumped up in a moment, and because a Turk holds himself superior to any Frank, the lowest Turk will never get up to receive any Frank. Mr Urquhart was always received as one of themselves..

"On Mr. Urquhart's departure after a visit to Mustapha Pasha, he turned out his body-guard, and lined the streets to Mr. Urquhart's house.

"--when he went away to England the impression was that he was coming back as Ambassador; that Lord Ponsonby intended to resign and that Mr. Urquhart was to take his place."9

It is not difficult to understand the exasperation which this must have caused Ponsonby. Urquhart, however, was not possessed of the sort of perception which could detect this. He saw in the flattery of the Turks a sincere tribute to his statesmanlike qualities, and could see no disloyalty or neglect of duty in his courting popularity with the Turks. Ponsonby must have understood that Urquhart was not intentionally disloyal, and it was only with the greatest reluctance, that he was driven to take measures to restrain him.

These were made necessary when Urquhart's friends began to make attacks on the Ambassador. The most offensive of these

9. MSS Life of Urquhart, found among his papers; cp. Robinson, op. cit. p. 50 (n).

was written by Millegan, Urquhart's personal physician and correspondent of the Times. The article in question implied that Ponsonby was incompetent and that things might be improved to the satisfaction of all, were Urquhart to be appointed Ambassador in his place.¹⁰ Ponsonby wrote to Palmerston, sending him the clipping from the Times and pointing out that it was obviously inspired by the Secretary of Embassy.¹¹

The extent to which Urquhart was directly responsible for these attacks on the Ambassador is difficult to establish. Since he was still on speaking terms with Ponsonby, it may be doubted that he encouraged Millegan to write these articles. What is more probable is that he simply remained silent, and did nothing to discourage the writer, in hopes that the appearance of the attacks would be sufficient to bring Ponsonby "off his high horse." In this calculation he was entirely wrong.

Urquhart was guilty of other offences against Ponsonby. In spite of the clearly expressed opposition of the Ambassador, he succeeded in securing the appointment of G'hies, a learned Tripolitaniaⁿ, as Turkish Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. On his visit to Paris, Urquhart had discussed this matter with Reschid Bey, and on the strength of the conversations he held then, had induced G'hies to come to Constantinople. This left the Secretary of Embassy in the unhappy position of having to

10. Ponsonby to Palmerston, March 15th 1837. Cited in Webster, op. cit. p. 341.

11. ibid.

choose between letting down his friend, and acting against the wishes of his superior. Although this dilemma was of his own making, it is possible to sympathise with his position.

His next offence was more serious and less excusable. Achmet Pasha had made efforts to see Urquhart from the Secretary's arrival. This had been forbidden by Ponsonby's orders. The orders were at first obeyed, but Urquhart made no secret of the fact that he thought them ridiculous. After he had left the Embassy, Achmet paid him an unexpected visit, and after this, communication between them was resumed. This, under the circumstances, amounted to a minor triumph of Achmed Pasha over the Ambassador.

While Ponsonby and Urquhart were having their quarrel, they managed to lend their joint encouragement to a project which provoked an international incident. George Bell, a Glasgow merchant, desired to open what he hoped would be a profitable trade with Circassia. It was known to both Bell and the Foreign Office that since 1831, Russia^{had} maintained a blockade of the Circassian coast. It was also known by both parties that this blockade was by British standards, informal and illegal. The reason for this was that Russian claims founded on the Treaty of Adrianople, were not recognised by England. Under these circumstances, Russia could not proclaim a blockade and claim the rights of a belligerent, since that would mean a de facto recognition of Circassian status as belligerents. Nor could England, without admitting the validity

of the Treaty of Adrianople, accept the Russian claims to the right to establish customs and sanitary regulations for this area. Palmerston was not prepared to go to war with Russia over the fate of Circassia, and therefore was unwilling to make any gesture which might encourage the Circassians to continue their hopeless resistance. But he was at the same time reluctant to give any recognition to Russian claims of sovereignty over Circassia. For these reasons the Foreign Secretary wished to avoid making an issue of the Circassian question.¹²

Bell considered that the economic prospects in Circassia were good, and that trade with its inhabitants was legal according to the accepted practices of international law. But before incurring the risk of sending a vessel to that country for the purpose of trade, he attempted to obtain Foreign Office backing. He wrote to Palmerston and inquired about the conditions of the Russian blockade of Circassia. The Foreign Secretary refused to comment, and referred Bell to the Gazette, if he wished to discover whether a blockade existed. This had the effect of discouraging the Glasgow merchant.

His ship, the Vixen went out to Constantinople, however, with his brother James Bell as supercargo. The Vixen carried Foreign Office dispatches, and when Bell called at the Embassy he questioned Urquhart on Circassia. The Secretary referred him to Ponsonby. The Ambassador had an interview with Bell, in which

¹². Puryear, V.J., International Economics and Diplomacy in the Near East. Stamford University, 1935. pp 23-30.

he informed him that the Russian Government had sent him an intimation of restrictions, of a conditional nature, on this subject, but that Russia had no right to impose any restrictions.

Bell recorded the following statement, which he made to Ponsonby, and had it sent to Urquhart:

"I had ascertained before leaving London, that our Government did not acknowledge any right on the part of Russia to impede trade with the country in question and as nothing seemed to have since occurred to change the position of affairs, I should endeavour to attain the object I had in view, and should not be diverted from it, unless force were employed on the part of the Russian Government, in which case I should seek redress from the British Government, and hoped to obtain His Lordship's aid in doing so." 13

Ponsonby's impression of this interview with Bell is recorded in his report to Palmerston. The Ambassador wrote:

"Mr. Bell informed me that he was about to undertake, without delay, a voyage to the coast of Circassia, on a trading expedition, and that he should act upon his knowledge that the blockade established there by the Russian Government was informal and illegal.

"I replied that I had no right (if I should have the desire) to offer any objections to his proceedings, of which he was the undoubted master; but I would observe, that it must be necessary to his own interest carefully to avoid everything that could wear even the appearance of an attempt to evade the blockade. He said his intention was to avoid even such an appearance." 14

This is sufficient evidence to establish that Ponsonby was in some degree responsible for the Vixen affair. There was, however, another factor which Urquhart was not to make public until years after the affair had been debated in Parliament and

13. Bell to Urquhart, Nov. 2nd 1836 (enclosing memorandum of an interview with Ponsonby). The Times, June 21 1838.

14. Ponsonby to Palmerston, 28 Oct 1836, A.&P. 1837, Vol. LIV. Papers Relating to the Vixen. No. p.553.

discussed in the press. In 1835 the former Secretary of Embassy wrote of William IV's part in the Vixen affair:

"The King so warmly entered into it, that a letter was written by his private secretary, stating the great service to his country which a merchant might so render. This letter was shown to Mr. Bell, who is now dead, that in all the misery and subsequent ruin incurred thereby, he never once alluded to the letter, on which alone the step was taken, yet he had authority to do so." 15

It is of course impossible to prove or disprove Urquhart's assertion about the letter from Sir Herbert Taylor, but the letter in question is not to be found among the Urquhart papers. During the Parliamentary debates and in his writing to the Times, Urquhart had been anxious to emphasise Ponsonby's part in the affair, rather than his own. Yet, if this letter existed, it would seem, since it was written from Taylor to Urquhart, that the greater blame would rest with Urquhart. Bell, Ponsonby and Urquhart must all bear the responsibility, and the share borne by each is of secondary importance.

The voyage of the Vixen was made possible because of Palmerston's reluctance to make an issue of Circassia. One reason for this was undoubtedly a dislike of provoking criticism in Parliament and the press, another was the attitude of the King. Then, there was his genuine desire not to be instrumental in prolonging the war in Circassia. There was no way of forbidding Bell's voyage without giving the appearance of making a concession to Russia. And when the news of the action of Ponsonby

15. Urquhart, D., Progress of Russia, North, West and South. London, 1853. p. 319.

and Urquhart reached him, the damage had been done.

In November 1836 the Vixen sailed into Soujak Kale, was seized by a Russian warship, and the crew taken as prisoners to Sebastopol. From that time on, matters were taken out of the hands of the Embassy at Constantinople. Had there been a strong war party in either country, hostilities could easily have resulted. But Durham was then Ambassador to Russia, and with the full approval of Palmerston, managed to reach a settlement agreeable to both Governments. It was not, however, satisfactory to the opposition in Parliament or to the press.

Palmerston agreed to recognise the de facto occupation of Soujak Kale, by the Russians, and the Tsar agreed to give compensation to Bell for his cargo. The Russian concession was declared by the Tsar, to be not a recognition of the justice of Bell's claims, but an act of grace.¹⁶

The Vixen incident provoked a sensation in the press greater than the Portfolio, and the first news that Urquhart heard from Strangways, the Under-Secretary, gave no indication of Foreign Office displeasure. But his personal responsibility was not known at once. A report written by Urquhart, however, in which he declared the Vixen voyage to be a Foreign Office measure, and emphasised his own part in persuading Bell to embark on the undertaking exasperated Palmerston, and appears to have been one

¹⁶. Bolsover, G.H., "David Urquhart and the Eastern Question." Journal of Modern History. Vol. VIII, No. 11; December 1936. pp 463 - 465.

immediate cause of the Secretary of Embassy's recall.

The quarrel between Urquhart and Ponsonby went through several stages. After a few months of strained relations, Urquhart's health suffered and he moved out of the Embassy and lived as a Turk, in a bungalow at Scutari. It was after this that the press attack on Ponsonby commenced, and it is then that the Secretary received the visit from Achmet Pasha.

The Ambassador seems to have made an effort to maintain a surface of good relations with his Secretary. They had an open break in the autumn of 1836 but ^{they} were reconciled. In December Ponsonby wrote: "I see the papers talk of a quarrel between
17
Urquhart and me. It is a lie."

At the beginning of the new year, however, the final break took place. The immediate cause for this was Ponsonby's refusal to allow Urquhart to continue negotiations for his commercial treaty. It is more than probable that the Dragoman were in some degree responsible for this rupture. Urquhart had maintained that it was impossible to carry on negotiations by way of the Dragoman~~s~~, and it is not unlikely that Pisani, the Chief Dragoman did what he could to promote the quarrel. And it was a particular humiliation for Urquhart to be told by Pisani in January that Ponsonby would no longer see him, and that henceforth he was to be denied the use of the Embassy Archives. Besides this, Ponsonby had told him that he had sent charges against him

17. Ponsonby to Palmerston, 20 December 1836. B.P. Webster, op. cit., p. 343.

to the Foreign Office, but would not tell him the nature of the charges.

Quite independently of Ponsonby, Palmerston had concluded that Urquhart was too irresponsible to remain at his post.¹⁹ The Ambassador's charges now made the Secretary's removal even more important. It was not a simple matter, however, since the removal of Urquhart would have the appearance of a concession to Russia. This the Foreign Secretary wished to avoid.

There was an additional difficulty raised by the fact that Ponsonby had applied for, and ^{had} been granted a leave-of-absence on personal grounds. It had been arranged that Urquhart should become Charge d'Affairs when the Ambassador took his departure. In February Ponsonby wrote to the Foreign Secretary, saying that this was impossible. Palmerston attempted to meet this difficulty by sending Sir Charles Vaughan out on a special mission with the rank of Ambassador, and suggested to Ponsonby that he meet Vaughan at Malta.

This arrangement, however, would not satisfy Ponsonby. He feared that were he to leave, it would look as though he were being recalled; and were Urquhart to replace him, ^{even} for a brief period, it would appear that the Secretary had taken his place. Under these circumstances, he refused leave altogether.

The actual recall of Urquhart was carried out in a slightly irregular manner. A letter dated March 8th gave him an

19. Palmerston to Ponsonby, No.24, January 24th 1837.
F.O. 78/501.

unrequested leave-of-absence, with an enclosure giving him
his commission as Charge²⁰ d'Affaires. In another note dated
March 10th, Palmerston explained to him that the Vixen²¹ affair
had made his continuance at Constantinople impossible. This
was followed by another note dated March 21st in which he was
instructed not to await the arrival of Vaughan.²² A final note
dated April 21st, telling him to leave at once, was also sent,
but this was received after he had gone.²³

Urquhart was not the man to accept the judgment of his
superiors without question. He wrote an exhaustive defence of
his conduct, and sent it to the Foreign Office. This was only
the beginning of a long, tedious correspondence, which was to
become a subject for discussion in both Parliament and the press.²⁴

20. Palmerston to Urquhart, Private, March 8, 1837. F.O. 78/309

21. Same to Same, 10 March 1837. (B.P.) Webster, op. cit.
p. 351.

22. Same to Same, Private, 21 March 1837. F.O. 78/309.

23. Same to Same, Private, 21 April 1837. F.O. 78/309.

24. Urquhart to Palmerston, 7 September 1837. F.O. 97/401.

CHAPTER VII

ACTIVITIES 1837 - 1838

When Urquhart returned to England in May 1837, he was not aware of the fact that his career as a diplomatist had come to an end. He clung to the fiction that he had been recalled, and not dismissed, and continued to write memoranda on affairs in the Levant and send them to the Foreign Office. Palmerston had told him in a private letter that he would not be permitted to return, but Urquhart had reasons for hoping that this might not be final. His favour with the King, the indignation in the press over the seizure of the Vixen and the weakness of the Ministry combined to raise his hopes of turning his recall into a triumph. But it was otherwise. The King died on the 20th of June, the public interest in the Vixen waned; and the Melbourne cabinet, in spite of its weakness, survived until 1841.

The parties in the House of Commons were about evenly balanced. Under the guidance of Peel the tories were reorganising their party machinery to win middle^{class} support, and were steadily gaining strength in the country. Since the whigs did not have a majority they required radical support to stay in office. This created a situation where every division threatened to turn out the ministry, and the fall of the Cabinet was a matter for daily speculation.

1. Woodward, E.L., Age of Reform. Oxford, 1938. pp 77-103.

Domestic affairs continued to take precedence over foreign policy both in the press and in Parliament. And when foreign policy was discussed, attention was more likely to be turned towards Spain than towards Russia.

Unrest among the working classes, which had died down after the passage of the Reform Bill was beginning anew. The immediate cause for this was the depression of 1837, which caused unemployment, and brought home to the working classes, the harshness of the new Poor Law. Thomas Attwood revived the Birmingham Political Union, and combined with Francis Place and others to form the Chartist Movement. There was a general reaction against the Whigs and "Whiggism" from all quarters, but not enough to turn them out of office.

It was against this background that Urquhart was to make his debut in domestic politics. In his own account of his return, Urquhart wrote:

"When I came home I was still under the belief that the Vixen was to be reclaimed, and I had taken the recall of myself as grounded upon the notions of Lord Palmerston that it facilitated his action with the Russian Government".²

On July 17th, 1837, Urquhart requested that the Foreign Secretary present him to the Queen. The fact that this request was granted indicates that Palmerston was not then openly hostile to the former secretary. But a letter from Taylor to Urquhart on August 7th, 1837, establishes that Urquhart was already contemplating measures to create unfavourable publicity for the Ministry.

2. Urquhart MSS. October 8th, 1842. Urquhart Papers.

Taylor wrote:

"I found your letter of the 5th here on my return from dining out, and I do not delay repeating to you what I have before said and written, that I must decline entering into and offering an opinion upon the questions at issue between yourself and Lord Ponsonby, or upon the nature of your communications to Lord Palmerston with reference to it.

"You must consult your own feelings as to the propriety of bringing forward to public notice documents of a confidential character and which were addressed to you as a confidential servant of the Government whether they relate to the Portfolio or to any other matter in which you may have been employed." 3

Sometime in late July or early in August Urquhart had a long interview with Palmerston.

"On my return", wrote Urquhart, "Lord Palmerston endeavoured to argue me out of myself, and to dazzle me with expectation of the highest office, and having failed, and after between four and five hours of hard contention, and at about nine o'clock in the evening (Mr. Porter of the Board of Trade, had waited for the issue up to that hour at the Foreign Office) Lord Palmerston suddenly said to me: 'You have betrayed my confidence.' and began running about the room, for, as he said, a copy of the Morning Post of the 3rd of some month, in which was contained a reference to a postscript to a private letter of his own to me which was known to us two and to his own private secretary."

After the interview Urquhart maintains that he and Porter looked

up the paper in question, and could find nothing to confirm

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Palmerston's contentions. In a later letter Palmerston pointed

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out that the paper was the Times, instead of the Morning Post.

This interview was followed by another which, if we are to believe

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Urquhart, also lasted for hours, but with no result.

3. Taylor to Urquhart, August 7th, 1837. Taylor Papers. Ernest Taylor, Ed., London, 1913. p. 300

4. Urquhart to Editor of the Diplomatic Review. December 20th 1874. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 6.

5. Palmerston to Urquhart, June 20th 1838. Times. Aug. 23, 1838.

6. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 6.

On August 15th Urquhart read in the Gazette that H.L. Bulwer had been appointed to take his place as Secretary of Embassy at Constantinople. It is difficult to believe that Urquhart was not by this time aware of the causes of his dismissal. In addition to the explanation which the Foreign Secretary undoubtedly gave him during the interview, he had a letter from Sir John MacNeil, which advised him of the nature of the charges which Ponsonby had brought against him and warned him that rash action would be of no avail. Yet the former secretary wrote to Palmerston on August 19th, 1837, and stated that, having seen his successor appointed in the Gazette, he felt that he should be told the reasons for his dismissal. The letter cannot be regarded as a legitimate request for information, but as an attempt to exact a reply in writing which could be used to embarrass the Foreign Office. Strangways answered Urquhart on August 23rd, and told him that he was dismissed because Palmerston did not think it for the good of the King's service that he remain in the King's service, and that the Foreign Secretary had already in private conversation explained to him the reasons for his dismissal. In response to this Urquhart composed a long letter giving a detailed account of his quarrel with Ponsonby, ^{and} discussing the Ambassador's part

7. ibid. p. 5. Ponsonby charged Urquhart with dressing as a Turk, and never dining at the Embassy; that he had told the Reis Effendi that Ponsonby did not enjoy the confidence of the Porte; and that Urquhart was responsible for the attack on the Ambassador in the Times. Ponsonby to Palmerston, No. 66, April 5, 1837. F.O. 78/301. Bolsover, op. cit., p. 465.

8. Strangways to Urquhart, August 23rd, 1837. F.O. 97/401.

in the Vixen affair. Palmerston had told him that it was not the practice of the Foreign Office to give subordinate officials explanations for their dismissal, and that it was only out of personal consideration for his feelings that he had in this particular case given him an explanation. Urquhart maintained that since his dismissal had been a matter of public discussion and newspaper comment unfavourable to his character, ~~that~~ he had a right to vindicate his conduct. He made a particular point of the fact that Ponsonby, through the agency of an attorney, Walker, had inserted paid advertisements in various English and Continental papers, attacking his conduct while Secretary of Embassy.⁹ No reply was made to this letter until the following year.

It was about this time that Urquhart became convinced that the Foreign Secretary was guilty of treason. He mentions in one account that he came to this conclusion after his second inter-¹⁰view with Palmerston, and in another that it came to him while¹¹ he was walking about on the Isle of Wight. Both of these accounts were written after the event, and there is no mention of the treason charge in his statements until 1839. During the autumn and winter of 1837 - 38 much of Urquhart's time must have been occupied with writing Spirit of the East, a two volume work of some 800 pages, which gave an account of his trip through Albania¹² in 1830. But he found time to commence his campaign against

9. Urquhart to Palmerston, Sept. 20, 1837. F.O. 97/401.

10. Urquhart to Editor of the Diplomatic Review, Dec. 20, 1874, Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 6.

11. Urquhart MSS. date: October 8, 1842. Urquhart Papers.

12. Urquhart, D. Spirit of the East. Two Vols., London, 1838.

the Foreign Secretary. The first object of his attack was Ponsonby. In December he filed an affidavit at the Court of Queen's Bench against Ponsonby's attorney, Walker, for libel. Sir William Follet acted as Urquhart's attorney. The case took a slightly ridiculous turn when the libels were traced to Lord Ponsonby and it became necessary to call him as a witness. Since it was absurd to have an Ambassador called from Constantinople to testify, and even were it to result in his winning, the case would certainly ^{end}~~result~~ in much unfavourable publicity. Some compromise had to be arranged. This was done by having Urquhart withdraw on condition that Ponsonby pay the Court expenses.¹³

The Portfolio again became the subject of correspondence. On December 25th Urquhart wrote to Palmerston making claims for expenses involved in publishing the Portfolio. He made the claim that Palmerston had referred him to Strangways in July, but that he had heard nothing since.¹⁴ The sum involved was 944 Pounds. These demands of Urquhart put the Foreign Office in a difficult position. Were any payment to be made to Urquhart, it was obvious that he would use it as evidence at some future date to prove the complicity of the Foreign Office in the publication. Under the circumstances the best policy was to ignore his claims. The Editor, H.H. Parrish, who had taken over the Portfolio after Urquhart left, had been an avowed enemy of Palmerston. He attempted to get redress from the courts, but without result,

13. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 5.
and 1837, K.B. 122 - 1326.

14. Urquhart to Backhouse, July 20, 1838. Times, July 26, 1839.

and in the end Urquhart had to bear the expense from his own
¹⁵
 pocket. The correspondence concerning the Portfolio was finally
 published in the Times early in 1839, but aroused only a passing
¹⁶
 interest.

Meanwhile Urquhart found allies for a campaign against Palmerston. Since the Foreign Secretary had many enemies this task was not difficult. The first efforts of Urquhart appear to have been directed towards turning the Cabinet and the Queen against the Foreign Secretary. His own account is difficult to credit, and impossible to confirm, but it is unlikely that the whole of the story is pure invention.

After he had arrived at the conclusion that the Foreign Secretary was guilty of treason, Urquhart called on the Marquis of Anglessey, and informed him of this conviction. The Marquis was a friend of Wellington, who is best remembered for losing a leg in an heroic, but not tactically brilliant cavalry charge at Waterloo. If this account is true, the Marquis was impressed by Urquhart's reasons, and promised to gather a group of his friends to dinner that night to listen to what the former Secretary of Embassy had to say. But when the dinner hour arrived ,
¹⁷
 only the Duke of Richmond was available.

"He (Lord Anglessey) was so struck that he arranged a dinner party with the Duke of Richmond -- I went over the circumstances connected with the Vixen from the beginning to the end of that affair. The Duke was moved with great

15. Webster, op. cit. p. 335.(n.1.).

16. The Times, January 16th 1839; January 28th 1839.

17. MSS Narrative of events, dated October 8th 1842, Urquhart Papers.

indignation, and I considered I may almost say England saved, seeing one man in his position coming to see and to understand." 18

The Duke of Richmond had been Military Secretary to Wellington. He is described by Greville as:

"...having a certain measure of understanding, prejudiced, narrow-minded, illiterate and ignorant, good looking, good humoured and unaffected, tedious, prolix, unassuming and a Duke." 19.

Even if allowance is made for the notorious bias of Greville, it (still, would be safe to assume that the Duke was not possessed of a profound political intelligence. But the Duke was not to remain long under the influence of Urquhart.

"A few days afterwards the Duke told me that this was a question so grave and so difficult that it would be utterly sacrificial unless brought forward by a man pre-eminent in talent..." 20

Then after listing other necessary qualifications the Duke²¹ of Richmond suggested Lord Ripon. Urquhart said that Lord Ripon was unsuitable, and declared he would appeal the case to the people of England.

"In the course of their conversation (Anglessey and Richmond) it was constantly objected to me, 'This nation takes no interest in foreign affairs no person cares the least about them, any man who ever speaks upon such matters is looked upon as a visionary.' It is impossible for me to record the afflicting experience which I may almost say for the first time I made of the national death of the country. It was these communications that led me to shew to them that they understood no more the character of their countrymen within than the affairs of their nation abroad. - I had made to a certain degree preparation through the columns of a newspaper - for

18. ibid. loc cit.

19. Greville Diaries, I. 205; D.N.B. XI, 927.

20. MSS Narrative of Events, dated 8 October 1842. U.P.

21. Lord Ripon, formerly Viscount Goderich, Prime Minister, August 1827 - June 1828.

three or four months I contributed to the Times a continuous series of articles upon foreign policy. -

"I then went down to the manufacturing towns and without any previous acquaintance or communication with any one of them produced a sensation and obtained the popularity I now receive, I had fully established my proposition that they did know no more of the means by which the feelings of their countrymen could be acted upon." 22

The account written in 1874 has one important difference ~~with~~ ^{from} the one quoted above. In it he mentions that Greville, the Clerk of the Council, was at the dinner party. During the conversation, wrote Urquhart, "Mr. Greville sat in sullen silence avoiding my eyes when they chanced to fall on him." ²³

Although Urquhart is mentioned several times in the Greville Diaries, there is nothing in them which suggests that the Clerk of the Council attended this undoubtedly entertaining dinner. There are additional details offered in the later account which are impossible to credit. Urquhart claimed that when Anglessey was ill with the tic, he threatened to denounce Melbourne in the House of Lords, when the Prime Minister visited his bedside. And as a result of this, Urquhart was offered presidency of the Board of Trade by Melbourne. He also claims that through the intermediary of Edward Ellice and Sir John Bowring, Palmerston hinted ²⁴ at giving him the Embassy at Paris.

It is possible that Urquhart managed to cast a spell over Lord Anglessey for a time, but the Marquis was dissuaded from making a fool of himself by his friends.

22. Urquhart, D. Narrative MSS, dated October 8th 1842. U.P.

23. Urquhart to the Editor of the Diplomatic Review. December 28th 1874. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 7.

It is also probable¹ that Urquhart received hints from his friends and acquaintances, that if he took his medicine quietly and thus demonstrated his common sense that further employment might be found for him. These suggestions were magnified by his vanity and he mistook them for a conspiracy to buy his silence. Had he taken the advice offered he might have been forgiven and offered another post. Sir John MacNeil, who was associated with the Portfolio managed to remain in the Foreign Service. And Anstey, who took the lead in the efforts inspired by Urquhart to bring about the impeachment of Palmerston in 1848, was later granted a post of importance at Hong Kong.²⁵

The fact that there is no written evidence that Urquhart received offers of future employment does not exclude the possibility of their having been made. No one would risk putting an offer in writing to the former Secretary, since if it were rejected they could count on its appearing at some future date in the Times. But since Urquhart's ability was never denied, and his capacity to make trouble was well known, it is not impossible that Palmerston thought of getting him out of the way by an appointment in some remote corner of the world where he could do little damage. The alternatives to believing this would be to conclude that the stories are pure fantasy or a deliberate invention.

The contention that Urquhart makes that he went to the manufacturing towns without "previous acquaintance or communication"

25. Robinson, op. cit. note, p. 143.

does not tell the whole truth. Actually he made use of his previous association with George Bell, the owner of the Vixen to introduce him^{self} into commercial circles in the North. In the Spring of 1838 he arranged, with the aid of Bell, to hold a large public dinner at Glasgow. At a meeting held by Glasgow merchants in the Star hotel, a resolution was passed:

"That in accordance with an address presented to Mr. Urquhart signed by 330 merchants and manufacturers that 27 that gentleman be invited to a Public Dinner next May 23rd."

A deputation was then sent to Urquhart and he consented to address the meeting. It was arranged that the dinner should be merely mercantile and non-party, which meant that Urquhart could give free reign to his own extr^aordinary political views.

The after-dinner speech lasted two hours during which Urquhart managed to cover the entire field of contemporary world politics as well as his views on morality and the Constitution.

"Why" said Urquhart, "are half the markets which were open to British trade now closed? Because, the champions of the oppressed had allowed injustice to be done and cared naught. We had an open market in Poland. Our goods are now taxed .60 because by our supine and criminal disregard of the Law of Nations, we have allowed her to be crushed out of existence. We have cut ourselves off from free commerce with Turkey by sacrificing her to Russian aggression. We have almost ruined our leather trade by allowing the blockade of Mexico by France in time of peace and infraction of maritime law which we, the British Nation, who are the guardians of the Freedom of the Sea, should have maintained at all costs.

"The power does not reside in her bayonets, and is not shadowed by her penants; it resides in the confidence which men have placed in her firmness and integrity. Her supremacy

can only be endangered by the conquests of independent states, and aggression, but rallies strength around her as the defender of endangered nationalities. When she proclaims sacred the love of peace at the expense of honour, when she asserts herself the friend and the ally of the aggressor, she ceases to have a situation among mankind, not because her fleets are disarmed, but because her character has sunk.

"My idea of the power of England has not been derived from the inspection of her dockyards, or any of her barracks but from the veneration with which her name is pronounced on the Atlas, on the glacings of the Alps, on the heights of the Pindus, and in the vales of the Caucasus, on the plains of Poland and the steppes of Astrakhan." 28

The meeting was a complete success and the merchants under the inspiration of Urquhart prepared a petition to Parliament demanding an inquiry into the conduct of the Foreign Office, in negotiations with Russia in the matter of the Vixen. Similar meetings were held in Glasgow, Newcastle, Hull, Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds and Birmingham.²⁹

In these speeches Urquhart advocated a policy which would not be unfamiliar at a later date: It consisted of several basic points. Firstly England was to enforce the principles of International Law based on Grotius, and Vattel. Secondly, That this amounted to a guarantee of the rights of the independence of small nations, with special reference to the Poles and Circassians. Thirdly, ~~ence~~ this guarantee should be strengthened by a series of commercial treaties allowing for free trade. And finally, since the interests of France were closely identified with the interests of England, an Anglo-French alliance would naturally come about,

28. ibid. pp 60 - 62.

29. ibid. p. 60.

were England to take the lead.

There is no reason to believe that the merchants, who applauded Urquhart and signed the petition, were particularly interested in the principles advocated in his speeches. It was enough for them that he was defending the cause of one of their number, Bell, and attacking the unpopular policy of Palmerston. Signing the petition and applauding Urquhart committed them to very little, but it was enough for his purpose. Stratford Canning used the petition as the pretext for challenging the Ministry in the House of Commons on June 21st, 1838.

The Vixen had first been mentioned in the House of Commons on February 6th 1837 when Charles Buller inquired of the Foreign Secretary whether the reported seizure of the Vixen were true, and what steps had been taken. Mr. MacLean requested that the correspondence dealing with the affair be laid before the House, Palmerston replied that as yet there was none.³⁰ Later, on the 17th of March Roebuck made a long attack of the Foreign Secretary's conduct in regard to the Treaties of Adrianople and Unkiar - Skelessi, and trade with Circassia. He confused the issue, however, by attempting to cover too much ground, and expounded his own notions of International Law. In replying, Palmerston remarked that Roebuck had some important differences with Grotius. Lord Dudley Stuart rose, and read a long passage from the Circassian Declaration of Independence, and as evidence of its authenticity

30. Hansard, 3rd Series, XXXVI, 133-34. February 6th 1837.

stated that: "He (Lord Dudley Stuart) was well acquainted with a gentleman of the highest calibre who was present when this document was signed."³¹

On June 2nd Roebuck again inquired whether the negotiations on the Vixen had ended. Palmerston replied that they had, and that he had no objection to having the correspondence laid before the House.³² This was done on June 8th.³³ Later, on the 16th of the same month, Urquhart's recall became a matter of discussion when Stratford Canning raised the question of Sir Charles Vaughan's mission. Palmerston answered by saying that Ponsonby had a right to leave, and that a post of such importance could not be left in the hands of a man of less than Ambassadorial rank. Peel rose and answered that he considered the mission of Vaughan "was a practical attack on Mr. Urquhart" and that the Foreign Secretary's answer was inadequate.³⁴

The matter did not come before the House again until December 14th of the same year. Then Thomas Attwood mentioned the Vixen in the course of a long speech in which the main emphasis was laid on the danger of Russian naval armament to England. Attwood was not taken quite seriously in the House, since he had been predicting a Russian descent on England for years. This time, as on former occasions, his speech was interrupted by

31. Hansard, 3rd Series, XXXVIII, 621-655. March 17, 1837.

32. *ibid.*, 1161. June 2, 1837.

33. A.&P. (1837) LIV (225) Papers Relating to the Seizure and Confiscation by Russia: The Vixen. R.-A. (H.C.-8 June) H.L. 4-5 July, 1837.

34. Hansard, 3rd Series, XXXVIII, 1500-07. June 16, 1837.

laughter. In his address he demanded that 20 line-of-battle ships be built and 20,000 men raised to man them. The men were to be induced to enlist by the payment of a 5 Pound enlistment bounty. The last recommendation was perhpas prompted by Attwood's theory of currency reform.³⁵ Admiral Codrington supported Attwood's views,³⁶ of the Russian danger, but nothing came of the debate.

On February 23rd 1838 Maclean requested that any additional correspondence on the matter of the Vixen be laid before the House. Palmerston consented, and this was done on May 18th.³⁷

Urquhart's letter of September 20th 1837, had remained unanswered, and in the Spring of 1838 he took measures to use this fact as a means of embarrassing Palmerston. He showed the letter to Stratford Canning, and persuaded him to bring it up in the House. On June 15th Canning asked that Urquhart's letter be made public. The Foreign Secretary replied that since Urquhart had no official status, the letter was a private document, and ³⁸that it contained a "mass of misrepresentations and flasehoods". Urquhart replied to this by having the letter in question published in the Times, On June 21st 1838. On the same day Stratford Canning moved the appointment of a select committee of the House of Commons to investigate the procedure of the Foreign Office

35. Thomas Attwood was the founder of the Birmingham Political Union, and was later to present the petition of the Chartists to Parliament. He held theories on currency reform similar to those held at a later date by the ^{superior of the} Social Credit Movement.

36. Hansard, 3rd Series, XXXIX, 1093-94, December 14, 1837.

37. A.&P. (1838) (236) Vixen, Further Papers, 18-21 May, 1838.

38. Urquhart to Backhouse, July 20th 1838. Times, July 26, 1838.

in negotiations with Russia over the seizure of the Vixen.

Palmerston wrote an answer to Urquhart's letter of September 20th 1837 which was dated June 20th 1838. Urquhart claims that he received this letter at 4:30 PM on June 21st, seven and one-half³⁹ hours after the letter appeared in the Times.

The debate on June 21st 1838 was a lengthy one, and was, ~~as~~ ^{as} far as argument went, a victory for the opposition.

"Sir S. Canning rose to move for the appointment of a select committee, to inquire into the allegations contained in the petition of Mr. George Bell and others, namely:- 'That the petitioners have suffered severely in their interest and character through the seizure of the vessal, the Vixen, and her cargo, by a Russian man-of-war in the Bay of Soujak Kale, that the intention of the petitioner, George Bell, to send a vessal to the coast of Circassia for the purpose of trading independently with the population of that coast was previously made known to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and had his approval and sanction; and that the final arrangements for the vessal's voyage were, before she sailed from Constantinople, communicated to and expressly sanctioned by Her Majesty's Representative at the Sublime Porte.'"40

Canning then went into a detailed description of the seizure of the Vixen. Palmerston answered by saying that he had in no way approved the voyage, and that short of going to war with Russia (at this point Canning is reported to have cheered) there was nothing more that could be done about the Vixen. The letter of Urquhart was referred to several times, and Palmerston pointed out that its appearance in the Times was itself proof of Urquhart's lack of discretion. This called forth a forceful reply from Canning:

39. ibid.

40. Hansard, 3rd Series, XLIII, 903. June 21st 1838.

"If he had been", said Canning, "in the place of Mr. Urquhart he should not only have felt himself at liberty but that it was incumbent on him to pursue the course which that gentleman had taken and whatever responsibility was incurred, rested on the Noble Lord (Lord Palmerston). What was his opinion as to whether his letter was a fit object of publication was not called into account, but taking the publication in connection with the circumstances which occurred on Saturday and likewise with the fact, that he was called on by the petitioners to apply for the letter as bearing materially on the question, the act, if it were one of indiscretion, was the Noble Lord's. All that he could say for himself was that if he thought it necessary to take lessons in discretion, he should not go to the Noble Lord's school for instruction." 41

The House then divided on the question of a select committee with 184 Ayes and 200 Noe's, giving the Government a majority of 16. In Urquhart's own account of this event he wrote:

"The Government did get a bare majority, but had it not been for a breakfast at Lord Hertford's which took away beyond the reach of the whip twenty or thirty of the young Conservative Members, it would have been beaten, Lord Palmerston broken, and the whole policy of England changed." 42

More important than Urquhart's observation about the breakfast at Lord Hertford's is the fact that Roebuck, who had previously spoken against the government policy was absent at the voting. It is possible that this was regarded as a purely Tory measure, which the Radicals as a group did not care to support. Attwood, of course, voted with the Ayes.

Strafford Canning seldom spoke in the House of Commons, and his Parliamentary career has generally been considered a failure ⁴³

41. ibid. p. 959.

42. Urquhart to the Editor of the Diplomatic Review. December 20, 1874. Reminiscences of William IV. op. cit. p. 7.

43. Lane-Poole, op. cit. II, Ch. xvi,

He was strongly opposed to Russian policy, and believed in taking a firm stand in Turkey. Peel was not known to have particularly strong views on the Eastern Question. It is therefore most likely that this debate was the result of Canning's initiative, and that Peel, seeing another chance to discredit the Ministry, gave his consent.

The groundwork for this effort to embarrass the Ministry was done by Urquhart. Canning was willing to make use of the opportunity offered by the former Secretary of Embassy, and Peel saw no reason for refusing. The balance of parties at that time was sufficient in itself to make the vote a close one. Thus Urquhart, by using his insignificant influence, was able to give the appearance of nearly turning out the Ministry. In his later propaganda he made a good deal of the favourable comments by Peel and Canning, and the smallness of the Government majority. It is hardly necessary to point out, however, that this vote was in no sense the indorsement of either Urquhart's or Stratford Canning's views on Russia, since it was Peel who was the decisive figure in the Tory party, and while in office he was, if anything, less an enemy of Russia than Palmerston.

During the Summer months of 1838, there was more about Urquhart in the Times. On July 26th, Palmerston's reply to Urquhart appeared, and with it, Urquhart's answer. Both were long and involved.⁴¹ Greville made the following comment:

⁴¹ 41. Palmerston to Urquhart, June 20, 1838. the Times, July 26, 1838/ Urquhart to Backhouse, July 20, 1838. ibid.

"The letters between Lord Palmerston and Mr. Urquhart which appeared two days ago in the Times have made a very great sensation, and thrown the friends of the former into great alarm. Urquhart's letter is so enormously long, so overlaid with matter, and so stuffed with acrimonious abuse, that it is difficult to seize the points of it. --

"There can be no doubt that Urquhart considered himself appointed to that station on account of the opinions he professed, and for the express purpose of giving them effect.

"This man(Urquhart) first his tool and then his(Palmerston's) victim turned out to be bold, unprincipled, and clever, and finding his prospects ruined and his reputation damaged, he turned fiercely upon him whom he considered as his persecutor and betrayer. It is fortunate for Palmerston that the matter has broken out at the end of the session." 42

Greville's dislike ^{of} ~~for~~ Palmerston was notorious, and he could not but have been pleased to see the Foreign Secretary in difficulties. Urquhart had never in any sense been a tool of Palmerston, but the Foreign Secretary enjoyed a reputation for irregular procedure, and his enemies were quite willing to suspect the worst. It is significant, however, that Greville showed no sympathy for Urquhart.

There were prominent men in the Tory and Radical ranks, who in spite of his long letter to the Times, were willing to have Urquhart as an ally. During his tour of the manufacturing towns he appears to have impressed some of the opposition with his ability as a speaker, and to have collected a small personal following scattered about the Midlands and the North. But these groups were quite distinct. The first group included Sir George

Sinclair, Governor of the Bank of England, Sir Francis Burdett

42. Greville Diaries. IV, 124. entry July 28.

London 1875

and Mr. Somerset Beaumont, who offered to back him for Marylebone in the election of 1839. Sheffield was also open to him. But Urquhart showed a sincere reluctance to enter Parliament and insisted that he was not a party man and would not be bound by any ideas other than his own.⁴³ In the end he agreed to stand for Marylebone in the Conservative interest, and it was this decision that brought him into direct contact with Chartism.

The group of disciples which he gathered around him in 1838, were to remain with him for a good part of his life. They all accepted his view that Palmerston was guilty of treason, and were prepared to follow Urquhart in any enterprise, however extravagant, which he chose to undertake. The most practical among them was William Cargill, a merchant of Newcastle, whose letters show a good deal of common sense in matters of arranging meetings and printing leaflets. Robert Montieth, a converted Catholic, and son of a prominent Glasgow Conservative, a London Barrister, George Flyer, Charles Attwood, the brother of Thomas Attwood of the Birmingham Political Union, and David Ross of Bladensbury who had been with Urquhart in the East made up the core of Urquhart's personal followers. Ross and Montieth were essentially aristocratic amateurs, who admired Urquhart's apparent grasp of practical affairs. Flyer and Cargill, although able men in municipal politics, were without experience, and except through Urquhart, without knowledge of national politics or foreign policy.

43. Robinson, op. cit. p. 63.

Charles Attwood and his brother, appear to have had ideas on the Russian danger very close to those held by the former Secretary of Embassy, and required no conversion. None of these men was ever to have influence which went beyond the confines of municipal politics or, ^{of} a minority religious movement.

CHAPTER VIII

CHARTISM

Urquhart's contact with the Chartists in the Autumn of 1839, makes necessary some discussion of his views on social questions and the position of Chartism in England during the 30's. It is not surprising, considering his background and his temper^ament, that there was no political movement, large or small, to which Urquhart could offer allegiance. Yet his ideas on social questions although not identical with any that have existed before or since, fall into a definite classification. His ideal was an agricultural handicraft society allowing for maximum local autonomy, with each class accepting its responsibilities and keeping its place, ^{and} with law based on religious principles, either Christian or Mussulman. Similar ideas have been offered whenever conservatives engage in utopian social thinking. They can be found among the Guild Socialists, the French Royalist followers of Charles Maurras, Belloc and numerous Catholic writers. Urquhart, however, went far beyond most social writers in insisting on a method of reasoning which he maintained was the only path to absolute truth.

He believed that all men had the capacity to understand all questions, if they chose. Men had the power to be right. But they were kept from this by self-love. Their vanity caused them

to be content with the mere appearance of truth. They preferred seeming to be right, to being right. Urquhart began by attempts to free his converts from self-love, "by showing them that they had never been right in their lives". When this was done, they were free to understand questions of diplomacy and International Law as no statesman could. Every man, in his view, was part of the state. Therefore, each was personally responsible for the acts of the state. If, for example, the Opium War constituted an act of injustice, every Englishman was morally responsible. This he described as the creation of a social conscience. Foreign policy was the responsibility of "each individual in the state sooner or later, and the working-man first of all, for he is bound to his country, and cannot get away from it. And yet people go on thinking that they can be right when the nation of which they are a part is wrong. They do this because they hide their responsibility under an abstraction, and say, 'the state does this or that', not 'I and my fellow-countrymen do this or ¹that'".

In spite of this extreme view of individual responsibility for acts of the state, Urquhart did not support universal suffrage. Chartism, he maintained, had selfish class objectives, which if admitted would encourage national disintegration. His appeals were never directed to the working class as such, but it was only among them that he could get a hearing.

1. Robinson, op. cit. p. 28.

Had Chartism been a movement under the leadership of men with a definite social ideology, Urquhart could have made no headway. It was, however, a confused democratic movement, for the most part a reaction against intolerable conditions, but in some degree representing the desire of the working-man for some sort of intellectual existence. It was this last aspect of Chartism which enabled Urquhart to achieve a limited success. His propaganda held out to men conscious of their own ignorance, the hope that they could, if they wished, acquire the ability to understand matters which had hitherto been, for them, a closed book.

Thomassen, a Scottish delegate to the Chartist convention, whom Cargill had converted wrote:

"I find in examining these topics that my mind is carried into the interior of a temple, of which I could form no conception, and I feel as though I could get introduced to every clime, and hold intercourse with universal man. Party and its paltryism are not worth notice when placed beside the rights of nations and the rights of man." 2

Not only did Urquhart confront these men with problems that they had not considered before, but he enjoyed a position in society and a renown as the associate of Kings and Cabinet Ministers which gave authority to his words. Of the workers' prejudices in favour of a gentleman, William Lovett wrote:

"A Lord, an M.P. or an Esquire was a leading requisite to secure full attendance and attention from them on all public occasions, as well as among those who called themselves their betters." 3

2. Thomassen to Cargill, c. 1839. Robinson, op. cit. p. 96.

3. Lovett, Wm. Life and Struggle. London, 1876, p. 192.

In addition to being able to profit by the respect his position offered and by the desire of the Chartists for learning, Urquhart had the advantage of meeting the Chartists at a time when their movement was suffering from the confusion that goes with defeat. Six months earlier his appeals would have been ignored.

Thomas Attwood had presented the petition of the Chartists containing 1,200,000 signatures to Parliament. On July 12th 1839⁴ it was rejected by an overwhelming majority (46 - 235) and the Chartist Movement was left to demonstrate its power in the nation as best it could. The national convention of the Chartists had moved from Birmingham to London in July. There, in face of the fact of its own weakness, it was torn by factional strife. The plan to hold a general strike, or "sacred month" in August had to be abandoned. Not only did general unemployment make work stoppage futile, but there was no trade union organisation to give such a move effective direction. Most of the supporters of Chartism came from the less skilled and poor sections of ^{the} working classes whose stoppage would have little effect and who had no savings with which to maintain themselves in idleness. Only the colliers were capable of carrying out an effective strike, and they would hear of nothing but physical force.⁵

The convention had no real authority over the movement, authority rested largely in the hands of local leaders such as

4. Hansard, 3rd Series, XLIX, 220-78.

5. Hovell, M., The Chartist Movement. London, 1920. pp 174-5.

Julius Har²vey, Frost, Feargus O'Connor and Bronterre O'Brien.

A physical force wing had been carrying out arming and drilling through the Winter of 1838-39, and with the rejection of the Charter, this element began to gain the ascendancy. The moral force men such as Francis Place and Hume lost influence, and the others came to the front. Feargus O'Connor and Bronterre O'Brien had been willing to use violent language and threats as a means to an end, but had no intention of leading an insurrection. When the genuine physical force wing began to gain ground,⁶ they were careful to keep their distance. Most of the information of the activities of physical force Chartists comes either from secret service reports of questionable veracity, or came to light as a result of the Newport rising. It is known that there was secret arming and drilling in Wales, the Midlands and the North, but the strength of these forces and the exact plans of the leadership remain unknown. A central committee composed of five men, John Taylor, Peter Bussey, Burns, John Frost and a Pole named⁷ Beniowski, appears to have had the direction of the plot. It is around the last of these that Urquhart built up his case for the existence of a Russian conspiracy.

Urquhart's following was drawn from all shades of Chartist opinion. The most active among these was William Cardo, a Marylebone shoemaker, and Marylebone delegate to the convention. Montieth described him as a man of quick intelligence with great

6. Hovell, op. cit. p. 174.

7. Gownner, E.C.K., "The Early History of Chartism". English Historical Review. IV, No. xvi, pp 625-49 (1889); Hovell, op. cit. pp 174 - 90.

gifts of oratory, and having Danton's power, without Danton's
⁸ ferocity. He was over six feet tall. There are, however, some
 doubts about his character, Francis Place considered him to be
 untrustworthy, and he had trouble over the expense money at the
⁹ convention.

Next in importance to Cardo was Warden, the delegate from
 Bolton, and chairman of the Metropolitan Trades Union, a society
 which had broken away from the Owenites. He was a man of delicate
 health who had been by turns a gardener and a carpenter. His
 favourite readings were the dialogues of Plato. Warden wrote
 to Montieth:

"My object was to restore to the working classes that
 privilege which they had lost, and which I conceived the
 other classes possessed, self-government, but I did not per-
 ceive that in losing simplicity of character, in allowing its
 perception to be clouded by error it had also lost the faculty
 of self-government -- and that simply to add to the number of
 electors, when all when all alike were ignorant of the laws
 of national greatness or national decay, would only have the
 effect of leaving us where we were, or perhaps make our down-
 fall more certain, since all classes from their common ignor-
 ance must have been committed to the same fatal policy." ¹⁰

Another convert among the Chartists was Lowery, a Newcastle
 working man and member of the convention, of the moral force wing.
 He had been won over by Cardo after he had made an unsuccessful
 effort to win the agricultural labourers of Cornwall for Chartism.
 Lowery alone of all the Urquhartites was able to remain on good
 terms with the other Chartists, He functioned as a link between

8. Robinson, op. cit. p. 94.

9. Northern Star, September 7, 1839; Hovell, op. cit. p.285.

10. Robinson, op. cit. p. 95.

Urquhart and the Northern Political Union.

The delegate from the Potteries, Richards, a working-man over sixty, and Westrupp, a middle-class Londoner and friend of the Barrister George Flyer, complete the list of Chartists converted by Urquhart.

Urquhart claims to have converted Dr. Taylor as well, but Taylor took no active part in the foreign policy movement, and his association with the former Secretary of Embassy was limited to a single somewhat lengthy interview.

"I have had a conversation of nearly five hours with Dr. Taylor", wrote Urquhart, "I never so shook any man, he seemed tortured, struggling between responsibility, shame and failure brought home, and self-love and pride that linked him to a system, and the greater shame of sinking in the estimation of those he had led on." 11

Of the same interview, Taylor wrote:

" I have had four hours conference with Mr. Urquhart, He is truly an extraordinary man, and destined to play a great part, but he has neither time nor materials for his present project.(the organisation of a foreign policy movement) I have given him letters to men who can aid him, but I believe we have parted never to meet again." 12

This was correct; Taylor, who was an active advocate of physical force, was working himself into the grave. He died in 1841.¹³

The circumstances under which Urquhart came in contact with the Chartists were as follows: George Flyer was addressing a meeting at the Mechanics Institute at Marylebone, when Cardo

11. Robinson, op. cit. p. 99.

12. ibid. loc. cit.

13. ibid. loc. cit.

came with a group of Chartists to heckle.

"It appears", wrote Flyer, "that my speech created a sensation among the Chartists, that you and your views have been the subject of discussion with the convention at Marylebone." 14

Flyer had already made the acquaintance of Westropp and had won him over to Urquhart's cause. When Westropp introduced Flyer to Cardo at the meeting he determined to pursue the acquaintance. A discussion was arranged for the next evening, when Cardo came and brought Bronterre O'Brien with him. The conversations held that evening were inconclusive. Cardo remained unconvinced, and Bronterre O'Brien declared that he "had not quite made up his mind that we should not be all the better without foreign trade". Flyer then called Urquhart to London.

Flyer took Cardo and Westropp to see Urquhart at the home of Colonel Pringle Taylor, another Urquhartite.

"Mr. Westropp and Mr. Cardo called on me; I took them to Colonel Pringle Taylor's where Mr. Urquhart was, and to use Mr. Cardo's expressive words the next day, 'in less than five minutes Mr. Urquhart had solved all their difficulties without my having felt it necessary to state them..'" 15

This meeting was followed by others, in which Urquhart won over Warden and Cardo, but not O'Brien. In these discussions, the former Secretary of Embassy lectured the Chartists on International Law and foreign policy. So great was the impression Urquhart made on them, that they came to him after a few meetings to reveal what they knew of the plans of the physical force wing of Chartism.

14. Flyer to Urquhart, c. September 1839. Robinson, op. cit. p86

15. ibid. p. 87.

No sooner had Urquhart heard of the plan than he declared it to be a Russian plot. This caused him to embark on a new campaign. Colonel Pringle Taylor was instructed to warn the Government by way of the Marquis of Anglessey. At the same time, Urquhart gathered as many of his friends and acquaintances as could be persuaded to help, and a fund was provided to send three of the new Chartist converts on a lecture tour to "save England."

Colonel Taylor's letter was written on September 22nd 1839, and from its length and tone, appears to have been closely supervised by Urquhart. It reads in part:

"On the night when they (the Chartists) revealed their scheme for a general and simultaneous outbreak, Mr. Urquhart remarked: 'and there is the Russian fleet already to seize the moment of the catastrophe.' They replied - 'But how can Russia know anything about it when our own Government does not?' He answered: 'Of course Russia is well informed of your movements and is probably now in directing your plans.' The next night one of them returned to say that he felt it his duty to state that a Polish emigrant had drawn up for them the plan of military organisation, that he had got himself appointed a member of the select committee of seven, and was to have command in the mountains of Wales.

"To communicate with any person connected with the Government would be of no avail as they certainly have no means of resistance. The only means by which it is possible that this popular agitation can be arrested are those which have providentially been employed, and such means are not within the reach or comprehension of the political men of the day.- But still, as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army, I cannot feel comfortable in keeping to myself the knowledge I possess." 16

The letter was answered by the Marquis' secretary on October 3rd 1839. An extract from it appears in the Urquhart manuscript labelled "Chartism" (1839) But the letter itself is not to be found.

16. Colonel Taylor to Anglessey, September 22, 1839.
Urquhart Papers, "Chartism" 1839.40.

The reply reads:

"I have just now obtained Lord Anglessey's opinion of your highly interesting letter, and though I have only five minutes before the closing of the letter bag, I must write you.-- It was owing to a mistake on my part that his opinion was not sooner given.- He says that all he can do in the matter is to communicate in a private letter to Lord Melbourne your communication if that should meet with your approval, or to send him your letter." 17

The manuscript mentions that Taylor replied to this letter transmitting a fair copy of his letter of September 22nd, and assenting to Lord Anglessey's suggestion that it should be submitted if he thought proper. But before the letter could be posted, news of the outbreak in Wales (November 4th) arrived, which caused Taylor to send the letter direct to Lord Melbourne.

On November 9th another answer came from Anglessey.

"Colonel Taylor's letter has been sent to Lord Melbourne, in preference to Lord Normanby, and its wonderful disclosures must fill them with amazement, as it does me, when taken in conjunction with these outbreaks in the mountains of Wales. It is positively prophetic - and it discloses so many other fearful projects of convulsion, this single confirmation of its statement must lend considerable power to all its other contents." 18

The above conveys the impression that Lord Anglessey's secretary had submitted Taylor's letter to Melbourne and Normanby. On that assumption, Urquhart declared that he had warned the Government prior to the Newport rising. He swore out a statement to this effect in the presence of the Town Clerk and the Mayor of Liverpool¹⁹ and sent it to the Home Office. Lord Normanby informed

17. Urquhart MSS, "Chartism", 1839.

18. Anglessey to Urquhart, November 9th 1839. U.P.

19. Deposition made before the Mayor of Liverpool and the Town Clerk. Free Press. Vol. 16, January 26th 1856.

the Mayor that this claim was "utterly false". When Taylor was told of this he again wrote to Lord Anglessey.²⁰ The secretary to the Marquis replied by explaining that because of an inexcusable oversight the letter in question had not been transmitted to Lord Melbourne and Lord Normanby until after the Newport rising, but that Lord Anglessey had personally communicated the contents to the Prime Minister and Lord Normanby.²¹

Taylor's direct communications to Normanby and Melbourne resulted in an interview with the Home Secretary. Two letters which he wrote describing this interview, one to an unidentified party, the other to H.H. Parish, reveal that Normanby regarded Urquhart as a dangerous nuisance. The date of the interview is unknown, but it must have come shortly after November 11th 1839,²² the date of Taylor's letter to the Home Secretary. In the first mentioned letter Taylor wrote that when Normanby expressed his disapproval of Urquhart's attacks on Palmerston he replied:

"I have witnessed the whole of the interviews between Mr. Urquhart and the Chartists; he never addressed them on the treason of Palmerston; they took to reading on the subject and came to that conclusion themselves of your colleague (Palmerston) as other people and myself have done." ²³

When Taylor produced a letter by one of Urquhart's Chartist converts, Normanby remarked:

"You are dealing with dangerous weapons, for from the speeches this man is reported to have made, he is as much a Chartist as ever, having only superadded upon Chartism

20. Urquhart to Pringle Taylor, Free Press. Vol. I, 16, January 26th 1856.

21. The secretary to Lord Anglessey to Pringle Taylor, Dec. 22nd 1839. ibid. Vol. I, 18, February 9th 1856; also vide U.P.

22. Taylor to Normanby, Nov. 11th 1839 ibid. No. 15, January 19th 1856. ~~also~~ U.P.

23. ~~Taylor to~~ ibid. Dec. nd, 1839. ibid. No. 18, Feb. 9, 1856.

the question of foreign policy; but perhaps he may have preserved an appearance of Chartism to preserve his influence." 24

In his letter to Parrish Taylor wrote:

"I have had an interview of two hours with Lord Normanby, who said that when we see 30 soldiers put to rout many thousands we are justified in not apprehending anything from their organisation.(Chartist)" 25

Taylor had argued that the Government was not possessed of sufficient means to suppress the Chartists by force, and that only Urquhart's methods could be effective against them, but the Home Secretary wouldn't listen. Taylor ended his letter by saying:

"The poor creature kept harping on trifles, and I could not bring him to entertain one rational thought, but Urquhart said that the time he kept me proved that I had done as much as could be done with such a creature." 26

There can be little doubt that the efforts of Urquhart and his followers left the Home Office unmoved. The information which they offered was filed away with other reports, but there is no reason to suppose that it was taken seriously. Melbourne's opinion of Urquhart stated elsewhere in this thesis, would indicate that he was not in the least likely to give credence to information by way of the former Secretary of Embassy. 27

Urquhart and his followers did not rest their claim to have saved England from Chartism on the fact that they had sent information to the Home Office, but on their own activities among the

24. ibid.

25. Taylor to H.H. Parrish, nd., ibid. No.19, Feb.23, 1856.

26. ibid.

27. vide supra p. 78.

Chartists. Before attempting to trace their activities, however, it will be necessary to re-state the Urquhartite contentions. So fantastic is Urquhart's story of physical force Chartism being Russian inspired, and when it is remembered that he said the same thing of nearly all contemporary disturbances, it is a temptation to dismiss the story without further examination.

Urquhart and his followers maintained that there was to be a rising of 122,000 partly trained men during the Christmas holidays. Everything was under the direction of a Committee of five which consisted of Cardo, Warden, Westropp, Beniowski a Pole and a high police official who remains unidentified. This conspiracy was the work of men of genius, and was beyond the capacity of any Englishman. Urquhart, however, because of his experience in the East was able to recognise the methods of the Greek Hetaicea, and realise that it was Russian inspired and that Beniowski was its guiding genius. The small band led by Urquhart was able to frustrate this conspiracy, by seeing the leaders and warning them of the evil forces behind their plans. Only in Wales did they fail, and here only because they could not reach Frost in time.

There are three points involved here; the existance of a plan for armed insurrection; the question of Russian influence; and the effect of the work done by Urquhart. The first question is not difficult to answer. Reports of preparations for a rising came to the Home Office from numerous sources independent of

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Urquhart. But there is every reason to believe that the more prominent leaders were content to stop with threats. A movement which was so divided and poorly organised as the Chartists were in 1839, could hardly have led a successful revolution. The command of troops in the North was in the efficient hands of Sir Charles Napier whose energetic efforts appear to have discouraged most of the leaders, and if a danger existed at all, it came from the less capable hot-heads of the rank and file. In any case, numerous arrests had removed most of the prominent physical force Chartists from the scene of action. There was, however, much violent talk, some drilling, and numerous ^{charges} ~~charges~~ of arms. If this was not sufficient for an insurrection, it was at least enough to create a good deal of disturbance.

It is hardly surprising that not a scrap of evidence can be found to support Urquhart's contention that Beniowski was a Russian agent. He had been a Major in the Polish Lancers, and, after participating in the Polish rebellion of 1830, had followed a career of revolutionary intrigues. The Pole was a member of Julian Harney's London Democratic Association. This association made a point of imitating the methods and language of Continental Radicalism, and had many European revolutionaries in its ranks. Beniowski was fond of violent speeches and was engaged in the numerous military preparations. Lord John Russell had stopped a pension of 3 Pounds per month which Beniowski had received as

trustee for a fund maintained for Polish refugees, but this had no other cause than the Major's association with Chartists. Several reports by police informers indicate that Beniowski was engaged in intrigue.²⁹ It is necessary to remember, however, that he was a plausible villain and that discretion was not one of his strong points. The fact that he was not arrested indicates that the Home Office did not take him too seriously.

Urquhart's claims that Beniowski made an attempt on his life contain no details. The following is from an account taken down by the Town Clerk of Liverpool from a deposition, made by Urquhart before the Mayor:

"There is at least one Russian agent in this country, an inhabitant of Northern Europe, a Pole who has been publically denounced by the whole body of Poles resident in this country, as a Russian spy. I naturally ask how comes this man to identify himself with the Chartists? What common interest can he have with Englishmen? But who will hire him? That Power which has the most direct interest in doing injury to this country. I ask myself what direct proof have I of his direct agency. That, Mr. Urquhart can if he please, place before you _____.

"My opinion of this man's (Beniowski) connection with the Chartists is, that he is their leader and probably the man who has brought the knowledge of a system not previously existing in England, by which millions of men may be organised silently and prudently, that only such an event as that at Newport could furnish any traces of it. That only a Russian agent could have been connected with such an organisation, I should have inferred from looking at the "Heterarist" who arrived at the separation and partition of Greece by raising that country in revolt."³⁰

The proof which Urquhart offered was nothing more than a comparison of the Chartist methods based on information provided by

29. H.O. 40 (43) Metropolis.; Hovell, op cit. p. 177.

30. Extract from a deposition made before the Mayor and Town Clerk of Liverpool, taken down for the Government. Free Press, Vol. I, No. 16, January 26th 1856.

Cardo and Warder, and the methods of the Hetarira, a knowledge³¹ of which he had acquired in the East. Urquhart does not support his contention that the Poles in England declared Beniowski a Russian agent. But since the Poles were divided, and Urquhart's contacts were confined to the aristocratic wing led by Prince Czartoriski who would naturally be opposed to a man of Beniowski's principles, evidence from this source would be of dubious value.

Beniowski appears to have done some travelling about the country, and it is believed that he visited Wales prior to the Newport rising. Urquhart maintained that Frost was not responsible for the rising, which had in fact been organised by the Pole, but that out of a misguided loyalty to his associated, Frost remained silent. Other reports sent in by Urquhart missionaries claim that Beniowski had been travelling about in the North and Midlands.

There are misleading newspaper reports which describe Beniowski as having escaped ~~th~~^{hr}rough a side door when the Police raided a meeting held at Bethnal Green on Thursday, January 17th 1840. Several Chartists were arrested at this meeting, but not the Pole. At a meeting held a week later, on January 24th, Beniowski is reported to have:

"Complained of its having been stated in the newspapers that he made his escape through a side door, and left his stick behind him. He declared that he walked out of the room with his stick in his hand, and was allowed to depart

31. Minute of a conversation between Major Cadogan and Sir Wm. Follett, January 29th 1840. Free Press. Vol. I, No. 15, January 19th 1856.

by the officer at the door. As to his coming to a public meeting with arms about him, he was not such a fool as to think of that, although if a whole people were armed for liberty, he might feel disposed to join them.

"He hated tyranny in any form, and he hated Russia, because tyranny existed there; but he hated the Whig Government more than all, because they were not only tyrants, but cowards." 32

If Beniowski was in receipt of Russian gold, he must have kept the matter well hidden, or the pay of the Tsar must have been meagre indeed. An announcement in the Charter declares that "The Shoreditch Democratic Association has paid the sum of sixteen shillings and nine pence to Major Beniowski, collected for him in that body, as a small tribute to his worth and patriotism at a concert held for his benefit." 33

The activities of Urquhart's followers appear to have begun with the collection of a war chest of 347 Pounds under the title of "National Subscription". This was collected among fifteen persons, the largest contributions being 125 Pounds from a William Sheppard Esquire, and 70 Pounds from Major Cadogan; the balance was made up from various sums ranging from five to forty Pounds. One of the contributors was the Mayor of Newcastle. Colonel Pringle Taylor acted as Treasurer. The subscription list was preceded by a preamble which reads:

"Having seen a complete alternation effected in the minds of leading Chartists by the language and views of David Urquhart Esq. and having witnessed a similar effect produced upon others, by those who in the first instance

32. The Charter, January 26th 1840, p. 15; No. 53.

33. ibid. July 7th 1839, No. 24.

were influenced by him, we the undersigned have undertaken a subscription to procure the means to enable those amongst the population who have become imbued with his opinions to spend them amongst their own class.

"We have taken this step under the conviction that through the general adoption of those opinions the safety of this country can alone be effected.

"We do so under the further conviction that there are no other means whereby the danger of this alarming organisation of the Chartists can be averted and that it may be averted by carrying into completion the means already adopted and the success already achieved." 34

Urquhart gave up the idea of standing in the Conservative interest in Marylebone, shortly after he became aware of this "Russian conspiracy". The group he had gathered together had three divisions: Colonel Pringle Taylor, Major Cadogan and George Flyer in London, Cargil and his friends at Newcastle on Tyne, and Richards in a roving commission in the Midlands and the North. Urquhart's first headquarters was Liverpool, where he called to his aid Dr. Bryce, a friend of his from the days of the Greek War of Independence.

Urquhart's "missionaries" travelled through the Midlands and the North talking to groups of Chartists and sending back reports. Although they had been won away from Chartism by Urquhart, they continued to take part in Chartist activities so as to maintain their influence. In this they had Urquhart's full approval.

In one report from Birmingham, dated October 9th 1839, the "missionary" reports that while addressing a gathering,

34. Urquhart MS~~8~~ "Chartism", 1839. Urquhart Papers.

"One old gentleman produced his Bible to prove to me (from some part of David and the Revelation) that Russia was to have possession of Great Britain, and some said that they did not care how soon, as things could not get much worse." 35

Two letters believed to be code letters were submitted to the Home Office in December. The second of these mentions that: "The Pole has not gone to Wales, but I understand, a much ³⁶honestest man". These letters are dated December 2nd and 8th, and are addressed to a Mary Anne. Except for the suggestion of some secret and sinister conspiracy, they say nothing.

On December 19th 1839, Urquhart wrote to Taylor:

"There is a most alarming system of misrepresentation carried on by unknown agents. I have traces of it in no less than five different places. This misrepresentation is of course in the nature of such a movement, but I allude to that of unrecognised agents and by persons unknown (as in the cases I refer to) coming with knowledge of pass words and leaders, and representing themselves as sent by another town to say so-and-so -- and if being found (I mean by those who have had their eyes opened) that these persons were equally unknown in the town from which they represented themselves as having been sent.

"___ I have ascertained that Beniowski is a Polish Jew, his influence is great in the North, and measures are now being taken which give him a very different position with the Chartists at London, who though of little value even before, and still less now, acquire great importance from the disposition of the provincial bodies guided by them." 37

In an undated letter, Pringle Taylor wrote to the Mayor of Southampton:

" We have detected five emissaries travelling at some expense, going from town to town, which have no knowledge of them, but who in that capacity are exerting the towns to

35. "Missionary" report, October 9th 1839. Urquhart MSS, "Chartism" 1839-40. U.P.

36. _____ to Urquhart, December 13, 1839, enclosure 1, and 2. Free Press, Vol. I, No. 15, Januray 19th 1856.

37. ~~Urquhart~~ to Taylor, December 19th 1839. ibid. No.18, Jan.26

break into insurrection. The word of the most secret of the organisations is now "we can kill ours, if you can manage yours". 38

The above reports ^{admit} have two possibilities, either ^{that} Urquhart was being misled by rumours and gossip, or ^{that} there was some sort of a "Cato Street" conspiracy in which Beniowski was involved, and in which he had at one time tried to involve Cardo, Westropp and Warden. It is not impossible that some members of Harney's group endeavoured to manufacture a rebellion by spreading false reports, and thus seize leadership of a movement whose original leaders had come to their senses. But even this cannot be established. The assertion that Beniowski was a Jew may have no other foundation than the desire of his Polish enemies to discredit him. A Major in the Polish Lancers would hardly have been of that People. If the conspiracy had any substance at all, it was certainly the work of obscure men whose only distinction was a taste for intrigue.

There is little mention of the work of Urquhart's men, even in the Chartist press until the beginning of 1840. This could be explained by the fact that Urquhart ordered them to avoid
39
publicity. Cardo, however, is mentioned on two occasions, both of which have their comic aspects.

Urquhart believed that Frost was the victim of Beniowski's sinister intrigues, and sent Cardo to Newport to investigate.

38. Taylor to the Mayor of Southampton, n.d., Free Press No. 16, January 26th 1856.

39. D. Ross, Account of Chartism, 1839. Urquhart Papers.

Cardo arrived on November 13th 1839, and registered at the Westgate Hotel, the scene of the riot on November 4th. He at once aroused suspicion by telling the Landlord that he had come to make a national investigation, since the lying newspaper reports could not be trusted. Before his arrival the Birmingham Commissioner of Police had Cardo's name and description sent to the Mayor of Newport, warning him that a member of the national convention of Chartists had left for his city. Cardo was apprehended, and when questioned by the Magistrates, declared that he had facts which led him to believe that the riot was the work of a Russian agency. When asked what those proofs were, he declared that he did not think it prudent to state them. After this, Cardo was escorted to the next coach leaving town, and the constable accompanying him was instructed that he be allowed to talk with ⁴⁰ no one.

The second mention of Cardo's activity concerns a meeting held at Carlisle.

"On Monday night, a meeting was held at the Coffee House, by some of our leading Clergy and evangelical gentlemen, the object of which was 'a better observance of the Sabbath'. Previous to the hour appointed, the place was occupied by the Chartists.

"Nevertheless, they commenced business by moving that Mr. Graham of Edmundcastle, be called to the chair. This was met by an amendment from the Chartists that Hall, one of their own body, keeper of a pothouse at Butchergate, be elected Chairman, which was carried by an astounding majority. Harney, Cardo and Dr. Taylor then held a meeting at which a collection was taken up for Frost. Cardo then thanked the clerical gentlemen for the use of the hall." 41

40. Northern Star. November 23rd 1839, VolIII, No. 106. The Charter. November 24th 1839. No. 44.

41. _____ to _____, Carlisle, December 22nd 1839. Free Press Vol. I, No. 25, February 23rd 1856.

It is interesting to observe that this meeting took place at about the same time as Urquhart's interview with Dr. Taylor (December 20th) mentioned earlier in this chapter.

By the end of January 1840, Urquhart's followers appear to have considered their work of saving England from the Russian conspiracy at an end, and their efforts were bent towards the more modest project of saving Frost.

"Having paralyzed the Chartist movement" - wrote Taylor-
"we have been striving to save the lives of those under sentence. Perhaps in spite of his answer to me Lord Anglessey may have sent my letter to him to the Ministers, and it may save Frost and the others." 42

Taylor's wife suggested that they arrange to see Sir William Follet who had undertaken to defend Frost. After some debate it was decided to accept this suggestion, and Major Cadogan was sent to see Follet.⁴³

Cadogan left a minute of his interview with Follet (January 29th 1840). The Major opened the conversation by declaring that he was convinced that Frost's innocence could be established by exposing the Russian agency. Follet's answers were polite.

Sir William Follet: "But what are his (Urquhart's) proofs of this foreign agency? "

Major Cadogan: "I believe you have seen an extraordinary document with Greek names, that appears to have been used before for insurrectionary purposes. "

42. Colonel Pringle Taylor to _____. January 30th 1840.
Free Press. Vol. I, No. 18, February 23, 1856.

43. ibid.

Sir William Follet: "Yes, I saw it at Mr. Urquhart's.
It is a very singular document." 44

After this Cadogan mentioned Beniowski. Follet replied that he thought the Pole had made a number of compromising statements, but was without influence. 45

The Chartist movement reached a low ebb after the trial
46
of Frost, but the activities of Urquhart's men continued. Urquhart now hoped to become a power among the Chartists and to use their movement for what he described as the "moral and political regeneration of England". His charges of treason against Palmerston had isolated him from reputable political circles, but not from the Chartists.

When Urquhart had mentioned Palmerston's treason to Brontere O'Brien, the only objection that O'Brien made was that all ministers
47
were traitors. On another occasion, this time at Birmingham, a Chartist is reported to have remarked:

"As to the treason of Lord Palmerston, we all know it. I knew it myself years ago; but we intend to have universal suffrage before we pay attention to this new-fangled doctrine." 48

What appeared to be a shocking and ridiculous statement in upper and middle-class society was regarded as commonplace and matter-of-fact among the Chartists. This made their movement the ideal recruiting ground for Urquhart.

44. Conversation held by Cadogan and Follet, Free Press. op.cit January 9th 1856.

45. ibid.

46. Hovell, op. cit. p. 19.

47. Account by Flyer, September 22nd, 1839, Urquhart Papers; Free Press op. cit. March 22nd, 1856.

48. Note of Conversation with a leading Chartist. Free Press Feb 9. 1856.

He wrote:

"There are in this body immense resources; they are individually more simple, more honest, and more thoughtful than the upper orders; there is a consciousness among them of community of interest, and there is sympathy for each other; they consider themselves as a class and not as a party; and therefore it is that my hopes for the salvation of their country are centred on them." 49

The decision of Urquhart to win a personal following for himself among the Chartists, brought him into conflict with the Chartist leaders. Urquhart and his foreign policy men were a less formidable rivals than the anti-Corn Law league which Cobden and Bright had formed in September 1839, but still a rival which had to be met.

During the Spring of 1840 a number of meetings were held in the North and Midlands at Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield and Newcastle-on-Tyne. Some of these meetings appear to have been attended by large numbers, and if Urquhart's reports are reliable, by as many as 20,000, but they received little publicity in the press.

Urquhart organised his followers into groups, called associations for the study of diplomatic documents, composed of "men of all parties and classes". The principal activities centred about a petition to both Houses of Parliament, signed by 40,00 operatives from the cities of Glasgow and Newcastle-on-Tyne. It is doubtful ^{whether} ~~if~~ any of these operatives could have understood the wording of this petition, or ^{whether} ~~that~~ it was even read by them. This document

was a lengthy denunciation of Whig foreign policy since 1830. It enumerated every incident, great and small, which was connected with foreign affairs, and cited it as an instance of Whig neglect of British interest.

The petition was taken to London and was the cause of a number of M.P.s' holding brief discussions with Urquhart followers on the subject of foreign policy. Lord Lynhurst was persuaded to make this petition the subject for debate in the House of Lords on August 6th 1840. He made the mistake of reading the entire document, and succeeded only in provoking⁵⁰ ridicule from Melbourne, and laughter from the Lords.

Meanwhile, however, the Treaty of July 15th 1840 which provided for the settlement of the second Mehemet Ali crisis without the participation of France inspired Urquhart to embark on a new and more vigorous campaign.

50. The Times. August 6th 1840.

CHAPTER IX

THE MISSION TO FRANCE

While Urquhart was carrying on his activities in England a new crisis was maturing in the Near East. The Peace which had been signed at Kataya was no more than an armed truce, and by 1839 the Sultan felt his position sufficiently strong to renew hostilities with Mehemet Ali. The Pasha, on his side, had been endeavouring to win European approval for making himself an independent Prince. He pleaded that since he enjoyed no hereditary rights, his empire would crumble on his death, and his life work be undone. In these designs no power save France lent a sympathetic ear. The Sultan, on the other hand, had every reason to believe that European Powers would put no obstacle in his way were he to commence operations against the Pasha. It is even possible that he may have received active encouragement from Ponsonby. And, moreover, the Seraskier, or commander of the Sultans forces, Karuskru Pasha, who was a personal enemy of Mehemet Ali, urged his master to attack.

Hostilities were resumed when the Turkish army invaded Syria in April 1839. At the battle of Nebib Ibrahim Pasha completely routed the Sultan's forces. This was followed by a greater disaster, when on July 1st, the High Admiral, and personal friend of

1. Hall, op. cit. Chap.VII, pp 219 - 278.

Urquhart's, Achmet Pasha, surrendered the entire Turkish fleet to Mehemet Ali. On the same day Mahmud II died, and was succeeded by Abdul Medjid (1839-61) a boy of ^{fourteen} twelve.

The new Sultan at once declared his willingness to compromise with the Pasha, by granting him hereditary rights in Egypt and granting his son Ibrahim the same in Syria. But under the circumstances such a settlement could only be effected by the intervention of the European Powers. On July 27th 1839 a collective note of five Powers was sent to Constantinople, reserving the right of the Powers to settle with Mehemet Ali. The attitude of France, however, made agreement impossible. Palmerston was determined to hear nothing of Mehemet Ali's claims, but was prevented from acting by French refusal to cooperate in taking measures against the Pasha. The obvious solution to this dilemma was action of the four Powers, England, Russia, Austria and Prussia, without France. But this could not be accomplished without causing a protest from public opinion in England.

In September 1839, the Russian emissary Baron Brunnow came to London to discuss matters with Palmerston, in hopes of persuading him to act independently of France. He assured the Foreign Secretary that Russia would not enter the Bosphorus without similar action by England at the Dardanelles, and agreed that pressure should be put on Mehemet Ali to force him to withdraw from Syria. Meanwhile, the Turks, under the inspiration of Reschid Pasha, had instituted a new series of reforms in hopes of winning European

approval. The Hatt-i-Sherif of Gulhane, a reform decree issued from the Palace of Gulhane on November 4th 1839, announced a series of changes in administration along Western and liberal lines. France, under the Ministry of Thiers, however, persistently refused to take part in measures to coerce Mehemet Ali, and went so far as to send Waleski, natural son of Napoleon, on a mission to negotiate a settlement between the Sultan and the Pasha, independently of the other Powers.

This provided Palmerston with the excuse to carry his reluctant Cabinet with him in making a four-Power agreement to settle the Near Eastern crisis without French support. The Treaty of London (July 15th 1840) signed by Austria, Britain, Russia and Prussia provided that the Pasha was to be permitted hereditary possession of Egypt and possession of Southern Syria for life. He was to give up Crete, Northern Syria, Mecca, Medina and ^{to} return the Turkish fleet. Ten days of grace were to be permitted for the acceptance of this offer, after that the offer of Southern Syria was to be withdrawn, and if the revised offer were rejected, the Porte would be free to make other arrangements.

This alignment with the "autocratic" Powers against "constitutional" France produced an outburst of popular indignation which the Melbourne Cabinet, held in office as it was by the Bedchamber Dispute, was in a very poor position to withstand. The reaction in France was even more violent, a vigorous anti-British campaign

was unloosed in the radical and liberal press, and the Thiers Government made threatening gestures in the form of increased armaments. This in turn caused alarm and increased opposition in England. Fear that the Foreign Secretary's policy would result in war with France shook the Cabinet itself, and Palmerston found himself opposed by Holland and Clarendon, who were later joined by Lord John Russell. Every enemy of the Foreign Secretary took the opportunity to come forward, and it is not strange that Urquhart selected this moment to launch a campaign to have Palmerston impeached for High Treason.

The Former Secretary of Embassy, however, was the least formidable of Palmerston's enemies at that time. Granville, the British Ambassador at Paris, was considering resignation. Greville was intriguing to bring pressure on Russell, King Leopold of the Belgians addressed words of warning to the Queen, while lesser figures such as Edward Ellis and Henry Reeve added their private efforts to the general attack on the Foreign Secretary. But if Urquhart was not the most formidable opponent of the Foreign Secretary, he was at least the most violent and the most ingenious.

Urquhart's efforts during this campaign fall into three divisions: the Campaign of public meetings held by his Associations for Foreign Affairs in the North and Midlands; the activities of Urquhart himself in Paris, and the visit of the delegations from the "Associations" led by Charles Attwood and Lowery to Paris.

Until the beginning of this new campaign, Urquhart and his followers had not made Palmerston's treason the main point of their activities. They had made the charge privately and publicly, but it was difficult to distinguish this particular view of theirs from the general run of invective which was common in Radical and Tory attacks on the Whigs at that time. This effort, however, was commenced by a formal charge made against Palmerston and a demand for his impeachment. By choosing such a line of attack Urquhart made it impossible for any of the more responsible opponents of Palmerston to cooperate with his followers. No Member of Parliament, however opposed to the Foreign Secretary, was willing to make himself a laughing-stock by demanding Palmerston's impeachment. And the newspapers, which had hitherto been friendly, including the Times, would no longer give Urquhart favourable publicity.

The campaign opened in August, the same month in which Louis Napoleon made his descent on Boulougne. Since they no longer had access to Parliament and the press, the Foreign Affairs Associations were reduced to dependence on pamphlets and public meetings to deliver their "message" to England.

The first meeting was held on August 5th 1840. On the same day Urquhart had a messenger deliver a letter to Melbourne at the House of Lords in which he formally denounced the Foreign Secretary for treason.² Thus he could claim that he made a declaration

2. Webster, op. cit. p. 351.

to the Government as well as to the people. The public denunciation was made by Charles Attwood to the people of Birmingham. Some idea of the hopes raised among Urquhart's followers by this campaign is offered by a letter written on the eve of the meeting. Montieth wrote:

"Tomorrow we hold a preliminary meeting of nearly 30,000. All the leaders of the people are with us heart and soul. We are now just about to raise the great curtain. This is the last evening we shall be conscious of the mingled comfort and pain of comparative obscurity." 3

The meeting was preceeded by placards posted on the walls bearing the message: "Now or never! Men of Birmingham, your duty to yourselves, your⁴ children and your insulted country."

The size of the meeting which Attwood addressed on August 5th cannot be accurately estimated. The unfriendly Northern Star of Feargus O'Connor mentions that a considerable crowd had gathered.⁵ The openly hostile Morning Chronicle declared that the meeting was attended by some "2,000 persons, none of them respectable."⁶ Urquhart's followers are alone in putting the numbers in the tens of thousands.

Charles Attwood opened the meeting by saying that "they

" they had been called together on a subject of more importance than any which had been broached since the days of Oliver Cromwell. It was no less than to charge the Foreign Secretary with High Treason --!" 7

3. Montieth to _____. August 4th, 1840. Urquhart Papers.

4. Northern Star No. 143, August 8th 1840.

5. ibid,

6. Morning Chronicle, No. 22,059, August 7th 1840.

7. Northern Star. No. 143, August 8th 1840.

This beginning was followed by a long denunciation of the Treaty of July 15th. Then at the close of the address, Attwood declared that:

"..it was their duty to, and the duty of, the country to demand public investigation, and if found guilty of the treason he had laid to his charge, to demand his(Palmerston's) public execution." 8.

The meeting ended by the passing of a resolution proposed by Attwood and seconded by Richards that "the interest of England had been betrayed to a foreign country; and that the people of Birmingham do, in public meeting, assert the danger and denounce the criminal". 9.

Another meeting was held on August 19th, but this time there was opposition. A Chartist, John Collins, who had recently been released from prison, denounced Urquhart and Attwood as Tories engaged in a Carlton Club plot. The meeting proceeded for two hours without disorder, but when Cardo attempted to introduce a resolution denouncing the Foreign Secretary, a counter-resolution was proposed from the floor, declaring that the men of Birmingham would agitate for the Charter alone.¹⁰ This last resolution caused the meeting to dissolve in cross discussion.

There is some evidence that the meetings caused Palmerston a certain amount of irritation. The Morning Chronicle, the principal Palmerston paper, devoted a good deal of space to ridiculing

8. ibid.

9. Northern Star. No. 143, August 8th 1840.

10. Morning Chronicle. No. 22,063, August 12th 1840.

the activities of the Urquhartites. Major Cadogan, an active supporter of Urquhart, was given the choice of resigning his commission, or "ceasing to agitate with Chartists"¹¹. While Palmerston himself took the trouble to consult an attorney on the advisability of bringing a suit for criminal information against Attwood,¹² he abandoned the idea on the advise of his counsel.

Althouth the Urquhartites claimed the Birmingham meeting as a great success, it was in reality a dissapointment. But Attwood and Monteith found some degree of compensation for this reversal by the success that Cargill was able to achieve at Newcastle-on Tyne. In this city, the Northern Political Union provided a friendly support for their activities and enabled them to overcome the opposition among the Chartists. The Northern Political Union had been revived in April with the aid of Cardo and Cargill, who had managed to win over Lowery, an influential member of this organisation. With this support from the local Chartists, the Foreign Policy Association at Newcastle could produce an enthusiastic mass-meeting for almost any purpose they desired. But things were different elsewhere.

In Carlisle, Birmingham and Sheffield they had to work largely with the aid of a few half-hearted local sympathisers and their own travelling organisers. They at once ran into the *opposition*

11. Cadogan to Monteith, August 18th 1840. Urquhart Papers.

12. Webster, op. cit. p. 351.

of the followers of Feargus O'Connor who saw in the sensational propaganda and "paid missionaries" of the Foreign Policy men , a threat to their own influence.

The most violent clash with O'Connor's men came towards the end of October at Carlisle. There Cardo and Richards had one of their meetings disrupted by shouts of "we want the Charter". Cardo attempted to answer these interruptions by saying:

"...that he was a democrat. He went a lot farther than many Chartists. The cause of liberty was progressing throughout the world, but there was a party in England and throughout the world to prevent the spread of democratic institutions. There was Russia, there was Prussia, and Austria was stepping into the shoes of Prussia. At a time like the present, when liberty was stretching out her hands to lay hold of the prize, at that moment the Foreign Minister offends a friendly Power, and links himself with the despotic Powers. What was the union with the despotic Powers for? To bring about a war between England and France when our commerce was barely sufficient to support our operatives, and war with France would throw millions out of employment. He wanted the Charter quite as much as that gentlemen who called out, and could maintain it, and if necessary, fight for it." 13

At this point Cardo attempted to introduce a resolution against Palmerston, but was immediately challenged from the floor. A disorderly discussion followed, during which Cardo and Richards lost control of the meeting. Matters were brought to an end by an unknown party who brought down the curtain on the stage where the speakers stood. Undaunted by this reversal, Cardo and Richards announced that another meeting would be held on October 31st. This provoked the followers of O'Connor to print a

13. Robinson, op. cit. p. 106.

14.. The Times 28 October 1840.

leaflet denouncing them in the bitterest terms under the heading: "Foreign Policy Humbugs Again:"

"Cardo and the renegade Chartists have announced by hand-bill, that they will lecture tonight, in the theatre, on the Foreign Policy, or as they express it, 'the Treaty of the 15th of July'. I had thought after the lesson you taught them and their supporters, at the meeting on Saturday night last, that they would never have shown their faces again in Carlisle, but what will audacity not do?

Recollect that Cardo was a member of the last Convention but has turned renegade and sold himself for three Pounds, ten, or Five Pounds a week, Warden is another of the same Kidney; and Richards -- I hope you have not forgotten the conetmptuous and insulting way in which he took leave of you last Saturday night.

...they profess what great things they would do if called on! But remember what Mr. O'Connor has often told you, have nothing to do with trading politicians, for be assured, they will deceive you.

My impression is that this meeting is called for the purpose of making money of you, from the excitement created in the public mind by the last meeting, a full house may be expected, and recollect that theatre meetings are always money-making ones. So I would recommend you to do at this meeting, what you did to the Whigs at the last election, not to hear a word from them.

Down, Down, Down with the Foreign Policy Humbugs.

15
(signed) A Chartist"

In spite of this incitement, Cardo and Richards managed to make a reasonable success out of the meeting in which a large neutral audience, which came out of curiosity, made the work
16
of O'Connor's disrupters ineffectual.

While these meetings were in progress in England, Urquhart was in France. On September 20th, he had published at Paris

15. Leaflet, printed at Carlisle, October 31, 1840, U.P.

16. Robinson, op. cit. p. 107.

a pamphlet on the Treaty of July 15th 1840, under the title: La France devant les ^{Quatre} ~~autres~~ puissances.¹⁷ In the introduction, Urquhart makes the claim that this was financed by a group of Frenchmen interested in preserving the peace. He hoped that by the indirect method of publicising his charges against Palmerston in France, ~~that~~ he could win the attention of the English press and Parliament. While in France, he pointed to the public meetings held by his followers in England, as evidence that the "British People" could be made to understand the Foreign Secretary's treason. It was only the stupidity and timidity of English public men, ^{he maintained} which permitted the infamy to go unchallenged. The only hope, ~~he main-~~ ^{tained}, was that the more acute political intelligence of the French leaders would enable them to perceive what the English could not, and by courageously forcing Palmerston's treason on the attention of British politicians, save both England and France from war. His efforts in the numerous interviews he had with politicians and journalists in Paris were directed towards winning some kind of a statement from them which would enable him to return to England, and say, in effect: "Palmerston's treason is common knowledge in France. Only among our own incompetent politicians is it unknown."

Urquhart's principal contact with French political leaders was M. Odillon Barrot, leader of the Left in the French Chamber under Thiers, and a relative of Blacque whom Urquhart had known in the East. He was also on good terms with M. Faucher, the

17. Urquhart, D. Paris, Sept 20, 1840

Editor of Courier Français. Nubar, the representative of Mehemet Ali, and Coletti, whom he had known as Governor of Samos in 1830, was the representative of Greece at Paris.¹⁸ Porter of the Board of Trade, another personal enemy of Palmerston's was in Paris at this time, and lent his support to Urquhart's efforts.

The efficiency of Urquhart's contacts in England and the extent of the inside information which he possessed is illustrated by an incident which occurred in September. A Cabinet meeting was called at the Foreign Office on September 28th, at the moment when Russell, under the influence of Greville, was offering opposition to the Foreign Secretary. Just before the meeting commenced, a messenger arrived and handed to the Foreign Office doorman a number of envelopes marked "urgent and immediate", addressed to each of the Ministers. These contained copies of the letter which Urquhart had sent to Melbourne in August, making the charge of treason against Palmerston.¹⁹

The high point of Urquhart's activities in Paris was a visit to Thiers, at the beginning of September. In an entry in his journal of September 4th, he wrote:

"I went out with Mr. Porter and M. Faucher to Auteuil. I had never seen M. Thiers. He received me well. About ten minutes elapsed before dinner was announced, during which he several times came towards me, and after a word or two went away again, showing an anxiety to enter into conversation, and still as if there was something that restrained him." 20

18. Journal kept by Urquhart, 1840; ^{cited in} ~~also~~ Robinson, op. cit. p. 115.

19. Palmerston to Russell, 28 September 1840. B.P., in Webster, op. cit. p. 350.

20. Robinson, op. cit. p. 112.

Urquhart complained that the dinner conversation was "contemptible", and that he only spoke when spoken to. After dinner he gave Thiers an unsolicited lecture on the differences between the English and French political systems, the point of which was that French Ministers could comprehend "without assistance what no unassisted Englishman could comprehend."

Thiers asked him about public opinion in England.

"I said: 'The opinion in England is not divided, it is nothing, and it is good -- that is to say that the mass of the nation is wholly indifferent and dead, and the few who are active are all acting in one sense.'" 21

The French Minister inquired what those who were acting would accomplish, and Urquhart answered that this would require a long explanation. He explained that there was great danger, to France and to England, ^{that} but Thiers, by rearming France was merely playing into Russian hands. Russia's weapons were intellectual, and only intellectual weapons could be effective against her.

"He stopped" - wrote Urquhart - "and after a pause which left me in some doubt whether he was preparing to oppose or assent, he said: 'I feel indeed that all our differences and our struggles are heedless and insane, and that a fearful overflow awaits Europe. I have often thought' he added, 'that we were much in the position of Athens in the face of Philip.' I said: If you feel that, these consequences will not follow, no Minister of Athens dreaded them. At this moment I conceived every end within reach. It died away, he followed nothing to conclusion, received coldly my statement regarding the ignorance of the public men of France and his own of matters without which he could not judge of the position of England and Russia, consequently of the diplomatic relations of the world, and the spirit of the conversation was lost from that point where he had come to the assertion of so solemn a resolution, as if it

was a thing to overwhelm me, and when he accepted my counter-declaration, not feeling that if he accepted it, the whole of what he was saying was vain and useless. We returned after some time to the saloon, where our friends, I saw, were anxiously awaiting the result. The only answer to the inquiries made me which I gave was: 'tant soit peu content.' He immediately after this sat down in an arm chair, and when I observed him next, he was sound asleep! " 22

The meetings held in the North of England and the Midlands were made the basis for the sending of Urquhart followers to France in October and November. They were to go as representatives of the people of the cities in which the meetings were held. It was only at Newcastle, however, that these meetings were sufficiently well-attended and orderly to lend the fiction that they represented the city ~~with~~ any degree of plausibility. For this reason the delegates went in the name of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Committee for Investigating Foreign Affairs. Two groups were sent over, one led by Charles Attwood in October, and another under Lowrey in November.

The first delegation consisted of Charles Attwood, Thomas Doubleday, Horn, Grey, Gilmore and Loutit. They carried a petition to Thiers, and were given the following instructions:

" Your chief duty is to make known to the People, the King and the Cabinet of France the earnest desire of the People of England to cement more firmly the feelings of friendship and sympathy which we feel towards the French people.

* * * * *

You will therefore impress on the French Government the absolute necessity, which is incumbent on it, for our common security, to protest instantly and decidedly against the Treaty as an act of outrage on the Law of Nations in

general, and of danger to our two nations in particular. **

* * * * *

In conclusion it is desired by order of the Committee that you cooperate by all the means in your power in the patriotic exertions of Mr. Urquhart, our respected fellow-countryman, to avert the blow that is being prepared and the danger that is suspended over our country, of which the hostility of France will be the signal, and the destruction of both the consequences of its fall." 23

Charles Attwood's mission was bitterly attacked in the Northern Star in a leading article published on October 24th.

"We beg to inform the French nation in general, and Odillon Barrot in particular, that Mr. Attwood represents himself, Mr. Urquhart, a portion of Mr. Cardo, and a blind fiddler of Birmingham, who said he never heard music he liked half so well as the jingle of Charley's tin.

The press, in the meantime, state the whole matter unfairly when they represent Attwood and the 'Beau' (Urquhart) as being in the pay of France. The machinery is composed of the following materials: -- Attwood is a hair-brained theorist, discovered by Urquhart, a half-cracked philanthropic and theoretical politician, to be a tool, or rather a person to give.

The sinews of war are provided by the Carlton Club the purpose being to undermine the Whigs on foreign policy. This could not be done so well by the partisans of Urquhart's and Attwood's class, and therefore some persons have been engaged at salaries varying from three Pounds, ten Shillings to five Pounds per week.

Now, we have always advocated paid missionaries ---

We do confess that we feel an awkwardness about working-men, not appointed by the people, going on expensive tours all over the country, having an abundance of money, their families well supplied at home, and Russia, - Russia, their constant theme of declaration, while in reality they know nothing about Russia. We advise all local committees previous to their allowing political missionaries to take part in their proceedings, hereafter to be satisfied of their

having been appointed by some authorised Chartist association, or otherwise to have nothing to do with them." 24

Feargus O'Connor must have seen in Urquhart's organisation with its "paid missionaries" and use of sensational publicity a political machine dangerously similar to his own. He could not know that Urquhart was too concerned with other matters to devote sufficient time and effort to becoming a rival Chartist leader. O'Connor's paper, the Northern Star, expressed concern over the danger of war, in nearly every issue of 1840, but it was careful not to associate itself with any items of Urquhart's propaganda.

The anti-Corn Law League of Cobden, which was also concerned with the danger of war, completely ignored Urquhart's campaign. In its publication, the anti-Corn Law League Circular, there is no reference to any of the activities of the Associations for
25
Foreign Affairs.

The most unkind reference to Attwood's mission to Paris came from the Morning Chronicle. Odilon Barrot had planned to give a public dinner to Attwood, but when Thiers resigned (October 21st) he explained that to give a public dinner to an English delegation at this time, would be misunderstood by the French public as ^{giving} support to the new and unpopular Guizot Ministry. This letter appeared in the Constitutionnel with an answer from Attwood. The Morning Chronicle commented:

"The Newcastle noodles Messrs C. Attwood and Company published a long column in the Constitutionnel consisting

24. Northern Star, No. 151, October 24th 1840.

25. Anti-Corn Law League Circular, 1839-40.

of a speech from Odilon Barrat excusing himself from giving these hungry Englishmen a dinner, and of a long speech in return, from the noodles, setting forth that they ought to have a dinner at all events. For the fortnight which preceded the fall of M. Thiers, Messers Attwood and Coy. went to call the respectable politicians in Paris, and besought them to give him a dinner. But no -- not a soul would afford them countenance, or give them a chop - M. Barrot, on whom they mainly depended, refused formally to preside at such a dinner. Without a public dinner, however, the noodles refused to leave Paris, and continued to bore their acquaintances with their hungry looks." 26

A compromise was finally arranged whereby M. Barrot gave a private dinner for Charles Attwood at which eighty members of the French Chamber were in attendance.²⁷

Another Chartist delegation arrived in Paris on Friday, November 13th 1840. This was composed of Lowery, Thomason and Richards. They were ignored by the London papers, but received some space in the Northern Liberator and the Northern Star. Their visit was taken up with interviews with minor French journalists and politicians, but Lowery wrote them up in reports to the Northern Liberator and they made some impression in Newcastle. O'Connor's supporters did not abuse Lowery, in the same way that they had Attwood or Cardo, but adopted a tone of mild disapproval.

Since Thiers had already resigned, and the Syrian war had by this time gone against Mehemet Ali, the visit of this delegation was an anti-climax. The indignation of the French people remained, but the chances of popular agitation or intrigue\ defeating Palmerston had passed. Lowery and the others, however, went through with their "mission," and enjoyed it very much.

26. Morning Chronicle. No. 22,135, November 4th 1840.

27. Robinson, op. cit. p. 111.

"We arrived here - on Friday night"- wrote Lowery - "on our way here we endeavoured to sound the feelings of the French people and found them in some instances under the war mania - but mainly disposed to a friendly connexion with England, yet they appeared to be at a loss to understand how, if we were disposed to continue the French Alliance, we had allowed the Treaty of July to be sanctioned." 28.

They visited a number of people, the most important of whom was M. de Tocqueville, who appeared to accept Urquhart's story of Palmerston's treason. Lowery wrote:

"After my explanation de Tocqueville appeared to think the treachery of Palmerston plain,--- and agreed with me that it was folly to consider the Treaty of the 15th of July as aught but calculated to injure England and that it was the act of the Minister, not of the people." 29

Among the others they visited were M. Cabet, a Member of the Chamber, M. Faucher, editor of Courier Francais, and M. Cavanah, editor of National. Lowery's accounts of these interviews indicate that they received courteous treatment and some hospitality. All the people they interviewed talked politics with them for a time, agreed to their criticism of the Treaty of July, and encouraged them to continue their protest. With the possible exception of de Tocqueville, however, they refused to comment on the subject of Palmerston's treason.

Some effort was made by the delegates to establish contact with the French working-men, but without any great success. On November 17th 1840, Lowery wrote:

28. Robinson, op. cit. p. 117.

29. ibid. loc. cit.

30. ibid. pp 109 - 112.

"M. Cabet, a Member of the Chamber, whom we visited to-day promised to procure me some introductions to some of the intelligent working men, hitherto we have not been able to get access to them, except by mixing in the cafes, and entering into conversation on the subject, which we have done very often, and have left some copies of Mr. Attwood's address to the French Nation." 31

While these activities of Urquhart were in progress, events turned decidedly in favour of Palmerston. From the beginning he had been certain that the military strength of Mehemet Ali was a myth, and that under no circumstances would Louis Philippe go to war. From the tone of the Thiers notes during the summer months it would seem that ~~he~~ and the French King had considered nothing beyond using the popular indignation as a means of effecting some much needed increases in French armament, particularly the purely defensive fortifications of Paris. But when they observed the extent of English protest against Palmerston, they considered the possibility of winning a diplomatic triumph. It was this which caused them to encourage Mehemet Ali.

The Pasha made the fatal mistake of not accepting the offer made to him of hereditary rights in Egypt and the retention of Syria, by the four Powers in August. As a result of this his forces were driven from Syria during October by an Anglo-Austrian squadron and Turkish troops. With Mehemet Ali's forces defeated, the point of French abstention from the Treaty of July 15th was gone. Nothing short of a war with Europe could hope to restore the Pasha to his former position. Thiers resigned, and

a new Cabinet was formed on October 29th, with Marshal Soult as Prime Minister, but with Guizot as the real power in the Cabinet. Nothing remained to oppose Palmerston but the impotent fury of French public opinion and the indignation of his confuted critics. Mehemet Ali returned the Turkish fleet in January 1841, and Guizot brought France into the four-Power agreement (Treaty of July 15th 1840) on July 13th 1841.³²

These events cut the ground from under the groups and individuals which had been intriguing and agitating against Palmerston. It was only the fear of war which maintained public excitement on the subject of foreign policy, and when it became known that this was not a real danger, public interest subsided.

Urquhart had staked everything on his belief that Palmerston was guilty of treason. This sincerely held delusion on the part of himself and his followers was a source of strength as well as weakness. Without it they could not have sustained the belief that their own efforts were more important than those of the leading political figures of France and England. The fact that the notion of Palmerston's treason was fantastic and untrue counted less among ignorant and ambitious men than the fact that it was simple, timely and sensational. None of the followers of Feargus O'Connor, which was the only group who opposed Urquhart, questioned Palmerston's treason. They attacked the foreign policy groups solely on the grounds that they were drawing a red herring across the Charter.

32. Hall, op. cit. p. 327.

Had Urquhart accepted the advice of his more influential friends and not used Palmerston's treason as the starting point for his agitation, he would undoubtedly have enjoyed some degree of support from the Tories, who were doing their best to use foreign policy as a means of turning out the Whigs. But their policy was no more congenial to the extreme anti-Russian views of Urquhart, than was Palmerston's. Therefore, the use they could make of Urquhart's propaganda was decidedly limited. The most he might have expected was a few letters in the Times, and perhaps a speech made on his behalf by a minor Tory M.P. in Parliament.

There can be no doubt that Urquhart had considerable abilities as an agitator and journalist, and had he been prepared to undertake the task in 1840, he could have established a permanent foreign policy group among the Chartists. Later, during the Crimean War, he undertook this task and succeeded in creating a series of small but well organised, Committees for Foreign Affairs, composed of the more intelligent working-men. But in the 1840's he considered this task beneath his dignity, and directed most of his efforts towards influencing other classes.

After the resignation of Thiers and the collapse of Mehemet Ali, efforts were made to sustain public interest in foreign affairs by the associations. When the mission of Attwood and Lowery returned ^{they} and made reports. The latter especially was listened to with some curiosity by his fellow Chartists, who were fascinated by the spectacle of one of their number going on a ~~mission~~ which had the appearance, at least, of a diplomatic mission.

But that was all.

There were no more funds available for paid missionaries, and Lowery, Cardo, Richards, Warden and the others were left to make their peace with the other Chartists, as best they could. Urquhart had one of his periodic breakdowns in 1841, and went on a journey to Morocco for as rest cure. In July 1841, Lowery wrote:

"After I wrote you last I waited till April in the hope that I would have heard of some attempt of our friends to set themselves in motion on the subject of foreign relations, but hearing nothing from the South of Mr. Urquhart coming Northwards, and never having had a line from Mr. Cardo or Mr. Warden on it, and from the desponding manner in which Mr. Cargill spoke, I concluded that those arrangements spoken of as being intended had been considered as impracticable, and had been abandoned." 33

Of his efforts in 1840 Urquhart later wrote:

"The way I pointed out has not been walked in. I had then minds in action, but minds can be brought into action or have hitherto at least only been brought into action by vain speculation. The excitement failing, stolidity returns. The convulsion of England was spared; that is all." 34

Urquhart's campaign which ended in his breakdown in the Spring of 1841 had exposed his worst faults and made it impossible for any responsible political leader to take him seriously again. His activities had by this time established his reputation, and had made it clear that his faults were not merely an expression of the zeal and carelessness of youth, but a permanent feature of his existence. He continued to enjoy an active life as a

33. Lowery to _____. July 1841, Free Press

34. Robinson, op. cit. p. 117.

publicist, and was able to play some part in politics.

In 1847 he was elected to Parliament, where he tried to bring about the impeachment of Palmerston. But the burden of this effort was carried by his protégé, Anstey. Urquhart himself was a complete failure in the House of Commons.

The promising beginning which he made with the publication of Turkey and Its Resources in 1833, may be said to have ended with the publication of La France Devant les Quatre Puissances in 1840.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

It would be a simple matter to dismiss Urquhart as mad, for the dividing line between fanaticism and insanity is very faint. That Urquhart was a fanatic is indisputable, for he pursued his Turcophil convictions with all the fervour and blind sincerity of an evangelical. Indeed, he had in early life learned something of the methods and enthusiasm of the Evangelicals from Dr. Caesar Malan, and his missionary zeal in advocating the cause of the Turks does credit to his tutor. Urquhart's importance, however, is not in the imponderable complexities of his character and methods, but in his influence on British policy and opinions.

Before discussing Urquhart's influence, however, it is necessary to make some judgment on the value of his opinions as expressed in his writing on foreign affairs. There is a great difference between the writings of Urquhart on Turkey and those on other subjects, for only when discussing the Ottoman Empire did he write from first-hand experience and study. The same cannot be said of his works during this period on other subjects. He wrote a number of pamphlets and articles on a wide variety of subjects such as Texas, Afghanistan, China, the Maine boundary^y and Buenos Ayres. In preparing these he drew his material entirely from Blue Books and newspaper reports,^{and} then interpreted them by means of his own

peculiar formula. Since his formula was to explain events by the presence of a direct Russian agency, or failing this, by the Foreign Secretary's treason, these writings are of little value. Urquhart's writings on Turkey, however, even though they are coloured by his extraordinary ^{notions} ~~nature~~, remain an important source of information on the Ottoman Empire of the early nineteenth century. Sir William White is reported to have said that to understand Turkey it was necessary to read Urquhart.¹

Most of Urquhart's claims of influence have only to be stated to be refuted. Obviously he was never a decisive influence in the councils of the Sultan, nor did he save England from a Chartist revolution, nor prevent a war with France. Yet he did have an influence, which though it bore no relation to his claims was still considerable. It was exercised in three ways; directly on the Government by memoranda and reports, and later by using his office as Secretary of Embassy; on public opinion through his publications; and finally on British domestic politics through his campaign against Palmerston. Of these three, the second is the most important.

From his first contact with the Court and Cabinet on his return from the East, Urquhart made two things evident; firstly that he had a valuable knowledge of the East; and secondly, that he had ideas of his own on policy which made his employment in

1. Sir William White held ministerial posts at Bucharest and Sophia from 1875 to 1885, and as Ambassador ad-interim and Ambassador at Constantinople from 1885, 86-91. Robinson, op. cit. p. 46.

an official capacity dangerous. It was only because his views were congenial to the anti-Russian bias of the King, and because of the need for first-hand knowledge of the East that the second factor was overlooked, to the extent of allowing him to proceed on the commercial tour in 1834-35. Until then he had supplied useful information on commercial subjects concerned with Zolver-ein and Turkey, which must have been helpful to the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade in forming their opinions on policy in Central Europe and the East. There was, however, other information available from reports of Consuls, Secretaries of Embassies and travellers in the East. But unlike Urquhart, they did not have the ear of the King, nor did they write popular works. Where the information offered by the others was much the same as Urquhart's, he had ways of demanding attention to his work, which they did not.

His claims to having been high in the Sultan's councils in 1835, just before his visit to Circassia, are without foundation. As in other cases, he mistook the flattery he received for influence. Circassia was not discovered by Urquhart as he later asserted. Safer Bey had been making efforts to attract attention to this country for a long time. Yeannes², the British Consul at Odessa, had sent reports on the Circassian situation quite independently of Urquhart. Ponsonby too, had been interested in that country. But it was left to Urquhart to devise a means whereby the cause of the Circassians could be made to

2. Puryera, V.J., International Economics and Diplomacy in the Near East. Stamford Univ. 1935.

arouse the sympathy of the King and the English public. The "Circassian Declaration of Independence" did not change British policy, but it did make England aware of the Circassians. ^{however} But its most immediate effect, was to bring about Urquhart's recall. Perhaps it raised false hopes among the Trebesmen, but since they apparently had no intentions of making peace with the Russians, this made little difference.

Urquhart's greatest achievement was the revolution he effected in public opinion during the summer of 1835. There was not another Turcophil in England either willing or able to conduct the sort of campaign that Urquhart undertook at that time. However much dislike of Russia may have prepared the ground for a more favourable view of the Ottoman Empire, it is difficult to see how the Turks could have been made to appear respectable in so short a time without the efforts of Urquhart. Any examination of the articles written on the Turks in England in the 1820's and early thirties demonstrates quite clearly that the Turk was unpopular, and the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire ^{was} expected momentarily. In 1829 the Quarterly Review spoke of the "tottering decay, towards which the Ottoman Empire has for some time been progressing," and described the Turks as people priding themselves on being ignorant. The same publication in reviewing England, France Russia and Turkey in 1835 ends by concluding:

"...that we shall not hereafter, as heretofore,

3. Quarterly Review. Vol. XLI, No. xxxii, 1829. p. 448.

become an instrument in the hands of Turkey's enemies to hasten the subjugation of Turkey --that we shall not, thus the whole matter slumbers on in ignorance of what Turkey was, or is, or is to be."⁴

The popularising of the Turk in England was undoubtedly useful to Palmerston in pursuing his policy of aiding reform in Turkey. It must not be forgotten that public opinion hostile to Turkey was a decisive factor in defeating Pitt's efforts to oppose Russia in 1792. When Cobden began raising objections to Palmerston's policy in 1835 he had to contend with a public which Urquhart had already prejudiced in favour of the Turks. This was no small service to the Foreign Office.

The episodes of the Portfolio and the Vixen attracted more attention than Urquhart's other activities, and caused considerable difficulty for the Cabinet, but left policy unchanged. They were efforts to force Palmerston into a position where he would be compelled to impose the diplomatic defeat on Russia which Urquhart desired. The documents published in the Portfolio did more damage to the self-esteem of the Duke of Wellington than they did to the policy of the Tsar.⁵ In the case of the Vixen the danger of war was more apparent than real. Neither Palmerston nor the Tsar wanted war, and the confused outbreak of public indignation both in Russia and in England could hardly have brought matters to the point of war.

4. Quarterly Review. LIII, February 1835, No. CUP, 231.

5. Stanhope, P.H., Notes on Conversations with the Duke of Wellington. Oxford 1938, pp 134-5.

During the crucial months of negotiations during the Winter of 1836 - 37 Urquhart was busy quarreling with Ponsonby, and it was not until the Winter of 1837 - 38 that he began his open campaign against Palmerston. By that time the crisis was over, and the Vixen incident had ceased to be a danger to the peace, ^{had} and became merely another way by which the opposition could embarrass the Melbourne Cabinet.

Peel was prepared to use Urquhart's dismissal ^{aff} and the Vixen as a means of discrediting Palmerston, but he was unwilling to come forward with a vigorous anti-Russian policy of his own. This fact kept Urquhart from embarking on a political career as a Tory Member of Parliament. The moment that it became clear to him that the Tories could not be persuaded to adopt his policy Urquhart went his own way. He was no more willing to accept direction from Peel than he was from Palmerston. In point of fact, Urquhart would be satisfied with nothing less than a political movement of his own.

Urquhart did make some impression on the Chartists, and had he abandoned his other activities, he might have established a permanent foreign policy party among them. What such an organisation might have accomplished is another matter. Late in 1855 he managed to establish a small, but well organised movement of working-men interested in foreign affairs, ^{and} there is no reason why this would have been impossible in 1840. But the influence

of such a group, committed as it was to the impossible belief in Palmerston's treason, could not have been very great. The working classes at that time were barely able to exert any influence on domestic policy, and there is no reason to believe that they could have become an important factor in influencing foreign policy.

The effort Urquhart made to organise the Chartists into foreign policy groups does not derive its importance, however, from the influence it exerted in 1839 - 41, but from the fact that it was an early example of what was later to become a common practice. It may be doubted ^{whether} ~~that~~ a genuine popular control of foreign policy is desirable or even possible. Yet so long as popular government persists, efforts in that direction are likely to continue. Urquhart's efforts to make foreign policy intelligible to all classes at least had the merit of encouraging a study of international law and Blue Books.

His two principal means of carrying out agitation were public meetings and petitions. It is apparent that ^{the} people who attended his meetings must have applauded ideas they only half understood, and that many of the petitions signed were beyond the comprehension of those who signed them. But his "missionaries" such as Cardo, Richards, Warden and Lowery did undertake a study of foreign policy, and were capable of defending their ideas with some degree of logic and consistancy. If the peculiar idea of Palmerston's treason is left aside, the fact

remains that Urquhart's followers were probably better informed on foreign policy than the supporters of the Anti-Corn Law League, and many members of more comfortable classes.

The object which Urquhart hoped to effect by his activities which began in the Summer of 1840 was much too ambitious. Although the weakness of the government, the divisions in the Cabinet, and the fear of a war with France created ideal circumstances for agitation, Urquhart's efforts were a complete failure. The demand for Palmerston's impeachment made the whole campaign ridiculous and frightened away many of the Tories who might otherwise have offered him some support. It is true that without this sensational accusation, he could not have given his followers that sense of self-importance which was necessary to inspire them ^{with} by his own enthusiasm. Yet the activity and zeal which this belief inspired was all in vain. Neither the meetings in England nor the delegations to France were sufficient to persuade Thiers or even Odilon Barrot publicl to accuse Palmerston of treason, while in England the campaign expired amid ridicule and indifference.

Palmerston was quite naturally irritated ^{by} at Urquhart's efforts to rouse the mob against him. It was annoying for him to have to take time out to answer the numerous charges made by Urquhart. The letters in The Times and the debate in Parliament in 1838 were only the beginning. Urquhart remained a source

of annoyance for the rest of the Foreign Secretary's life. This irritation reached such heights in 1855, that he wrote to Stratford Canning:

"As to Urquhart, depend upon it he is in the pay of the Autocrat and is employed by him to prevent progress and improvement in Turkey. I do not say this lightly, I knew that Urquhart was in the pay of Louis Philippe to assail me. --The information came to me in a very curious way and from the Tuileries with a statement of the sums given him. He is a little mad but much more bad." 6

Palmerston's conclusion is of course every bit as unlikely as Urquhart's contention that the Foreign Secretary was guilty of Treason. It is certainly not supported by any available evidence. There is, however, no reason to suppose that Palmerston held this view for very long, and it is interesting only as an indication of the exasperation which Urquhart was causing ^{him} ~~Palmerston~~.

Urquhart was better suited by temperament and early training for a career as a missionary or leader of an evangelical movement than as a diplomatist. This was apparent to Palmerston, Wellington and others concerned with the business side of diplomacy, but the services of a well-informed, intelligent and well-connected young man were difficult to refuse. ^{Yet} ~~But~~ the limited employment which Urquhart was given soon confirmed the worst fears of the Cabinet. With the single exception of his preparation of the commercial treaty which was signed after his dismissal (Balta Lenam 1838), Urquhart accomplished nothing

6. Palmerston to Stratford Canning, Feb. 7, 1851. B.P. Ashley, E., Life of Viscount Palmerston, London, 1876., I, 366. Webster, op. cit. p. 351.

during his brief but eventful career as Secretary of Embassy. His other projects were failures.

Missionary zeal is not without its place in politics, and certainly was an important factor in the politics of the 1830's. It is difficult to see, however, how a minority of zealots, led by a fanatic, could have done anything but add to the general confusion by efforts to intervene in foreign affairs. Although the policy of Palmerston was not above reproach, it could hardly have been improved by such unenlightened interference. Happily these efforts of Urquhart left the Foreign Office unmoved. The fact that Urquhart's talk of Russian plots and Palmerston's treason caused a certain amount of confusion in the ranks of the Chartists and frightened Feargus O'Connor, is less important than the fact that he was the first man with any claim to being a professional diplomatist who invited the working-classes to attempt to understand and influence foreign policy. It is true that the majority of them ignored his advice, but the fact that he received a hearing indicates that the working-classes were not wholly indifferent to so marked a compliment.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

I. Unpublished Material, Parliamentary Papers and Collections of Documents.

A. Urquhart Papers: At Balliol College, Oxford.

These papers consist of four chests of MSS and correspondence, covering events from 1820 to 1877. Miss Robinson, Urquhart's biographer, has prepared a typewritten list of the contents of these chests, and made an effort to divide them by subject matter and date. When the condition of some of the earlier correspondence is taken into consideration, it must be concluded that the list is reasonably accurate, and the organisation of materials, the best that could be expected. The system of numbering, used on the correspondence, I think, ante-dates Miss Robinson's effort at organisation, and does not appear to be based on any recognisable principle.

The names and dates on many of the letters have been obscured, and most of the writing is illegible. The series of MSS which deal with Urquhart's activities during different stages of his career are in good condition, and are easy to read. They appear to have been dictated by Urquhart to various friends and followers.

With the Urquhart Papers there is an excellent collection of pamphlet material which deals with foreign affairs during the 19th century, which is more complete than the collection in the British Museum.

B. Francis Place MSS: In the British Museum.

These papers contain very little material on Urquhart's activities among the Chartists, 1839 - 40.

C. Foreign Office Papers in the Public Record Office.

1. Foreign Office Papers: Turkey.

F.O. 78/209 1832 : From Stratford Canning.

F.O. 78/225 1833 : From Ponsonby, October 22 - Dec. 1833.

F.O. 78/232	1834	:	Foreign Various and Consular Domestic.
F.O. 78/236	1834	:	From Ponsonby, May and June.
F.O. 78/239	1834	:	From Ponsonby, Sept. 21, to Nov. 11
F.O. 78/249	1834	:	To Colonel Patrick Campbell.
F.O. 78/252	1835	:	From Ponsonby Jan. - March.
F.O. 78/ 266	1835	:	Foreign Various.
F.O. 78/ 268	1835	:	Domestic, Namick Pasha, Nourri Effendi and Prince Vogorides.
F.O. 78/279	1836	:	David Urquhart
F.O. 78/298	1836	:	Domestic Various, Jan. - June.
F.O. 78/300	1837	:	To Ponsonby.
F.O. 78/301	1837	:	From Ponsonby, Jan. - Feb.
F.O. 78/302	1837	:	From Ponsonby, March - April.

2. Foreign Office Papers : Miscellaneous.

F.O. 97/409 1837 - 39 : Case of David Urquhart.

The records listed above contain the official minutes, correspondence, memoranda and instructions which deal with David Urquhart's association with the Foreign Office from his early trip with Stratford Canning, until the time of his dismissal. Most of the material concerning the Vixen has appeared in Blue Books. But the details of Urquhart's voyage to Circassia, the numerous drafts he submitted to the Foreign Office on the commercial treaty with Turkey, the comments of Palmerston, Ponsonby, Wellington and others on Urquhart's activities, are all to be found here. The last volume listed deals with the circumstances surrounding his dismissal from his post as Secretary of Embassy. It contains material which did not come to light either in Parliament or the press.

D. Parliamentary Papers.

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R - A (HC, 8 June), HL 4 July; HC, 5 July, 1837. Vol. LIV(1837) p. 545.
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L/C HL, 18 May; HC 21 May, 1838.
Vol. LII (1838), p. 221.
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R - A (HC 3 April) HC, 22 June 1848.
Vol. LXV (1847-48) (959) p.681.

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This publication was apparently the work of some friends and sympathisers of Urquhart. It contains correspondence printed in the Diplomatic Review, during Urquhart's lifetime. The editors do not give their names, and copies both in the British Museum and at Balliol College end abruptly in the middle of a letter.

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