

me upon equal grounds, and will listen to the appeal which I make.

The appeal which I make to them is this: If my position here is a serious one, their position is serious too. My allegations have been before you for a length of time. I will not now again read to a Midlothian audience the letter in which I first accepted this candidature. By every word of that letter I abide; in support of every allegation which that letter contains, I am ready to bring detailed and conclusive proof. These allegations—I say to you, gentlemen, to that portion of my audience—these allegations are of the most serious character. I admit as freely as you can urge that if they be unfounded, then my responsibility—nay, my culpability—before my country cannot be exaggerated. But, on the other hand, if these allegations be true—if it be true that the resources of Great Britain have been misused; if it be true that the international law of Europe has been broken; if it be true that the law of this country has been broken; if it be true that the good name of this land has been tarnished and defaced; if it be true that its condition has been needlessly aggravated by measures both useless, and wanton, and mischievous in themselves—then your responsibility is as great as mine. For I fully admit that in 1874 you incurred no great or special responsibility. You were tired of the Liberal government; you were dissatisfied with them. [Cries of “No, no!”] Oh, I beg pardon; I am addressing my opponents. Scotchmen, I believe, as much as Englishmen, like plain speaking, and I hope I have given you some proof that if that be your taste I endeavor to meet it as well as I can; and I thank you heartily for the manner in which, by your kindly attention, you have enabled me to say what I think is the truth, whether it be palatable or whether it be not.

Now the great question which we have been debating for the last three or four years—for I do not carry back the pith of what I have principally to say to the six years of the government—is the question of the policy which has been pursued during that time; most especially by far the policy of the last two years, and the effect of that policy upon the condition of the country, upon the legislation of the country, upon the strength of the empire, and above all upon the honor of the empire. I am now going to compare the conduct of the present government, which is commended to you as masterly in forethought and sagacity and truly English in spirit—I am going to compare it with the conduct of the last government and to lay before you the proceedings of the results. It so happens that their histories are a not inconvenient means of comparison. England, as you are aware, has been involved in many guarantees. I said England—do not be shocked; it is the shortest word—Great Britain or the United Kingdom is what one ought to say. The United Kingdom—the British empire—has been and is involved in many guarantees for the condition of other countries. Among others, we were involved, especially since the Peace of Paris, but also before the Peace of Paris, in a guarantee for Turkey, aiming to maintain its integrity and its independence; and we were involved in another guarantee for Belgium, aiming to maintain its integrity and its independence. In the time of the present government the integrity and the independence of Turkey were menaced—menaced by the consequences of rank, festering corruption from within. In the time of the late government the integrity and independence of Belgium were not less seriously menaced. We had been living in perfect harmony and friendship with two great military states of Europe—with

Prussia and with France. France and Prussia came into conflict, and at the moment of their coming into conflict a document was revealed to us which the ministers of those two states had had in their hands. Whoever was its author, whoever was its promoter, that is no affair of mine—it is due to Prince Bismarck to say that he was the person who brought it to light—but they had in their hands an instrument of a formal character, touching a subject that was considered and entertained. And that bad instrument was an instrument for the destruction of the freedom, independence, and integrity of Belgium. Could there be a graver danger to Europe than that?

Here was a State—not like Turkey, the scandal of the world, and the danger of the world from misgovernment, and from the horrible degradation it inflicted upon its subject races—but a country which was a marvel to all Europe for the peaceful exercise of the rights of freedom, and for progress in all the arts and all pursuits that tend to make mankind good and happy. And this country, having nothing but its weakness that could be urged against it, with its four or five millions of people, was deliberately pointed out by somebody and indicated to be destroyed, to be offered up as a sacrifice to territorial lust by one or other of those ministers of powers with whom we were living in close friendship and affection. We felt called upon to enlist ourselves on the part of the British nation as advocates and as champions of the integrity and independence of Belgium. And if we had gone to war we should have gone to war for freedom, we should have gone to war for public right, we should have gone to war to save human happiness from being invaded by tyrannous and lawless power. This is what I call a good cause, gentlemen. And though I detest war, and there are no epithets too strong,

if you could supply me with them, that I will not endeavor to heap upon its head—in such a war as that, while the breath in my body is continued to me, I am ready to engage. I am ready to support it, I am ready to give all the help and aid I can to those who carry this country into it. Well, gentlemen, pledged to support the integrity and independence of Belgium, what did we do? We proposed to Prussia to enter into a new and solemn treaty with us to resist the French empire, if the French empire attempted to violate the sanctity of freedom in Belgium; and we proposed to France to enter into a similar treaty with us to pursue exactly the same measures against Prussia, if Prussia should make the like nefarious attempt. And we undertook that, in concert with the one, or in concert with the other, whichever the case might be, we would pledge all the resources of this empire, and carry it into war for the purpose of resisting mischief and maintaining the principles of European law and peace.

I ask you whether it is not ridiculous to apply the doctrine or the imputation, if it be an imputation, that we belong to the “Manchester School,” or to a Peace Party—we who made these engagements to go to war with France if necessary, or to go to war with Prussia if necessary, for the sake of the independence of Belgium? But now I want you to observe the upshot. I must say that in one respect we were very inferior to the present government—very inferior indeed. Our ciphers, our figures, were perfectly contemptible. We took nothing except two millions of money. We knew perfectly well that what was required was an indication, and that that indication would be quite intelligible when it was read in the light of the new treaty engagement which we were contracting; and consequently we asked Parliament to

give us two millions of money for the sake of somewhat enlarging the numbers of available soldiers, and we were quite prepared to meet that contingency had it arrived. The great man who directs the councils of the German empire [Bismarck] acted with his usual promptitude. Our proposal went to him by telegraph and he answered by telegraph, "Yes," the same afternoon. We were not quite so fortunate with France, for at that time the councils of France were under the domination of some evil genius which it is difficult to trace and needless to attempt to trace. There was some delay in France—a little unnecessary haggling—but after two or three days France also came into this engagement, and from that moment the peace of Belgium was perfectly secured. When we had our integrity and our independence to protect we took the measures which we believed to be necessary and sufficient for that protection; and in every year since those measures, Belgium, not unharmed only, but strengthened by having been carried safely and unhurt through a terrible danger, has pursued her peaceful career, rising continually in her prosperity and happiness, and still holding out an example before all Europe to teach the nations how to live.

Well, gentlemen, as that occasion came to us with respect to Belgium so it came to our successors with respect to Turkey. How did they manage it? They thought themselves bound to maintain the integrity and independence of Turkey, and they were undoubtedly bound conditionally to maintain it. I am not now going into the question of right, but into the question of the adaptation of the means to an end. These are the gentlemen who are set before you as the people whose continuance in office it is necessary to maintain to attract the confidence of Europe; these are the gentlemen

whom patriotic associations laud to the skies as if they had a monopoly of human intelligence; these are the gentlemen who bring you "Peace with Honor"; these are the gentlemen who go in special trains to attend august assemblies and receive the compliments of august statesmen; these are the gentlemen who for all these years have been calling upon you to pay any number of millions that might be required as a very cheap and insignificant consideration for the immense advantages that you derive from their administration.

Therefore I want you to know, and I have shown you, how we set about to maintain integrity and independence, and how it was maintained then. I ask how they have set about it. But, gentlemen, on their own showing they have done wrong. We have it out of their own mouths. I won't go to Lord Derby; I will go to the only man whose authority is higher for this purpose than Lord Derby's, namely, Lord Beaconsfield. He tells you plainly that what the government ought to have done was to have said to Russia, "You shall not invade Turkey." Gentlemen, that course is intelligible. It is a guilty course, in my opinion, to have taken up arms for maintaining the integrity of Turkey against her subject races, or to take up arms against what the Emperor of Russia believed to be a great honor to humanity in going to apply a remedy to these mischiefs. But Lord Beaconsfield has confessed in a public speech that the proper course for the government to have taken was to have planted their foot and to have said to the Emperor of Russia: "Cross not the Danube; if you cross the Danube, expect to confront the power of England on the southern shore." Now, gentlemen, that course is intelligible, perfectly intelligible; and if you are prepared for the responsibility of maintaining such an integrity and such an independence irrespectively of

other considerations against the Christian races in Turkey, that was the course for you to pursue. It was not pursued, because the agitation, which is called the Bulgarian agitation, was too inconvenient to allow the government to pursue it, because they saw that if they did that which Lord Beaconsfield now tells us it would have been right to do, the sentiment of the country would not have permitted them to continue to hold their office; and hence came that vacillation, hence came that ineptitude of policy which they now endeavor to cover by hectoring and by boasting, and which, within the last year or two, they have striven, and not quite unsuccessfully, to hide from the eyes of many by carrying measures of violence into other lands, if not against Russia, if not against the strong, yet against the weak, and endeavoring to attract to themselves the credit and glory of maintaining the power and influence of England.

Well, gentlemen, they were to maintain the integrity and independence of Turkey. How did they set about it? They were not satisfied with asking for our humble two millions; they asked for six millions. What did they do, first of all? First of all they encouraged Turkey to go to war. They did not counsel Turkey's submission to superior force; they neither would advise her to submit, nor would they assist her to resist. They were the great causes of her plunging into that deplorable and ruinous war, from the consequences of which, her Majesty's speech states this year, Turkey has not yet recovered, and there is not the smallest appearance of hope that she will ever recover. But afterwards, and when the war had taken place, they came and asked you for a vote of six millions. What did they do with the six millions? They flourished it in the face of the world. What did they gain for Turkey? In the first place, they sent a fleet to the

Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. Are you aware that in sending that fleet they broke the law of Europe? They applied for a firman to the Sultan. The Sultan refused, and they had no right to send that fleet. But, however that may be, what was the use of sending that fleet? The consequence was that the Russian army, which had been at a considerable distance from Constantinople, marched close up to Constantinople. Is it possible to conceive an idea more absurd than that which I really believe was entertained by many of our friends—I do not say our friends in Midlothian, but in places where the intelligence is high—that the presence of certain British ironclads in the Sea of Marmora prevented the victorious Russian armies from entering Constantinople? What could these ironclads do? They could have battered down Constantinople no doubt; but what consolation would that have been to Turkey, or how would it have prevented Russian armies from entering? That part of the pretext set is too thin and threadbare to require any confutation. But they may say that that vote of six millions was an indication of the intention of England to act in case of need; and when it was first proposed it was to strengthen the hands of England at the Congress. But did it strengthen the hands of England; and if so, to what purpose was that strength used? The treaty of San Stefano had been signed between Russia and Turkey; the treaty of Berlin was substituted for it. What was the grand difference between the treaty of Berlin and the treaty of San Stefano? There was a portion of Bessarabia which, down to the time of the treaty of Berlin, enjoyed free institutions, and by the treaty of Berlin, and mainly through the agency of the British government, which had pledged itself beforehand by what is called the Salisbury-Schouvaloff Memorandum, to support Russia in her demand

for that territory if Russia adhered to that demand, England, with the vote of six millions given to strengthen her influence, made herself specially responsible for handing back that territory, which enjoyed free institutions, to be governed despotically by the Russian empire.

That is the first purpose for which, as I have shown you, your vote of six millions was available. What was the second? It was to draw a line along the Balkan Mountains, by means of which northern Bulgaria was separated from southern Bulgaria, and southern Bulgaria was re-named eastern Roumelia. The Sultan has not marched and cannot march a man into eastern Roumelia. If he did the consequences would be that the whole of that population, who are determined to fight for their rights, would rise against him and his troops, and would be supported by other forces that could be drawn to it under the resistless influences of sympathy with freedom. You may remember that three or four years ago utter scorn was poured upon what was called the "bag-and-baggage policy." Are you aware that that policy is at this moment the basis upon which are regulated the whole of the civil state of things in Bulgaria and eastern Roumelia? What that policy asked was that every Turkish authority should be marched out of Bulgaria, and every Turkish authority has gone out of Bulgaria. There is not a Turk at this moment who, as a Turk, holds office under the Sultan either in Bulgaria or in southern Bulgaria, which is called eastern Roumelia—no, not one. The despised "bag-and-baggage policy" is at this moment the law of Europe, and that is the result of it; and it is for that, gentlemen, that the humble individual who stands before you was held up and reviled as a visionary enthusiast and a verbose—I forget what—rhetorician, although I believe myself there was not much

verbosity in that particular phrase. It appeared to me the people of England understood it pretty well—nay, more, the Congress of Berlin seemed to have understood it, and the state of things which I recommended was irresistible, and now, I thank God, is irreversibly established in those once unhappy provinces. Gentlemen, we have got one more thing to do in regard to these provinces and that is this—I urged it at the same time when I produced this monstrous conception of the "bag-and-baggage policy"—it is this, to take great care that the majority of the inhabitants of these provinces, who are Christians, do not oppress either the Mohammedans, or the Jewish, or any other minority. That is a sacred duty; I don't believe it to be a difficult duty; it is a sacred duty. I stated to you just now that there was not a Turk holding office as a Turk in these provinces. I believe there are Turks holding office—and I rejoice to hear it—holding office through the free suffrage of their countrymen, and by degrees I hope that they, when they are once rid of all the pestilent and poisonous associations, and the recollections of the old ascendancy, will become good and peaceful citizens like other people. I believe the people of Turkey have in them many fine qualities, whatever the governors may be, capable under proper education, gentlemen, of bringing them to a state of capacity and competency for every civil duty.

Gentlemen, it still remains for me to ask you how this great and powerful government has performed its duty of maintaining the integrity and independence of Turkey. It has had great and extraordinary advantages. It has had the advantage of disciplined support from its majority in the House of Commons. Though I am not making any complaint, as my friend in the chair knows, it was not exactly the same as happened in the days of recent Liberal govern-

ments. It had had unflinching and incessant support from the large majority of the Lords. That was very far from being our case in our day. There is no reason why I should not say so. I say freely—it is an historical fact—that the House of Lords, when the people's representatives are backed by a strong national feeling, when it would be dangerous to oppose, confront, or resist, then the House of Lords pass our measures. So they passed the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, and so they passed the Irish Land Act; and I have no doubt that, if it pleases the Almighty, they will pass many more good measures. But the moment the people go to sleep—and they cannot be always awake—when public opinion flags and ceases to take a strong and decided interest in public questions, that moment the majority of the House of Lords grows. They mangle, they postpone, they reject the good measures that go up to them.

I will show you another advantage which the present administration possesses. They are supported by several foreign governments. Did you read in the London papers within the last few weeks an account of the energetic support they derived from the Emperor of Austria? Did you see that the Emperor of Austria sent for the British Ambassador, Sir Henry Elliot, and told him that a pestilent person, a certain individual named Mr. Gladstone, was a man who did not approve the foreign policy of Austria, and how anxious he was—so the Emperor of Austria was pleased complacently to say—for the guidance of the British people and of the electors of Midlothian—how anxious he was that you should, all of you, give your votes in a way to maintain the Ministry of Lord Beaconsfield.¹ Well, gentlemen, if you approve the

¹Subsequent disclosures proved that this was not strictly correct, and Mr. Gladstone apologetically withdrew the statement.

foreign policy of Austria, the foreign policy that Austria has usually pursued, I advise you to do that very thing; if you want to have an Austrian foreign policy dominant in the councils of this country, give your votes as the Emperor of Austria recommends. What has that foreign policy of Austria been? I do not say that Austria is incurable. I hope it will yet be cured, because it has got better institutions at home, and I heartily wish it well if it makes honest attempts to confront its difficulties. Yet I must look to what that policy has been. Austria has ever been the unflinching foe of freedom in every country of Europe. Austria trampled under foot, Austria resisted the unity of Germany. Russia, I am sorry to say, has been the foe of freedom too; but in Russia there is an exception—Russia has been the friend of Slavonic freedom; but Austria has never been the friend even of Slavonic freedom. Austria did all she could to prevent the creation of Belgium. Austria never lifted a finger for the regeneration and constitution of Greece. There is not an instance—there is not a spot upon the whole map where you can lay your finger and say, "There Austria did good." I speak of its general policy; I speak of its general tendency. I do not abandon the hope of improvement in the future, but we must look to the past and to the present for the guidance of our judgments at this moment. And in the Congress of Berlin Austria resisted the extension of freedom and did not promote it; and therefore I say, if you want the spirit of Austria to inspire the councils of this country in Heaven's name take the Emperor's counsel; and I advise you to lift the Austrian flag when you go about your purposes of canvass or of public meetings. It will best express the purpose you have in view, and I for one cannot complain of your consistency, whatever in that case I might think of

the tendency of your views in respect of principle, of justice, of the happiness of mankind, or of the greatness, the dignity, and the honor of this great empire.

But, gentlemen, still one word more, because I have not spoken of what has been the upshot of all this. There are a great many persons in this country, I am afraid, as well as in other countries, who are what is called Worshippers of Success, and at the time of the famous "Peace with Honor" demonstration there was a very great appearance of success. I was not myself at that time particularly safe when I walked in the streets of London.¹ I have walked with my wife from my own house, I have walked owing my protection to the police; but that was the time, gentlemen, when all those curious methods of maintaining British honor and British dignity were supposed to have been wonderfully successful. And now I want to ask you, as I have shown you the way we went about maintaining the independence and integrity of Belgium—what has become of the independence and integrity of Turkey? I have shown that they neither knew in the first instance the ends toward which they should first have directed their efforts, nor, when they have chosen ends, have they been able rationally to adapt their means to the attainment of those ends. I am not speaking of the moral character of the means, but how they are adapted to the end. And what did the vote of six millions achieve for Turkey? I will tell you what it achieved. It did achieve one result, and I want you well to consider whether you are satisfied with it or not, especially those of you who are Conservatives. It undoubtedly cut down largely the division of Bulgaria, established by the treaty of

¹At the time of the "Jingo" excitement Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone were hustled by a gang of rowdies in Cavendish Square, and were saved only from violence by taking refuge in the house of Dr., afterwards Sir Andrew, Clark.

San Stefano. Now, I am not going to maintain that that division was a right one, for that depends on a knowledge more minute than I possess; but the effect of it was to cut it down, as is perfectly well known—that is, put back under the direct rule of the Sultan of Turkey, and in the exact condition in which all European Turkey, except the Principalities, had been before the war, the population inhabiting the country of Macedonia, and about a million of people, the vast majority of them Christians. Two substantive and definite results, the two most definite results, produced were these—first of all that Bessarabia, that had been a country with free institutions, was handed back to despotism; and secondly a million and a half of people inhabiting Macedonia, to whom free institutions had been promised by the treaty of San Stefano, are now again placed under the Turkish pashas and have not received one grain of benefit of importance as compared with their condition before the war.

But how as regards Turkey? I have shown results bad enough in regard to freedom. What did the British plenipotentiaries say at Berlin? They said that some people seemed to suppose we had come to cut and carve Turkey. That is quite a mistake, said the plenipotentiaries; we have come to consolidate Turkey. Some of the scribes of the foreign office coined a new word, and said it was to "rejuvenate" Turkey. How did they rejuvenate this unfortunate empire, this miserable empire, this unhappy government which they have lured into war and allowed and encouraged to pass into war because they allowed their ambassadors at Constantinople, Sir Henry Elliot and Sir Austen Layard, to whisper into the ear of the Turk that British interests would compel us to interfere and help her? What has been the result to Turkey? Now, I will say, much as the Christian populations have the right to com-