

fostered by Russia precisely in accordance with the policy that has terminated in the disruption of Turkey in Europe.

In the same despatch of 30th May, 1878, Lord Salisbury continues:—

“Her Majesty’s Government intimated to the Porte on the occasion of the Conference at Constantinople that they were not prepared to sanction misgovernment and oppression, and it will be requisite before they can enter into any agreement for the defence of the Asiatic territories of the Porte in certain eventualities, that they should be formally assured of the intention of the Porte to introduce the necessary reforms into the government of the Christian and other subjects of the Porte in those regions. *It is not desirable to require more than an engagement in general terms, for the specific measures to be taken could only be defined after a more careful inquiry and deliberation than could be secured at the present juncture.*”

The italics are my own, for the weak point of the Convention is exhibited by this sentence.

No “general terms” should ever be mentioned in a communication with Orientals, and no convention should have been concluded with the Porte unless every detail had been previously considered and specially agreed upon between the contracting parties. When this Convention was made public, I concluded that the British government contemplated the official employment of a certain number of their own officers, to carry out the spirit of the agreement, without which the Convention would be a farce; at the same time I was convinced that the suspicions of the Turkish government and the stubborn pride of the race would resist any such direct interference upon the part of