



Meeting *Hauteur* with Tact, Imperturbability, and Resolution: British Diplomacy and Russia, 1856–1865

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ABSTRACT

This article takes a broad view of Anglo–Russian relations in the years between the Peace of Paris, 1856, and the death of Viscount Palmerston, 1865, examining the shifts within that period in an essentially high-political diplomatic history. It traces a number of strands in geopolitics, offering a sense of the competing strategies of the European Great Powers, particularly the roles of British diplomats: the private and public communication amongst prime ministers, foreign secretaries, ambassadors, ministers-plenipotentiaries and consular officials concerning British policy towards Russia in the post-Crimean War period. It outlines the principles that underlay that policy and the ways in which the diplomatic network observed the tsar and his advisors and agents, assessed the developing situation in Russia, Central Asia, and the Ottoman Balkans, made decisions, and implemented policy. It focusses on the diplomatists' attitudes and perceptions—how they thought about Russia and British interests and how they worked to protect them. It also analyses British policy in light of the European dimension. The years 1856 to 1865 not only witnessed Russian attempts to undermine the Crimean settlement, they also saw revisionist Bonapartist France work to destroy the constraining Vienna system of 1815—primarily in northern Italy. These policies complicated British attempts to maintain the status-quo and defend their interests in the East. The evolving situation was highly complex.

Underlying principles shaped British policy towards Russia in the years immediately after the Crimean War and the signing of the 1856 Treaty of Paris. In this context, operating as a group, key individuals comprised the British diplomatic network that dealt with and assessed Tsar Alexander II's government and its foreign policy. Accordingly, there existed a collective mind-set of the diplomats and political leaders involved in formulating and implementing policy towards Russia. In the decade after the war, the tsar's government pursued a revisionist foreign policy in Europe—for the first time since the signing of the Treaty of Vienna in 1815—often in collusion with the unpredictable and ambitious French Emperor, Napoleon III.

In these years—during which the Russian government worked to save face following defeat in the Crimea—Anglo–Russian relations worsened owing to three factors. There had long existed an ideological cold war between autocratic Slavdom and Western liberalism. To Britain, the events of 1849—when the Cossacks had crushed the Hungarian revolt—convinced them of Russia’s barbaric despotism.¹ And many in St. Petersburg still believed that Russian leniency in the 1820s had let out the liberal genie, leading to revolution in France, Belgium, Poland, and then Central Europe. Tensions re-emerged also because of strategic and economic competition. Economic crisis in 1857–1858 pushed Britain into Asian markets. It sought to compensate for a deficit in its balance of payments with Europe and the United States. The end of Russia’s war with the Circassian tribes in the Caucasus in 1859 released troops for campaigning in Central Asia. Both sharpened Anglo–Russian competition and heightened tensions. This analysis is not concerned, however, with ideological, strategic, or economic considerations; it *will* consider these factors, but it is unashamedly a diplomatic history. It seeks to sketch a picture of the lower levels of the diplomatic corps, which much study is too often little aware. It aims at offering a richer and more sophisticated picture than the one exiting at present.

How senior officials reacted to developing situations reflected their core belief system.² Diplomacy enables states to secure the objectives of their foreign policy without resort to force. Exceptions to the rule are 1854 and 1914; in the long nineteenth century, Britain worked to attain its objectives by using diplomacy, not force. This exegesis ascertains Britain’s objectives when dealing with St. Petersburg in these tumultuous years. It examines communication between British diplomatic agents on the ground in Russia, in the sultan’s dominions and in France, and political leaders—both Whig and Conservative—and Foreign Office officials in London. It looks at policy-making in three different governments—one Whig, one Conservative and one Liberal—the agreement of an agenda and on procedure and its implementation on the ground; and the co-ordination of relations with Tsar Alexander II and his agents and representatives in both the Russian capital and elsewhere. There is a lack of secondary material considering the relationship between Britain and Russia in this period—which was an essential dynamic in Great Power relations. With the obvious exception of the Crimean War, no aspect of the relationship between 1815 and the onset of the 1875–1878 crisis has really received sufficient attention. Consequently, this analysis adds to the existing historiography.

It the first study of its kind to look in-depth at the role played, in particular, by consular agents: how they worked with each other and with ambassadors to create a fuller picture and reduce the complexity of policy options available to the foreign secretary in Whitehall. Recently, scholars have commented on the hitherto neglected consular agents despite a wealth

of well-catalogued archival material³; but it has been 46 years since an exploration of the “Cinderella Service.”⁴ It has also been some time since historians have offered works of diplomatic history in the traditional sense on Anglo–Russian relations, the “Eastern Question,” and the Crimean Settlement—monographs that reconstructed crises and charted the course of bilateral and multilateral relations using the correspondence contained within the parliamentary Blue Books.⁵ This analysis builds upon these important texts as well as upon work already carried out by other scholars.⁶ It also adds to recent work by making more of the European dimension of Anglo–Russian relations in this period.⁷ And where that broad-sweep investigation is structural in its analysis, this work is concerned with the personal.

When the consular officials, ministers-plenipotentiary, and ambassadors observed, noted, and recommended, and when the foreign secretaries and prime ministers decided and acted, they did so in accordance with a set of values and ideas. Nevertheless, these individual men also worked together as a pragmatic unit—professionals who reacted to changes in the international system at local and global levels and talked to each other constantly across vast distances. They formed an organisation based on information. The consuls-general in Odessa and Bucharest, for example, formed a key part of the chain; they helped the foreign secretary make decisions. The private letters, official despatches, minutes, and memoranda that survive allow the diplomatic historian to eavesdrop on an ongoing conversation.

The 1856 Peace of Paris was the first treaty that recognised the Ottoman Empire as an equal: it brought Constantinople into the European system of law. Russia could no longer wage war on the sultan without considering the European consequences—something it had done intermittently since the reign of Catherine the Great.⁸ The treaty was one of the few checks to Russian expansion between 1774 and 1914—the others being the 1841 Straits settlement and the 1878 Treaty of Berlin. It made the Black Sea neutral territory—closing it to all warships and prohibiting fortifications and the presence of armaments on its shores. The treaty marked a severe setback to Russian influence in the region. Conditions for the return of Sebastopol and other towns and cities in the south of Crimea were clear. Russia returned Southern Bessarabia to Moldavia and abandoned its claims to protect Christians in the Ottoman Empire.

At the beginning of negotiations for the peace that would end the Crimean War, the veteran ambassador at Constantinople, Sir Stratford Canning, wrote to the foreign secretary, the Earl of Clarendon, “I am persuaded that Russia is far more beaten than is generally supposed.” Known for both strong-arm tactics and his forcefulness, the “Great Elchi” saw the difficulties of “making a durable peace” and the immense complications involved in settling boundary disputes by creating small independent states on the Russian frontier.⁹ The

Conservative leader in the House of Lords, the Earl of Derby, predicted—quite correctly—that the arrangement would create “endless causes of dispute and difference.”¹⁰ The home secretary agreed with Stratford, “Russia has suffered more than we were aware of, and was sincerely desirous of bringing the war to an end ... the public opinion of this country was not averse to the continuation of the war, if satisfactory terms were not procured.”¹¹ The British plenipotentiary at the Paris Congress, Earl Cowley—the pre-eminent British diplomat of the mid-nineteenth century—was also disappointed with the treaty, which he considered too favourable to Russia.¹² By printing black lines between its columns as a sign of mourning, *The Sun* echoed these Palmerstonian sentiments—the Whig, Viscount Palmerston, had become prime minister in February 1855. It made a violent attack on the pacific measures pursued by the government in Paris.¹³ Critics singled-out Clarendon as weak, as a milk-and-water diplomat.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, nearly all British diplomats and political leaders ascribed to the Palmerstonian policy established circa 1833 of strengthening Ottoman defensive capabilities to contain Russia. Britain’s policy after 1856 was to continue to contain Russian power in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East—to uphold the Crimean settlement. To do this, it required a strong naval presence in the region and diplomatic co-operation with France. Without the support of Napoleon III, naval power alone was insufficient. It was especially the case since no British minister—not even Palmerston—was likely to risk another war. In these years, the House of Commons assumed a Cobdenite Radical—or “Manchester”—colour; with retrenchment imposed by William Gladstone, the chancellor of the exchequer, Whiggish and Conservative caution took hold over British foreign policy.¹⁴ But between 1856 and 1863, Russia and France, Europe’s two major revisionist Powers, found it convenient to work together; one to destroy the 1815 Treaty of Vienna, the other, the 1856 Treaty of Paris.

The Franco-Russian combination—which began to emerge in 1856 when St. Petersburg and Paris began to find common cause on a case-by-case basis—blocked all British efforts to obtain harsher terms at Paris. Napoleon III’s Italian policy—driving the Habsburgs out of Northern Italy and strengthening Piedmont—was based on an anti-Austrian alliance with Russia as the Habsburgs had chosen not to side with their autocratic eastern neighbour in the war. Clarendon’s main aim at the Congress was the neutralisation of the Black Sea. He realised that to obtain this goal, he would have to give way on other demands. “[I]t was nonsense,” he complained, “to write to me what Russia should be told what Russia ought to do &c.”¹⁵ He told Palmerston that the “only thing of real importance is that the Russians shall have no water communication with the Danube.”¹⁶ The former foreign secretary and prime minister, Lord John Russell, was clear that as long as Britain and France kept together, “this Treaty would prevent Russia from carrying out her projects.”¹⁷

But France would “have to choose between Russia with dishonour and England with good faith.”¹⁸ Clarendon’s fear was that France would “not give way & that the Russians so long as they are supported by France will not yield” on questions relating to the Danube and the Danubian Principalities.¹⁹ The former editor of the liberal *Daily News* warned the incoming ambassador to Constantinople, Sir Henry Bulwer: “The southward progress of Russia [is] as natural as the flow of its rivers.”²⁰ From Paris, Cowley reported on France “think[ing] of nothing but what Russia desires.”²¹

In May 1856, Clarendon offered the delicate position of minister-plenipotentiary at St. Petersburg to the talented young Liberal MP, John Wodehouse. Wodehouse had been undersecretary of state for foreign affairs, a role in which he had impressed. Clarendon appreciated his discretion, hard work, and quick perception. He believed that Wodehouse would “meet Russian *hauteur*” with “tact, imperturbability, and resolution.”²² As an envoy-extraordinary to Russia in 1856–1858, Wodehouse was a successful representative at St. Petersburg, working well with Alexander II. In early 1858, the tsar even attended the British Embassy ball—going against etiquette—to celebrate the marriage of Queen Victoria’s eldest daughter to Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia. Lady Florence Wodehouse told her mother-in-law: “all the other Dip[lomatic] Ministers are jealous.”²³

One of Wodehouse’s triumphs during his brief tenure at St. Petersburg was to play down reports in *The Times* of a January 1857 speech in Birmingham made by Sir Robert Peel, the son of the former Conservative premier who had attended Alexander II’s coronation in summer 1856. Peel supposedly insulted the tsar’s younger brother, the Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolayevich by saying that the royal admiral was not a “frank and open-hearted sailor.” Working with Clarendon, Wodehouse “broke ... the ice” with Alexander II and the senior members of the court. But he recognised Russia’s permanent “desire to find a final fault with us about little things.”²⁴

Wodehouse was an efficient servant in St. Petersburg. However, he did not agree with the focus of government policy when it came to Russia: “I can imagine nothing more senseless than to expend millions to maintain the Ottoman Empire, to go and cry at the loss of Kars [in eastern Anatolia], and coolly look on while our [India’s] next door neighbours are subjugated.”²⁵ He wrote confidentially to his uncle, Raikes Currie, the former member for Northampton and partner of the bank, Curries & Company, “people are determined to shut their eyes to all that passes in the North West frontier of our Indian Empire.”²⁶

The crumbling Persian Empire and the Central Asian Khanates had long been the focus of Russian aggrandisement. British policy-makers saw Persia as a barrier to British India. The destruction of either the Persian or the Ottoman empires, so the belief went, would expose India to Russian invasion.²⁷ This is why Britain had traditionally supported the Persians to

create a strong buffer zone to isolate India from European politics. In November 1856, Britain had declared war on Persia. It opposed an attempt by the Qajar dynasty to press its claim on the city of Herat, a strategically important point on the map that had declared itself independent under its own rebellious emir and placed itself under the protection of the British in India and in alliance with the Emirate of Kabul in Afghanistan. The war resulted in Persia withdrawing from Herat and signing a new treaty in which it surrendered its claims on the city and the British withdrawing from southern Persia.²⁸

Wodehouse was “no alarmist about Russia.” Yet he believed that one day, it would grow assertive in Central Asia—it would win control of Persia. It aimed at absorbing gradually the territories between India and its own borders.²⁹ The heavy-handed representative to the court of the Shah of Persia, Charles Murray, reported in November 1858, “the Russians were still sulking over the fall of their well-bribed partisan minister & were consequently on rather cold terms with the court.” But they had “sent to St. Petersburg for a new set of presents for the Shah & will ... doubtless ere long out-bribe us, out-threaten us, out-promise us & out-do us in every way.”³⁰

Wodehouse was astute in his judgement that the Foreign Office could no longer view the affairs of Afghanistan and Persia in isolation from developments in Europe. Indeed, with a powerful ally in Europe, the tsar could set his sights on the River Oxus—Amu Darya—in Central Asia. As minister in St. Petersburg, Wodehouse began to advise the government in London to focus on Herat and Kandahar—the only land routes to India. “To talk of Herat,” he complained, “as a distant place in which we have no more interest than in Timbaktu is sheer nonsense.”³¹ He believed that British policy should be to establish and maintain a “series of buffers between India & Russia.”³² Only this would guarantee lasting peace and British imperial power: “Where would be our prestige ... if we allow our beards to be pulled in the face of all India?”³³ This was only five months before the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny.

To Palmerston, India was “just one of many pieces available when playing the ‘Great Game’” with Russia. It was a mere strategic asset. Thriving on shadowboxing with St. Petersburg, he protected India because it was “an explanation for and foundation of British greatness.”³⁴ Yet he was not prepared to turn Afghanistan into a defensive buffer or offer greater gifts to the Persians. Both undertakings would be expensive; as a government minister, Palmerston knew that Parliament would never sanction the money. And sensitive to public opinion, he judged from newspaper editorials that adventures in Central Asia were unpopular. Isolated in diplomatic missions a long way from Westminster, Wodehouse and Murray were blind to the political realities at home. In the heat of the Indian rebellion, Wodehouse believed that if Britain lost India, it “deserve[d] to perish as a nation.”³⁵

Murray lamented the fact that Central Asia was “an arena upon which John Bull looks with supreme indifference.”³⁶

Nevertheless, like many in the diplomatic corps in the mid-nineteenth century, both men believed that Palmerston would stand up to the Russians and “keep up our prestige.”³⁷ The principal British missions around the world were still firmly in the hands of the Palmerstonians. In Paris, Cowley felt the same as Wodehouse: Palmerston was “master of the situation.”³⁸ Wodehouse knew that if Palmerston fell from office, there would be “great rejoicing here [St. Petersburg].” Indeed, the “respect & fear” with which Palmerston was regarded in St. Petersburg tempered the hatred felt for him.³⁹ It is somewhat ironic, therefore, that Palmerston’s government fell in 1858 for being insufficiently firm against France.⁴⁰

The minority Conservative government that took office in February 1858 wished to “maintain friendly relations with all powers ... without adopting either a tone of haughty intimidation or a tone of servile submission towards any Government.”⁴¹ It was determined, nevertheless, to hold the Great Powers of Europe to “abide by the terms of treaties.”⁴² The new prime minister, Derby, hoped that relations with Russia “may speedily resume—if, indeed, they have not already resumed—the friendship and cordiality by which they were formerly marked.”⁴³ British efforts to block Montenegrin independence from the sultan in 1858 dampened these hopes somewhat—the Russian ambassador to London was in a “sulk” with the foreign secretary, the Earl of Malmesbury, who in turn called the ambassador “treacher[ous].”⁴⁴ However, in May 1858, the tsar was “very civil” to Wodehouse; he “expressed pleasure at the better prosperity” that prevailed between Britain and Russia.⁴⁵ When Wodehouse resigned on the collapse of Palmerston’s government, Malmesbury was confident that “the Emperor of Russia has no intention of going to war now or hereafter if he can help it. His armies are reduced to the lowest scale.”⁴⁶

This confidence was the result of reports from Wodehouse at St. Petersburg—Russia had no choice but to resort to diplomacy and secret intrigue to further its aims—and from the British consul-general at Odessa, George Benvenuto Matthew. Matthew, a former Tory MP and former governor of the Bahamas, had served in the important cosmopolitan Ukrainian city port since 1856. The remoteness of Odessa from the Embassy at St. Petersburg meant that the consul-general had considerable independence. He had the right to communicate directly with the Foreign Office. After 1856, the purely commercial consulate assumed an important role in political and military reporting. Matthew was active in gathering intelligence, which he sent to St. Petersburg, Constantinople, and London. His report of January 1858 detailed the “notorious want of probity” amongst the emperor’s servants in the military and civil departments, the “constant instances of judicial venality,” the “perversion of justice” and the “swarm of useless and ill-paid functionaries” that clogged every public office. He, too, singled out

the Grand Duke Konstantin for criticism: the royal admiral worked, it was widely reported, to undermine the tsar's project of "national advancement." Matthew was convinced that "no further measures of improvement and liberal advancement" would take place as long as reactionary forces dominated at court.⁴⁷

His sources also seemed to confirm that Russian foreign policy was shifting eastwards in focus—away from the Mediterranean and the Straits of the Dardanelles. Count Karl Robert Nesselrode—Russia's foreign minister since 1816 and the man most responsible for Russia's Crimean policy—was losing influence at court to the "Ultra Russian Party," led by the tsar's younger brother and possessive of the "most inveterate hatred of England." This faction promoted activity in the country around the Sea of Azov, land rich in grain and cattle, traversed by the Don and the Volga rivers, and suitable as a base for eastern operations. Matthew's information supported Wodehouse's suspicions: Konstantin proposed to unite the two great rivers by a grand canal. And work was already taking place to strengthen the fortress at Baku on the Caspian Sea. "The Russian character," Matthew reminded the ambassador at Constantinople, "is far more Asiatic than is supposed." Nevertheless, "whatever the future aspirations of Russia may be, it should be distinctly understood that for the present and for some time to come, she is incapacitated from entering under any circumstances into another European war."⁴⁸

Matthew did not recommend a proactive policy in Persia and Afghanistan; it was not his place—it was barely that of Wodehouse. His function was to send home "plain dispassionate" reports, free from exaggeration.⁴⁹ The consular agent's first duty was not to trouble the Embassy or the Foreign Office, but to send concise reports that contained conclusions rather than excessive detail. If the subordinate agents ignored these instructions, "there is an end to all policy & all discipline."⁵⁰ Matthew limited himself to listing the reasons why Russia would not risk antagonising Britain—even with French friendship in Europe. Its workers and mechanics were unskilled and few in number, typhus was rampant in the army, the paucity of labourers in southern Russia meant that soldiers had had to bring in the 1857 crops, and an on-going war against Circassian tribes in the Caucasus cost a great deal in money, men, and equipment.⁵¹

The Foreign Office judged that Russia would revert to its policy of the 1830s and 1840s. Russia's best-case scenario after its defeat in 1856 would be to have the Ottoman sultan dependent on St. Petersburg. This would put the world's Sunni Moslems on Russia's side, as the sultan was also the Caliph. It constituted Britain's main fear with regard to India—especially after the mutiny of 1857. If Russia had the sultan on side, it could instigate a *jihadi* revolt in India against the British. The British army in India was composed largely of Moslem Indians from the north-west frontier. Historically, the sultan had "yield[ed] to Russia until a close alliance between England and France gave

him sufficient courage to resist.”⁵² Malmesbury instructed Bulwer to remain close to Sultan Abdülmecid. In 1858, the *Government of India Act* liquidated the East India Company and transferred its functions of government to the British Crown. However, Malmesbury’s biggest foreign policy headache in 1858–1859 was not India or the Russian threat to it, but the Franco–Piedmontese war against Austria in northern Italy. Derby judged that Russia would “not be over anxious to engage in new hostilities”; representatives in the East were not so sure.⁵³

Whilst France, Piedmont, and Russia “seem[ed] uniting in the Med[iterranean]” during the chaotic first months of the Italian war, the tsar conferred certain decorations on a number of Ottoman ministers.⁵⁴ He sent the Grand Duke Konstantin to present the Imperial Order of St. Alexander Nevsky to Fuad and Āli Pashas, the leading Tanzimat—reforming—ministers. The Russian emissary to Constantinople, Prince Alexey Borisovich Lobanov-Rostovsky, then invested the sultan with the Imperial Order of St. Andrew.

Derby and Malmesbury worked to localise the Italian war; they could not allow Russia to involve itself in the Franco–Piedmontese assault on the *status quo*. They wanted to maintain good relations with St. Petersburg, induce the combatants to disarm, and protect as much of the 1815 Vienna settlement as possible. In January 1859, Derby believed that the tsar did “not seem inclined to *brouiller les affaires*.”⁵⁵ As the Italian crisis developed in spring 1859 and rumours spread of a secret Franco–Russian treaty, a Russian general arrived in Constantinople to win over the Armenian grand patriarch. He brought with him a number of Armenian priests.⁵⁶ Bulwer warned Malmesbury, “The policy of Russia is in fact especially to be watched at this crisis.”⁵⁷ Indeed, reports from St. Petersburg and Odessa confirmed that a Russian army of 60,000 men had crossed the Dnieper River—it rises near Smolensk and flows to the Black Sea—and that a significant force had collected on the Galician frontier. At London, Derby hoped that a “French & Russian fleet *combined*” was not imminent; but he instructed the Admiralty to “be prepared for all emergencies.”⁵⁸ He did not trust the assurances of the Russian Foreign Ministry. Indeed, Malmesbury thought that Russia had “taken such a decidedly French line [in supporting Napoleon III against Austria]” that it was “not a neutral Power.”⁵⁹ Concerned that France would return the favour by supporting Russian intervention in the Balkans, the Foreign Office kept a close eye on Turkey-in-Europe.

In the years after the Crimean War, there were a number of tensions in Ottoman Europe, especially in Serbia and the Danubian Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. The Montenegrins also began to assert themselves.⁶⁰ Disturbances in the Balkans combined with tensions over the process of Italian unification presented Russia with an opportunity to break free of the confines of the Treaty of Paris. Britain’s policy was to prevent the Ottoman government from making mistakes in the Balkans by which Russia might profit.

Russian agents worked to undermine the sultan's authority and to stir up pan-Slavist agitation. They made life very difficult for British officials in the region. From Sarajevo, the consular officer, Henry Churchill, warned of the Russian presence that was "very prejudicial to the authority of the Porte."⁶¹ At Edirne, Bulgarian-after-Bulgarian visited the Russian consular office with petitions against the Ottoman authorities. At Belgrade, the Russians sought to control the ruling Obrenović family: Prince Miloš had led the revolt against the Ottomans in 1815. Russia maintained its influence in Serbia through the president of the senate, an Orthodox bishop, and through other Serbians rather than through its official consular agent.⁶² St. Petersburg pursued its Serbian policy through the bishop, who sent emissaries into the districts to put the idea of a—potentially pan-Slavic—national assembly "into the heads of the peasantry."⁶³ Finally, at Iași in Moldavia, Russian agents made promises to the newly elected prince of the united principalities, Alexandru Cuza. By June 1860, the British consul-general at Bucharest, John Green, believed that Cuza was a "Russian tool if not a Russian agent." Britain's consuls in the principalities were to disprove the necessity for Russian intervention.⁶⁴ The Russian consul-general at Bucharest spoke of a Russian occupation as if it were "a thing on the point of taking place."⁶⁵ Green established an excellent working relationship with his counterpart at Iași, Henry Adrian Churchill. Green and Churchill corresponded regularly, sharing their problems and suggesting solutions. In May 1862, Green wrote to Churchill, "we must try & pull together."⁶⁶ There was, as a result, a united British presence in the provinces—two men representing one policy—that worked to defeat Russian projects.

When Cuza's visit to Constantinople for the investiture proved to be a success, the Russians in Bucharest were "sulking."⁶⁷ Russia's aim was to reassemble the conference at Paris to discuss the future of the Danubian Principalities. France prevented this; Napoleon III did not want to offend Vienna on the Danube owing to his Italian policy after Austria's cession of Lombardy.⁶⁸ Cracks were appearing in the Franco-Russian friendship. Cowley was confident that Russia was "caught in her own trap." It had supported Cuza originally because Britain objected and France assented to a unified Moldavia and Wallachia; but Paris and London did not quarrel over it.⁶⁹ By 1862, Russian influence at Bucharest was "the mere ghost of what it was"; but the tsar still had numerous adherents amongst the upper classes who "fix[ed] their faith on the advice of the Russian agent."⁷⁰ And numerous Russians travelled around Moldavia under different pretexts. Nevertheless, European considerations prevented the tsar from placing his brother-in-law, the Duke of Leuchtenberg, on the "Romanian" throne. With Cuza overthrown in 1866, the provisional government acted upon Napoleon III's recommendation and named Karl of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen as prince.

Britain also worked successfully with Vienna and Constantinople in 1858 to defeat a Russian plan to make Montenegro independent.

On returning to office in June 1859 at the head of a Whig-Liberal-Peelite-Irish-Radical coalition, Palmerston told the Russian ambassador at London, Philipp Graf von Brunnow, that he had “no enmity to Russia.”⁷¹ When the Circassians asked for British military assistance, the government refused because it desired continued peaceful relations with the tsar. The Liberal foreign secretary, Russell, believed it “certain that Russia seems to expect the downfall of the Turkish Empire.”⁷² Bulwer assured him that Russia would rather keep the Ottoman Empire in a “smoldering state of discontent than provoke prematurely the flame of revolution.”⁷³ Sir Charles Wood, the new secretary of state for India, advised Palmerston, “We cannot object to what the Russians are doing on the Volga—they are a long way off [from India] & close to their own territory in these operations.” He did not consider Russia a threat to Herat.⁷⁴ The tsar’s forces *could* approach the strategically significant town from the southeast corner of the Caspian Sea; but British India’s safety was “the enormous distance.” Wood advised Palmerston to stay on good terms with the Russians and the Afghans.⁷⁵

Evidence suggested that Russia preferred discontent to revolution in the Balkans. Now returned as under-secretary at the Foreign Office, Wodehouse could “not think it possible that Russia with her discontented serfs and dilapidated finances can risk an aggressive war, but bullying the Turk is a policy sure to be popular in Russia, and the Emperor ... may wish to divert attention away from home quarters.”⁷⁶ With intimidation in mind, its troops continued to march in small detachments along the Bessarabia frontier.⁷⁷ And St Petersburg focused its attention on the sultan’s Bulgarian subjects—publishing anti-Ottoman/anti-Muslim pamphlets at Odessa and distributing them in the neighbourhoods around Tulcea. Russian emissaries were also working in Niš—persuading the sultan’s Bulgarian subjects to emigrate to Russia where there were excellent Bulgarian schools.⁷⁸

The new consul-general at Odessa, E.C. Grenville-Murray, discovered that Russian agents in “Romania” and elsewhere were working without authority from central government in St. Petersburg, “Every man sets up for himself and tries to make a separate reputation.” Grenville-Murray doubted that the court had any “desire to molest any foreign power”; the “tribe of pigmy agitators” in the Ottoman frontier lands that caused mischief.⁷⁹ The British consul at Galați in Moldavia worked to ease London’s fears—there were no reports of the Russian army hiring wagons and securing means of transport, things necessary for a full-scale military campaign.⁸⁰ Yet, Greek priests continued to tour Rumelia, distributing as presents ecclesiastical robes and books printed in the Slavonic dialect.

Grenville-Murray was incorrect in one way; in spring 1860, Russia pushed for a European investigation into the condition of the sultan’s Christian

subjects. The aim was to embarrass the Porte, cause division between Britain and France, and exacerbate existing tensions in the Balkans. The British government pointed out the emigration going on from Russia, the poor condition of the Russian peasantry, and the corruption in the administration: “it is doubtful whether the Russian Govt. is a govt. which can claim a right to sit in judgement as a critic of other states.”⁸¹ Russian diplomats in Berlin and Paris, however, worked successfully to convince Frederick William IV and Napoleon III to support the idea of an investigation.

Grenville-Murray soon discovered the source of the agitation. The Russian Empress, Maria Alexandrovna, had taken an active part in church affairs. A confirmed *devotée*, she brought “overwhelming pressure to bear” on Alexander Mikhailovich Gorchakov, Nesselrode’s successor at the Foreign Ministry.⁸² The empress worked with Countess Antionette Blondoff, sister of the councillor of the Russian Embassy in London and one of Gorchakov’s mistresses, to force the government to “take up the question of the Turkish Christians.” At St. Petersburg, the new representative, Sir John Crampton, a Conservative appointment, confirmed that a religious movement had taken rise at court—a deeply mystical belief in the spiritual unity of all Slav peoples—and was spreading throughout the provinces. Alexander II was prone to bouts of extreme melancholy and Gorchakov’s health was poor. The well-whispered rumour at court was that the foreign minister was so anxious about his own salvation that he was in the pocket of the Greek priesthood. Blondoff and the empress were head of an official subscription opened for the improvement of—the already very wealthy—Orthodox churches. Expectations were that every Russian landowner would contribute twelve-and-one-half roubles a year. Grenville-Murray could not help but joke: “A cynic might smile and a bishop might sigh to remember that Her Imperial Majesty was once a German Protestant!”⁸³

In the nineteenth century, Russian foreign policy focused on the tsar, and more particularly, where he was and to whom he listened. When he was in St. Petersburg and listening to highly westernised advisors such as Gorchakov, he was willing to make only modest gains to play the arbiter of Europe, just as Alexander I had done at Vienna in 1815. London’s problem was that its insight came from these Petersburg men—western Russians who wanted to show Europe that they were peacemakers, not pan-Slavic, pan-Orthodox, Asiatic barbarians. The Foreign Office’s direct link to Russia was Brunnow in the Embassy at London; his direct link to St. Petersburg was Gorchakov. In 1860, this channel was unreliable. Russell and Palmerston relied more upon the Crampton-Bulmer-Grenville-Murray network for information. “I do not think Russia is wise, rich or strong,” Grenville-Murray wrote to Bulwer, “but I fear that she is rash and fanatic. The reins of government are in very dangerous hands.”⁸⁴

Indeed, by July 1860, 80,000 Russian troops were concentrated at Odessa. There were five regiments on the Moldavian frontier. The tsar and the Grand Duke Konstantin reviewed the troops at Tiraspol, a town on the Dniester. Workers built military hospitals at Sebastopol, deepened the harbour at Odessa, and built new ships. Bulwer also learnt that after the Treaty of Paris, the Russian government had ordered 500 cannon from an arms company in Sweden, which delivered the weapons in Swedish vessels to various ports along the Black Sea.

One of the major challenges that British diplomats faced here was obtaining objective evidence. Geography and communication—language-barriers—made the task harder. One day, Charles Cunningham at Galați would confirm Russian troops entering Bessarabia; the next, Green at Bucharest would deny it. And Gladstonian retrenchment at the Treasury meant that there was no longer a British consular agent at Vidin, an important port town on the southern bank of the Danube in Bulgaria, the “headquarters of [Russian] propaganda.”⁸⁵ Britain was deaf and blind on the Bulgarian coast. Bulwer “always thought the accounts of Russian movements exaggerated,” although he admitted to Wodehouse the necessity of reporting them. The view in the Foreign Office was that Russian agents created and spread stories of troop build-ups and movement in order to confuse, intimidate, and embarrass.⁸⁶

Nevertheless, Britain’s recommendation that French troops enter Ottoman Syria in 1860 to restore order following a massacre of Christians made probable a Russian demand to enter the Ottoman Balkans on the same pretext. Palmerston and Russell were determined not to allow Gorchakov to quote the French example.⁸⁷ When Bulwer reported that Orthodox Armenians had provoked a conflict with *bashi-bazouks*—irregular Ottoman soldiers—it seemed certain that Russia “plan[ned] to accompany European intervention in Syria with Russian intervention” in Rumelia.⁸⁸ This course would have been the doomsday scenario for British foreign policy. “We have been with Russia against France [1840],” Russell noted; “& with France against Russia [1854], but we have never had to oppose both.”⁸⁹ “The ball,” he told Cowley, “is with the Russians.”⁹⁰

Russia may have been “working heartily with France” in Western Europe, but its “embarrassments and comparative powerlessness” and the “absorbing preoccupations of Italian politics” left the “Turk free once more to save himself.”⁹¹ Napoleon III would not risk a major *contretemps* with Britain by supporting Russian intervention in the Balkans; and British consular agents worked to provide the Foreign Office with evidence to use against Russia’s contention that Ottoman dominions maltreated Christians. For example, the Smyrna consul’s, Charles Blunt’s, Russian colleague at Plovdiv in southern Bulgaria even provided him with a list of churches that had been built to prove that the Ottoman authorities treated the Christians well.⁹² This highlighted the disunity in Russian diplomacy.

By 1861, Russia's major pre-occupation was not foreign policy, but the emancipation of the serfs and the condition of its finances. The new ambassador to St. Petersburg, Charles Napier—Crampton moved on to Madrid—informed Russell that the country was “on the verge of a social revolution of the deepest import.” Indeed, emancipation comprised an alteration of the whole frame of Russian society and governance—army, revenue, laws, and hierarchy all drawn “into the vortex of reformation.” Napier assured London that the “external action of Russia is even more paralysed.”⁹³ Its economy continued to sink—the value of paper money fell to its lowest level. Russell believed that the tsar's finances were “even in a worst state than the Turkish.”⁹⁴ In southern Russia, the corn trade was all-but-dead owing to the lack of roads, and large-scale buying-and-selling had ceased because there was no credit available.⁹⁵ The authorities subdued the troubles that accompanied emancipation with “musket balls and floggers.”⁹⁶ They found it more difficult to contain the anger of the landowners, whose income had halved; they could not afford to buy the steam machinery necessary to replace the serfs.

In April 1861, Brunnow expressed to Russell St Petersburg's desire to cooperate with London in maintaining the Ottoman Empire. Gorchakov made the same noises to Napier. It seemed certain that the pan-Slavists at court had lost some influence over the tsar and foreign minister. British consular officers began to make light of their Russian colleagues' “terrible stories of [Ottoman] intentions to massacre, of insurrection, murders, etc., etc.”⁹⁷

Napier felt confident enough to inform Russell, “The Russians do not intend any active mischief to Turkey.” He suggested that Britain “go along with them, aiding them in good [to help the sultan's Christian subjects] and preventing them in evil.”⁹⁸ It was widely accepted that Gorchakov would “not break with France”—the dominant foreign policy aim of the Russian Cabinet—but Cowley was sure that Napoleon III had “no wish for any understanding with Russia in Eastern affairs.”⁹⁹ Paris was disinclined to allow the Tsar to aggrandise himself in the East. After assessing the intelligence before him—and assured that French troops would soon leave Syria having helped Fuad Pasha restore order—Russell concluded, “Russia is out of the field for some years, and France will not act alone in a manner we disapprove.”¹⁰⁰ By the end of July 1861, it was clear even at the British Embassy in St. Petersburg that “the intimacy” between Russia and France had “considerably cooled.” Gorchakov was very quiet, passive, and openly friendly to Napier.¹⁰¹ Upon learning about the inability to induce Russian peasants to work on any terms and that disturbances had broken out in Poland, Russell told Palmerston that Russia posed no significant threat to British interests.¹⁰²

The year 1861 marked a turning point, therefore, in British diplomacy's concerns about Russia. Russell and Palmerston no longer feared the spectre of a Franco-Russian combination in the East. Alexander II's scheme to undermine the Ottoman government and split the Anglo-French wartime alliance

had failed.¹⁰³ Russell now “like[d] Gortchakoff very well & wish[ed] him to remain minister.” The Russian foreign minister had “found that France does not very much prize the Russian alliance; perhaps he might find the British one safer.”¹⁰⁴ France would always support Russia in a secondary question; but over major issues, it would work with Britain. France was “either Catholic or Revolutionary” in its foreign policy, neither of which suited Russia. The tsar was “at heart a German Legitimist.”¹⁰⁵

It seemed that Russia was reaping its deserved reward: Bulgarian *émigrés* in southern Russia died from want, starvation, fever, and cholera; Poles in Kiev rioted; the peasantry and students agitated; and re-enforcements were required to put down a revolt in Warsaw. Ambassadors and politicians joked about placing bets on the tsar offering a constitution within two years. Russell warned Gorchakov through Napier to “leave the Turk alone, & not adopt in Turkey the principle of revolution & intervention which Russia discourages everywhere else.”¹⁰⁶ The foreign secretary asked his opposite number at St. Petersburg to rein-in the insurgents in Herzegovina, who relied upon Russian aid, and take control of the rogue Russian agents instigating rebellion on the ground in the Balkans supposedly *sans* instructions.¹⁰⁷

The problem, as Napier explained, was that pan-Slavists still dominated the Russian Foreign Ministry, where anti-Ottoman feeling was prevalent. Count Nikolay Pavlovich Ignatyev, the former plenipotentiary to the court of Peking and now director of the Asiatic Department, had risen to prominence. He was “the most ardent and advanced” of the pan-Slav set.¹⁰⁸ This group wished to see the boundaries of their empire expand.¹⁰⁹ Napier predicted correctly that the tsar would soon send Ignatyev to Constantinople; he hated the Turks and was a professed “enemy of England.”¹¹⁰ At London, Russell worked to play down Napier’s fears: “Russia is hardly in a state to do much in the East.”¹¹¹ The ambassador toned down his concern accordingly: “I do not believe that any apprehension need be entertained of Russian designs in the East at present. Prince Gotchakoff thinks it decent to repeat the old predilections and sometimes the old menaces but he is quite powerless to do any mischief.” The pan-Slavists and Orthodox fanatics in the Russian Foreign Ministry would continue their “sterile prophecies” of Ottoman ruin, but nothing would come of them.¹¹² From Belgrade, on his way to Iași, the consul-general, Robert Dalyell, had argued that “a bad pig year in Servia” and the “low price of pigs had quite has much to do with the wish for the national [Serbian] assembly as Panslavism.”¹¹³

Nevertheless, it soon looked like Russell and Napier had tempted fate. In June 1862, the Ottoman citadel at Belgrade fired upon the Christian population outside the city walls. The Belgrade bombardment raised the “aims and hopes” of the pan-Slavists in Russia.¹¹⁴ They pushed for the cession of the Ottoman fortresses in Serbia and counted on Italian, French, and Prussian support—the tsar had recently recognised the Kingdom of Italy. Nonetheless,

calmness and an appreciation of the diplomatic realities prevailed. Russia would not consent to Austrian forces entering Belgrade to restore order—something proposed and considered—and if Britain could get France on side, Italy, Prussia, and Russia would follow. For pan-Slav Russian diplomats like Ignayev, it was inevitable that one day Russia would fight Austria for predominance in the Balkans—to be the leader of Slavdom. Russell instructed Napier to warn Gorchakov not to attempt to overthrow the Treaty of Paris.¹¹⁵ He told Cowley to be firm with the French at Paris: “we shall support the Turk in resisting the Russian pretensions to take Belgrade out of his hands.”¹¹⁶

British firmness worked; on 21 July 1862, delay of the Constantinople conference on Serbia occurred because the Russian ambassador did not have any instructions. Russell provided Bulwer with the line to take at the conference: “The Russian ambassador has no more right to ask for the evacuation of the Fortress in Servia than we have to ask for the evacuation of the citadel at Warsaw.”¹¹⁷ By 29 August 1862, with the French and the Russians having “seemingly drawn in their noses,”¹¹⁸ the Russian ambassador at Constantinople accepted Bulwer’s plan. The Russian consul-general at Belgrade even lost his temper with the Serbian prince for not obeying the conference’s decision.¹¹⁹

Russia was “willing to wound [the Ottomans],” but was “afraid to strike.”¹²⁰ Britain had “clip[ped] the wings of that arrogant fellow, Gortchakoff.”¹²¹ Indeed, by early 1863, the Russian foreign minister was out of favour at court, in a sulk. Having defeated Russia over Serbia, Russell judged that the tsar would “not repeat for some years such violent acts of aggression ... as those which brought about the Crimean War.”¹²² As the foreign secretary wrote these words, the Russian army in Poland sank to “burning, shooting & hanging” to subdue the revolt.¹²³

The moderation in Russian policy towards the Ottomans soon appeared in the Balkans. At Ruse, a Bulgarian city on the Danube, the Christian population began to “look up to England,” no longer relying on the Russian agent.¹²⁴ At Belgrade, the Russian consul-general began working with his British colleague, J.A. Longworth, an active and painstaking official not prone to exaggeration. The tsar’s government pursued a lighter policy in the Balkans and raised the possibility of reforms and liberal measures at home to offset the anger felt by the Western Powers over its barbarity in Poland. There was no way a tsar who “live[d] in a house so completely made of glass” could “be always throwing stones at the Turkish mosque.”¹²⁵

Napier urged Alexander to restrain his generals in Poland; they confiscated the property of Polish noblemen and shot every Polish officer they could find.¹²⁶ France joined Britain in threatening war if the atrocities in Poland did not cease. Even autocratic Austria sided with the liberal West to

“intimidate Russia.”¹²⁷ Palmerston, however, would not allow a European congress to discuss the affairs of Poland and the Danubian Principalities, as well as Italy and Denmark—something for which Gorchakov pushed. The only result of such a meeting would be a formal recording of “fundamental Differences of Interests and opinions.” If Russia would not concede to Europe about Poland, the Western Powers would have no choice but to submit to humiliation or revert to war.¹²⁸ France’s decision to support the Poles in 1863 seemingly destroyed the Franco–Russian alliance for good. The tsar and his ministers were “so deeply disgusted with the conduct of France ... and so much startled and alarmed by the high pretensions and aspirations of Napoleon that they may really hold aloof from him in the future.”¹²⁹

This no doubt accounted for Russell’s decision not to react angrily when reports reached him of increased Russian naval activity in the Black Sea. Grenville-Murray was in little doubt that “Russia has broken the terms of the Treaty of Paris.”¹³⁰ Owing to routine Russian inspections of the contents of ordinary mail, Grenville-Murray now sent his military reports to the Foreign Office—via Constantinople—by a safe hand.¹³¹ By December 1863, there were two steam yachts, nine corvettes, 13 schooners, nine paddle steamers, and 10 sailing vessels in the Black Sea. Concerned about Prussia’s increasing power and its ability to close the Baltic, the British government wanted Russian support.¹³² As the latest British ambassador at St. Petersburg warned, “[Otto von Bismarck] is more Russian than France.”¹³³ During the Polish rebellion, Berlin had supported Russia, even agreeing to a military convention. In turn, Russia supported Bismarck’s wars against Denmark and then Austria. Britain could not use Prussia to offset Russia in the East.

By 1864, the Foreign Office did “not see any present prospect of difficulties with Russia.”¹³⁴ The tsar and his advisers would “never lose sight of the policy of the Empress Catherine, the Emp[eror] Alexander, & the Emp[eror] Nicholas”; but for the moment its ambitions were severely limited.¹³⁵ Its shattered finances prevented any fresh fight.¹³⁶ Nevertheless, British policymakers did not delude themselves; once Russia had completed railways to the Crimea and once its economy began to improve, it would “probably repeat the experiment of the Emp[eror] Nicholas and take possession of Moldo-Wallachia with a strong hand.” The frontier was weak and “an Anglo–French army of 150,000 men is not always forthcoming to defend it.”¹³⁷ Indeed, relations between London and Paris were still very cool.

The years 1856 to 1865 showed that any disintegration of the balance of power in Europe offered Russia an opportunity to break free of the chains of the Crimean settlement. The Austro–Prussian occupation of Schleswig and Holstein in 1864 demonstrated clearly the inability of the other European Powers to intervene to protect the status quo. By May 1865, Bismarck threatened to annex both Duchies and reorganise the German Confederation. Barely a year later, Prussia had defeated Austria in war, had

absorbed Schleswig-Holstein, Hesse-Cassel, Hanover, Nassau, and Frankfurt, and united the northern German states under Berlin's leadership. In the following three years, Bismarck manoeuvred an isolated France into war. These events in Central Europe called into question Britain's already tense relationship with Napoleon III's government and rocked the "Eastern Question" into major significance again.

In November 1870—only 14 years after Clarendon had agreed the terms of the Treaty of Paris—the process of German unification provided Russia with the opportunity to abrogate the Black Sea clauses, which it took. The Palmerstonian diplomats of 1856–1865, and even the Conservative ministers who held office in these years, under-estimated the quickness with which the diplomatic scene could change. By 1875, a unified Bismarckian Germany dominated Europe, a Republican France was in the process of recovering from defeat in a major war, Russia was part of a loose friendship with Austria and Germany, and Britain was diplomatically isolated. Its leaders had failed to assert British influence in settling the future of the Elbe duchies; they had been unable to affect in any way the march of Prussia. In 1871, a European conference in London headed by the anti-Ottoman Gladstone, now prime minister, rubber-stamped the re-militarisation of the Black Sea. In the 1870s, the "Great Game" and the "Eastern Question" coincided in ways that created major headaches for British policy-makers.

Napoleon III's designs made defence of the Crimean settlement difficult from the start. Defeat in the Crimean War made Russia a revisionist Power for the first time since 1815. The chances of playing one off against the other, as Britain had done in the 1840s and 1850s, were very low. Nevertheless, using careful diplomacy based upon intelligence gathered by agents on the ground, both Conservative and Whig policy-makers in London were able to protect British interests and keep the "Eastern Question" relatively dormant. Along with ambassadors, ministers-plenipotentiary, and consular officials, they assessed the scene, contained Russia, and worked successfully against the Franco–Russian combination in the East without pushing relations to dangerous extremes. Britain was firm with Russia when the European situation and Russian domestic politics allowed for it.

When Palmerston died in October 1865, a number of unresolved problems complicated Anglo–Russian relations and placed the 1856 settlement under stress. British politicians and diplomats knew that one day the tsar would renew Russia's expansionist drive. Yet the evolving situation between 1856 and 1865 and, indeed, in the years afterwards was highly complex. The absence of reference to Prussia in correspondence relating to Russia is interesting to the historian with hindsight. By 1865, the individuals that made-up the British diplomatic network that dealt with Russia believed that there was little chance of events connected to Bonapartist France presenting the tsar with the opportunity to destroy the treaty that contained

him. Little did they realise that it was Prussia and the designs of Bismarck that would allow for the end of the Crimean system.

Notes

- 1 See Jonathan Parry, *The Politics of Patriotism: English Liberalism, National Identity and Europe 1830–1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
2. T. G. Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind: The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
3. For instance, G. R. Berridge, “Postgraduate research required on contemporary diplomacy” (n.d.), <https://grberridge.diplomacy.edu/thesis-topic/>.
4. D. C. M. Platt, *The Cinderella Service: British Consuls Since 1825* (Harlow: Gazelle Book Services Ltd, 1971).
5. Cf. W. E. Mosse, *The Rise and Fall of the Crimean System 1855–71* (London; New York: Macmillan & Co. Ltd, 1963); M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774–1923* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1966).
6. C. R. Pennell, “The Social History of British Diplomacy in North Africa and How it Affected Diplomatic Policy,” in Markus Mösslang and Torsten Riotte, eds., *The Diplomat’s World: A Cultural History of Diplomacy, 1815–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 347–79; Raymond Jones, *The Nineteenth Century Foreign Office: An Administrative History* (London: Littlehampton Book Services Ltd, 1971); W. N. Medlicott, “Vice Consul Dupuis’s ‘Missing’ Dispatch of June 23 1876,” *Journal of Modern History*, 4/1 (1932): 38–48; Charles Middleton, *The Administration of British Foreign Policy, 1782–1846* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1977); G. R. Berridge, “Nation, Class and Diplomacy: The Diminishing of the Dragomanate of the British Embassy in Constantinople, 1810–1914,” in Mösslang and Riotte, *Diplomat’s World*, 407–31; Nassif Mallouf, ed., *Gadaleta Affair, Adalia 1859, or Correspondence Regarding Complaints Against Her Majesty’s Vice-Consul in That Post* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2002); T. G. Otte, “A Case of Unceasing Remonstrance: British Diplomacy and the Suppression of the Slave Trade in the East, 1852–1898,” in K. A. Hamilton and P. Selmon, eds., *Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807–1975* (Brighton, Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2009); John Dickie, *The British Consul: Heir to a Great Tradition* (London: C. Hurst & Co, 2008).
7. Evgeny Sergeev, *The Great Game, 1856–1907: Russo-British Relations in Central and East Asia* (Washington, DC; Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2013).
8. See J. H. Gleason, *The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain* (Cambridge, MA: Octagon Books, 1950).
9. Stratford to Clarendon [copy], 25 February 1856, Stratford Canning [Stratford Canning Papers, The National Archives, Kew] FO 352/44/1.
10. Derby, 5 May 1856, House of Lords, *Hansard*, Third Series, CXLI, 2011.
11. Cornwall Lewis to Walker Head, 13 April 1856, in Reverend Sir Gilbert Frankland Lewis, ed., *Letters of the Rt Hon. Sir George Cornwall Lewis, Bart* (London: Longmans, 1870), 310–11.
12. David Steele. “Henry Richard Charles Wellesley, First Earl Cowley,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [ODNB], <http://www.oxforddnb.com>. See also, Otte, *Foreign Office Mind*, 25–26.
13. See Henry Drummond Wolff, *Rambling Recollections*, Volume I (London: Mcmillan & Co, 1908), 233.

14. See Eugenio F. Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment, Reform: Popular Liberalism in the Age of Gladstone, 1860–1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Geoffrey Hicks, *Peace, War and Party Politics: The Conservatives and Europe, 1846–1859* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); David F. Krein, *The Last Palmerston Government: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics and the Genesis of “Splendid Isolation”* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1978).
15. Quotation from E.D. Steele, *Palmerston and Liberalism, 1855–1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 67.
16. Clarendon to Palmerston, 15 September 1856, Palmerston [Viscount Palmerston Papers, Southampton University, Southampton] GC/CL/896/1.
17. Russell, 5 May 1856, House of Commons, *Hansard*, CXXI, 2093.
18. Hammond to Wodehouse, 8 September 1856, Kimberley [First Earl Kimberley Papers, British Library, London] Add MSS 46694/155.
19. Clarendon to Palmerston, 15 September 1856, Palmerston CG/CL/929.
20. Eyre Evans Crowe to Bulwer, 10 June 1858, BUL [First Baron Bulwer Papers, Norfolk County Record Office, Norwich] 1/204/18.
21. Cowley to Bulwer, 30 July 1858, BUL 1/202/7.
22. John Powell, “John Wodehouse, First Earl of Kimberley,” *ODNB*.
23. Lady Florence Wodehouse to Anne Wodehouse, 6 February 1858, KIM [First Earl Kimberley Papers, Norfolk County Record Office, Norwich] 7/3.
24. Wodehouse to Currie, 21 February 1857, KIM 14/5/20.
25. Wodehouse to Currie, 3 January 1857, *Ibid*.
26. *Ibid*.
27. See Edward Ingram, *The Beginning of the Great Game in Asia, 1828–1834* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).
28. For more on this conflict, see J.F. Standish, “The Persian War of 1856–1857,” *Middle East Studies*, 3 (1966): 18–45; M. Voldavsky, “Russian Diplomacy during the Anglo–Persian Conflict of 1855–1857,” *Central Asia Survey*, 6/2 (1987): 43–54.
29. Wodehouse to Currie, 3 January 1857, KIM 14/5/20.
30. Murray to Bulwer, 3 November 1858, BUL 1/268/2. In 1856, Murray was involved in a scandal, accused of having improper relations with the wife of a man he wished to appoint as a secretary. The wife’s sister was one of the Shah’s wives. When the Persians arrested the woman, Murray demanded her release. When this did not happen, he broke off relations with the Persian government.
31. Wodehouse to Currie, 3 January 1857, KIM 14/5/20.
32. *Ibid*.
33. *Ibid*.
34. Douglas M. Peers, “‘He Has a Jolly Way of Looking at Disasters’: Palmerston and India in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” in *Palmerston Studies*, II, David Brown and Miles Taylor, eds. (Hartley Institute, University of Southampton, 2007), 119–22.
35. Wodehouse to Currie, 8 August 1857, KIM 14/5/20.
36. Murray to Bulwer, 3 November 1858, BUL 1/268/2.
37. Wodehouse to Currie, 21 February 1857, KIM 14/5/20.
38. Cowley to Bulwer, 15 November 1856, BUL 1/137/10b.
39. Wodehouse to Currie, 7 March 1857, KIM 14/5/15.
40. See K. Theodore Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation, 1845–1886* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 206.
41. Derby, 1 March 1858, House of Lords, *Hansard*, CXLIX, col. 28.

42. Derby to Malmesbury, 17 January 1859, cited in Geoffrey Hicks, John Charmley, and Bendor Grosvenor, eds., *Documents on Conservative Foreign Policy, 1852–1878* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 143.
43. Derby, 1 March 1858, House of Lords, *Hansard*, CXLIX, col. 29.
44. Malmesbury to Derby, 23 August 1858, 920 DER [Fifteenth Earl of Derby Papers, Liverpool Record Office, Liverpool] (14) 144/2.
45. Hammond to Derby, 28 May 1858, *Ibid.*
46. Malmesbury to Derby, 21 February 1859, *Ibid.*
47. Matthew to Bulwer, “Report on Russia,” 20 January 1858, BUL 1/262/6.
48. *Ibid.*
49. Bulwer to Moore, 28 August 1858, BUL 1/266/13a.
50. Bulwer to Green, January 1862, BUL 1/235/6a.
51. Matthew to Bulwer, “Report on Russia,” 20 January 1858, BUL 1/262/6.
52. Bulwer to Malmesbury, 3 May 1859, FO [Foreign Office Archives, The National Archives, Kew] 78/1431.
53. Derby to Malmesbury, 30 December 1858, Malmesbury [Third Earl of Malmesbury Papers, Hampshire Record Office, Winchester] 9M 73/20/46.
54. Bulwer to Malmesbury, 8 January 1859, FO 78/1427; and 13 April 1858, FO 78/1430.
55. Derby to Malmesbury 4 January 1859, Malmesbury 9M 73/20/47.
56. Bulwer to Malmesbury, 1 May 1859, FO 78/1431.
57. Bulwer to Malmesbury, 3 May 1859, *Ibid.*
58. Derby to Malmesbury, 26 April 1859, Malmesbury 9M 73/20/51.
59. Malmesbury to Derby, 28 April 1859, 920 DER (14) 144/2.
60. See Barbara Jelavich, *Russia’s Balkan Entanglements, 1806–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Alex Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture: Literacy and the Development of National Identity* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006).
61. Henry Churchill to Bulwer, 25 July 1858, BUL 1.
62. Dalyell to Bulwer, 24 September 1858, BUL 1/208/31.
63. Dalyell to Bulwer, 7 October 1858, BUL 1/208/37a.
64. Green to Russell, 3 June 1860, Russell papers [First Earl Russell Papers, The National Archives, Kew] PRO 30/22/94.
65. Green to Bulwer, 18 August 1860, BUL 1/231/32.
66. Green to Bulwer, 27 May 1862, BUL 1/232/17.
67. Green to Bulwer, 8 September 1860, BUL 1/231/33.
68. Cowley to Russell, 4 July 1861 [copy], BUL 1/162/18.
69. Cowley to Bulwer, 5 July 1861, BUL 1/202/29.
70. Green to Bulwer, 25 March 1862, BUL 1/232/13.
71. Palmerston to Russell, 5 July 1859, Russell PRO 30/22/18.
72. Russell to Palmerston, 10 December 1859, Palmerston GC/RU/563.
73. Bulwer to Russell, 21 February 1860, FO 78/1504.
74. Wood to Palmerston, 3 October 1859, Palmerston GC/WO/135.
75. *Idem.*
76. Wodehouse to Bulwer, 31 May 1860, BUL 1/324/4.
77. Fiott-Barker to Bulwer, 1 March 1860, BUL 1/182/140.
78. Longworth to Bulwer, 24 May 1860, BUL 1/254/11.
79. Murray to Bulwer, 28 April 1860, BUL 1/269/12. See G. R. Berridge, “A Diplomatic Whistle-blower in the Victorian Era: The Life and Writings of E.C. Grenville-Murray” (2015), <https://grberridge.diplomacy.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/G-M.pdf>.
80. Cunningham to Bulwer, 7 June 1860, BUL 1/206/39.

81. Bulwer to Russell, 16 May 1860, FO 78/1506.
82. Murray to Bulwer, 18 May 1860, BUL 1/269/14.
83. Murray to Bulwer, 4 June 1860, BUL 1/269/17. She had been born Marie of Hesse.
84. Murray to Bulwer, 9 June 1860, BUL 1/269/18.
85. Longworth to Bulwer, 20 October 1860, FO 78/1508.
86. Bulwer to Wodehouse, 5 July 1860 [copy], BUL 1/324/25.
87. See Russell to Palmerston, 20 July 1860, Palmerston GC/RU/613/1.
88. Bulwer to Russell, 23 July 1860, FO 78/1508.
89. Russell to Palmerston, 27 July 1860, Palmerston GC/RU/614.
90. Russell to Cowley, 31 July 1860, Russell PRO 30/22/104.
91. Wodehouse to Bulwer, 27 February 1861, BUL 1/324/12; and 23 December 1860, BUL 1/324/11.
92. Blunt to Bulwer, 27 February 1861 [copy], enclosed in Bulwer to Russell, 8 March 1861, FO 78/1603.
93. Napier to Russell, 14 March 1861, Russell PRO 30/22/83.
94. Russell to Bulwer, 28 March 1861, BUL 1/293/13.
95. Murray to Bulwer, 13 July 1861, BUL 1/269/28.
96. Murray to Bulwer, 20 July 1861, BUL 1/269/29.
97. Holmes to Bulwer, 7 May 1861, BUL 1/242/4.
98. Napier to Russell, 8 May 1861, PRO 30/22/83.
99. Bulwer to Russell, 12 June 1861, BUL 1/295/28; Cowley to Bulwer, 5 July 1861, BUL 1/202/29.
100. Russell to Bulwer, 6 July 1861, BUL 1/293/17.
101. Napier to Russell, 31 July 1861, Russell PRO 30/22/83.
102. Russell to Palmerston, 5 September 1861, Palmerston GC/RU/668.
103. See Russell to Napier, 10 January 1862 [copy], Russell PRO 30/22/114.
104. Russell to Napier, 7 February 1862 [copy], Ibid.
105. Napier to Russell, 19 January 1863, Russell PRO 30/22/84.
106. Russell to Napier, 7 February 1862 [copy], Russell PRO 30/22/114.
107. Russell to Napier, 7 March 1862 [copy], Ibid.
108. Napier to Russell, 17 May 1862, Russell PRO 30/22/83.
109. See John Charmley, *Splendid Isolation? Britain and the Balance of Power 1874–1914* (London: Faber and Faber, 1999), 33.
110. Napier to Bulwer, 17 May 1862, BUL 1/272/13.
111. Russell to Napier, 28 May 1862 [copy], Russell PRO 30/22/114.
112. Napier to Russell, 4 June 1862, Russell PRO 30/22/83.
113. Dalyell to Bulwer, 8 September 1858, BUL 1/208/23.
114. Napier to Russell, 19 June 1862, Russell PRO 30/22/83.
115. Russell to Napier, 25 June 1862 [copy], Russell PRO 30/22/114.
116. Russell to Cowley, 7 July 1862 [copy], Russell PRO 30/22/105.
117. Russell to Bulwer, 13 August 1862, FO 78/1626.
118. Cowley to Bulwer, 29 August 1862, BUL 1/202/51.
119. Longworth to Bulwer, 16 February 1863, BUL 1/254/28.
120. Russell to Palmerston, 26 September 1862, Palmerston GC/RU/727/2.
121. Bulwer to Russell, 9 October 1862 [copy], BUL 1/296/6.
122. Russell to Bulwer, 12 February 1863, FO 78/1728.
123. Russell to Napier, 2 March 1863 [copy], Russell PRO 30/22/114.
124. Mayers to Bulwer, 16 February 1863, BUL 1/262/16.
125. Russell to Napier, 1 June 1863 [copy], Russell PRO 30/22/114.
126. Russell to Napier, 15 July 1863 [copy], Ibid.

127. See Napier to Russell, 7 August 1863, Russell PRO 30/22/84.
128. Palmerston to Russell, 18 November 1863, Russell PRO 30/22/22.
129. Napier to Russell, 21 November 1863, Russell PRO 30/22/84.
130. Murray to Bulwer, 28 November 1863, BUL 1/270/17.
131. See Berridge, *Diplomatic Whistle-blower*, 62.
132. See Russell to Napier, 30 March 1864 [copy], PRO 30/22/114.
133. Buchanan to Russell, 13 January 1865, Russell PRO 30/22/84.
134. Layard to Bulwer, 8 August 1864, BUL 1/250/36.
135. Russell to Bulwer, 10 September 1864 [copy], Russell PRO 30/22/116.
136. Russell to Buchanan, 14 December 1864 [copy], Russell PRO 30/22/114.
137. Russell to Stuart, 15 December 1864 [copy], Russell PRO 30/22/116.

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