1877

Wednesday 3 January (London)

In the evening I presided in Grand Lodge and carried in a very triumphant way my proposal to establish in perpetuity two life boats in record of the Prince of Wales's return from India.[574] It was undoubtedly a successful speech, as it convinced a divided and rather reluctant body.

But I had bad news from India. Sir L. Mallet[575] came to me and gave me the details of the threatened scarcity in India. There is fault I think with the Foreign Office, and fault with the Government of India. I telegraphed to Lytton for more information – and I wrote to Lord Beaconsfield to ask for a very early Cabinet.[576] It is I fear a very serious case.

Thursday 4 January (London)

A very hard day's work.[577] This terrible Indian famine threatens to absorb all my time even if I had not the Colonial Office on my hands and plenty of other business. It looks very bad.

I spoke to Rowe[578] as to the contemplated mission to Dahomey and told him that if he went he must be successful, that his capture or death would not only be the loss of everything to himself but would jeopardise the whole policy on the West Coast. He understood all, and is so cool and courageous a fellow that I am ready to trust him: but I suspect Derby will be too timid to run any risk even though I offer to bear 5/6 of it.

[574]The Prince had landed at Plymouth on 11 May 1876.

[575]Sir Louis Mallet (1823–1890), Permanent Under-Secretary for India since 1874.

[576]Carnarvon to Disraeli, 3 January 1877: Hughenden Papers, 100/1, fo. 192.

[577]Carnarvon learnt of the 'extremely serious calamity which is impending in Bombay and Madras' on 3 January (Carnarvon to Sir George Hamilton, 6 January 1877: CP, TNA, PRO 30/6/15, fo. 52).

[578]Sir Samuel Rowe (1835–1888), Governor of Sierra Leone and the Gambia (1877–1881) and of the Gold Coast (1881–1884). He was an ambitious and energetic ex-army surgeon, who favoured acquiring territory for fiscal reasons.

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Wednesday 10 January (London)

Took the Chair at the Indian Council in the India Office. I found the Council disposed to be harmonious. I explained the position and had the Department despatch on the famine read, appointed a famine Committee and referred the Department to them appointing a fresh Council for tomorrow.[579] It is an unwieldly body to manage and as yet I have had no experience of it. Today however there was no difficulty. It is a curious episode in one's life to find oneself the really active Minister at the same time of two such departments as the Colonial and India Offices: but it remains to see how I can do it. It has added much to my work and must add.[580]

I met Disraeli in the street and walked for half an hour with him. He was apparently in an amiable mood and spoke well of Salisbury, but this (perhaps I am uncharitable) may have been said with the personal object of letting me know or repeat it. I do not set much on this.[581]

Saturday 13 January (Highclere)

Worse accounts again from India. On the public works of Bombay there are 300,000 persons and on the State of Madras the incredible number of 1,250,000!! This only reached me late this evening. I hope to be in London again on Monday and must take some further steps though I really hardly know what they should be.[582] I have written privately to Northbrook on the subject.[583]

[579]For an account of the Council's deliberations, see Carnarvon to Lytton, 11 January 1877: Lytton Papers, India Office, BL, MSS EUR/E 218/10, II, Letter 23.

[580]Describing his 'double burden' of the India and Colonial Offices, he told his sister, 'It is strange how heavy work seems always to gravitate towards me' (Carnarvon to Lady Gwendoline Herbert, 7 January 1877: CP, BL 61054, fo. 5).

[581]Carnarvon gave a full account of the meeting to Salisbury but did not repeat Disraeli's comments on him (Carnarvon to Salisbury, 10 January 1877: CP, TNA, PRO 30/6/10, fos 105–107).

[582]Carnarvon sent a despatch on 12 January to Lytton, raising questions concerning the purchase of grain by the government of Madras and the employment of labourers on public works by the government of Bombay (CP, TNA, PRO 30/6/3, fos 156–158; see also Carnarvon to Queen Victoria, 13 January 1877: Royal Archives, N33/32). Nevertheless, he had qualms about Derby's telegram of 12 January to Salisbury stating that 'no language is to be held that can pledge the Government to enforce these proposals at a later date' (Carnarvon to Disraeli, 14 January 1877: Hughenden Papers, dep. 100/1, fos 194–195). See P.L. Brumpton, *Security and Progress: Lord Salisbury at the India Office* (Westport, CT and London, 2004), pp. 82–84.

[583]Carnarvon to Northbrook (copy), 12 January 1877: CP, TNA, PRO 30/6/15, fos 75–76.

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I received late in the afternoon a telegram from Salisbury. It took me some time to decypher it and reply but I succeeded in doing both in time for the last train.[584]

Wednesday 17 January (Windsor Castle)

A very busy morning, almost entirely occupied with Indian work, a long conversation with Maine.[585] His is a singularly clear intelligence and not merely on abstract or legal subjects, but on high political matters [. . .].

After dinner I had a long conversation with the Queen. I told her as much as I could of the Indian famine but her thoughts were in Turkey[586] and not in India and so I soon gave this part of the subject up.[587] I found her very Turkish. She said she felt for the way in which they had been treated, the spirit that they had shown and the recollection that we had in former times fought for and with them. I reminded her of the Bulgarian horrors. She disbelieved many, thought others exaggerated and that the Bulgarians had been equally guilty. It was clear that she had moved in this respect considerably forward since my last conversation with her, and I thought I could trace distinctly Disraeli's influence. I said enough to show my own feeling but did not of course argue it further.[588] She seemed to be entirely satisfied with Salisbury but had heard that Lady S. had talked too freely and foolishly. She was angry with the Opposition, but admitted that Granville had been cautious and Hartington[589] had not behaved ill, but she did not agree

[584]Salisbury to Carnarvon (copy), 13 January 1877: CP, BL 60761, fo. 191.

[585]Sir Henry Maine (1822–1888), had been legal member of the Governor-General's Council in India (1862–1869), then first Professor of Jurisprudence, Oxford University (1869–1877). See W. Stokes (ed.), *Sir Henry Maine: a brief memoir of his life . . . with some of his Indian speeches* (London, 1892).

[586]On the Conference of European powers then in session in Turkey.

[587]See Queen Victoria's Journal, 17 January 1877: Royal Archives, Z/384.

[588]'The news from Constantinople looks very bad [. . .]. The only thing that can be done is to press the Turks strongly and to make them feel that they really have no support from us [. . .]. The Prince does not like my "ideas" on this subject and Derby does not answer when he disagrees with a letter' (Carnarvon to Northcote, 16 January 1877: Iddesleigh Papers, BL 50022, fo. 202).

[589]Spencer Compton Cavendish (1833–1908), Marquess of Hartington (1858), 8th Duke of Devonshire (1891). Lib. MP for North Lancashire (1857–1868), for Radnor (1869–1880), for North-east Lancashire (1880–1885), and for Rossendale (1885–1891), Chief Secretary for Ireland (1871–1874), Secretary of State for India (1880–1882), Lord President of the Council (1895–1903), President of the Board of Education (1900–1902).

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much when I included Forster[590] in this praise. She said he was not a man of the world and did not understand foreign affairs.

Thursday 18 January (London)

The best part again of my day has been spent on Indian affairs [. . .].

Later I called on Lady Derby and found her in. I had a long and very friendly talk on all subjects. Two or three things resulted:

1. It is quite clear that Derby is sore at my constant opposition (which as I explained is inevitable and is really more loyal than silent antagonism would be) in the Cabinet.[591]

2. We are in a state of tension. She expects the Cabinet to break up. Derby cannot bear opposition. Disraeli she thinks if now thwarted may take the Garter and retire and Derby will retire with him.

3. When Disraeli lately told us that the Russian Ambassador had intimated that his Government desired the withdrawal of Sir H. Elliot and on that statement I and others at once agreed that Elliot could not be withdrawn she said that *the statement was false*. She repeated this more than once.

Thursday 8 March (London)

I dined with Froude to meet Tennyson.[592] I naturally wished to know him and he was good enough to say that he wished to know me. On the whole I think we were mutually satisfied. His conversation has very little of the poet in it: or at least there is more of the "Northern Farmer" than the "Lady of Shalott".[593] He shows little sign too I should say of

[590]William Edward Forster (1818–1886), Lib. MP for Bradford (1861–1886), Vice-President of Committee of Council on Education (1868–1874), Chief Secretary for Ireland (1880–1882). After visiting eastern Europe (including Bulgaria and Turkey) in the autumn of 1876, Forster denounced Turkish atrocities but raised objections to British intervention. See T. Wemyss Reid, *Life of the Right Hon. W.E. Forster*, 2 vols (London, 1885), II, pp. 160–164.

[591]Carnarvon had urged Derby to accept General Ignatiev's proposals to offer Turkey reduced terms at the Conference of Great Powers (Carnarvon to Derby, 10 December and 14 December 1876: Derby Papers, DER (15), 17/2/a). Richard Millman has claimed that Carnarvon was being used as a spy in the Cabinet by Salisbury. The latter telegraphed Carnarvon on 13 January that he 'would need to control the Foreign Secretary for there to be any hope of Turkish acceptance' (R. Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question, 1875–1878* (Oxford, 1979), p. 227).

[592]Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1808–1892), Poet Laureate (1850), succeeding Wordsworth, 1st Baron Tennyson (1884).

[593]'Northern Farmer Old Style', humorous and dramatic poem in North Lincolnshire dialect published 1864. 'The Lady of Shalott' appeared in 1832.

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historical reading or knowledge which surprised me: but there were glimpses of his metaphysical studies in what he said, but generally he was straightforward and simple and fair and I liked what I saw of him in the two or three hours' talk. There was no one else as Froude had asked him alone. He began on the subject of Colonies and Colonial Government and said he heartily agreed in my administration of them.

Wednesday 14 March (London)

Usual day of work. I attended Lowe's Sustentation of Incumbents Fund [. . .].

A conversation later with Lady Derby as to D.'s manner, a delicate matter to discuss, and one impossible but for her perfect straight forwardness and the fact that she is so old a friend. I said of course nothing that possibly hurt her as regards D. but I also said that I thought that on the whole it was best not to say anything to him or to force any renewal of friendly relations on him: but I leave it all to time. I am not myself very sanguine.

Thursday 15 March (London)

Dined with Rosebery at the St. James's Club: and then was with him admitted as a member of the Society of Antiquaries, where I listened to a wondrously dull discussion on an old charter which had turned up at Dover and another old Bull of the reign of Henry VII.[594]

Just before going out to dinner I received in a circulation box a telegram from Lyons saying that Ignatieff[595] was coming to England immediately and was to go on Saturday to Hatfield. It is most singular and I can hardly believe it. Only a few days ago Salisbury agreed that it would be a great mistake if Ignatieff were to come to London and it is clear that his going to Hatfield would identify Salisbury with him and his Russian policy. It is altogether inexplicable, and I doubt if there is truth in it.[596] On returning home I found that Salisbury had

[594] *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*, 2nd series, 7 (1879), pp. 162–163.

[595] Gen. Nikolai Pavlovich Ignatiev (1832–1908), Russian diplomat. Ambassador at Peking (1860) and at Constantinople (1864–1878).

[596] On 1 March, the day that peace was declared between Turkey and Serbia, Russia decided to send Ignatiev on a mission to European capitals to co-ordinate the Great Powers' views on the Russian protocol, giving conditions as to the Porte for Russian disarmament (Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, p. 155).

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THE AWKWARD SQUAD

(*SEE BLUE BOOK*)

SERGEANT. "On your Eastern Question—Right-about-turn!" COMPANY OFFICER (*aside*). "Ah, they always *were* slow at their 'facings!'"

SERGEANT (to himself). "Must get 'em round somehow!"

Fig. 4 'The Awkward Squad', *Punch*, 24 February 1877, by Sir John Tenniel, depicting the differences within the Cabinet on the Eastern Question. The Sergeant represents Lord Derby and the Company Officer, Disraeli. Carnarvon is the fourth figure from the left.

called here at 7.45: but having to dine early I had gone. Probably he called to give some explanation.[597]

Sunday 18 March (Hatfield)

Ambassadors, Northcote, Cross, Bourke,[598] Hartington, Bath, Goschen,[599] altogether about 35 or 40 persons – and on the whole

[597]Lady Salisbury later that day wrote to Carnarvon, 'The Ignatieffs have just telegraphed to our great surprise that they are coming to Hatfield on Saturday. Do pray by the memory of our ancient friendship come and meet them. We are in despair' (Lady Salisbury to Carnarvon, 15 March 1877: CP, BL 60759, fo. 2). Carnarvon agreed to join them (ibid., fo. 79).

[598]Robert Bourke (1827–1902), MP for King's Lynn (1868–1886), Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office (1874–1880, 1885–1886), Governor of Madras (1886–1891), created Baron Connemara (1887).

[599]George Joachim Goschen (1831–1907), Lib. MP for City of London (1863–1880) and for Ripon (1880–1885), Independent Lib. MP for Edinburgh East (1885–1886) and for St

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everything well and handsomely done. As to the two chief guests Madam I. [Ignatieva] was certainly very pretty and is still good looking. She is agreeable, light in hand, speaks English very well and is extremely taking. He is very anxious to please: but I doubt if I quite like him. He talked to me some time this morning in a torrent of voluble French but the sum total of his conversation was reiterated assurances of his honesty and sincerity. At last I hardly knew how to answer him. This and the repeated statement that England and Russia had in the East few interests at variance comprised all he said. But he is doubtless clever and has evidently great energy.

I had a long and important conversation with Northcote as to the recent difficulty in the Cabinet respecting Elliot. He admitted and said that Derby's temper was becoming impracticable, that Disraeli seemed to be now entirely under Derby's influence, that matters could hardly go on as they now are and that the situation was growing dangerous and very disagreeable to all of us. The truth is that yesterday's Cabinet has been very useful in bringing matters on to a decisive issue. It has also perhaps cleared away that which was once a matter of extreme probability and which has always been a contingency – the succession of Derby to the Prime Ministership. I think this is almost disposed of. I doubt now if Salisbury would serve under him – I do not think I could – and if we both withdrew, *as things now stand*, it would make such an event almost impossible.[600]

Good Friday 30 March (Highclere)

I wrote to Northcote on the singular article in the *Pall Mall*,[601] put in evidently by official inspiration and saying that the signing of the protocol was due to causes operating within and without the Cabinet, in other words advertising our differences. It seems to me an unjustifiable and unprecedented proceeding on Derby's part.[602]

George's, Hanover Square (1887–1900). Contributed to formation of Liberal Unionist Party, President of Poor Law Board (1868–1871), Chancellor of the Exchequer (1886–1892), 1st Viscount Goschen (1900).

[600] Elliot, who was strongly pro-Turk, had come under pressure to resign. Disraeli and Derby wished to keep him; Salisbury opposed Elliot's return to Constantinople. At the Cabinet of 17 March, Derby threatened to resign if he was overruled (Vincent, *Derby*, II, p. 383). Elliot was replaced by Henry Layard, who was also pro-Turk, on 31 March.

[601] 'The English Government and the protocol', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 28 March 1877, pp. 1–2. Carnarvon remarked that 'I can hardly recall anything like it, for it is a distinct announcement of the difference of opinion', and he believed that 'for weeks past the *Pall Mall* has been ostentatiously the F.O. organ' (Carnarvon to Salisbury, 30 March 1877 (copy): CP, BL 60761, fo. 207).

[602] Carnarvon wrote to Northcote about the Cabinet meeting of 28 March, the day the Cabinet agreed to sign the protocol: 'The extraordinary address which Disraeli made as on

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Saturday 7 April (Highclere)

I have had a tolerably quiet evening here by myself and I have done a good deal of work. I think I begin to see how to deal with my South African Confederation question.[603] One of my greatest difficulties in office is that I have really no time for any quiet or deliberate thought. Everything has to be decided on the spur of the moment, and either it must be decided by a sort of instinct or on the advice of those whose judgement I think I can trust and who have had more leisure to look into the case. Everything too at home naturally and necessarily is referred to me and if I do not listen to every question from the children's dresses to the cooking of the dinner I know all would go wrong. At the same time it is fair to admit that the head servants are excellent, have really good judgement, and honestly try to spare me in every way.

Monday 16 April (London)

Walked home from the House with Salisbury and he told me that tomorrow evening he is to have a conference with Disraeli on foreign affairs. It shows that D. feels we have come to a serious stage and as Salisbury thinks it means business. Also it means that D. does not mean to break with us just now: but we are on hollow and slippery ground. Salisbury's notion is that we must take the harbour in Crete, erect Crete into a republic undertaking for her the management of her *foreign* affairs, and on the whole as I understand him not to let Russia get hold of Constantinople.

[? Saturday 5 May (London)]

[Page torn away] [. . .] was understood at the last Cabinet. He is so averse to taking any decided step that even when matters are thought to be decided he leaves them open. Some discussion ensued but I doubt if he will take any real action.

I called at Lady Derby's before the Cabinet as she leaves England today for a month. I had as usual a most friendly talk. She says she can

the disturbers of the unanimity of the Cabinet and which was obviously directed against Salisbury and myself, the things which *I know* to have been said out of the Cabinet on the same theme. Derby's intemperate conduct even in the ordinary relations of daily life – and this new method of advertising our differences in the newspapers – all this seems to me to be full of danger and if it were to be carried much further would threaten our existence' (Carnarvon to Northcote, 30 March 1877: Iddesleigh Papers, BL 50022, fo. 210).

[603]Carnarvon had sent Disraeli the proofs of the revised Confederation of South African Colonies and State Bill two days earlier (Carnarvon to Disraeli, 5 April 1877 (copy): CP, TNA, PRO 30/6/11, fos 189–190).

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do no more[604] and that she hopes that peace is now in the ascendant, but I do not think that she believes much in the stability of affairs. She would not, I suspect, be astonished if during her absence Derby retired from office, a contingency which at times has been in view. Meanwhile he has recovered all his serenity as far as I am concerned, and is very affable again.

At the Academy dinner tonight I sat next to Hardy and talked much with him. He is angry with Disraeli's appointment of Thorold[605] as the new Bishop of Rochester, and certainly his way of speaking of the Prime Minister does not imply any great confidence in him on any subject. Gladstone spoke with singular eloquence at times, and Northcote in a wholly different and in a lower strain spoke well.

Monday 7 May (London)

Last night I received the news of the annexation of the Transvaal. On the 12th ult. it seems Shepstone after exhausting all other means told the Transvaal Government that he would wait no longer and acting on my general instructions he declared the territory to belong to the English Crown. It is a step which I think has no precedent for many a long year but I think it is right and it will anyhow mark my tenure of office.[606] *The Times* gives a friendly but cautious approval and one or two other papers write in the same sense.[607] I expect that the foreign Press will criticise in no friendly manner; and just at this moment it might be well to be spared this, but it cannot be avoided and on the whole it is enough for me if this Country generally approves. But for the war in the East which absorbs everything else it is an event

[604]War between Russia and Turkey had broken out on 24 April.

[605]Anthony Wilson Thorold (1825–1895), Bishop of Rochester (1877–1879), Bishop of Winchester (1890–1895).

[606]In sending his 'hearty congratulations' to Shepstone in carrying out the task, Carnarvon added, 'The work has been admirably done; and I rejoice to think that the hope which I expressed to you just before you sailed has been so well fulfilled' (Carnarvon to Shepstone, 30 May 1877 (copy): CP, TNA, PRO 30/6/23, fo. 16). For Shepstone's reply, see Shepstone to Carnarvon, 23 July 1877: ibid., fos 30–33. Cornelis Uys has pointed out that Carnarvon gave Shepstone no official instructions except in a vaguely worded Royal Warrant, while in private letters impressing on Shepstone the urgency for acquiring the Transvaal. 'The reason for this is obvious. His private epistles could not be published in parliamentary papers, nor could be used against him by his political opponents, trusting in Shepstone's loyalty to him. He evidently calculated that should the mission be a failure, Sir Theophilus would have to bear the full brunt, while he himself would not be jettisoned by the British nation. On the other hand, should the annexation be an unqualified success, he and his friend Wolseley would share the kudos with the Special Commissioner' (C.J. Uys, *In the Era of Shepstone* (Lovedale, 1934), p. 265).

[607]See leading article on the annexation, entitled 'South African Republic', *The Times*, 7 May 1877, p. 9.

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which would have created a good deal of discussion. Derby from a few words that he said evidently does not like it: but it is in opposition to everything that he approves and so I am not surprised. As to the rest of my colleagues they hardly seem to know much of it, except of course Salisbury is evidently amused at the whole transaction.

At the Levée today d'Harcourt[608] told me privately, saying that he wished to tell me but that he had mentioned it to no one but Derby, that the Prince of Wales whilst in Paris had talked in a very injudicious way of the present war, saying that Russia had planned all this for a long time and that Germany probably intended to take the first opportunity of attacking France.

Thursday 31 May (London)

In the evening I took the Chair at the Society of Antiquaries to hear Newton deliver a lecture on the date of the Mycenae discoveries.[609] Schliemann was there but he did not make much head at an explanation of the several points raised. Newton was very clear. I summed up, but I doubt if I did it as well as I ought to have done.[610]

Friday 3 August (London)

I had some conversation with Lady Derby on recent events in the Cabinet. Derby had written to her before our alliance to say that he was extremely anxious and that affairs were more critical than they had as yet been: but now he was satisfied at the result and at the support which I had given him and which he seems to have appreciated. She was astonished at Salisbury's change of position and frequently recurred to it, saying she could not understand it.[611] Her general notion however was it was the result of his visit to Osborne and that the Queen had impressed him with her new ideas. It seems to have been Disraeli's notion that if he could be sure of Salisbury,

[608]Georges, Marquis d'Harcourt (1808–1883), French ambassador at London (1873–1879).

[609]C.T. Newton, 'On the discoveries of Mycenae', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*, 2nd series, 7 (1877), pp. 236–247.

[610]Ibid., pp. 247–250.

[611]Carnarvon later noted that it was at the Cabinet meeting of 21 July that 'Salisbury to my astonishment, expressed himself in favour of sending the fleet to Constantinople in the event of the Russians effecting an entrance in Constantinople. A few days afterwards he admitted that he had since been in conversation with Disraeli on the subject' (Carnarvon, 'Memorandum on circumstances which led to my resignation in January 1878': CP, BL 60817, fos 67–68).

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he might count upon me, and if this was so all this must have been a great disappointment to him.

Monday 10 September (Highclere)

Derby has I find written a draft on the subject of Turkish atrocities but the draft when sent to Balmoral was disapproved. It came back to Disraeli who of course was in favour of assuming the Russians to be equally guilty, and since then it has been tinkered and patched and apparently has not yet gone.[612] Pauncefote[613] says that Serbia is entirely in Russian hands and only awaiting orders. Greece is much in the same position.

Tuesday 30 October (Highclere)

The Transvaal Delegates came down here for lunch before returning to London. Old Kruger[614] is a curious and really an interesting specimen. He illustrates, I take it, perfectly the Dutch "Dopper Boer"[615] – obstinate, narrow, rough, unlettered, prejudiced: but shrewd, not untruthful, homely and except as regards natives by no means unkindly. He looked at Margaret as she sat by me at luncheon with evident admiration and watched her as she moved about. But his chief admiration was for the stables and the horses: and when I had a breaking-in bit put into the mouth of one of the horses and a dumb jockey placed on the animals back he was extremely interested.

Both he and Jorissen promised to do all they could to influence their countrymen for good and to serve the Queen faithfully on their return.[616]

[612]Both Disraeli and the Queen had put pressure on Derby to take action. The Queen insisted that he not only protested against Russian atrocities but that he should appeal to other Powers to declare war against Serbia. See Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, p. 322.

[613]Sir Julian Pauncefote (1829–1902), Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office since 1876.

[614]Paul Kruger (1825–1904), the Vice-President, and his political adviser, Dr Edward Jorissen (1829–1912), who made up the delegation, arrived in England at the end of July. They requested a plebiscite on some form of self-government for their country.

[615]Dopper or Canting Church, an evangelical body that strictly adhered to the decrees of the Synod of Dordrecht, 1618–1619. No hymns except psalms were sung by worshippers.

[616]See 'Memorandum of final interview of delegates with Lord Carnarvon in the library of the castle, 30 Oct. 1872', in Carnarvon's handwriting: CP, TNA, PRO 30/6/48, fos 214–216.

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General Summary of Cairns' resolutions, 18 December [page missing][617]

1. Parliament to meet on the earliest day (7 January) and a vote of credit to be taken.

2. A despatch to be framed founded on the communication of 8th June to us by Russia which indicated the terms of peace which Russia would accept under certain circumstances, asking Russia whether we may communicate these terms to Turkey without expressing an opinion upon them.

3. Supposing that a vote is taken for increased armaments and that peace is not made and that Russia is not giving satisfactory assurances and that she continues to advance on Constantinople, that we should occupy the Gallipoli end of the Straits.

4. That the consent of the Sultan should be asked for this, but that if it is refused we should consider whether we should not take it by force.

5. That our objects are "British interest", the conclusion of the war and some other generalities which I could not take down.

6. That we do not propose an alliance with Turkey beyond what circumstances render necessary (this being the sense of the passage though the words used were different), that we do not intend to encourage her to continue the war and some other similar generalities.

[617]The fall of Plevna to the Russians on 9 December had increased the risk of war. At the Cabinet of 14 December, Disraeli had put forward three proposals: an immediate summoning of Parliament, a vote to increase military forces, and a proposal to act as mediator to the warring parties. The Cabinet meeting ended indecisively. At a further meeting on 17 December, Disraeli stated that he would resign. Cairns proposed a Cabinet the following day, at which he introduced a modified version of Disraeli's proposals. There was general consent to these views. 'The great struggle is over', Disraeli reported two days later, 'and I have triumphed' (Buckle, *Disraeli*, VI, p. 207).

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