

A DOCUMENTED STUDY IN MODERN
MEDITERRANEAN POLITICS

TUNIS

THE GREAT POWERS

1878 - 1881

BY

M. M. SAFWAT M. A., PH. D. LONDON

*Lecturer in Modern History
in the University Farouk I,
Alexandria.*

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الدكتور إبراهيم أبو لغد

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TO
MY FATHER
AND
MY MOTHER

PREFACE

The subject of Tunis is a new and original one. There is no complete or carefully documented study on the question as a whole. Most existing studies seem in fact to have been undertaken to justify a certain national point of view; and whatever documents are used, few and meagre as they are, are so selected in order to prove a case. French authors let their feeling control their selection of facts. The same rule applies to the few Italian and British authors. The approach of the historian, whose aim is solely to present an accurate account of the events which led to the protectorate, is conspicuously lacking in the majority of these studies,

The only two important works on the subject which bear the stamp of originality are D'Estournelles de Constant's "La Politique Française en Tunisie, 1891" and Professor Langer's two articles: "The European Powers and the French Occupation of Tunis", published in the *American Historical Review* 1925-1926. D'Estournelles possessed a vast knowledge of North African affairs and witnessed the events of 1881. But the main objective of his study was to justify the French protectorate. His work is descriptive and brief on the diplomatic side. It is based on the inadequate information published in the British Blue Book of 1881, in the *Livre Jaune* of the same year, and in other publications of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The study of Professor Langer is of a more recent date. It is mainly devoted to a brief study of the diplomacy of the Powers regarding the Regency. No space is given to the Tunisian background. Professor Langer did not demonstrate the intimate connection which existed between the economic and political interests of the Great Powers. The two articles are based on the Blue Book, the *Livre Jaune*, on the *Grosse Politik*, some Austrian documents and on a few Italian sources to which Professor Langer had access. It is unfortunate that the two articles of Professor Langer were written before the *Documents Diplomatiques Français* became available to researchers. The material in the records of the British Foreign Office remained unused.

This present research, dedicated mainly to the period between 1878 and 1881, attempts to complete the work begun by D'Estournelles and Langer. It endeavours to fill the gaps left by these two historians. It studies the Tunisian and the European aspects of the question. It uses the unpublished material in the Public Record Office, the Documents Diplomatiques Français, the Papers of Lord Granville and the vast secondary material in the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Bibliothèque Coloniale. No research had been made in these two repositories of knowledge so far as the question of Tunis during the years 1878-1881 is concerned.

A whole chapter is devoted to the Tunisian background, studying the situation in Tunis itself, the problems arising from the incapacity of the native Government, from the Capitulations and from the over-enthusiasm of Consuls. In dealing with the constitutional and financial reforms research has to go twenty years further back in order to explain their development and to assess their real bearing on the question of Tunis as a whole. The second chapter deals with the relations of Tunis with Turkey, Britain, France and Italy. Again I have to sketch in outline the evolution of the interests of the Powers.

The third chapter is devoted to the diplomatic relations between the Great Powers before and during the Berlin Congress with special emphasis on the Tunis question. To make this point clear, some space must be given to the evolution of British-Turkish relations which ended in the abandonment of the traditional policy of maintaining the territorial integrity of Turkey. This first part is not original since it is based mainly on the researches of Professors Temperley, Seton Watson, Penson and Mr. Sumner. Yet it is essential since it illustrates how Great Britain came to accept a partial partition of Turkey's European, Asiatic and African possessions. The study of British-Italian relations is important since it shows how England came to ignore Italian aspirations in the Mediterranean. The part devoted to Austrian-Italian relations describes the many offers which Andrassy made to Italy and which Italy decided to refuse. The evolution of Germany's relations with Italy and France explains Bismarck's offer of Tunis to France. The course which French-British relations took led to the famous Salisbury-Waddington deal in Berlin.

Chapter IV is concerned with relations regarding Tunis between France on the one hand, and Britain, Italy and Germany on the other during the period between 1878 and 1880. A large part of this chapter studies the French-Italian conflict in Tunis which did not fail to influence the general relations between the two Latin countries. Chapter V deals with the motives behind French military action in 1881, and with the Treaty of the Bardo. Chapter VI treats of the attitude towards the expedition taken by French public opinion and by the Mediterranean Powers.

I owe many thanks to the valuable advice of Professor Webster of London University under whose kind guidance I worked. I am under obligation to Mr. Robinson, the Dean of Postgraduate Studies, London School of Economics and Political Science, who read this work and offered invaluable suggestions. My sincere thanks are due to Professor Penson of Bedford College for her assistance. I am indebted to Miss Howden and Professor Veitch of Liverpool University. I acknowledge a large debt of gratitude to Professor Shafik Ghorbal bey for his help and encouragement.

London School of Economic and Political Science.
Cambridge, December 1939.

My deep and most sincere thanks are due to the Egyptian Ministry of Education for undertaking the publication of this work on the recommendation of the London University.

Alexandria, December 1943.

MUHAMMAD MUSTAFA SAFWAT.

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CHAPTER I.

THE TUNISIAN BACKGROUND.

I. *Position of Tunis in the Nineteenth Century: The Political Institutions.*

The Bays had been able to rule Tunis as long as they had no outside interference. The Regency was flourishing when Turkey was on the decline, and when Spain fell into decay. The rivalry between England and France, in spheres far removed from the Mediterranean, gave Tunis a period of peace and prosperity unparalleled in her modern history. The two great colonising Powers were pursuing during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries their conflicts in India and North America. The one strong Power bordering on the Mediterranean was engaged in her schemes for supremacy in Europe. Till the nineteenth century Italy was a geographical expression, and the interests of England were confined to her own trade. During the period extending from the sixteenth to late in the eighteenth century the Mediterranean was no longer the great highway between West and East. The time had not yet come for modern European imperialism to extend to that sea.

The French Revolution came with new ideals of social life and government, and with it came Napoleon. Liberty, equality and fraternity were echoed from the North Sea to the first cataract of the Nile. The whole Mediterranean countries were roused from their lethargy to benefit from this great movement. Decisive battles were fought in the Mediterranean and in North Africa. Italy was transformed, Malta changed masters, the Nile experienced great changes, and the last and finest military survival of the Middle Ages disappeared near the pyramids at Gizah. French arms and French ideals invaded the eastern Mediterranean as well as the greater part of the North African coast. The impression Napoleon made on eastern imagination was not insignificant. Muhammad 'Ali in Egypt and Ahmad Bay in Tunis were admirers of the great Frenchman. In their reforms the two great eastern rulers derived inspiration as well as material aid from French sources.

It was due then to France and to a great extent Napoleon, a Corsican and a man of the Mediterranean, that Europe was aroused to the importance of the Mediterranean as a great thoroughfare and as the most important link between West and East. The Mediterranean itself was awakened from the sleep of two centuries to find itself a great factor in world politics, (1) for following the initiative of the French the English became permanently interested in that sea. Conflicts between these Powers were extended to Mediterranean lands; for if France had lost Canada and India, she succeeded in 1830 in establishing herself in Algeria. Before that great event Eng-

(1) With the exception of the struggle for Gibraltar and Minorca the Mediterranean saw no great events after the establishment of the Turks in North Africa in 1574.

land had instituted British rule in Malta. The Porte, impressed by these new developments, and always anxious about its prestige in the Moslem world, rose from its long apathy and reconquered Tripoli in 1835. Italy, though still in the process of unification, and needing all her energy and resources, cast yearning eyes towards African shores so near to Sicily.

Tunis could not adapt herself to the new international situation; she was unable to cope with the new responsibilities towards her four powerful neighbours; neither was she able to oppose their encroachments upon her rights and independence. This spot in the very centre of the Mediterranean had been till late in the eighteenth century a strong State with a respectable if not redoubtable fleet. Beautiful women and young men from the shores of Spain, the Riviera, the Italian islands and peninsula, from the isles of Greece thronged the palaces of the Bey and his lieutenants. The bazaars of Tunis, as well as those of the coastal towns, were busy with prisoners and loot from nearly the whole parts of the European Mediterranean. To secure the safety of their shipping, the «friendly» Powers bought dearly «treaties of alliance» almost every year. The slave trade with the interior of Africa was a very lucrative one, and brought to Tunis not only slaves but the rich products of the lands beyond the desert. But these two and very important sources of wealth and revenue ⁽¹⁾ were to disappear permanently before the demands and threats of Europe. The suppression of slavery together with the establishment of the French in Algeria closed the age of the old

(1) Of the plunder brought by the Raïses, the Bardo received one eighth, for in Tunis piracy was an institution supported by the Government. (Raïis is equivalent to captain).

caravan routes which ended in Tunis and which connected the Mediterranean with the heart of Africa. The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed a rapid decline in both the financial and the political conditions of the Regency.

The political institutions were no longer fit to cope with the new political and economic state of affairs. They might perhaps have been sufficiently adequate to rule the Regency in early modern times, but they were hardly equal to that task in the nineteenth century. They did not submit readily to change; they remained incapable of adaptability. Rule was concentrated in the hands of the Bay, a despot who was never properly trained in the art of government. He might possibly have been well-meaning, but he was not sufficiently enlightened to be able to devote his extensive powers to the service of his country. The Court of Tunis was in fact a miniature of that of Constantinople in the pompous magnificence kept up in the palaces of the sovereign and his lieutenants. The first years of the Bay were spent in the Court or the luxurious harim; he laboured under the constant fear of the poisoner and the assassin. The princes of the reigning family were not allowed much liberty, and in most cases they had to spend the best if not the greater part of their lives in palaces allotted to them or even in prisons, in order to prevent them from rebellion and conspiracy. For in Tunis there still survived the old Turkish custom of either murdering the would-be claimants or of sending them to permanent confinement. The English Consul, Wood, reminding the Bay of this custom, said, "At your demise what guarantee has your Highness that your successor will not deprive your children of their patrimony... and reduce

them to destitution? Your Highness in succeeding to the Government had to liberate your cousins from the dungeons of the Bardo where they had pined from their infancy until they attained manhood." (1) That which the West regarded as essential for the training of a sovereign or administrator was completely absent in Tunis. The only education most of the Bays received was the rudiments of reading and writing coupled with some religious duties and perfunctory military exercises. It is true that the heir to power, the Bay of the Camp, as he was called, was charged with leading the annual expeditions to the semi-independent tribes of the interior and borders, expeditions dispatched by the central authority for the purpose of collecting taxes and securing order. The benefit derived from such expeditions was not great since every comfort and convenience of home life that could be imagined were provided for the prince. It is not surprising therefore if the Bay came to power practically inexperienced and with no great real culture.

With the bitter experience of his early life working havoc and destruction in his Unconscious-self, and with the insignificant education he received, it could not be expected that the new ruler would base his power upon any recognized rules or principles. Caprice and the whims of the moment were the bases of his policy. The Bay was the head of the Government claiming to rule by inherited prerogative and the right of might. Of Greek extraction, his family had governed Tunis since the eighteenth century. Though his power was not hereditary at the outset, yet since the beginning of the nineteenth, the eldest

(1) F. O. 102/52. Wood to Clarendon, Sept. 2, 1857.

member of the family became the heir to the throne. (1) As a hereditary despot the Bay enjoyed the legacy of unlimited powers bequeathed to him by his forefathers. From the seventeenth century down to 1857, and from 1864 to the establishment of the French protectorate, the entire executive, legislative and to some extent the judicial authority lay practically in his hands. Even after the grant of the Organic Laws (1857) and the Constitution of 1861, the arbitrary use of his authority was, in a practical sense, but lightly curtailed. In matters of finance he had enjoyed till the establishment of the International Financial Commission in 1869 unlimited authority. Without having any knowledge of jurisprudence he was the supreme judge. Indeed he did not refrain from personal exercise of judicial authority. This practice was as simple as it was primitive. His palace served till May 1881 as a high court of appeal to all those who sought his judgment. He had, indeed, taken a full and direct share in settling justly the disputes of his subjects, until the establishment of tribunals in the late fifties relieved him from that onerous burden. (2)

Though the Moslem religion relieved the Bay from the necessity of making new legislation, yet his word was law. The chief adviser on matters of justice and legislation remained the Shaikh-Ul-Islam, who was regarded as the last authority on all religious questions. He was mainly concerned with the religious details which were too complicated for the mind of the Bay.

(1) The word «throne» here is used in a figurative sense since there existed no throne in Tunis until 1860. F. O. 102/60. Wood to Russell. Feb. 11, Apr. 21, 1860.

(2) Wingfield: Under the Palms of Algeria and Tunis 1868. vol. 1 p. 271. See F. O. 102/52. Wood to Clarendon, despatches of Sept. 2, 1857. The first commercial and criminal tribunals were established in Aug. 1857. Wood to Clarendon, Aug. 18, 1857.

The Regency conformed as a matter of course to the sacred laws instituted by the Shar'a. Since the codification of Moslem law in the ninth century, the Shar'a was recognized by many Moslem jurisconsults as eternal and unchangeable. The right to make new laws or to develop those already existing was thus prohibited for all time. The Bay as well as any individual Moslem had to abide by these religious prescriptions. When the new tribunals were to be established in the late fifties, opinion was divided as to whether Moslem law should be enforced there. It was finally decided under the pressure of Europe to institute Moslem law at some tribunals and to borrow European laws for the others. Side by side with these tribunals, the consuls administered justice among their own nationals. Corruption and exploitation were not absent from any of the courts of justice in Tunis. No wonder then that up to the French protectorate complete chaos reigned in the realms of justice and legislation.

The executive was concentrated in the hands of the Bay who delegated it to his ministers and representatives in the provinces; but he was unlimited in his power of appointment and removal of his officials. The ruler's ministers were not so much his advisers as his slaves. They could only exercise the powers granted them by their master. Even the authority of the Prime Minister could be safely undermined by any official who enjoyed the favour of the sovereign. He was not empowered to choose the other ministers or the other high officials of the State who were all appointed, promoted and dismissed without much ado by the Bay.

Most of the Ministers were mamluks, slaves that had been recruited and prepared for the baylical service, Throughout the nineteenth century up to the time of the portectorate, the Regency was governed by men either of Circassian or Greek origin. (1) These ministers rose to power not always according to merit but in most cases according to the ever changeable caprice of the Bay. As most of them arose from the lowest ranks, they owed their master everything, treated him as their lord and vied with each other in gaining his favours. They were kept under perpetual watchfulness; they could not call their lives their own, their destinies were at his own unfettered discretion. The prince of Tunis as a rule, could not trust large native elements in his government, for though they were sufficiently good-natured they did not possess the amount of servility which he demanded in his advisers. He had set up for himself in fact a council composed of ministers and natives but whose counsel he was loath to accept on many occasions. This assembly suffered from the fact that it was simply the creation of the Bay and that its composition was frequently shifting and that presence or absence from this committee was a marked sign of Baylical approbation or disfavour.

As a rule the Ministers met under the presidency of the Bay and furnished him with their reports and with the views with which they thought he would be pleased. For the autocratic rule of the Bay could not suffer the development of any organized dissenting opinion from his own. Not infrequently did the ministers give him the advice he sought, individually and in private. The flattery of courtier and minister gave rise

(1) *Khair-ud-Din, Generals Hussain and Rustem were Circassians, Mustafa Khaznahdar, and Muhammed Khasnahdar (not brothers) were Greek.*

to arbitrary and rash use of the Baylical authority, and sometimes led to the most strange inconsistencies due to the Bay's vacillations. The ministers were not given a free hand to carry out their mandates, and their limited activities were not clearly defined; friction and inefficiency were the inevitable results. It is true that in the early sixties the sphere of every ministry was defined on European lines; but it is interesting to note that there survived ministries with hardly any departmental work. The country possessed a ministry of war which controlled an army of several thousands in the most desperate conditions. The Ministry of Marine was an "honorary" department entirely redundant for since the fifties there existed no navy. After the establishment of the Financial Commission, the Finance Ministry was deprived of most of its work and the Bay became no longer master of the purse of the country. The Regent retained till May 12, 1881 his full unlimited authority in the departments of the Interior and Foreign Affairs.

Since the seventeenth century, the Bay concentrated in his hands the direction of foreign relations. He acted as the spokesman of the country and took prompt action in emergencies. The declaration of war and the making of peace were subject to his whims and fancies. In fact he was really his own foreign minister. His functions were regulated by no domestic legislation or tradition; his word was final. His action in that field was subject to no popular control since the chief organs of public opinion, parliament and the press were non-existent.⁽¹⁾ It is true that the Tunisian Gazette, "AR-Raid-et-Tunisi", had led a difficult existence; but it was the official and only newspaper

(1) The only means by which public opinion expressed itself was insurrection.

available. As the supreme directing authority, the Bay did not feel called upon to explain or to justify his policy. The Bay nominated his own envoys and representatives abroad, and it was under his orders that all documents connected with foreign relations were composed. To conclude treaties and conventions with foreign Powers and to watch over their execution were his right and responsibility. Even the Firman of October 23rd 1871 did not interfere with the right of the Bay to conduct his foreign relations, though it stipulated that in political and military matters, and in matters dealing with frontiers, the Bay had to obtain the previous consent of the Porte. (1) But even that stipulation did not in effect limit the Bay's right of concluding treaties and conventions.

- (1) La dite Eyalet (province) étant une partie intégrante de nos Etats, notre bon vouloir souverain est... que ces relations continuent comme par le passé avec les puissances étrangères sauf dans les matières politiques et militaires, modifications de frontières, ou actes pareils qui sont du ressort de nos droits souverains et sacrés."

This was the text of the article dealing with the Bay's position as regards foreign relations in the Firman.

On May 26, 1864, Wood, the English Consul-General, (1855-1879) stated that "from the remotest period, as far back as 1270, when the King of Aragon made a Treaty with Tunis down to 1857, the date of the Australian Treaty, Tunis had concluded with foreign states no less than one hundred and fourteen treaties, of which twenty seven were with France, and fifteen with England, and none of which had been ratified by the Porte." See Granville Papers (G.D.29) vol. 362. Memorandum as to the Right of Tunis to conclude Treaties with Foreign Powers independently of the Sultan. Printed for the use of the Foreign Office May 17, 1881.

The character given by England to the Convention of 1863 concluded between Great Britain and Tunis is very interesting. "It (the Convention) did not bear the character of an ordinary Convention between two independent states, and had not been ratified by the Queen in the usual acceptation of that term as applied to diplomatic instruments, nor had the ratification of it been exchanged between Her Majesty and the Bay." Ibid.

On the other hand France recognized that her treaties and Conventions concluded with Tunis were diplomatic agreements between two sovereign States.

No regular intermediary had ever existed between the Bay and the foreign representatives. Consuls-General and *Chargés d'Affaires* addressed themselves directly to him, negotiated and signed conventions with him. Possessing no permanent missions abroad, the Bay was always ill-informed. His lack of political training was not counterbalanced by the experience of his advisers on foreign affairs, for their knowledge was more superficial than that of their master, with the possible exception of *Khair-ed-Din*. In fact they were more unscrupulous. The adviser of the Bay on foreign questions was in fact no more than a dragoman, he could give no instructions. Count *Raffo*, an Italian resident, occupied this position for a long time. (1) Although after his death, a Tunisian occupied this position till the 12th May 1881, yet the Foreign Minister never wielded any real influence on foreign affairs. Perhaps the second man after the Bay to whom foreign agents sometimes presented themselves was the Prime Minister. Though he possessed the ill-defined power of persuasion, yet he had to receive his orders from the Bay and could make no binding agreements. This probably explains the fact that on important questions, the consuls communicated directly with the Bay or approached him through his favourite.

Foreign problems arising between Tunis and the other Powers were in most cases settled in Tunis itself. The Bay did not at the outset feel the necessity of having diplomatic representatives abroad. If Foreign Powers were to make transactions with Tunis, they had to send their own representatives to negotiate with him. That was the case till the French

(1) After his death, his son became an active official in the Tunisian Foreign Office.

conquest of Algiers. Even when the times had changed, and Europe began to encroach upon his independence, he was not in a position to appoint diplomatic representatives in Europe. This was due in great part to the fact that since 1830 the European Powers, with the one exception of France, regarded Tunis as an integral part of the Turkish Empire. Yet even France, herself, seemed never to have welcomed the idea of a permanent diplomatic mission in Paris, although she accepted an agency in France which was usually occupied by a Frenchman. Jules de Lesseps occupied that position for a long time, "but without any public character whatever".⁽¹⁾ In other European countries and Turkey the Bay had no permanent agents at all. The disadvantages of this are quite obvious; he could make his voice heard in European countries only through the one medium of their representatives. He had to rely in most cases upon the good will of these agents which was frequently defective. In the latter half of the nineteenth century especially, each consul had his own personal and national ambitions to consider in his reports. In times of crises the Bay had to resort to the only method open to him, that of sending diplomatic missions to European capitals with the aim of furthering the Tunisian point of view. These envoys were his personal representatives receiving their instructions directly from him. Khair-ed-Din and General Hussain were among the chief envoys of the Bay.

Up to 1881 the administration of the country was conducted on medieval lines. The function of the Kahiahs and Caid, who were at the same time feudal lords and representatives

(1) F. O. 102/55. Wood to Clarendon Feb. 20, 1858.

of the Bay, was administrative, financial and to some extent, judicial. These representatives were either governors of towns, or heads of tribes. Owing to lack of modern communications, these officials enjoyed very extensive powers; (1) but as most of them abandoned their districts and flocked round the Bay at the Bardo, their representatives, very unscrupulous men, laid waste the country. It is not that these officials were cruel or wicked by nature; their positions were insecure; they received no payment from the Government; they were raised in a most corrupt atmosphere and placed under no effective control.

In 1861 the Government undertook to pay its officials. Yet its action was not very consistent with its professions. On many occasions, the officials were left unpaid, and as the finances of the country were getting more and more disorganised, the Government was unable to fulfil its obligations. No hope of any effective amelioration could be entertained as long as the disorganisation of the administration was only equalled by the venality and corruption of most of the Bay's advisers and ministers.

Around the governing class swarmed pests of every nationality and creed with personal gain at any cost as the one aim of their lives. According to the Commission of Inquiry which tried the Khaznahdar in 1873, the fallen Prime Minister was found guilty of malversation and appropriation of public money. Through "ignorance and culpable negligence", he had allowed the country to be despoiled of about twenty million francs.

(1) Governors in the North were called Kahias; those of the South Caid. There were Caid of large sedentary tribes, and Caid of semi-nomadic tribes. Under the Caid and Kahias were the Khalifas and the Mas-hayekhs. See "Revue Tunisienne". 1900. P. 294.

A certain Marpurgo, one of his friends, appropriated three millions out of an accommodation loan of five millions. Another instance was the case of a certain Dahak, a Syrian adventurer, who was employed at a salary of six hundred francs a month, but who amassed in an incredibly short time a fortune of eight millions. (1) It should be borne in mind that the Khaznahdar was Prime Minister, for thirty six years and served three Bays, from 1837 to 1873. Though his successor, Khair-ed-Din, could not be accused of dishonesty, yet at the time when he left the Regency, he possessed the wonderful estate of the Enfida in the richest part of the country. Mustapha Ibn Ismail was very rich when the French condemned him to disfavour in 1881.

Under such administration the whole economic and social life of the country was bound to disintegrate, The conception of a state authority, which would actively interfere in everything and regulate the life of the nation, was entirely absent. The obligations of government as understood in the West in the nineteenth century or even as conceived by early Islam, were never performed. Those who came to power, perhaps with the one exception of Khair-ed-Din, absence of responsibility was a matter of course; It was inconceivable that the aim of government should be other than personal aggrandisement. The natives would not be dissatisfied with a regime that gave them justice and peace. They did not possess the warlike spirit of the Algerians, and were addicted to agriculture and commerce. The fact that the regime was instituted from above and

(1) See F. O. 102/99. Report of Consul-General Richard Wood of Jan. 8, 1874.

See also D'Estournelles de Constant: *La Politique Française en Tunisie* SP, 9-10. Faucon: *La Tunisie* 1893. vol. 1 p. 195. And Abd ul-Wahab: *Outline of the History of Tunis* (Arabic) p. 184.

that it was not of their own making was no matter for complaint. But when this ruling regime failed to withstand European aggression and when it bowed before the Christian will, they began to doubt its fitness to survive. And when the Government combined weakness with corruption and exaction, the country was in despair. Commerce languished, and the most fertile part of the Regency, the Majerdah valley, was left to the desert. A great part of the already cultivated lands, many palm groves and olive plantations were abandoned by the peasant to avoid the heavy contributions levied upon them. Those who remained on the soil or were engaged in commerce were the victims of remorseless and arbitrary taxation, the prey of a hateful system of conscription; they were deprived of the fruits of their industry and labour. Governmental rule was not the only source of their misery, for the marauding tribes of the neighbourhood fell upon what was left, and ravaged with impunity the countryside far and wide. Revolt in 1864 did not alleviate that suffering. Famine and disease reduced the population. Civil war was added to the other destructive factors. And through the Khaznahdar fell in 1873, the change of rule did not bring with it much worldly content. The Regency was beginning to recuperate under the enlightened though dictatorial government of Khair-ed-Din, when the Turkish-Russian war brought with it the fall of that great man and the end of reform in Tunis. No wonder that the travellers of the time were struck by the vast difference between the declining Tunis and the prosperous colony of Algeria. (1)

(1) See "Economiste Français" May 19, 1881. Article by Paul Leroy Beaulieu.

II. *Contact with the West. Reform.*

Reform became indispensable in Tunis once contact with the West had become inevitable. On her borders Europe stood watching for an opportunity to interfere. On the Tunisian soil itself the expansionist tendencies of the Powers came into conflict; French, English, Italian, and Turk were in bitter rivalry, each aimed at no less than predominance. Yet the Regency experienced another contest no less conspicuous; this contest was one between the ideas of the West and those of the East. Tunis remained an integral part of the Near East. From the geographic point of view she constituted a part of Mauretania and belonged rather to the Western Mediterranean than to the Eastern. Yet religion, language, the same sufferings and aspirations had united her closely to the Near East. She was influenced by the same factors which shaped the history of those lands situated at the junction of the three continents. She had seen Roman, Byzantine, Arab and Turkish conquerors. The French and Norman Crusaders, the Venetian and Genoese traders had trodden her coasts. Arabic blood runs in the veins of many of her inhabitants; and it was from Tunis that the revived forces of Islam conquered Sicily and invaded Southern Italy as far as Rome. Islam had greatly determined her cultural character and her social structure. Finally she fell a prey to European imperialism, and underwent the same process as the other parts of the Near East.

From the earliest times East and West ⁽¹⁾ had met. The Mediterranean was the link that kept relations between them

(1) East here is taken to mean the Near East. West is taken to mean Europe, with the exception of its eastern and Balkan parts.

almost uninterrupted. On many occasions did they exchange the products of culture and civilisation, and it is historically true that on more than one occasion the East was superior in material power and learning. The Christian religion was a product of the East; and though Greek philosophy originated in Europe, yet it was developed and preserved for the use of the West by the East. They parted definitely when the ideals of the Humanists and Renaissance replaced in Europe the ideals of the Middle Ages. The great discoveries had drawn the attention of Europe to the more attractive lands beyond the oceans. In the meantime the East remained inert and reactionary. From the sixteenth century onwards relations with the West became intermittent and were confined to trade. Europe developed far beyond the East not only in power but in the spheres of finance and culture. While she struggled to free herself from feudal domination and then from absolutism, Eastern countries remained trodden down by their unenlightened despots. Eastern society remained, generally speaking, "earth bound, living with the rhythm of nature"; and although the Moslem religion was professed by most of the easterns, yet Islam was fettered by medievalism, and that "shade of mystical magical feeling of their own particular life" (1) was always preserved. When East and West came into conflict in the nineteenth century, it was not so much a clash between two completely incompatible civilisations as it was one between two stages of civilisation, the Medieval and the Modern. European civilisation was rational, secular and based on the principles

(1) See de Kat Angelino: Colonial Policy 1931. Vol. I. Chapters 2, 3 and 4. contain a comprehensive study of the characteristics of Eastern society.

of nationalism; the Eastern was traditional, religious and established on "universal" principles. In political, material, and scientific spheres the East had nothing to compare with the West. The one had at its disposal overwhelming force and energy, the other was completely exhausted. It was high time that the West should impose its ideals upon the East. At the outset it was material force that attracted the attention of the East. Man was and is always a worshipper of power. In Tunis as well as in Egypt and Turkey military reform was the first step that was taken. But military reform in Tunis did not meet with the great success it had in Egypt. But as happened also on the Nile, the movement proved of short duration and soon died with its initiator. Though organised on French lines and by French officers, the army of Ahmad Bay served only as a show, and the great part of it was fated to perish in Caucasia during the Crimean War. When Ahmad died in 1847, it was quite evident that the Regency, already impoverished, could not afford to maintain a respectable army. At any rate his successor, who was given to a life of luxury and legalised profligacy, did not believe in armies and armaments, and his extravagance was bound to engender general discontent and unrest. With an unconscious but destructive recklessness he left the Regency to fall into disorganisation. But if the population sought refuge in a world of departed glory, or with oriental mysticism resorted to religion for release from the sufferings of earthly cares, Europe did not conceal her dissatisfaction. The West was to make its influence felt in the realm of administrative reform. France could not tolerate anarchy in Tunis, while England was anxious that Tunis should not give her powerful neighbour any chance for interference. The

fifties were an era of reform in Turkey; both England and France thought it convenient from different motives that the Bay should follow the example of the Sultan and introduce some Western ameliorations. The pressure on the Bay was over-powering, and in the framing of the new reforms both Léon Roches and Richard Wood took a prominent part. The French and English Representatives found themselves, curiously enough, in full agreement about the policy to be pursued. Roches was a sincere believer in the civilising mission of France; he considered the possibility of the emancipation of the Regency under French guidance and alliance. For her part, England was not disinterested, and in order to remedy the evils prevalent in Tunis, the Palmerstonian tonic dose of constitutionalism was prescribed, though Palmerston himself was not in power. Yet one of his disciples and admirers took upon himself the task of enforcing his policy. This diplomat was Richard Wood who preserved his position as English Representative from 1855 to 1879.

Wood had spent at least a quarter of a century in the Near East, and was one of the great advocates of reform. Despite his long residence in that region, he seemed to have been so carried away by his enthusiasm for reform as to underrate the powerful elements that made for stagnation, immobility, fatalism and resignation prevalent in North Africa. His French colleague whose experience of North Africa was extensive, fell into the same mistake. Both championed the cause of reform, but both resorted to the old arguments, threats and naval demonstrations in order to convince the Bay of the benefits of reform. Muhammad, the reigning Bay, tried the well-known and effective policy of playing one consul off

against the other and in this way resisting the demands of both. But this policy came to grief when the two Powers were at one on insisting upon reform and upon the limitation of his boundless authority. (1) It was quite natural for a despot to resist any attempt to limit his own authority; moreover, the reforms urged upon him were beyond his comprehension. He was doubtful of the advisability of granting equal rights to non-Moslems. Moreover, he dreaded the explosions of public opinion. But before the French and English naval demonstrations he could only give way. He felt the urgent need of Western support, and therefore the Organic Laws were solemnly but reluctantly promulgated on the 9th September 1857. To no community were these laws more beneficial than to the Jews who were recognized as an important element of the population, were given the right of representation in courts, and were relieved from dress regulations. Not least in significance were the priveleges granted to foreigners; they were given the right to exercise all industries and professions and to possess landed property. For the first time in the history of the Regency, non-Moslems were formally recognized as the equals of Moslems. This Charter registered the interference of Europe in the internal affairs of Tunis and was a formal invitation to European enterprise and capital.

Es-Sadik, who succeeded Muhammad Bay, had no alternative but to accept the changes brought about by his predecessor. The first part of his reign 1859-63 was distinguished by reforms in most branches of government. The climax was

(1) "I have conjointly with my French Colleague pressed nim the Bay with an earnestness that has scarcely left a door for escape". F. O. 102/52. Wood to Clarendon Aug. 18, 1857.

reached when the Bay granted his subjects the liberal Constitution of the 28th April 1861. This Constitution limited the authority of the ruler, defined to some extent ministerial responsibility, and recognized the equal rights and duties of all those settling in Tunisian territory. The new "Fundamental Pact" (1) was based on the rights of man as conceived in the East - security of religion, of person, of property and of honour. The legislative power was theoretically given to the "Grand Council" whose members were nominated by the Bay, but which was declared to be the "Guardian of the Constitution." This assembly was to enjoy nominal control over the Bay and the Ministry. Judicial power was exercised by the newly established tribunals. The Bay's control of finances was to be checked: he was given an annual allowance, while the budget must be approved by the Legislative Assembly.

To an Eastern country, the Constitution of 1861 was the most liberal and the most impracticable. Viewed broadly as an instrument of government, this Constitution was severely theoretical and limited in scope. No ministerial responsibility could ever exist, if the ministers were the fearful and obedient slaves of a capricious and vacillating master. The Legislative Assembly proved only a mere tool in the hands of the Bay, for it was the Bay who chose the members from amongst his high officials and the notables of the realm. The vague impracticable checks which limited the ruler's freedom of action in internal affairs was quite absent in dealings with foreign Powers. The most important defect of the Constitution was

(1) The Arabic text is in the correspondence of Wood in 1860. F. O. 102/60.

that it made no mention of the most urgent question of education. Medieval instruction, religious, theological and scholastic, prevailed in the Regency. In an age of great national movements, national sentiment in Tunis was completely absent, and no effort was made to inculcate it. All educational efforts were dedicated to the worship of tradition, and most surprisingly, the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle received as much attention in Tunis as the teachings of the Koran and the prophet. Outside this limited circle, every branch of knowledge was regarded by many as absurd and even devilish. The Arabic language was looked upon as sacred and universal, and, therefore, it was considered superfluous to instruct in European languages. Although such distorted and inexpensive education was not a prerogative of any class or caste, yet it is a fact that the masses of the people received hardly any education at all.

Under such conditions, the Constitution could not stand the test of time. It could hardly be expected that an unenlightened Oriental despot would whole-heartedly rule on constitutional lines. He was conscious that the native population was not ready to understand the new system. "You are aware", Es-Sadik told the English Consul, "of the difficulties I have and still have to encounter in carrying out my intentions; for you neither ignore our prejudices, the tenacity with which we cling to our holy and ancient institutions, nor the repugnance of all the Mussulmans to changes of any description, although those changes are for their benefit and advantage... Whether it is from ignorance, from doubt, fear or from feelings and conventions... every innovation and reform is looked upon by our Ulemas and Divines and consequently by the people, as an inroad into our precepts". The Ulema, wondered whether

the Muhammadan law, political, civil, religious and moral, as preached by the Koran and the Prophet, would be abandoned for ever. This divine law, which rested on the inviolability of their rights was to give place to a law made by man and which recognized infidels as equal to Moslems. In fact the Moslems found that this new "Pact" gave them no new rights, for according to Moslem tradition the Moslems were equal amongst themselves and before God. This equality was at best theoretical, but it was the fundamental basis of any Moslem Government. The law of the Koran was but the will of God; submission to it was a social as well as a political duty. No wonder that to public opinion the Constitution meant an intrusion upon their rights, a blow to the law of Allah, that eternal monument of human guidance in this world and in the hereafter, and an unnecessary surrender of essentials in their faith. That, in great part, explains why theoretical reform failed in all the dominions of the Turkish Empire.

The opposition of the Ulema, ⁽¹⁾ this influential caste, brought in its train the opposition of public opinion. For in Tunis as well as in other Moslem countries religion had dominated the political, social and cultural life of the community; it penetrated almost every act of daily life: it was until recent times [the great force holding the community together, the idea of nationality was still unborn. It is impossible then to underrate the great influence of those men who were believed

(1) Wood had alluded to the unremitting opposition of this group when he wrote: "We have less to combat the opposition of the Bey than that of the majority of the members of his Government, who supported by the Mufti and the ecclesiastical party, compose a formidable array of opponents not only to our own efforts but to those of the ministers who are favourable to progress."
See F. O. 102/52. Wood to Clarendon. Aug. 18, 1857.

to be learned in the word of God. They were the only cultured class, and their function was to guide the minds and souls of the faithful. In no place in the Moslem Sunnite world did this caste enjoy the esteem of the people more than in North Africa. Indeed, many members of this caste received even veneration; they were regarded as saints, "marabouts", possessed of a divine power. The members of this caste were the leaders and mouth-piece of public opinion. They served the purpose of the central authority as long as the latter abided by the Moslem law which was recognized at that time. But if the Government failed to win their approval, the result would probably be universal discontent if not insurrection.

This caste remained irresponsive to reform. Religious reasons were not the sole factors. That the Moslem conscience was outraged by this forfeiture of Islamic ideals was true. Not less equally true was the fact that pride as well as the particular interests of their profession led them to condemn these innovations. From the political point of view no good Tunisian could tolerate the interference of Europe in the internal affairs of the Regency. It should be borne in mind that the heritage of hatred and rivalry between the two great religions did not end with the Middle Ages. Religious differences became in fact more outspoken, since the Crusdaers did not represent Christianity at its best, and as the Turks could not win the devotion of their subject Christian races. The persecution and expulsion of the Moors from Spain, and their mass emigration to Tunis had nourished that hostile sentiment between the two great religions. Above all things what annoyed the proud Eastern was the idea of the Occident that the political and economic success of the West was due to "an inborn or God-ordained

“superiority”. This, naturally, led the East to deny its own inferiority or the fact that its God was less omnipotent than that of his Christian fellow human being. Hence arose the school that demanded reform on purely eastern lines. They condemned cultural contact with the West and advocated the revival of the simple traditions of early Islam. In their enthusiastic admiration of the past they did not hesitate to offer blank opposition to all change.

What the East knew of Western influence and dealings was wholly discouraging. The West was understood as purely worldly, excessively materialistic and financially greedy. According to Oriental conception, Western policy was one based on the exploitation of the weak and the unnecessary display of material force. Indeed the East awoke to find its finances and liberty of action entirely controlled. The almost unbelievable rate of interest and the exacting demands of European imperialism were scarcely in harmony with the duties of a civilising mission. Thus the entry of modern European ideas and customs was not wholly a blessing to the East. They were accompanied by adventurers of the lowest strata of European society, with new elaborate forms of corruption and bribery. The struggle for concessions opened the eyes of the Orientals to the evil powers of the West. The life of the East was exploited for the most part in brutal disregard of the rules of international intercourse. It is true that at that time in the second half of the nineteenth century, sympathetic feeling, guided by knowledge was lacking on the part of both East and West. The East saw daily proofs of the abuse of power, while the West, not always well-informed about the East, applied to that world its own standards of life, held the traditions of the East in

contempt and ridicule, and justified trickery and bribery in the national cause.

The end of reform on Western lines was found to come rapidly, it was inevitable. Reform could not thrive under conditions of harrassing political uncertainties, foreign antipathies, and native prejudices. The special conditions of social life in the Regency were, in addition, most unfavourable. The population of the towns was against these reforms, since they granted the foreign adventurer, who was protected by his national flag, the right to compete with them. Outside the towns social life was based on the tribe, upon patriarchial republican foundations. The tribesmen worshipped their traditions and resented any interference with their liberties and beliefs. They were not in a position to appreciate the innovations wrought at the capital. What the population clamoured for above all was justice and peace, and these two essentials were absent. The men who could restore order and enforce these laws, so dear to the country, were wanting. Was it practicable then that a Government which ignored rights, registered by divine law, should respect laws made by man? They wanted just and strong rule not written reforms. The new Constitution meant subjection to new taxes and organised conscription. The reforms were accompanied by the humiliating visit of the Bay to Napoleon III in Algeria, (September 1860) and with a telegraphic monopoly concession to France. Bad harvests resulted in inability to pay taxes. The peasants were still exposed to the exactions of the past and were dragged into prisons. That was a poor testimony to the inviolable rights of man as confirmed by the Constitution. No credence was indeed attached to its high sounding pronouncements. The reform movement promised

much but accomplished little, so complete was its demoralisation.

Finally Europe itself was alarmed. European imperialism could not afford the Regency a period of undisturbed development; its function was to hasten her collapse. It is true that no important change was brought about in the social and economic life of the natives, yet the West could not agree to the theory that its "superior" nationals were the equals of the "contemptible" inhabitants. Its interests were for conservatism and reaction. Nor did it regard with complacency a Constitution which asserted that foreigners should be tried by the native courts. The Italian Government publicly denounced the Organic Laws. With vehemence and force, France demanded the abrogation of the Constitution; her agents made use of the popular sufferings and discontent, and knew how to exploit the intrinsic weakness of the Bardo. (1) At last, through lack of sincerity and sympathy, the absence of endurance and solidarity, reform ended in complete failure. Revolt broke out, and civil war did not spare the last powers of resistance that the Regency still possessed. The sequel was financial disaster and economic ruin, for the resources of Tunis were not in a position to give any fair amount of relief. Reaction was thorough and frank and stopped at nothing; all discussions of local reform were rudely rebuffed, corporal punishment, devastation of land, and expropriation grew once more into a weapon of the administration. Payment of officials was suspended, and they were given a free hand to help themselves to public revenue. Financial chaos and political impotence

(1) For the Italian attitude see F. O. 102/68, 71. Reports of Wood to Russell. Sep. 28, 1863 and Feb. 16, 1864. For the French Attitude See F. O. 102/71, 72. Reports of Wood to Russell. April. 21, 23, 30. May 14, Jul. 23, Sep. 3, 1864.

brought in their train direct Western control. The free will of Tunis to conduct her own affairs perished. That was the story of reform in Tunis in the second half of the nineteenth century.

III. *Contact with the West. The International Financial Commission.*

The contact with the West had resulted in another but more permanent interference. Military reform had been a very expensive policy for the Regency. She was forced to contract loans as a result of the continuous decrease of revenue which unfortunately coincided with a great and gradual increase in the Government's necessities. Economic decline had begun in fact with the abolition of piracy and slavery. The finances of the Regency were shattered by participation in the Crimean War, and were further damaged by the luxurious life of Muhammad Bay. But it was mainly the misgovernment and corruption of the Khaznahdar that brought financial ruin. Among his chief accomplices figured a Jewish banker, Caïd Nessim Samama, who directed the financial department but who stopped at nothing to achieve his own ends. The reform movement in no way improved the administration of the finances. The short lived Legislative Assembly was controlled by the corrupt Minister so long as he enjoyed the favour of the Bay. When all forms of exaction and illegal procedure failed to balance the expenditure, the Government resorted to local loans from the foreign merchants resident in Tunis. But far from meeting the Government's needs, these local loans had the opposite effect of increasing its liabilities. In 1862 the Local Debt rose to the huge sum of 28,026,000 francs. To save the financial situation, the more

dangerous policy of borrowing from Europe was then pursued. A disastrous loan of nominal value 35,000,000 fr. was concluded in May 1863 with the Houses of Oppenheim, Emile Erlanger and Saxe Meneingen. (1) This loan was to be repaid in fifteen years, at twelve per cent interest, and it was secured on the poll tax. What really reached the Regency of this loan was the insignificant sum of 5,640,000 fr., the remaining part, no doubt, found its way to the pockets of the Prime Minister, bankers and commissioners. But the sure results of indebtedness were increased taxation, social unrest, opposition and revolution.

The Insurrection of 1864 brought about the bankruptcy of the population as well as of the Government. It involved the Bardo in new expenditure and consequently in new local loans. During the three years 1865, 1866, 1867, the population suffered untold miseries; there were the ravages of cholera, then an epidemic of typhus among the coastal towns, and lastly severe drought and famine. (2) Capital was wanting for economic reconstruction. No less acute was the absence of men prepared to undertake that task. A second loan of twenty five millions had to be contracted in Paris, this time on less advantageous terms. Taking advantage of the inexperience of the Tunisian Government in complicated financial transactions, of its weakness and corruption, foreign capitalists made considerable profits. (3) Of this last loan, the Treasury received only a small sum; 2,500,000 francs were represented by an obsolete frigate, and another million by old and rusty cannons. The guarantee for this unfortunate loan was the custom dues, so that the Government

(1) F. O. 102/68. Wood to Russell, May 11, 1863.

(2) F. O. 102/82. Wood to Stanley Jan. 4, 1868.

(3) F. O. 102/113. Wood to Stanley Mar. 14, 1868.

deprived itself of a very important source of revenue. The financial situation, itself, was far from improved, for in less than a year the Bardo was unable to meet its obligations. By 1865 the interest of the debt went unpaid, and it was natural for the creditors to protest to their Governments. France was the first Power to remonstrate again the defective financial policy of the Bardo. (1)

The Tunisian Government was in a dilemma. In January 1866, the English Consul reported that the treasury was upset by "a formidable debt", the accumulation of unpaid capital and interest. (2) This situation led the foreign representatives to seek a plan which would satisfy their nationals. The loans contracted with the local British, Italian and French merchants were therefore united into a common local debt at an interest of twelve per cent. Of that Local Debt, which amounted to forty million francs, the British claimed sixteen, the Italians fourteen, and the French ten. (3) But this arrangement could not solve the whole problem for as Khair-ed-Din reported, the treasury was unable to pay either the debtors, or the officials, while public works received no attention whatever. (4) The large grants and assignments to foreigners were another drain on the poverty-stricken finances. The Regency was indeed in the final stages of deterioration. For the Government remained the alternatives of bankruptcy or repudiation of the debt. The Bardo was not in a position to adopt the latter policy.

(1) Ibid.

(2) Memorandum respecting the finances of Tunis, printed for the use of the F. O. 102/123, Mar. 31, 1876.

(3) Abid.

(4) Memoirs of Khair-ed-Din, published by Mzali and Pinon in *Revue Tunisienne*. Year 1934.

The project for the consolidation of the loans and for the establishment of a national bank failed to obtain the approval of the bondholders who were supported by their Governments. (1) It was then that the French Consul, de Botmiliau, advised the establishment of a mixed commission which was to be controlled by a majority of Frenchmen. It was natural that the English Representative should interpose his veto and suggest a commission on which the three Powers would have equal representation. With enthusiasm the Italian Agent supported his British colleague. Although a conflict between Wood and de Botmiliau ensued, yet they agreed upon this, "that it was utterly hopeless to expect any improvement as long as the finances continued to be solely administered by persons who had given palpable proofs of incompetency". (2) By threats the French Consul succeeded in convincing the Bay of the necessity of a purely French Commission. (3) Both England and Italy protested against this egoistic move. Lyons, the British Ambassador in Paris, was instructed to point out to de Moustier, the French Foreign Minister, "that in a case so vitally affecting the interests of the three Powers, common action was more likely to lead to a beneficial result, than attempts on the part of one to establish a separate influence and to provide for separate interests". (4) After very difficult negotiations in Paris, in which England and

(1) F. O. 102/113. Wood to Stanley Mar. 14, 1868.

(2) Ibid. Wood to Stanley Mar. 28, 1868.

(3) "I am taken by the throat," Es-Sadik told Wood, "You know the proceedings of the French Chargé d'Affaires... the pressure he employed to extort from me, in the interval of few hours... my decision regarding the project he had presented to me". F. O. 102/82. Wood to Stanley Apr. 5, 1868

(4) F. O. 102/113. Stanley to Lyons, Apr. 8, 1868.

Italy took one side, and France the other, Lyons, Nigra, and de la Valette agreed to the establishment of a mixed financial commission. They had discussed the nature and amount of foreign loans and then proceeded to the more difficult point relative to the composition and functions of the Commission. This institution survived the momentous events of 1881.

The first obligation of the Commission was to secure a proper administration of the finances in the Regency, in order to ensure the payment of the Debt's interest, and in order to regulate the expenditure of the Government. It was constituted of two distinct sections. The Executive, appointed by the Bay, was composed of two Tunisian members, one of them was to be the president of the Commission. The third member, a Frenchman, was designated by the French Government and received his appointment as vice-president at the hands of the Bay. The functions of the Administrative part were "prospective", and indeed did not extend to "setting aside arrangements already entered into by the Tunisian Government". The Controlling section possessed "real and effective authority". It consisted of two French-men, representing the Loans of 1863 and 1865, two Englishmen, and two Italians representing the Local Debt. This section discussed, and supervised the decisions of the Executive. In July 1869, the Bay promulgated the decree establishing the Commission. Later on, a sub-committee, known as "the Council of Administrators of the Conceded Revenues", was added. This section was composed of five members namely, one Englishman, one Frenchman, one Tunisian, one Italian, and one taken indiscriminately from among the most respectable residents of any other nationality; these were to be

named by the Financial Commission for three years. (1)

The Commission succeeded in converting the various debts into one common stock. The Debt which was estimated at 160 million francs at an annual interest of a little more than twelve per cent was reduced to 125 millions and an interest of 5 per cent. To secure the rights of creditors, the Commission divided the revenues of the Regency, which amounted to thirteen millions, into two equal parts, the first was reserved for the service of the Debt, while the remainder went to the treasury. Whenever the sources of revenue reserved for the Debt did not yield the 6,250,000 francs, the Government had to cover the deficit. This arrangement was recorded in an Act of Settlement dated the 23rd March 1870, which was placed by the Bay under the guarantee of the three interested Powers. (2)

Throughout its life the Commission never worked smoothly; it was confronted from the beginning with insurmountable difficulties. The jealousies and rivalries that raged between the three Powers found a very suitable field in the Commission. Italy never concealed her jealousy of the French influence in that body. While on the whole England was conciliatory and sympathetic, Italy was always envious and irritated. The Italians were so loud indeed in their complaints against the presence of a French member in the Administrative section that they

(1) Granville Papers. (G. D. 29) Vol. 362. Confidential. Memorandum printed for the use of the F. O. Aug. 22, 1883. See F. O. 102/107. Report of Reade upon the Financial Condition of Tunis May 13, 1880. See also F. O. 102/104. Wood to Derby. Feb. 1, 1876.

(2) F. O. 102/120 no. 1063. Lyons to Granville. In his "Report upon the Financial Condition of Tunis", 1880, Consul-General Reade made a mistake when he dated the Act of Settlement March 1869. See Memorandum respecting the finances of Tunis printed for the use of the Foreign Office, March 31, 1876. See also F. O. 102/123 Wood to Derby Feb. 1, 1876. Also D'Estournelles de Constant: *La Politique Française* p. 58.

attempted to torpedo the whole Commission. It was only the firm attitude of England that saved the ill-adventured Commission from complete shipwreck. "I did not conceal from Count Maffei" (1) wrote Lord Clarendon, "my dissatisfaction at the Communication he was instructed to make to me; and I said so far as her Majesty's Government is concerned, the arrangement had been concluded and that Count Menabrea must take his own course". (2) As late as 1881, the Italian Ambassador in London kept complaining of the incompetency of that institution.

On their part the consuls did not view this Commission with equanimity. Both De Botmiliau and Roustan were discontented because of its international character; the French agents were much more in favour of a purely French commission. They always maintained that the proximity of Tunis to Algeria and the fact that France was the chief debtor of the Regency entitled France to an exclusive influence over Tunis. Richard Wood, the English Representative, was at the beginning unable to reconcile himself to the new institution; he had fought the scheme which gave France ascendancy over England in Tunis with all the weapons at his disposal, but had failed. He had always entertained the most extravagant suspicions of France. It remained for him now to hold meetings of the opposition to the arrangement, and exerted himself to impede its action. He criticised it and showed the Bay that he had himself to blame for its establishment. The attitude of his Italian colleagues, Pinna and Maccio (3) was more hostile.

(1) Italian Chargé d'Affaires in London.

(2) F. O. 102/118 No. 600. To Lyons. Jun. 15, 1869.

(3) Maccio succeeded Pinna at the end of 1878.

Pinna expected that the project of the Commission would not be carried out, and expressed his hope of witnessing its destruction. He regarded it not only as an instrument in the hands of the Bardo to prejudice Italian interests, but as a tool for French political preponderance. Hence, his reports about the financial situation were always drawn in the darkest shades.⁽¹⁾ The consuls differed amongst themselves with regard to the exact spheres of action of its two sections. The French Agent was more inclined to support the Administrative part; the English and Italian Representatives stressed the importance of the Control.

The Commission was further handicapped by the fact that it was composed of mutually hostile committees. As a majority in the Control, the representatives of the English and Italian creditors inexorably opposed any project sent by the Administrative section which was deemed to favour French interests. These representatives indeed regarded the Executive as a mere instrument for carrying out orders. The rivalry between the three Powers was relentlessly raging in the Commission as well as outside it. Most exciting were the quarrels between consuls and financial agents, even of the same nationality. The most conspicuous conflict occurred between the French Consul-General and the Vice-president of the Commission. The latter, being entitled to have a separate correspondence with the French Foreign Office, often complained of the obstacles set in his way by the political agent. Not infrequently did the latter take upon himself the task of defending

(1) See F. O. 102/85. Herries, English Agent in the absence of Wood to Clarendon Sep. 23 1869.
Also F. O. 102/101. Wood to Derby. Jun. 19, 1875.

the pecuniary claims of a concessionnaire which were on many occasions damaging to the finances controlled by the Commission. On his part the Bay was sufficiently thankful to leave the two agents to fight their own battle alone. The complaints of Villet, the first Vice-president, was among the reasons that led Decazes to withdraw in 1874 de Billing, who was attempting to reinstate the Khaznahdar, the personal enemy of Villet.⁽¹⁾ On his part the French Consul-General, Roustan, blamed the financial agent for defeating his schemes for political dominance. The conflict between Roustan and Queillet in the Sancy affair was most illuminating. The financial agent was recalled for the unpardonable crime of having honestly discharged his duties as a Tunisian official; from 1878 onwards the French Vice-president had to receive his orders from the political agent. Not less enthusiastic in making complaints were the foreign merchants in the Regency. Although the Commission was established for the protection of their own rights, yet sadly enough for them, it had put an end to the policy of borrowing followed for a long time by the Bardo. Thanks to that policy, they had become possessed of vast landed property and many concessions. Thus they were unable to reconcile themselves to the policy of economy pursued by the Commission.

The establishment in Tunis of that foreign and powerful institution caused no little alarm to the Regent. He had been always reassuring himself with the hope that the three Powers would never come to any agreement. He was rudely awakened to find himself no longer master in his own house; he wondered whether the next step was to urge him to surrender

(1) F.O. 102/99. Wood to Derby Oct. 22, Dec. 22, 1874.

his own autonomy.⁽¹⁾ For the Commission, in order to restore financial stability, had to interfere in all branches of the administration. It came into conflict with the Government which naturally resented the limitation of its freedom of action. The Ministry hated this foreign intrusion into its own affairs; cooperation with the Commission became practically an impossibility. Nor could it be expected that a Moslem population would view with equanimity a Commission with such limitless powers, and whose members were mostly Christians and Europeans. In the conception of the natives, the Commission succeeded only in registering foreign rights and in securing their permanence. With sorrow did they witness the squandering by the Commission of their own national wealth, in order to maintain foreign interests. For indeed the Commission had confined its activities to the satisfaction of the foreign bondholders alone; it did not give any real consideration to the vital needs of reconstruction. Tunis found herself in fact unable to breathe without the permission of the Powers. The evil of the new financial system was not only confined to the present of Tunis, it was a burden on her future, and an impediment in the way of progress. The power it gave to the country's creditors was enormous, but that power was not always in very clean hands. In fact the Commission stood there as a living symbol of Western oppression, an instrument for the permanent exploitation of an unfortunate country.

1. F.O. 102/118, Wood to Clarendon Jun. 1, 1869

VI. *Foreigners in the Regency.*

Though the Regency was politically outworn and financially diseased, she possessed enough to tempt the avarice of her all powerful neighbours. To Tunis the sea had lost its protective value and became only an added danger. Her dominant position in the very centre of the Mediterranean, between Europe and Central Africa, the proverbial fertility of her soil, her long coastline with its deep inlets, the suitable and magnificent harbours she possessed, her wealth in minerals and Mediterranean products, and her healthy climate, all these privileges not only enabled Tunis to play a leading part in the history of the Mediterranean, but also attracted to her conquerors who devastated her territory, and warriors who served in her army and navy. Merchants from all parts of the Mediterranean flocked to her cities. Her navy was manned essentially by an international group; ⁽¹⁾ sailors from Spain, Corsica, Italy, Greece and Turkey played an important part in her naval and political history. Not infrequently did the Raïs of the fleet usurp government in Tunis; Osta Murad, who was said to be of Corsican origin, affords a good example. ⁽²⁾ A mere renegade from Crete, Hussain ibn Ali, who served in the Tunisian army, rose rapidly to power and succeeded in establishing the present reigning family. On many occasions black soldiers served in the Tunisian Army. Spanish, French, Italian and Levantine settlers greatly influenced her political

1. Langer might probably have meant this group when he referred to the "warlike proclivities of the population". *European Alliances and Alignments* 1931. P. 218.

2. Abd-ul Wahab: *Outline of the History of Tunis* p. 146.

and social history. A good many Italian words figured in her language, a dialect of Arabic.

The tide of foreign conquests came to an end in the sixteenth century when the Turks finally expelled the Spaniards from Tunis. From that time onwards adventurous European traders and fishermen began to settle in the Regency in comparatively large numbers. They derived great benefit from the generous concessions offered by the Turks to foreigners. It is true that European settlers had lived in Tunis since the Middle Ages. Equally true was the fact that they received charters granting them liberty of worship and right to security, but enumerating at the same time their duties towards the country which was good enough to receive them. Nor were they deprived of the right to settle their own disputes and personal relations. Under the tolerant rule of the Fatimids and Hafsids, these foreigners were able to thrive and grow. But it should be borne in mind that what concessions they received did not give them any permanent privileges, for these concessions were renewed from time to time, almost with the accession of each new sovereign. The Turks conquered Tunis, establishing their direct rule for only a short time. The generous concessions which they granted to the French by the famous Treaty of 1535, and which they conferred on the English and Dutch later, extended to Tunis as well as any other part of the Ottoman Empire. For their part, the Days and Bays consented that such concessions to Europeans should apply to the Regency as well. These special privileges, immunities and concessions were better known by the name of "Capitulations". They extended to all Moslem countries where the authorities were not ready to bother

with the settlement of the differences which arose among European residents in their territory. That these concessions were based on "a presumed inferiority of the Western merchants as unfit to share in the privileges of the Moslem Law" (1) is untrue. Though these privileges were "unilateral and one-sided", they were granted to Europeans for the main purpose of encouraging foreign trade.(2) They were not demands presented to the Porte by the French or any other European Government. They were not considered in the sixteenth century as a derogation from Turkish sovereignty. In fact they were gratuitously given by Turkey at the time when her military power was almost incomparable.

"In spite of the outward form of "gracious concession" in which many of these Capitulations were closed, it is reasonably clear that the earliest concessions represented nothing more than a good business transaction in the mutual interest of the parties involved, in other words, were simply a means of securing to Turkey the trade and other benefits resulting from the presence in the country of large bodies of industrious and intelligent people, in exchange for a protection and a right of self government which had the advantage of relieving the Turkish State from complicated administrative burdens. Certainly the Capitulations were far from being privileges wrung from unwilling Eastern religious rulers. Founded on mutual interest they were above everything else the expression of a practical working agreement dominated by a factor of controlling importance, namely the essentially religious conception of the early ideal of sovereignty

1. Borchard: Diplomatic Protection of Citizens Abroad, 1915. p. 437.
 2. Shin Shuh Liu: Extraterritoriality 1925. p. 56.

as distinguished from the later and Western conception of sovereignty as co-existent with territorial control." (1)

Whatever these privileges might have amounted to, the Bey did not consider the agreements between him and the foreign Powers as binding, though such agreements periodically emphasised the articles relative to the Capitulations. To respect the right of foreign residents was a matter dependent upon his good-will and nothing more. Whenever he was short of maney, or whenever his soldiers were desirous of expressing a surplus energy, he had to let them loose to pillage even the consulates, or seized the handful of foreigners together with their consuls, subjected them to all sorts of humiliation, and imposed upon them indemnities for more or less imagined injuries. A statement made by the English merchants in Tunis describes how Europeans were treated in this city in the seventeenth century:

"In this Citty and Kingdome of Tunis About an advance Imposed by Sidi Muhamet Bey upon the English Nation amounting to Fifteen Thousand and eleven dollars.

On the 12th January, in the yeare of our Lord 1677 His Excellency Sidi Mahomet Bey appeared with his Forces before this city of Tunis...

On the 26th January he sent for our Nation and the French to attend him... and taxed the latter with many frivolous pretences... and did without any reply forceably and violently seize on Charles Gratiano Consul for the French together with ourselves, sending as Prisoners to his Camp... swearing by the Soule of his diceased he would cut us to pieces that night,

1. J. J. Brinton: *The Mixed Courts of Egypt*. 1930. p. 6. Brinton was Justice of the Court of Appeal, Mixed Courts of Egypt.

and seize on the whole English Estate in this Country . . . Neither our lives nor the whole English Estate in the Country were in security unless we complied in the payment of a Summe of money, of which his occasions for the payment of his Army were very pressing". (1)

Such treatment was not very rare, and might explain in part the small number of foreigners settling in Tunis in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The instability of the rule of the Days and of their successors, the Bays, the almost incessant capture and evacuation of towns, disorder and even anarchy, the ill-treatment of non-Moslems, all combined to render emigration to Tunis practically impossible. The Europeans who ventured to remain in Tunis lived under the most dangerous circumstances, with their lives and property at the mercy of the authorities in the Regency. In addition to those who came voluntarily to settle in Tunis, there existed the involuntary immigrants. This group consisted of those captives who were taken during the raids on the southern coast of Europe. Those unfortunates who were unable to pay the ransom were sold as slaves and had to work for their masters until they could buy their liberty. Such captives crowded the "bagui" of Tunis, and many of them ultimately made their abode in the Regency. These usual occurrences which constituted a part of the life of Tunis in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries took place under the very eyes of the foreign consuls, who, though armed with the Capitulations and other treaties, were unable to do anything but protest. The appeals of those ill-treated or those who were brought into captivity to the

(1) Broadley: Last Punic War. 1882 Vol. 1. pp. 53—56.

“Well-Guarded” City, Al-Mahrousa, went in most cases unheard. “Sy les roches avaient des sentiments, ils verseraient des ruisseaux de pleurs de voir ce qui commet contre vos sujets qui crient miséricorde”, appealed French captives to Louis XIII in 1631. (1)

The French conquest of Algiers put an end to this chaos. It opened Algeria as well as Tunis to all European emigrants. The growth of national sentiment in Europe, the development of state obligations towards the individual citizen made it imperative that the most complete protection possible should be given to nationals abroad, especially when this protection signified the development of national interests. The over-confidence of the East in its powers disappeared when the forces of Napoleon proved themselves more effective than the forces at the disposal of Egypt and Turkey. The naval demonstrations of England and France on a scale threatening the very existence of Tunis, the humiliation of the Day of Algiers, the drastic revenge for an insult addressed to a European Agent by the eventual conquest of a country, made a deep impression upon Government and population in the Regency. The success of Europe in imposing its will upon the Bay in the questions of piracy and slavery, the failure of the heroic resistance of Prince Abd-ul-Kader in Algeria combined to secure the material supremacy of Europe in the mind of the North Africans. The defeats of Turkey in Europe in the twenties, the effective intervention of Europe to prevent the establishment of an Egyptian Empire in the Near East resulted in a sense of resignation and defeatism which swept the whole Moslem

(1) Auguste Pavy in “Revue Tunisienne.” 1900.

Mediterranean. The political and social position of Europeans in the East soared very high, and contempt for the European gave place to a sense of awe mixed with jealousy and hate. On their part, Europeans were well-aware of the superiority, of which they took full advantage. They succeeded therefore in securing the renewal of rights granted to them by old treaties which became no longer applicable. As far as Turkey, Egypt and Tunis were concerned, treaties had to preserve their sanctity; they were not to submit to the eternal law of change, unless this change was in European interest. The ancient treaty between Soliman the Magnificent and François I was always appealed to; verbal declarations on the part of Eastern statesmen were given the importance of recorded documents and acted upon. Concessions to Europe were regarded by the West as something sacred to depart from which was considered an act of bad faith, and consequently a sufficient excuse for the expression of European wrath. Promises made by the East must be fulfilled to the letter; treaties could be interpreted only to the benefit of European enterprise and expansion. European statesmen and writers were self-appointed judges of the "backwardness", the inferiority of the East. Members of Western Governments found pleasure in bullying and despising the Eastern statesmen with whom they came into contact. The representatives of the Great Powers in Constantinople, Cairo and Tunis allowed themselves the liberty of referring to the rulers to whom they were accredited and also to the native statesmen in the most disparaging terms. Nor did they refrain from addressing Orientals in a language that was meant to wound and humiliate. The language used by the French Agent, Beauval, to Es-Sadik Bay during the revolt of

1864 was insulting; his reference to the Prime Minister as a thief was not very consistent with the usual diplomatic language. It would probably be no exaggeration to state that the Eastern Moslem was considered as inferior to the Western Christian, and consequently was treated as if he did not possess the same pride and the same feelings. A certain conception that the Eastern was inferior in intelligence and other mental endowments found general acceptance among the ignorant people even among Governmental circles. Right and justice and God himself were generally believed in the Occident to be on Europe's side.

No wonder then that the whole system of the Capitulations was given by Europe a new definition. Their original object had been "to regulate the conditions, under which Europeans were to do business"; (1) their new object was to protect European nationals from the rotten laws of the East and from the jurisdiction and caprice of its incompetent and corrupt administrators. "The object of the Capitulations was to defend foreigners from the injustice to which they would have been exposed by recourse to the native courts", so Tissot pointed out to Granville in 1882, when France intended to abrogate Consular jurisdiction. (2) Count Kalnoky, the Austrian-Hungarian Foreign Minister, was perhaps right in defining in what light a European Power regarded the capitulatory system in Tunis:

(1) Shih Shuh Liu: *Extraterritoriality*, 1925, p. 56. and De Vallat: *Guide Pratique des Consulats* 1898, Vol. 1, p. 520.

(2) Granville Papers (G. D. 29), Vol. 337, Tunis Miscellaneous, Correspondence respecting the Establishment of French Tribunals and the Proposed Abrogation of Consular Jurisdiction. Printed for the use of the Foreign Office, No. 1, Granville to Plunkett, Sep. 13, 1883. Tissot was the French Ambassador in London.

“There is really no technical reason for maintaining Consular jurisdiction in Tunis, when once the administration of justice will be exercised there by the French Government. The Capitulations and the jurisdiction of foreign Consuls resulting therefrom are in Mahomedan countries necessitated by the peculiar institutions based on Islam, which in connection with the unreliability of the local tribunals, have imposed the obligation in the European Powers to provide for their subjects in those countries the indispensable protection of the law and security for life and property, with the introduction of an organization of justice, under the authority of a Christian Power, and of the corresponding ideas, the basis for the maintenance of the capitulations falls to the ground”. (1)

The conception of the English Foreign Office was not very different. On October 16, 1882, Lord Granville informed the English Chargé d’Affaires in Paris, Plunkett, “that there would be no sufficient reason for maintaining Consular jurisdiction in Tunis when the native courts are superseded by French tribunals. The institutions which have grown up under the Capitulations in Turkey have been found essential for the protection of foreigners under the peculiar circumstance of the Ottoman Empire, and the necessity for them disappears when tribunals organized and controlled by a European Government take the place of the Mussulman Courts”. (2) Such was the European conception of this system in the second half of the nineteenth century.

(1) Ibid. no. 8. Extract from the Instructions sent by Count Kalnoky to the Imperial and Royal Chargé d’Affaires in Paris. Communicated to Earl Granville by Mr. Hengelmüller Oct. 7, 1882.

(2) Ibid. no. 13. Granville to Plunkett. Oct. 16, 1882.

The modern significance of the Capitulations meant among other things the exemption of European and American residents from local jurisdiction. The European colonies were subject only to their national law which was administered by their consuls. In course of time this privilege was extended by some of the foreign agents to non-treaty subjects and to natives in foreign employ. (1) This right, wrung by threat and demonstration of force, was one of the main pretexts exploited by Italy to attempt the invasion of the Regency in 1871. The extraterritorial rights usually included "the inviolability of domicile, freedom from arrest by native officials except when in the act of committing a flagrant crime; if arrested the right of surrender to the Consul for trial and punishment; criminal or civil trial in consular or national courts of the accused or defendant". (2) As the central authority grew more impotent and disorganised, these rights though vaguely based on treaty

(1) The English Consul-General referred to the encroachment of the consuls upon the Bey's sovereignty with regard to matters of jurisdiction. "The Consuls", he reported, "have persistently endeavoured to apply the right of judging their own national subjects when no native is a party to the case, to mixed cases wherein a Tunisian is the plaintiff. The exercise of such a jurisdiction has never been conceded to them by treaties, which on the contrary, provide that in mixed cases the Bey shall be the judge. Neither can they invoke usage for the justification of their pretensions since it has never existed *de jure* inasmuch as the Tunisian Government has always protested against it. . . . Whatever usage they (consuls) may have established by the employment of external pressure, cannot be invoked as a right acquired, when that usage has been invariably denounced by the Government as being at variance with existent treaties, with international law, and the territorial rights appertaining to the ruler of a State". F. O. 102/106. Wood to Derby. 22 Sep. 1874. See also Lord Lloyd: *The End of Capitulations in Egypt*. "Politica". Dec. 1937. p. 528.

(2) Borchard: *The Diplomatic Protection of Citizens Abroad*. 1915. p. 433.

and custom, got more complicated, even reached the extent of encroachment upon the national sovereignty of the state. In fact the Capitulatory System became "the very negation of sovereignty". "Ou commence l'action du Consul", wrote Charmes, "s'arrêtent la police, l'administration, la justice et les lois". (1) Although foreigners found the Regency a generous and hospitable country, most of them were always discontented. Their press kept on insulting the local authorities and harassing the Government. The European newspapers accused the Bardo of inability to keep the peace, but they overlooked the fact that the Bardo was completely powerless whenever a foreigner was involved in trouble. To the foreign colonist in Tunis, the Capitulations came to mean complete exemption from taxation, immunity from native legislation, the escape from all obligations instituted by the native authorities. They came to denote the ardent exploitation of the political and economic weakness of the Regency. In a word they grew to serve the purpose of imperialism and the national ends of European countries. The Capitulations of the sixteenth century were invoked by the consuls to obtain new privileges and new concessions in the nineteenth. Naval demonstrations and concentration of troops on the western frontier of the Regency were resorted to in order to assert what Europeans called their "legitimate" rights, and in order to realise "civilised" aspirations.

By the end of the first half of the nineteenth century, through the increasing pressure of Europe, the weakness and negligence of the Tunisian Government, the concessions accorded in the

(1) *La Tunisie et la Tripolitaine* 1883. pp. 139-146.
Charmes was an authority on questions connected with the Near East.

Capitulations grew to the same scandalous proportions as in all the countries of the Near East. And when the Organic Laws and the Constitution of 1861 granted foreigners the right to possess landed property and to practice all professions, a swarm of emigrants arrived in Tunis. These emigrants ranged from bankers and merchants to "escaped convicts engaged in transactions of every description", to adventurers of the lowest strata of European society. Before the promulgation of these laws, European colonists were confined to the coastal towns. But now their numbers increased; they were induced to spread all over the country and to engage in all industries, in agriculture, in the breeding of cattle and in all kindred pursuits. Under the undisputed leadership of their enthusiastic consuls, these colonists appealed to the Capitulations and raised the most hazy of claims. Even as early as 1856 the Bay was tired of the endless demands made by foreigners. "Your Government, Mr. Wood", the Bay confided to the English Consul-General, "knows our position: the pressure exercised upon us is great; it has become intolerable, pretensions were put forth which we cannot resist; and demands are made upon us which we strive in vain to satisfy". (1) Tunis could not by any means derive any great material benefit from the presence of such people on her soil. They in fact contributed to her economic ruin. Here were rich and thriving colonists who enjoyed privileges they would not dream of having at home, who came to possess the best sources of income, but who obdurately refused to pay taxes. Under the name of the Capitulations, they obstructed every measure of reform, whether it was

(1) F. O. 102/50. Wood to Clarendon. Oct. 8, 1856.

constitutional, judicial or financial, which they imagined prejudicial to their interests. They were alarmed at any progress made by the Regency. The Italian colonists could not renounce rights granted by the Capitulations in favour of the liberal Constitution of 1861. (1) The French Government and the French colony were relentless in the demand for its abrogation. Wood analysed with great skill the motives behind such a conduct:

“I must beg to again advert to the real object sought to be attained by an influential portion of the colonists, namely the overthrow and subversion of the Constitutional Laws of the country. To effect their purpose, they have recourse to an unflinching opposition to the new order of things: they throw unnecessary and vexatious impediments in the way of settlement of their not always clear affairs in order to create fresh causes of complaint and embarrassment. They resort to acts and language which cannot fail to wound and irritate; they accuse their own authorities of incapacity and weakness, exciting them thereby to a course of action that cannot but paralyse a weak Government, deprived of the official channels of explaining its position, or of causing its representations to reach the friendly Powers, except through those very parties who bring to bear upon it an intolerable pressure.

Previous to the promulgation of the Organic Laws and the introduction of reforms, the judicial functions were vested in the Bey, to whose tribunal the Foreign Agents referred the claims of their respective merchants. Be it on account of political

(1) F. O. 102/71. Wood to Russell Feb. 16, 1864.

considerations, or be it on account of the inability of the Beys to clearly comprehend the merits of a dispute arising from a commercial transaction, wrapped up in much obscurity, the condemnation of their own subject was due to follow. By the new system, by the formation of Tribunals, this can no longer occur... the Beys who either tired out by the importunities of the consul or irritated by his observations, found in the condemnation of their subject an easy solution of the dispute.

This equality before the law, is received by foreigners, with some highly honourable exceptions, with unfeigned repugnance...

Under the protection of their flags and in the enjoyment of exclusive privileges by their treaties, they resist reforms that elevate and confer freedom on the poor natives with regard to whose fate and prosperity they have evinced from olden times a most stoical indifference, to the extent of averring that as they are barbarians they must not be withdrawn from the iron rule of a crushing despotism: their vehement cry is still "*de-lenda est Carthago*", but as the motive of their inconceivable illiberality is simply one of cupidity, unembarrassed by other and higher considerations, it required no further elucidation on the part of those who see with pain that their countrymen and correligionists in Tunis have lost all sense of justice in the pursuit of gain and that in feeling and sentiment they are not far removed from prejudices and fanaticism they condemn in those who grant them hospitality and protection. (1)

This hostile and malevolent sentiment survived the French protectorate. France, who had relentlessly appealed to the Capitulations, and constantly upheld them, considered it

(1) F. O. 102/71. Wood To Russell Feb. 16, 1864.

her chief and first task to abolish gradually these special privileges once her protectorate was firmly established in Tunis.

The grave abuses of the Capitulations were not only confined to the relations between the Bardo and foreigners. The operation of the system served to embitter the relations between the consuls and between the different colonies. As a result of the Capitulatory System uniformity of justice in the Regency was non-existent. Secondly as the European colonies were engaged in the most fervent economic and political rivalries, trouble was bound to be the outcome if the plaintiff and the defendant were of different nationalities. Complications ultimately ensued if it was found impossible to bring together the parties to a transaction before one tribunal. And if it is remembered that the consuls combined national and deep-rooted prejudices with lack of training in judicial procedure, one can easily imagine the great confusion that prevailed in the administration of justice in the Regency. The case of the Enfida Estate gave French and English the opportunity to vent the mutually suppressed feeling towards each other. It afforded a good example of the interference of national interests with legal procedure, the intermingling of political and economic factors. It illustrated the deep irritation with which French statesmen viewed the malaise of their neighbours across the Channel, and the alternate suspicion and confidence of both in the justice of Tunisian judgment. (1) The evils of the Capitulatory System reached such a pitch that even Europeans became doubtful of its usefulness. On May 30th, 1871, the English Consul, Wood, wrote, "It is a fallacy to believe that the

(1) See Chapter V.

extortion of advantages from a weak Government to the detriment of its prestige and authority would be beneficial to European interests or to the personal security of the European colonists themselves". Indeed the European Powers were not sorry to co-operate in the final abrogation of this system. When France declared in 1882 her desire to abolish Consular jurisdiction in Tunis, the Italian Government "considered that the Capitulations would have to go". Europe was unanimous in complying with the French proposal. "No one", wrote Sir Henry Elliot, the British Ambassador in Vienna, "who has had occasion for observing the working of the Capitulations and especially of Consular jurisdiction, desire their maintenance wherever the establishment of a responsible Government renders their abrogation possible. I understood the Austrian Consul-General at Tunis to have expressed a strong opinion in favour of the benefit that would result from it in the Regency". (1)

In 1871, the Bardo felt the urgent need of modifying the Capitulations. The increased contact between natives and foreigners resulted in disputes with which the existing judicial machinery was unable to cope. The foreign representatives did not refrain from resorting to diplomatic action in order to adjust petty claims. For its part, the Bardo had recourse to vexatious delays and sometimes to subterfuges, in order to protect its subjects. This dilatory attitude was always construed as denial of justice and as incompetence. The Bay etherefor found sufficient encouragement to issue a circular Note to the

(1) See Granville Papers 337. No. 17. Elliot to Granville. Oct. 19, 1882. For the attitude of Italy see the same source, despatch no. 2 of Sep. 15, 1882.

three most interested Powers suggesting the establishment of Mixed Tribunals as the only remedy for this unfortunate state of affairs. The Note provided for the formation of a Tribunal of First Instance and a Court of Appeal. The function of these two Tribunals was to settle cases arising between natives and foreigners. As to the differences that might arise between the subjects of the different foreign Powers they would be settled by the defendant's Consular Court. The proposed scheme was to last for five years. As the original composition of the Tribunals was confined to English, French and Italian judges it was considered too exclusive by the other Powers, and modifications were therefore suggested by which judges of each nationality should sit at the Tribunals by turns. To this project the English Consul-General gave his full support. "The Establishment of Mixed Tribunals", he reported, "offering efficient securities for the protection of European interests, has become indispensable in Tunis, not only on account of the increase of the foreign population but likewise in order to obviate the constant misunderstandings which occur between the local and foreign authorities, in treating personally and in their diplomatic capacity the private claims and disputes of their respective national subjects", (1)

The attitude of the English and French Government was sympathetic. But the whole project was destined to perish. In August 1874, the Italian Government raised objections to the scheme, objections based on legal grounds and extraterritorial rights. The Italian Foreign Minister declared that he could not force an Italian subject to submit to the judgement of a

(1) See F. O. 102/106. Memorandum of Mar. 4, 1875 on the subject of Judicial Reforms in Tunis.

magistrate, who was neither his national, nor a Tunisian, his suit was with a Tunisian, and on Tunisian territory. (1)

Although the British Government recognized the connection of the principles of territorial and national jurisdiction, yet they regarded that they were not to their full extent applicable in Tunis. where the Bardo was willing to give up some of its rights of territorial jurisdiction. Austria conceived that the project was not yet sufficiently developed in the absence of codes. Germany was not interested and refused to give any opinion. Though France had displayed much real sympathy with the project at first yet parliamentary affairs were causing sufficient trouble to Decazes, the French Foreign Minister. The reception with which the French Parliament greeted the Government's Bill relative to judicial reforms in Egypt was far from encouraging. (2) It was definitely the apprehensive attitude of Italy which decided the complete failure of the scheme, for she did not consider the project as sufficiently maturely studied to form the object of an international agreement, and was unable to conceal any longer her disinclination to depart from the Capitulatory system, "a system which up to the last years, has given satisfactory results, and which has the advantage of institutions consecrated by long and uninterrupted tradition which have passed into the customs of the country". (3) In this way a great step towards judicial reform failed, and the Capitulations remained untouched. Up to the French Protectorate, they were used by the

(1) F. O. 102/106. Derby to Wood. Aug. 17, 1874.

(2) F. O. 192/106. No. 487. Lyons to Derby. Jun. 14, 1875.

(3) Ibid. Note of Visconti Venosta of Jun. 25, 1875.

consuls as an effective instrument against the Bardo and as a powerful weapon against each other.

V. *Consuls in Tunis.*

As head of an aggressive and dissatisfied colony, ⁽¹⁾ the consul held a position which was by no means enviable. The office of the consul was originally elective. As the "ancien membre" of a mercantile colony, he was charged with the task of conducting their relations with the local Government. This was the custom in the Middle Ages; ⁽²⁾ the modern consular system, however, dates only from the sixteenth century. Yet even long after consuls had been appointed by the various Governments, as diplomatic agents, they still preserved a

(1) This applies to the three important colonies in Tunis, Italian, British and French. What is mentioned above about consuls, their prerogatives, contests etc. applies to the diplomatic representatives of France, Italy and England.

(2) As far as France is concerned this custom survived the Middle Ages. Article 2 of "the Ordinance of the Marine of August 1681" states: When a Consulate becomes vacant, the oldest of the deputies of the nation in service shall exercise the functions of the Consul until we shall provide for the post". "The deputies of the Nation" were "two merchants elected by an assembly of the French merchants in the port". See Feller and Hudson: *Diplomatic and Consular Laws* 1933. p. 518.

It should be noted that till June 17, 1778, French Consulates were subordinated to the Ministry of Marine. The Colonial Office controlled the English Consulates down to June 1, 1836. *Ibid* p. 520 and footnotes; also *British Diplomatic Representatives 1780-1852*. Edited by Bindoff, M. Smith and C. K. Webster, p. 163. footnotes 2.

Compare the statement of Consul Reade's referring to Tunis: "As early as 1683, H. M. Charles II, by a letter under his sign-manual, was pleased to appoint Mr. Thomas Goodwyn to that office in succession to a Mr. Francis Baker who enjoyed the same rank . . . To Mr. Goodwyn succeeded an unbroken line of Agents and Consuls-statement of Bindoff in *British Diplomatic Representatives* with the p. 163: "No regular diplomatic representation before 1825".

certain commercial character. Some of them were even engaged in various trades together with their official duties. It was only in the nineteenth century that consuls in Tunis were obliged to keep strictly to their official business. (1) Yet despite this rule, some of them seem to have been involved in various commercial or financial transactions; Richard Wood spent most of his vacations in Syria to attend to "a personal business" of his; the French Parliament and press accused Roustan in the year 1881 of being mixed up in dishonourable financial transactions. (2) As to the consular agents in the different parts of the Regency, they were recruited from among the local foreign merchants. Most of them received no payment at all, while the others received almost nominal pay. (3)

The consul's obligations were enormous and difficult to discharge; they were at once diplomatic, naval, commercial, administrative and civil.

(1) The Ordinance of Aug. 20, 1833 forbade French consuls-general, consuls, student consuls, dragomans and chancellors to carry on any business, either directly or indirectly under penalty of dismissal. Article 34, Feller and Hudson editors of *Diplomatic and Consular Laws*. 1933. p. 522.

The Committee of 1858 sanctioned that English Consuls should be forbidden to trade, and recommended the better payment of consuls. See J. Tilley and S. Gaselee. *The Foreign Office*. 1933 p. 232.

(2) See *Le Procès Roustan*. Paris 1881.

(3) Of the nine British Consular Agents in Jan. 1879, seven were unpaid, and occupied in commerce; two were English, four were Maltese, one Italian, one Frenchman and one Algerian. F. O. 102/125. Wood to Salisbury Jan. 7, 1879.

As far as Italy was concerned vice-consuls and consular agents "secure only the consular fees". Feller and Hudson: *Diplomatic Consular Laws*. p. 686. The Ordinance of August 20, 1833, which regulated the French Consular service, and whose essentials remained in vigour till 1920, asserted in Article 44: "The functions of consular agents and vice-consuls do not give rise to any salary . . . Ibid p. 524.

“The duties of (the consul) are multifarious and heavy requiring much of his time. He has to administer a large and somewhat troublesome colony. The system of centralisation coupled with the dilatoriness of the Tunisian Government multiply his occupations, and he could not therefore bestow his attention on petty cases without detriment to much more urgent matters and affairs as require his personal intervention. In fact he would not have the time requisite for the efficient and satisfactory discharge of his duties”. (1)

The naval, commercial, civil and administrative constituted the original duties of the consul and remained among the chief attributes of his office. Even as late as 1835, English consuls, were instructed “to bear in mind that it is their principal duty to respect and promote the lawful trade and trading interests of Great Britain by every fair and proper means”. (2) The administrative and civil functions consisted in settling the commercial and personal differences that arose between the members of his colony and in other kindred duties.(3) The consuls were generally inadequately trained for their judicial post. The English Consul was not even provided with legal advisers who would relieve him of this most onerous duty. Reade complained in 1880 that “the Consular work which (had) for many years been steadily increasing in importance as well as in bulk, had now arrived at such limits as to

(1) F. O. 102/92. Wood to Granville Sep. 29, 1870. See also F. O. 102/106. Wood to Granville Jul. 30, 1871.

(2) Quotation from “The Foreign Office” by Sir J. Tilley and Mr. S. Gaselee. 1933. pp. 229, 230. The trading function of the consul is developed in pp. 230—232. See also de Vallat: Guide Pratique des Consulats 1898. Vol. 1. p. 1

(3) With regard to the civil and administrative functions of the consul,

defy all the energies of one single officer however capable he might be. The time at his disposal was insufficient for all the duties that had to be discharged". (1) It was only in the eighties that England thought of appointing legal officers to the Consulate in Tunis. The French and Italian Consuls-General were better equipped. Paris attached to her diplomatic agent a "consul suppléant", despite the fact that the French colony was small in member and constituted for the most part of respectable members. With regard to the Italian colony which surpassed in numbers both the British and the French, the Italian Consul

the English Government conceived them to be "(giving) his best advice and assistance, when called upon to his Majesty's trading subjects, quieting their differences, promoting peace, harmony, and good will amongst them". Quoted from the former English source. p. 230.

The functions of the Italian Consul given by the Royal Decree of January 28, 1866 are interesting since they could be applied generally to all consuls in Tunis. They are as follows:

Article 20: Consuls shall exercise administrative functions and also diplomatic functions, with the capacity of notary, of official civil status in regard to nationals, and also of judge, within the limits of the treaties, usage and local laws.

Article 21: Consuls shall supervize the observance of treaties, the care of the interests of the State, and the maintenance of the respect due to the national flag.

Article 22: They shall keep the Government of the Kingdom informed of everything which may be of public utility, especially in regard to navigation, commerce, industry and public health.

(Articles dealing with the civil duties of the Consul.)

Article 60: . . . Consuls shall exercise all the other jurisdictional functions" See Diplomatic and Consular laws edited by Feller and Hudson. pp. 687-689.

(1) F. O. 102/128 Reade to Sir J. Pauncefote Jan. 13, 1880. See also his dispatch to Salisbury of March. 22, 1880. Consular.

The judicial obligations of the British Consul in Tunis were regulated in 1871. He had to receive a "Deputation" from the English Consul-General and Judge in Constantinople whereby the latter deputed to Wood certain powers entrusted to him (the Consul at Constantinople) by the Order in Council of the 10th November 1866. F. O. 102/92. Wood to Granville. Dec. 5, 1871.

It should be noted that the "Supreme Consular Court" in the Ottoman Dominions had its seat in Constantinople.

was supplied according to the Decree of 1866 with a legal officer if the necessity arose. (1)

The diplomatic function was of a later date, but it was not less strenuous or less significant. It became in fact the most important of his duties. The consul's powers in dealing with the native Government overshadowed in fact those of an ambassador. The position which this agent occupied in Tunis was even more important than that of a minister at a small court. Indeed, he combined in himself the attributes of a diplomatic representative and those of a consular agent. His position differed much from that of an ordinary consul-general in some parts under the rule of Turkey. The British Foreign Office usually subordinated the Consular Service to the Diplomatic Service in the sense that the consul-general was under the control of the head of the mission. According to Russell's Circular of 1861, the consul had to keep the ambassador fully informed of all political and commercial matters in his district; he had to furnish the ambassador with copies of all despatches sent to the Foreign Office; moreover he had to act according

The British colony was second in number to the Italian, and consisted chiefly of Maltese men, mostly coachmen, boatmen, gardeners, artisans, and coffee shop-keepers. Their moral character gave the British Consul no little trouble.

- (1) This Official bore the title of "Supplementary Consul". Feller and Hudson. p. 686. See also de Vallat. vol. 1 pp. 50, 51.
 The staff of the British Consulate consisted of a Consul-General, Vice-Consul, Chancellor, and three interpreters; The French of a Consul-General, Consul Judge, Consul Elève, two interpreters, a Chancellor, 4 commis; the Italian of a Consul-General, Consul Juge, Vice-Consul, Consul Elève, two Interpreters, three commis, two commis without salary, and a Délégué de police. See F. O. 102/125. Inclosure no. (1) in Reade's Consular. Nov. 12 1879.

to the instructions he received from the head of the mission. (1) It is obvious that according to the English diplomatic procedure which was regulated in 1861, the consul-general in some Turkish dominions received his instructions from both the Foreign Office and Embassy in Constantinople. The case is quite different in Tunis. The special political status of the Regency, the independence she had enjoyed for centuries in the direction of her internal and foreign affairs, made it imperative that the agent accredited to this State would enjoy greater privileges than the ordinary consul-general. Tunisia was not a city surrounded by a limited area; it was a country where international rivalries were in a condition of very excited activity. It is not surprising therefore that the Consul-General in Tunis was not subjected to these restrictions. To shew his diplomatic position, the title of "Chargé d'Affaires" was sometimes added to his original title. (2) He was given great liberty in initiative and action, in order to enable him to defeat the schemes of the native Government and to outmanœuvre his colleagues.

The consul had not only to conduct his country's rela-

(1) See Report from the Select Committee on Diplomatic Service. Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 23, July 1861. Circular addressed to Her Majesty's Consuls May 2, 1861. p. 478. For the consul's position in the East see the same source pp. 53, 147, 159.

It should be borne in mind that the diplomatic and consular services were generally kept apart by England, while they were amalgamated in France. See *Ibid.* p. 179.

(2) It should be borne in mind that the British Government never addressed their representative as "Chargé d'Affaires". They simply addressed him as "Her Majesty's Agent and Consul General". It is true that on several occasions the Bardo used to address the English, French and Italian agents as "Chargés d'Affaires". The Government of the French Republic addressed Roustan as "Consul-General and Chargé d'Affaires". *Doc. Dip. Français. The first three volumes.*

tions with the native Government but also to fight relentlessly for the development of the national political and economic interests. He had to uphold the interests of his colony however insignificant or shady they might be. In many cases, the European agent might be well aware of the injustice of the claim, yet he had to act against his better judgment for fear of being accused of lack of patriotism or of indifference to the interests of his nationals. Nor was his duty to enforce the claims of his colony against the local Government only; he had to be ever on the watch against encroachments that might be made by the other foreign communities. The consul had to act according to instructions from home, in many cases he had to take the initiative. (1); but in both cases he had to be careful that his action was in harmony with the views of his colony. It is interesting to note that from the very moment a consul arrived in Tunis, his colony took great pains to shape his opinions. "The European merchants", Wood testified, "use their utmost efforts in influencing their newly appointed consuls before they acquire a thorough knowledge of the country or before their experience could enable them to unveil covert intrigues, prejudices and local interests to enter the lists against

(1) The tedious details with which the consul usually filled his reports, did not seem to have aroused great attention in his foreign office. Though he communicated directly with the foreign department, yet it was only in times of crises that his despatches could reach the foreign secretary or the cabinet; his communication on commercial, administrative and civil questions was usually with the under-secretary. Nor did foreign departments seem to have cared much about the ways and means by which their consuls got information, carried out instructions or obtained concessions.

As Austria-Hungary, Germany and Russia had no important interests in Tunis though they had Consulates, the information here applies only to the English, French and Italian Consulates.

the new order of things". (1) The consul's diplomatic work was in fact measured by the number of important concessions he obtained for his countrymen and by his success in bullying the native Government and outmanœuvring his colleagues. He was to a great extent secure in his position so long as he was sure of the support of his colony. This fact might explain in part his great zeal for the speedy development of national interests. But once he showed any hesitation or betrayed a sense of justice which the colonists considered as detrimental to their interests, he would become the subject of violent complaint to his Government. The latter frequently responded by his removal. Roches was withdrawn in 1863, because the French colony considered him too much of an idealist and because he was instrumental in the promulgation of a constitution that ventured to declare natives the equals of European residents. The most remarkable characteristic of the Italian colony in fifties and sixties was their chronic discontent with their consuls; in the course of seven years four consuls had been appointed. (2) Another important cause for the recall of a consul was the incessant complaint of the other Governments; this usually occurred when the consul was so carried away by his zeal as to injure seriously the interests of the other nations. De Beauval was withdrawn in 1865 when the English Government strongly remonstrated with Drouyn de Lhuys and the Emperor against the purely egoistic conduct of their agent. The withdrawal of Wood in 1879 was due to the bitter complaints of Waddington, the French Foreign Minister.

(1) F. O. 102/71. Apr. 21, 1864.

(2) F. O. 102/72. Wood to Russell. Aug. 17, 1864.

The consul represented his government not so much for the maintenance of amicable relations between the two countries, as for the development of his national interests. Lyons's conception of the functions of a French Consul in the East can be safely applied to those of the other consuls. The English Ambassador in Paris wrote that the functions of the French Consul were "porter haut le drapeau de la France", bluster with the local authorities and protect French interests in the sense of extorting monopolies and concessions for French speculators. (4) While the motive of the English Consul was to secure England's position as mistress of the waves, his Italian colleague aimed at nothing but assuring to Rome a dominant place in Carthage.

In his task the consul was not only supported by his colony but also by his national press. The French, Algerian and Italian newspapers frequently resorted, through frank partisanship, to deliberate misrepresentation of facts, in order to further national interests. Not less enthusiastic in the support of their consuls were the Catholic Missions. It is not without interest to note how religion was sometimes used by imperialism as a tool for the advancement of its own purposes. Catholic priests, usually frowned upon in their homeland, were encouraged by the practically anti-clerical Governments to transfer their energy to less civilised countries. Some of these missionaries keenly availed themselves of the rights granted to Europeans to promote not only the interests of humanity, culture and Christianity, but also the interests of nationalism and imperialism. Perhaps the greatest name

(1) Granville Papers. (G. D. 29). Vol. 171. Lyons to Granville. Private Nov. 8. 1881.

among the French nationalistic churchmen was Mgr. Lavigerie, the Bishop of Algiers, who seems to have given Roustan his complete support and who conferred upon the French expedition to Tunis his full blessing.

The clear principle of self-interest governed the consul's dealings with the Local Government and with his colleagues. He acted on the assumption that he was the representative of a superior civilisation and the advocate of very important interests. With unshakable belief in this creed he made unjust but unending pretensions, threatening conquest and destruction if they were not satisfactorily recognised. The consul succeeded in fact in making himself a great nuisance and in depriving the Local Government of any rest or peace. For if he failed to impose his will, he bitterly complained that Bardo "sought to avoid the accomplishment of (its) engagements,... a refuge for (its) tortuous policy in the continual rivalries of the foreign Consulates".⁽¹⁾ As each of the representatives of the three Powers believed himself to be the agent of the most interested nation in Tunis, he refused to give any consideration to the interest or claims of others. In fact the only thing upon which all consuls seem to have agreed was that they can make better use of the Regency's resources than the natives themselves. The principle that property belongs to the one who reached it first and to the best user constituted their political philosophy.

The consul's correspondence portrayed this chaotic state of feeling between the consulates and between them and the Bardo. Greatly influenced by the views of their colonists, of their consular agents who owned important vested financial

(1) F. O. 102/90. Wood to Granville. May 30, 1871.

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interests, the consuls shaped in their turn the views of their governments. The reports sent from Tunis tended generally to exaggeration of facts and over-statement. They appealed to emotion and prejudice. In times of crises the views of the consul could either be greatly optimistic or despairingly pessimistic. That the intentions of his rival colleague were perfidious, and his designs the darkest were very familiar statements in the correspondence of every consul-general. The various foreign offices were of course conscious of this tendency, and their comment on the behaviour of their consular agents was not always very complimentary. In Napoleon III's mind, Beauval was "hot headed"; to Granville, Reade ⁽¹⁾ was "too impulsive."⁽²⁾ The consul's judgments of native statesmen varied according to the favour they displayed towards his nationals. The description of native characters, found in English and French correspondence, reveal this remarkable phenomenon. The most important reason for which the French Consul vehemently demanded the dismissal of the Khaznahdar was not this alleged corruption but his definite English sympathies. For this same reason, Wood described the same Khaznahdar as an "honest gentleman", who possessed many enemies. When Khair-ed-Din granted France the concession of the railway from Tunis to the Algerian frontier, Roustan praised his political wisdom; but this impression was to disappear when the Tunisian Prime Minister invited his countrymen to support Turkey in the war against Russia in 1877. Pinna, the

(1) The English Consul-General who succeeded Wood in 1879.

(2) See F. O. 27/1537. Cowley to Russell. Dec. 15, 18, 1864. and the Granville Papers, 202. Granville to Lyons, private. Feb. 2, 1881.

Italian Consul, attempted, but without success, the restitution of the fallen Khaznahdar to power since he believed Khair-ed-Din to be in the pay of the French. Finally Mustafa ibn Ismail, whom Roustan had supported to power, and presented with the highest grade of the "Légion d'Honneur", was dismissed from Office because he was sufficiently imprudent to betray a sympathy for Italy.

A consul in Tunis must be a careful student of character. The first characters he had to study was the Bay himself and his ministers. As the consul usually received his training in the Near East, (1) this task was not very difficult. The only difficulty was how to exploit the weaknesses of the local authorities. To handle the Bardo in an atmosphere charged with rivalry and antagonism needed above all patience and great tact. Wood and Roustan seem to have excelled in this art. Each consul had his spies in the Bardo recruited from amongst the Ministers themselves who kept him well-informed of the secret moves of his rival and of the schemes of the Tunisian Government. He had other instruments among which figured chiefly Levantines who were in the employ of the Bardo. The consul also availed himself of the well-paid services of those foreign merchants who were in intimate relations with the ministers or the members of the Beylical family. He kept a careful record of the ministers, misdeeds in order to use it against them when the hour came. Moreover, the consul had his official lieutenants, the consular agents who were appointed by him, and whose duties were to

(1) This applies to the second half of the 19th century till France established her Protectorate in 1881.

report to him on local affairs, on everything which might interest the service of the State or the good of the nationals. (1) As they were recruited from the merchant class, they had their vested interests to look after, and their reports were not always trustworthy. Their chief function consisted in being employed as spies and informers, especially in times of crises. The members of the whole colony indeed vied with each other in furnishing the consul with news. The French consular agent at Kaf, was the chief instrument in the capitulation of the Western fortress of Tunis to the French army in April 1881. The Tunisian Consul at Bône, a French protégé, played an important part in paving the way for the French invasion which ended the direct government of the Bay.

The entourage of the consul-general was not always very edifying to his repute. Even in his office he was surrounded with foreigners whose business was either to satisfy his personal desires or to supply him with information. Amongst these men figured chiefly Levantines and Maltese who changed nationalities, character and position as often as they could. Sometimes they were Tunisians, on other occasions they were in French pay, and quite suddenly they might obtain English or Italian protection. Even the woman was not lacking. Madame Musalli, it is said, seems to have played an important part in the rivalries and intrigues that crowded the years between 1878 and 1881. Musalli had been a Levantine who was dismissed from the service of the Tunisian Government, but he was restored to a high position in the Bardo, thanks

(1) Consular agents did not possess the right to correspond with the foreign ministries. The consul-general was responsible for their conduct.

to Roustan. His wife, Madame Musalli, kept Roustan well-supplied with what was going on in the Bardo and the Italian Consulate. Though this woman was in close relations with Maccio, yet she seems to have favoured French influence.

The natural result of the great liberty enjoyed by the three consuls, of the struggle for political ascendancy, of the uncompromising policy they were encouraged to pursue was the inevitable clash of interests; rivalry on the basis of self-interest alone gave place to violent antagonism. Between the consulates raged a war for concessions, concessions to individuals, concessions to companies and concessions to the Governments themselves. Each consul gave the concessions he obtained a character of exclusiveness, even of monopoly. The establishment of banks attracted attention first, then telegraphs and finally railways. With perhaps only the exception of the first, these enterprises were not of a very remunerative nature, nevertheless they were undertaken for the important purpose of controlling the political destiny of the Regency.

The rivalries between the consuls affected even their personal relations and sometimes led them to revile one another; on many occasions the agents were not on speaking terms. In 1864 Wood complained to his Government that his French colleague, de Beauval, pursued an aggressive policy "openly and actively and in a manner calculated to lower the position of Her Majesty's Consulate-General in the estimation of the Government, the foreign representatives and the European colony." (1) To obtain information, to defeat

(1) F. O. 102/71. Wood to Russell. May 3, 1864.

the intrigues of his rival colleagues, or to secure the dismissal of a hostile native minister, the foreign agent did not shrink from resorting to keen intrigue, flat lies, bribery and corruption. Ruses, deceptions, subterfuges, secret machinations were made use of in order to attain the same ends. Diplomacy and economics were not the only field for consular rivalry; religious missions and schools felt keenly the struggle for political ascendancy. In this feverish struggle "les têtes s'échauffent," wrote Charmes, "la colère s'éveille; la situation s'aigrit, tourne au tragique, et le jour vient où les armées seules peuvent dénouer une crise qui n'étant à l'origine qu'une simple querelle entre des appétits excités à la curée".⁽¹⁾ Indeed the temper of consular diplomacy was not one of compromise or of cooperation. This might probably be justified as a necessary evil since the methods of the East had to be met by matching weapons. Yet it should be borne in mind that the consuls of the interested Powers received the experience of their youth and manhood in the Near East where the political methods of both East and West gathered and intermarried, the methods of a decadent Orient despairingly struggling for survival, and the methods of European imperialism relentlessly fighting for dominance. If environment had any influence at all, consuls were not exempt from it. In Tunis they found the atmosphere most suitable for developing the tendencies they had cultivated in the Near East.

(1) La Tunisie. 1883. pp. 153-4.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE EVE OF THE BERLIN CONGRESS.

I. Es-Sadik. Relations with Turkey.

In the spring of 1878 four influential men were to be found in Tunis. In the first place Sidi Muhammad Es-Sadik was the reigning Bey, and had already spent nineteen years as head of the Government. Consul-General Richard Wood was the second man in the Regency; he had been the diplomatic Representative of Great Britain since 1855. The French Agent was Roustan, who arrived at Tunis in 1874; the Italian Consul was Pinna who had represented the Italian Government since 1865.

Es-Sadik came to power in 1859. The heritage of power bequeathed to him had diminished greatly during these nineteen years; his independence had been tampered with impunity. He had seen the national sovereignty of the State successfully encroached upon, the rich resources of the country going to the foreigner, and he stood powerless unable to resist the

overwhelming forces of European imperialism. "He was constantly exposed," wrote the English Consul-General, "to unreasonable demands, to which he must either submit or offer an uncompromising opposition. He is fully persuaded that by yielding to one pretension he is only preparing the ground for another, to the gradual extinction of his autonomy and rights; but were he to resist, he apprehends a resort to coercive measures against him, which might create complications that would probably increase his dangers if they did not lead to the conquest of the Regency". (1) His plight was due to two contradictory sets of ambitions, the ambition of his great neighbours for expansion, and the ambition of his small country for independent existence. Through no lack of common sense in expenditure or family life, and through no absence of patriotism, he had witnessed the financial collapse of the Government and the establishment of a foreign institution that usurped his control of the finances. Three main reasons were in fact responsible for the gradual decadence of Tunis during these nineteen years. The first was the continuous pressure of Europe. The second was the retention of the Khaznahdar till 1873 when Es-Sadik discovered that the damage wrought by his Prime Minister was irremediable. Last, though not least important was the inherent weakness of Es-Sadik himself,

As far as his looks were concerned, this prince of Tunis was definitely a European; yet he preserved many of

(1) Granville Papers (G. D. 29.) Vol. 337. Issue of Firman to Bey of Tunis. Printed for the Use of the Foreign Office Jul. 28, 1881 no. 2. Wood to Granville. May 10, 1871.

the characteristics of the Oriental. In the first place he possessed the oriental conception of power, his manner did not invite discussion or disagreement; but he showed great lack of judgment in selecting his own advisers. In that great task he relied on the primitive tendency of caprice, and voluntarily ignored any defects of character he might find. Though undoubtedly sincere in devotion to what he conceived to be his duty, sincerity was not enough. As an indiscriminated worshipper of tradition, he hated to take the initiative and found pleasure in listening to advice volunteered by others. He tried to satisfy everybody who was sufficiently clever to appeal to his vanity.

Though he amply realised the difficulties of his position, yet he wholly failed to perceive the implications of government. When he came to power he found the position of the Prime Minister already occupied by the Khaznahdar since 1837. As the Khaznahdar proved himself a great master in the art of flattery, his mandate remained until his contempt for human rights, his corruption and irreconcilable hostility to France brought about his downfall, the confiscation of his property and permanent confinement.

The new institutions established by the Organic Laws in 1857 put some limitations to Baylical authority; yet Es-Sadik was satisfied enough to abide by them, not because they had proved their usefulness but mainly because they were consecrated by the Bay before him and by time. The granting of the Constitution of 1861 was the more remarkable, since the achievement was not one that its author deliberately willed. Perhaps the most disastrous defect in the character of Es-Sadik was not his unenlightened despotism but his excessive indit-

ference. This trait of character, though possibly acquired from his environment, from a peculiar sense of recklessness and defeatism that prevailed in Tunis, did not fail to have disastrous effects upon his outlook and his conduct. In a large degree, he was disposed to give those who won his favour a free hand to do almost anything without exercising over them control or moderation. He shewed no spark of interest in popular complaints until he was aroused from his lethargy by an insurrection or the remonstrance of a new favourite. He failed to understand the great responsibility incumbent upon him as a ruler of a country that was coveted by all her neighbours. He was not sufficiently certain of himself to decide upon one policy and then carry it out with resolution. From France he kept vacillating towards England. His hesitation in winning the sympathy of either Turkey or Italy secured for him their suspicion and ill-will. The constant fear under which he laboured resulted in a confused foreign policy. But his desire to please all his powerful but irreconcilable neighbours must be taken into account in any final assessment of his policy. Through no fault of his own, the international position of the Regency was immensely complicated. To give a free hand to France was to displease England, Turkey and Italy. Of French friendship he was sure, should he dispense with the aid of the other three Powers; but he might possibly have doubted her ability to protect his person and family in case Turkey stirred a revolt against him. A French protectorate would of course remove that doubt, but he would have to abandon his position as an independent prince. What was precisely French policy towards Tunis in the seventies, he was not in a position to know. France herself was not certain. Again he could not

venture to arouse the discontent of France who had a strong army on the Eastern Algerian frontier. Turkey he could not completely neglect, because of the popularity of the Sultan in Tunis and because of religious sentiment. To Es-Sadik the friendly attitude of England was a guarantee against the aggression of the other three. As regards Italy, he thought that there was no harm in cultivating her friendship in order to counterbalance the influence of France. Hence arose for him the necessity of trying to satisfy the insatiable appetites of all his greedy neighbours, an attempt which resulted in increasing the complication of the situation. The fears entertained by the Bay, and the troubles that haunted his mind were as a matter of course exploited by the ever-watchful consuls, as a method of influencing his internal policy. Among the important reasons for the dismissal of Khair-ed-Din in 1877 were the rumours circulated by the Italian press about the minister's French sympathies and the propaganda undertaken by France against his Turkish views. In this way the Regency was deprived of the ablest man in her modern history.

The rise of Khair-ed-Din to power had inaugurated an epoch of real reform. A firm believer himself in reform, he established, through his writings and through his administrative activities, a new school of thought which espoused the cause of westernisation. It stressed more than anything else the theory that without any stable and competent system of government there could be no settled order or progress. In wide experience, learning and integrity he was unequalled among Tunisian statesmen. His military training was received under the supervision of the French mission that undertook in the forties the reorganisation of the Tunisian army. As an

Ambassador-at-large of the Bay, he saw nearly every country in Europe. A prolonged visit to France enabled him to study European politics and civilisation. Khair-ed-Din was a good type of the statesman in whom Eastern and Western civilisations found their synthesis. He was definitely the only Tunisian Prime Minister who succeeded in winning the love of natives and the respect of foreigners. As soon as the Khaznahdar was removed and the confidence of England and France won, Khair-ed-Din began his work of reconstruction. With power concentrated in his hands, he took prompt action to suppress corruption and disorder, and repair the ravages of the last ministry. The difficulty of that task will be better appreciated if it is remembered that the Regency was far from well equipped with available material resources.

By regulating the relations between the Executive and the Judicature, he secured for the Government a new position of respect. Taxation received his greatest attention; most of the remnants of the feudal customs had to disappear for ever. In a word, he attempted to carry out the obligations of a modern government with regard to finance, public works, sanitation and education. Khair-ed-Din could have stayed permanently in office had he not developed independence and obstinacy. With the Bay, who grew jealous of Khair-ed-Din's reputation, ability counted less than subservience. The popularity of Khair-ed-Din with the Ulemas alarmed the Bay who was already well-aware of the fact that the Softas had deposed Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz in Constantinople. The relentless intrigues of Roustan and Pinna and the contradictory rumours about the Minister's alleged connivance with Turkey and leaning

towards France, the incessant insinuations of Mustafa ibn Ismail, the favourite, found a ready hearing with Es-Sadik, who was glad to get rid of a minister dictator with whom relations had already assumed an acrimonious character. (1)

A modest and weak Muhammad Khaznahdar became Prime Minister in 1877, but the all powerful man in the Government was the Minister for Marine, Mustafa ibn Ismail. In 1882 Broadley described the character of the newcomer to office. "Twenty years ago" wrote Broadley "a little boy in a tattered shirt and battered red cap, was often cuffed for somewhat too obtrusively picking up cigar ends in the European cafés of Tunis. A benevolent Maltese tavernkeeper gave him a suit of clothes, and for a few months he got more kicks than bakhschich from his master's customers. When tired of serving infidel wine bibbers he became the servant of one of the officers of the Turkish Guards. Es-Sadik was the first to perceive his natural abilities and transferred him from the service of the Turkish Colonel to his own." (2) Such was pictures, somewhat exaggerated, of the most powerful man in the Regency in 1878, the man who was destined to govern it in the fateful years between 1878 and 1881.

(1) The enemies of Khair-ed-Din doubled their activities in 1878. They availed themselves of the Russian Turkish War to create a feeling of mistrust in the mind of the Bay. They pointed out to Es-Sadik that Khair was following a policy dictated by France, and that he was ignoring the religious and national sentiment which demanded immediate participation in the War. Khair was therefore called upon to declare himself either a partisan of Turkey or of France. F.O. 102/108. Wood to Derby 24 Jul 1877.

As to Khair being a dictator there is no doubt. He kept the Bay in complete isolation, and prevented the ministers from having any direct communication with him. Wood to Derby. Jul 24, 1877.

(2) Last Punic War., Vol. I. p. 164

The Bay did not shrink from showering every possible favour upon this upstart; he even gave him one of his daughters in marriage, and practically delegated to him his full powers. The influence exercised by Ibn Ismail upon his new master was boundless. It was he who was directly responsible for the dismissal of the Khaznahdar and Khair-ed-Din. With no proper training at all before his contact with the Bay, and utterly devoid of general culture, it was natural that he would become a supple instrument in the hands of the consuls who cared to use him. No less capricious than his old master, he did not possess his good intentions or his pride. He changed sides and sympathies; sometimes he was pro-French, on other occasions he adopted Italian views, not always according to the dictates of political necessities, or in the interest of the Regency. His humble origin and his past were not an asset to his position. As to the respect of foreign agents he possessed none. Though they were well aware of his limitless influence with his retiring master, yet on many occasions they completely ignored him and communicated directly with the reluctant Bay. In his relations with the consuls, Mustafa Ibn Ismail was an object of insult and humiliation. His lack of training and intelligence and his ignorant obduracy removed the last vestiges of respect the Bardo might have preserved. The new life which had been introduced by Khair-ed-Din and which needed only the opportunity of favourable conditions to flourish and prevail came to a miserable end. Even foreign observers began to talk of "the mischief which the Bay's favourite would be... in a position to create".⁽¹⁾ And it was very much doubted,

(1) F. O. 102/111 Wood to Salisbury. May 10, 1878.

the Regency could preserve any longer her independent existence.

Ralations with Turkey.

According to the Firman of 1871, Es-Sadik was only the "Governor-General of the Province of Tunis." The character of the Bay's relationship with Turkey is not without interest.⁽¹⁾ Up to the French conquest of Algiers Tunis enjoyed almost complete independence from the Porte. But the Turkish success in the reconquest of Tripoli naturally engendered hopes about Tunis. Many times did the Porte attempt the reconquest of the Regency, and it was due to the

(1) Despite the independence enjoyed by the Baysin the realms of internal and foreign affairs, there still subsisted relations between Tunis and Turkey which give the impression that Tunis was not completely a sovereign State. Although the Bay became ruler at his predecessor's death, yet it was the custom in Tunis to apply for the confirmation of the Porte which was never withheld. This application was usually accompanied by costly presents. In his letters, the Bay addressed the Porte in the most exalted terms as the "Sublime Ottoman Government, the Monarchy of Glory and the Empire of the Khans" etc. The Sultan was recognised by the Bay as the head of Islam, the Khalifah, and as "chosen by God to guide his creatures." For his part, the Sultan preserved his rights to grant titles to the Bays and to receive tokens of "submission and devotion." He usually offered his good offices, whenever the Regency was involved in trouble. In this way, the Porte intervened in 1821 to put a stop to the almost continuous war between Tunis and Algeria; and in 1825 he warned Tunis against entangling herself in the Moroccan-Austrian dispute. Tunis never forgot to support the Sultan with her army and navy in the crises of 1798 and 1827 and during the Crimean War; but this contribution was due to the religious sentiment rather than to recognition of the Sultan's political authority. Despite all these aspects of friendship and devotion, the Bays were always jealous of their political independence and never tolerated the attempted interference of the Porte in Tunisian affairs.

The letter of Muhammad Bay to the Porte illustrates how the Bay applied for the "firmans" of confirmation. See also Serres: *La Politique Turque en l'Afrique du nord*. p. 179. Also F. O. 102/58 Wood to Russell. Nov. 19, 1859

obstinate opposition of France that it ultimately failed. Placed between two extremely dangerous neighbours, Es-Sadik tried to avoid putting himself under the sole dictation of either of them; the main object of his policy was to do nothing which would jeopardise the independence of his State. His apprehension of becoming the vassal of France was only counter-balanced by the humiliation of becoming the mere "Vali" of the Regency. He was disturbed by the assumption which the French agents maintained that French influence should be at least paramount in Tunis. Roches no less than Beauval and Roustan showed no lack of energy in advocating that theory. At the same time Turkey was raising claims that any independent ruler could never resign himself to accept.⁽¹⁾ Es-Sadik was conscious of the fact that despite her boasting Turkey was not in a position to protect him effectively against French military aggression. The fate of Algiers was always before his eyes, a positive torment to him. The nightmare of falling a victim to the same fate haunted his thoughts and influenced all his actions. But though he was well aware of the perils of this unenviable political situation, he could not be expected to consent to demands amounting to the limitation of his

(1) The character of Turkish-Tunisian relations in the 19th century was well described by Wood when he said: "The failure of the occasional attempts made to bring about a better understanding between Turkey and Tunis by fixing their relative positions; the pretensions put forth on the one hand by the former, and the abstinence with which on the other the latter rejects them, sufficiently illustrate notwithstanding what may be advanced to the contrary, that their connection is nominal, grounded on the unsteady basis of a religious sentiment. This impression does not rest upon simple supposition. It is derived from facts as well from the remarks which the chief and also the members of the Tunisian Government have from time to time made in the course of conversation or discussion and from the observations which had dropped from the Turkish Envoys". F. O. 102/55. Wood to Malmesbury. Jul. 31, 1858.

practical independence or the loss of the privileges which he inherited from his ancestors. Therefore he sometimes considered that the only way open to him was to adhere to the ill-defined status quo with regard to his political position. But even that status, as conceived by him, was gradually losing its meaning and effect. As he was powerless, the daily increase of pressure brought to bear upon him must inevitably be met by concessions on his part. But each concession was nothing but a loss to his power and independence and a proportionate gain to his encroaching and unpleasant neighbour. He soon found that his influence and prerogatives were passing gradually and tacitly from his own hands. Nevertheless he was not ready to accept a French protectorate, while, on the other hand, Turkish sovereignty was repugnant to him. It was only when he discovered in 1871 that he was in real need of the support of Turkey that he accepted the Firman which the Porte issued in that year. (1) The procedure of Italy in that year convinced Es-Sadik of his precarious and dangerous position; it gave rise to the desire of putting his international relations upon a footing which would prevent him from being exposed single-handed to European pressure. Through the good offices of Great Britain, the Firman contained nothing which could be interpreted as interference with his inherited rights. The Bay accepted the nominal suzerainty of the Porte. But when in 1874

(1) For the Firman, and the correspondence respecting its issue, see the Granville Papers. (G.D.29) 337. Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. July 28, 1881.

It is interesting to note here that when Wood recommended that the British Government should support the Bay's application for the Firman, Granville was not willing to take the initiative; in fact he left decision in that matter to Sir H. Elliot, the English Ambassador in Constantinople. See the same source. Granville to Elliot no. 2. May 28, 1871.

Turkey raised new claims with regard to his right of granting concessions without the previous approval of the Porte, he did not hesitate to make known his protests.⁽¹⁾ The Porte did not press its claims, but nevertheless showed a vivid interest in Tunis by showing its flag in the waters of Goletta. Even the Turkophil Wood expressed his surprise in 1875: "It (was) somewhat unusual for Turkish ships of war to visit Tunisian ports, their presence for the third time within the last nine months had naturally drawn the attention of foreign representatives."⁽²⁾ Moreover, the Sultan treated the envoys of the Bay as if they were his own high officials; he even gave them permission to be present in his Council of Ministers and to take an active part in its deliberations. Such was the treatment of General Rustem in 1877. This Tunisian envoy seemed to have availed himself of the personal friendship of the Sultan "to suggest a reciprocal extension of the privileges existing between Tunis and Turkey". It was even proposed that the Pashalik of Tripoli should be given to the Bay together with the title of Khedive. In return, Es-Sadik was to pay a fixed annual tribute. Though this proposal seemed to have found great favour in the Imperial Court, it was met with disapproval

(1) When in 1874 the rumour was circulated that France proposed to construct a railway from some point in Algeria, across the frontier, to Bizerta, the Turkish Ambassador in London inquired of Lord Derby whether in the event there being any foundation for this rumour, the English Government would support Turkey in resisting the French proposal. The Turkish Ambassador based his claims on the plea that the right of the Porte to interference was involved. In reply the British Foreign Secretary expressed his "doubt whether any such right... really existed". F.O. 102/106. Draft to Elliot. Aug. 6, 1874. See also the same source. Wood to Derby Aug. 31, 1874. and Draft to Elliot Sep. 7, 1874.

(2) F.O. 102/101 Wood to Derby. Feb. 5, 1875.

at the Porte. (1) Turkey was not sufficiently free in 1877 to think of modifying her relationship with the Regency. Tunis failed to achieve that aim, but she succeeded in her attempt to improve Turkish-Moroccan relations. Notwithstanding the "censures" and remonstrances of the French and Italian consuls against the participation of General Rustem in the affairs of Turkey which, as they pointed out, might compromise the neutrality of the Regency in the event of war between the Sultan and the Tsar, the Bay was not discouraged in his efforts. To such an attitude the English Consul gave his full support. (2) The agent of the Bay at Alexandria, a certain Sanoussi, was therefore the bearer of a letter from the Sultan of Turkey to the Moroccan Caliph. Eight handsome women with rich presents were to enforce the argument of the Turkish Sultan to his fellow Sultan. (3)

Up to the declaration of the Russian-Turkish War Tunis and Turkey were on the best possible terms, for the Porte did not seriously attempt to interfere with the established rights of the Bay. Though the War ravaged countries far away from the Regency, yet it was watched in Tunis with great anxiety. It gave the Tunisians a good opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty to the Sultan, the protector of their faith. In spite of the penury and distress caused by the failure of the crops in the two successive years 1876 and 1877, generous subscriptions, horses and cattle left the country for Constantinople. Yet the war placed the Bardo in a real dilemma. What line of conduct

(1) F.O. 102/108. Wood to Derby. Mar. 22, 27, 1877.

(2) For his part, Wood assured the Bay that even in case of war "there was no fear that Russia would carry out her hostilities as far as Tunis". Ibid.

(3) F.O. 102/108, Wood to Derby, Apr. 24, 1877.

had the Government to pursue? The precarious condition of the finances was a matter of grave concern. The military forces of the Regency consisted only of 2,000 Nizam who were employed for police purposes.⁽¹⁾ But the Firman of 1871 which the Regency had freely negotiated and gladly welcomed, stressed the necessity of military assistance to Turkey if she was involved in war. The declaration of Abd-ul-Hamid as to the religious nature of the war increased the embarrassment of the Bay. The Circular Firman of the Porte to all parts of the Turkish dominions emphasised that Russia aimed at destroying the Ottoman Empire and Islam.⁽²⁾ This was soon followed by a violent letter by a Tunisian doctor of divinity published in the "Gawaib" in Constantinople which portrayed the Bay's weakness and indecision in a matter of life and death to the Moslem religion.⁽³⁾

On the other hand, the Bay was not very certain about the fate of Turkey. The prospects of that heterogeneous Empire were far from brilliant. Her defeats in Armenia might probably be a prelude to a complete and final catastrophe. These apprehensions were soon fortified by rumours concerning the impending fate of the Regency. Some rumours spread that in case Turkey collapsed France and Italy would divide Tunis amongst themselves. Others again declared that Tunis would be given as a compensation to a certain European Power. The psychological effects of these rumours must have been destructive to the Bay's mental comfort. In fact he awaited the end of the war and the fateful settlement with very great anxiety.

(1) Wood to Derby. May 7, 1877.

(2) F.O. 102/108. Wood to Derby Jun, 5, 1877.

(3) Wood to Derby, Jul. 24 1877.

Meanwhile the foreign agents, with the exception of Wood, were delighted to play on his plight. They portrayed a sudden bombardment of Golleta by the Russian fleet in case Tunis took an active part in the war. The French acting-representative, Cassas, advocating a waiting policy, pointed out to the unfortunate ruler "that His Highness would run all the perilous chances of the struggle at a moment when this struggle appeared to be taking a menacing aspect for the Mussulman cause". He even indicated to the ill-informed Bay that it had come to French knowledge that so long as Tunis kept aloof, she had nothing to fear on the part of Russia.⁽¹⁾ When Roustan returned from his visit to Paris he repeated the same representations in stronger language, and was fully supported by the Financial Commission, the chief power in which was the French vice-president. This gentleman, who practically controlled the finances of the Regency, declared that the Treasury was simply empty. The Bay's alarm reached a climax when the Havas Agency transmitted a telegram to the effect that the Russian fleet in the Baltic had been ordered to the Mediterranean. This was accompanied by the action of the Russian Consul-General in interrupting his diplomatic relations with the Bay. The prince of Tunis therefore decided not to fulfil his obligations to Turkey. To give some concessions to public opinion, which was definitely in favour of military assistance to Turkey in her great struggle, preparations were made, but the departure of troops was delayed until the War came to an end. The attitude adopted by the Bay was naturally not very satisfactory to Turkey. Relations between Es-Sadik and

(1) Wood to Derby. Nov. 9, 1877.

the Porte were bound to become more strained especially when Khair-ed-Din settled in Turkey and succeeded in wielding a great influence over the Sultan with regard to Tunisian affairs. It is true that after the temporary settlement of San Stefano, Es-Sadik did not take any step to diminish the influence of the Porte in Tunis, for fear of revolt and French aggression. On her part Turkey was too much occupied with her miseries after the disastrous war to think of giving any serious attention to the Tunisian question.

II. *Wood and the English Policy.*

Up to the spring of 1878, England studiously observed her traditional policy towards the Regency. The important strategic position of Tunis which commands the passage between the two maritime basins of the Mediterranean, the fine harbours she possesses "which could be easily transformed into formidable arsenals", imposed upon Great Britain the view that these places should not fall into the hands of a strong State.⁽¹⁾ The French movements in the Mediterranean during the Napoleonic Wars and the first half of the nineteenth century, the French occupation of Italy and the Ionian Islands, the conquest of Malta, the expedition to Egypt, the invasion of Palestine, the occupation of Spain, the final establishment at Corsica, the conquest of Algiers, the moral support for Muhammad Ali's attempts to found an Egyptian Empire

(1) In his letter of May 10, 1871 to Sir H. Elliot, Wood wrote: "The reasons upon which that policy (of Her Majesty's Government) is based are obvious... The geographical position of the Regency gives it an importance in our estimation in so far as the equilibrium of the Mediterranean and other essential interests are concerned". See Granville Papers. (C. D. 29) Vol. 337. See also F.O. 102/58 Wood to Russell. Nov. 24, 1859.

in the Near East; all these great movements were bound to arouse the suspicion of England with regard to the real aims of France in the Mediterranean. Though most of these attempts failed, yet France succeeded in establishing herself permanently in Algeria, while in the Near East and North Africa she enjoyed an enviable position. It was obvious to Great Britain that it was only in these lands that France could attack British interests with any great amount of safety and success. France who had lost all hopes of territorial acquisitions in Europe, was becoming a successful colonial Power, rival only to England. The French concentration on naval and colonial questions in the Mediterranean was not a welcome policy in London. It was doubted there whether France was not really aiming at dominance in that sea. On her part, France viewed with jealousy the English preponderance in the Mediterranean on which England "n'est même pas riveraine". And since the thirties, her policy was directed to the creation of new small allied Powers depending solely on the friendship of France. With regard to Algeria, Louis Philippe wrote to his Minister in London in September 1830. "L'entreprise d'Alger peut avoir des conséquences encore plus avantageuses pour notre avenir maritime".(1)

Therefore the absorption or occupation of the Regency by France or any other great Mediterranean Power was not a matter of indifference to England. She was justified then in taking her precautionary measures; she could not look upon the destinies of her Indian Empire as dependent on the good will of France. The power of Muhammed Ali must therefore

(1) Serres: La Politique Turque en Afrique du Nord, pp.64-65.

be humbled. On the frontier of Tunis the gradual but inevitable French expansion must be ended. The most important move to be made was to oppose the French schemes to separate Tunis from Turkey. With this aim in view, Palmerston warned France against any expansion at the cost of Tunis, and stressed the newly adopted English view that Tunis was part of the Ottoman Empire.⁽¹⁾ To the Porte he advised moderation in its dealings with the Regency. The Bay's endeavours at complete independence were wholly discouraged. The British Government had "steadily and uniformly" refused to recognize Tunis as an independent State.⁽²⁾ The proud Bay was treated as a mere "subject of the Sultan".⁽³⁾ That conception was developed in the despatch to Sir E. Baynes when he was appointed Consul-General in Tunis in February 1850. "That ruler", ran the despatch, "though enjoying a large share of independence in the administration of the affairs of his Regency, and though permitted to enter for himself into certain engagements with foreign powers, had always been considered by the Porte as a vassal of the Sultan. This state of vassalage

(1) In his book "The Crimea", Professor Temperley went so far as to maintain that "the French extension to Morocco and Tunis was a matter about which Palmerston was prepared to fight and one in which he knew the navy would be effective and public opinion would be in his support". P.62.

Professor Temperley's statement: "If Egypt attacked Syria and Tripoli, if France added Tunis and Morocco to Algiers, six provinces would fall from the Sultan's grasp at a blow" is open to question, since Tunis and Morocco were not at the time in the Sultan's grasp. In fact Morocco never came under Turkish rule, while in Tunis the Sultan's dominion came to an end with the rise of the Days to power in the early seventeenth century. Tunis formally recognized the Sultan's suzerainty in 1871. Tripoli was quite independent of the Sultan, and was ruled by the Caramanli, a hereditary family, till 1835, when the Turks reconquered the country. See *The Crimea* p.62.

(2) F.O. 102/50. Draft to Wood, Aug. 13, 1856.

(3) F.O. 102/55. Wood to Malmesbury Nov. 5, 1858.

had been practically acknowledged by Her Majesty's Government as being the character of the Tunisian Regency.⁽¹⁾ This conception remained unaltered until the summer of 1878. In pursuing that policy the English Government disputed the right of the Bay to confer decorations. They did not agree to the Bay's visit to England unless he was introduced by the Turkish Ambassador. They gladly offered their good offices to produce a rapprochement between the Baylik and the Porte. From such a policy Great Britain never departed. She did not stop to consider what that policy might mean to a prince proud of his prerogatives. In fact the Bay was more offended than ever when her representatives were not directly accredited to him.

(1) The Convention of the 16th Aug. 1838 concluded between England and Turkey, and the Treaty of the 29th April, 1861 which replaced it, applied to Tunis as well as any other part of the Turkish Empire. It is true that the stipulations of these two agreements were not enforced in Tunis. When the Turkish Ambassador was instructed in 1864 to protest against the Convention concluded between England and Tunis "on the ground that it sanctioned the existence of an attribute of sovereignty in the Bay," Lord Russell explained that the Convention had only sanctioned privileges which had already been granted by the Organic Laws (1857). Russell concluded that, "Neither formerly, nor at the present time, have the British Government considered that they were precluded from making arrangements with the authorities of the States of Tunis, Algiers and Tripoli, without the intervention of the Porte, and neither then nor now have the British Government intended in directly making such arrangements to call in question or to impair such Sovereign Rights as the Porte may have had, and may still have, over any one of those three Regencies". The Granville Papers (G.D. 29) 362. Memorandum as to the Right of Tunis to conclude Treaties. Printed for the use of the F.O. May 17th 1881.

Again, in December, 1871 England stated her argument: "Tunis is not an independent state and therefore the Queen could not properly conclude a formal treaty with the Bey... Although in the heading and title they (the old treaties) are stated to be between the King of Great Britain and the Bey; either alone or in conjunction with his Divan. yet appear in the articles to be so drawn as carefully to avoid any recognition of the independence of the Bey, e.g., the expressions "subjects of ... King of Great Britain" and "Dominions of Tunis and not of the Bey of Tunis". See F.O. 102/103. Memorandum Dec. 20, 1871. And Draft to Wood May 28, 1872.

Both Sir Edward Baynes and Mr. Richard Wood were to suffer from the results of the British policy; on their arrival in the Regency they were treated with complete neglect. Wood was driven from the house given by the Bay to the English Consulate, until "thirst and disease" obliged the newly appointed Agent to resort to threats; on his way to Court he was even denounced as "a Christian dog", (Kalb Roumi).⁽¹⁾ But the apprehensions respecting the future fate of Tunis under which the Bay laboured forced him to look to England for support and countenance. Indeed, Es-Sadik was well-aware that it was "the disinterested counsels and the unremitting vigilance of Her Majesty's Government (that) had successfully frustrated the designs of (France and Italy)."⁽²⁾

The English objective was not to acquire Tunis; all that Great Britain desired up to 1878 was to prevent Tunis from falling under French or Italian authority. Even when the English Consul recommended in 1864 the temporary occupation of some points on the Tunisian coast, the British Government expressed their complete disapproval.⁽³⁾ The object of English diplomacy was not to diminish the freedom and independence which Es-Sadik actually enjoyed; it was not to lessen his hereditary rights or to place Tunis in a position of subjection to Turkey, but it advocated the idea that the Porte should concede

(1) "A letter from the Queen of England is not to satisfy my personal ambition . . . It would raise me in my estimation and that of my people, but above all it would counteract the impression entertained here that England does not care for me; that she disregards and is indifferent to our fate". F.O. 102/50. Wood to the Foreign Office Oct. 8, 1856.

(2) Granville Papers. (G.D.29). Vol. 337. Issue of a Firman to the Bay. no. 2. Wood to Granville May 10, 1871. And Inclosure N. 5. of the same date.

(3) F.O. 102/71. Drafts of Apr. 25. and May 17, 1864 to Wood.

to the Bey the privileges which he had enjoyed for centuries. For England was as much determined as France to prevent the restoration in Tunis of the direct authority of the Sultan. England was unfavourable to Turkish interference in either the internal or the foreign policy of the Regency. For it was obvious that if Turkey were given such a right, she would definitely act in terms prejudicial to foreign interests and would impede the execution of treaties with Tunis.⁽¹⁾ Moreover, England considered that if the Porte possessed the right of interference, it had to assume certain responsibilities which would undoubtedly raise new difficulties in its relations with the European Powers. But as suzerain, the Sultan could act, with more safety, the part of mediator between Tunis and her powerful neighbours. In this sense Sir Henry Elliot expressed himself to the Porte in 1871, when the question of a Firman was being discussed. "I impressed upon him (the Turkish Foreign Minister", wrote the English Ambassador, "the necessity of avoiding in the Firman everything which might appear like an alteration of the relations at present subsisting between the Sultan and the Bey. It will give no just cause for umbrage in

(1) The English Consul-General strongly objected to the interference of the Porte in Tunisian internal affairs especially with regard to concessions. In his despatch of Aug. 31, 1874, he analysed the reasons for this attitude. "In the first place," he wrote, "had I to apply to the Sublime Porte for the concessions on behalf of the Tunis Railway Co., or the Gas Co., for the establishment of the London Bank of Tunis, I have no hesitation in affirming that were even the application successful, the conditions imposed would be such as to be rejected by an English company, and in the second, that the Bey, in the maintenance of his autonomy and rights would have opposed the execution of enterprises, which did not emanate directly from himself ... (he) would lose all control over the concessionnaires; they would defy the authority of his Government, and every difference that occurred between them would have to be preferred to Constantinople. Hence endless trouble, (and) discouragement". F.O. 102/106.

any quarter, but if an attempt is made to take the opportunity of extending the authority of the Sultan over the Regency, it would probably provoke remonstrances from some European Governments as well as be resisted by the Bey".⁽¹⁾

This policy was bound to meet with disapproval in Paris, for it ran counter to French ambitions in Tunis. Nevertheless, Great Britain never wavered in reminding France, whenever the opportunity arose, of the necessity of respecting the status quo in Tunis. She refused to recognise the paramount interest France assumed that she possessed in the Regency. She did not shrink from opposing energetically French endeavours to encroach upon the independence of the Bay. The English attitude is best illustrated in the crisis of 1864. In December of that year, the British Ambassador in Paris, Lord Cowley, made it known to Drouyn de Lhuys and the Emperor himself that "England had interests to take care of in Tunis and would not admit French claims of supremacy there." That was on the famous occasion when the French Consul-General, de Beauval, "commenced a crusade against everything that was connected with British interests".⁽²⁾

The protagonist of this policy in Tunis was Richard Wood, who was in 1878 the second most influential man in the Regency. He was already an old man, though he never lost the energy and the enthusiasm of his youth, Long residence in the Moslem lands of the Mediterranean, coupled with a

(1) The Granville Papers. (G.D.29) 337. Issue of a Firman to the Bay. No. 3. Elliot to Granville, Jun. 16, 1871. The Turkish Foreign Minister at that time was Ali Pasha.

(2) See F.O. 102/71. Reports of Wood Apr. 21, May 3, 1864 to Russell. F.O. 27/1537 No. 1034, Cowley to Russell. Dec. 6, 15, 17, 1864.

keen interest in the destiny of that part of the world made him an unequalled authority on Near Eastern and Tunisian affairs. From a dragoman in the Embassy in Constantinople he was promoted to the position of Consul at Beirut and then Damascus. In 1855 he was appointed Consul-General to Tunis. The quarter of a century which he had spent in the near East and the twenty-three years in Tunis gave him a fair chance to be well versed in oriental philosophy of life, a philosophy which did not fail to influence his own habits and conduct. The great interests he found in his profession, the missions he undertook to Mesopotamia and Irak, the many acquaintances he made during a long and eventful life gave him a clear insight into the affairs of the Mediterranean. (1)

The great experience Wood obtained in the lands that controlled communications between East and West gave birth to ardent imperialist emotions. An admiring disciple of Palmerston and a firm believer in the supremacy of English institutions and the disinterested sincerity of English diplomacy, he took an active part in maintaining British supremacy in the Mediterranean. He was relentless in arousing discontent against Egyptian rule in Syria. As he believed that French policy had always been "prejudicial and injurious to England", he developed from the very beginning anti-French sentiments. French opposition to the development of English interests in the Mediterranean, surpassed in his opinion "the limits of a generous rivalry between the two neighbours" (2) The moves

(1) Among his acquaintances figured Grand Vizirs, Greeks, Armenians, Levantines, Syrian Arabs, Christian Maronites, proud Druses, Jewish financiers, pious Alems, modernists and reactionaries.

(2) F.O. 102/58 Memorandum of Wood, Aug. 26, 1859.

of France in the Mediterranean did not fail to arouse his suspicion, and it was with sorrow that he saw the French occupying an important position in that sea. With a powerful fleet and a well-organised army in Algeria, he pointed out, France was even in a position to threaten English supremacy. The war waged by French Agents on British interests and the efforts to supplant English influence provoked on his part a stiff opposition to French claims. As he perceived that the aim of France was the annexation of Tunis in order to acquire those admirable ports which Algeria did not possess, he believed his diplomatic mission to consist mainly in the expulsion of French influence from those lands which dominated the trade routes to India. In Tunis, in particular, he made it his task to prevent France from taking Bizerta, Susa, and Mahdia. His voluminous correspondence, his despatches and memoranda struck this one note. It was mainly for this reason that he advocated reform and the promotion of British interests in the Regency. Most important of all, he succeeded, not without a struggle, in improving Turkish-Tunisian relations.

So far as reform was concerned, he recommended to the Bay a policy of amelioration, in order "to put his country in a position to gain the sympathy of Europe against future adversity".⁽¹⁾ As to the advocacy of British interests he intimated that it was for the prince of Tunis to decide whether he would become "a member of the great family of Europe" by inviting English capital and enterprise. On more than one occasion he attempted to get a concession for a bank that

(1) F.O. 102/52 Wood to Clarendon. Aug. 18, 1857.

would supervise English enterprise and raise the prestige of England among the population.⁽¹⁾ To support such a demand, he went so far as to submit to the medieval government of the Bay a rough treatise which simplified the teachings of the modern schools of political economy. His efforts to attract British enterprise to Tunis were essentially for interesting his country in the political fate of the Regency. He could not think of France enjoying undisturbed dominance in the Regency. For this end he fought for concessions and succeeded in obtaining for English subjects the right to landed property and the railway from Goletta to the capital. Through his indefatigable efforts an English company obtained in September 1874 the concession of the railway from Tunis to the Algerian frontier. It is no exaggeration to say that by the beginning of 1876 English companies monopolised railway communications in the Regency. Moreover, the British Agent did not lose sight of the outlet which the fertile and rich Tunis afforded and would afford for the surplus population of Malta. He therefore took steps to encourage Maltese emigration to Tunis, by recommending to the Bardo the abolition of state monopolies. He succeeded in inducing the Regent to concede a large tract of land on lease for the cultivation of cotton by an English company.⁽²⁾ His hold on the Bardo became so great that in 1874 the British Consul was able to report that "It was the policy of the Government not to grant, so far as it could possibly avoid it, any concessions to foreigners other than British capitalists, who gave no trouble They (the Tunisian Government)

(1) F.O. 102/20 Wood to Clarendon. Nov. 8, 1856.

(2) F.O. 102/50 Draft to Wood. Dec. 15, 1856. and Wood to Clarendon, Spe. 23, 1856.

had learnt from experience how to appreciate the conduct of English men in general, and that of other foreigners..... They place therefore the greatest confidence in us and mistrust in others, and I may rest assured that any enterprises or works of public utility, proposed by Englishmen of known character and standing would alone be viewed with favour by the Tunisian Government.“(1) As all the treaties between England and Tunis dealt mainly with piracy and slavery, they were entirely out of date. It took the British Agent four years to conclude a new treaty. Thus on July 19th, 1875, “Her Majesty’s Agent and Consul-General and His Most Serene Highness the Lord of Tunis” signed the treaty which sanctioned all the rights which had been granted to British subjects, and which unreservedly opened the Regency to British capital, produce and machinery. This Treaty was framed upon the model of the two treaties concluded between England and Morocco on the 9th December, 1856. The Treaty of 1875 regulated the English consular service, advocated freedom of commerce and assured the security and prosperity of British subjects; it also registered the end of privateering and slavery.(2) But all the efforts of Wood were to end in disappointment. The English capitalists, lacking the foresight of the English Consul and seeking immediate profits, either raised inadmissible claims or failed to carry out their obligations. In 1878, concessions of banks had long been annulled, and the railway to Algeria passed in 1876 into the hands of a French company.

(1) F.O. 102/106. Wood to Derby, Aug. 31, 1874.

(1) F.O. 102/103. Report of Wood to Granville of September 12, 1871. and inclosure. See also Draft to Wood May 28, 1872. The Treaty is in F.O. 102/103

In the colossal task of improving relations between Turkey and Tunis, the English Consul met with more success. The struggle was hard and needed many years to come to a successful end. In that great effort he appealed to the patriotic and religious sentiments of the Bay and assured him that the rapprochement with Turkey would not entail any curtailment of his rights; on the contrary, it would give "the position Tunis actually occupied a stability and a security which it could only acquire by a formal acknowledgment of the suzerainty of the Sultan".⁽¹⁾ The aggressive designs of France and Italy in 1864, the preparation of an Italian invasion in 1871, prompted Wood to redouble his efforts in order to place the Regency under the safeguard of the Treaty of Paris of 1856.⁽²⁾ He warned Turkey against her indifference with regard to Tunisian affairs and pointed out that circumstances were rapidly occurring which rendered it expedient for the Turkish Government to adopt some decisive line of action in the matter. "Their irresolution", he pointed out, "has greatly weakened the suzerainty of the Sultan. It has encouraged France and Italy to give it a spiritual, and to deny it a temporal character; and acting in accordance with this view of the relations between the Regency and Turkey, their representatives here have spared no efforts

(1) F.O. 102/58 Wood to Russell. Nov. 24, 1859.

(2) "Owing to the great pressure", he wrote to Lord Granville. "That was brought to bear upon the Tunisian Government by the French Representative during the Insurrection of 1864, no less than the intention that was contemporaneously manifested by Italy to occupy militarily the Regency with the sanction of the French Emperor, it was deemed prudent and politic to regulate the relations between it and the Sublime Porte in order to draw closer the connection between them and their aggression". Granville Papers. (G.D.29) Vol.337. Tunis. Printed for the use of Foreign Office. Issue of a Firman to the Bay. No. 2. May 10, 1871.

to establish the independence of the Bey". (1) But on the other hand the English Consul was fully aware of the complete helplessness of the Regency and her inability to extricate herself from her perilous position by her own unaided efforts. It was hopeless to expect that so impotent and incompetent a Government could resist foreign pressure or aggression without external support. He therefore pointed out to his Government that "the security of the Regency should not be left to depend upon vague assurances that its political existence would be respected." (2) His conclusion was that "the future of this Kingdom therefore could only be permanently and efficaciously secured by extending to it the integrity which Europe had recently guaranteed to the Ottoman dominions." (3) By emphasising the political aspect of the Sultan's authority, the English Consul thought that France could not attack Tunis without raising the whole Eastern question with all its complications and dangers. (4) The outcome of his efforts was the Firman of 1871 which remained valid until May 12th, 1881.

While the attitude of both France and Italy in the seventies was growing increasingly hostile, if not detrimental to the Regency, the conciliatory behaviour of England, and her readiness to aid the Bardo under very trying circumstances, convinced the Bay of British good will. The English Consul described the situation with precision when he said, "(Tunis) came to the conclusion that both France and Italy were more

(1) Ibid.

(2) F.O. 102/55. Memorandum of Wood enclosed in this despatch of Jul. 31, 1858.

(3) Ibid.

(4) In these views the English Consul was supported by General Khair-ed-Din, General Hassenin and General Rastem,

disposed to see the Regency retrograde than to co-operate in its progress and material development..... the policy of Italy offered no sure guarantee of its being less aggressive now than it was in 1864 when the Italian Cabinet conceived the project of occupying the Regency. Italy was anxious to establish a large colony in Africa; she likewise felt the chances of realizing her scheme would lessen in proportion as the material progress of the Regency increased. With the little reliance, therefore, that the Bay could place in Italy and France His Highness's Government had resolved to lean on Great Britain for countenance and support. With this object in view, it would adhere to the policy of Her Majesty's Government"(1) Indeed up to the removal of Wood the Bardo never lost an opportunity to demonstrate its desire to be on the best terms with England.

The position of the English Consul-General at the beginning of 1878 was therefore unique. The long period he had spent in the Regency, his knowledge of the Arabic language and Moslem religion, the valuable advice he gave the Bay on critical occasions, the intimate relations he cultivated with the Bay and his advisers, and above all the disinterestedness of England gave the British Representative a prestige almost unparalleled. On Roustan's suggestion, Wood was selected as the Doyen of the Consuls,(2) a position which he kept till his recall.

(1) F.O. 102/99. Wood to Derby Sep. 15, 1874. See also F.O. 102/106 Wood to Derby Aug. 31, 1874.

(2) This office did not exist in Tunis before 1877. It was Roustan who suggested the necessity of creating it.

III. *Roustan and French relations with Tunis.*

The political destiny of the Regency did not figure in French diplomacy till after the conquest of Algiers in 1830. Before that date, French interests were confined to commercial relations and to the fisheries on the north African coast. Regular commercial relations with North Africa began in the second half of the fifteenth century especially after the settlement of Spanish Jews in lower Languedoc, in Provence, and of the Moors in North Africa. It is true that France was the first Great Power which was diplomatically represented in Tunis; it is equally true that she possessed great influence from the sixteenth century till the outbreak of the French Revolution. During the direct rule of the Turks, her influence was naturally superior to any other European Power, since she was the ally of Turkey and the formal protector of Latins in the Near East. But these privileges lasted only for a short time, for Turkish rule soon collapsed and the Days usurped power. Later on in the seventeenth century the French Consul was granted the right to protect all Europeans in Tunis. But this almost exclusive and nominal privilege was in need of renewal from time to time; charters and treaties were generously granted but in fact they were never intended to be carried out. The life and possessions of the European colonists and their consuls, including the French, were absolutely at the mercy of the Bay.

The last vestiges of a theoretical French superiority in Tunis vanished with the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars. From 1810 to 1830 the English enjoyed practically undisputed preponderance. Then, the conquest of Algeria changed

the whole political situation. Before this momentous event, England and France had treated the Bay as an independent sovereign, no mention was ever accorded to Turkish sovereignty or even suzerainty. But while England changed her views, France remained faithful to her old policy once she decided to stay in North Africa, though in her Treaty of 1830 with Tunis France maintained that the Capitulations in force in Turkey should also apply to the Regency. In the thirties and forties, France laid the foundations of her traditional policy which she carefully followed until the establishment of the protectorate in 1881.

Down to 1830, France was a Christian Power; for fifteen years she had retained her old title as the eldest daughter of the Church. Though the conquest of Algiers, was one of the "audacities of a timid reign" yet the year 1830 was a very significant year in the life of the Mediterranean. Though by their expedition to North Africa the Bourbons primarily aimed at establishing respect for the white flag at home, yet it was in that year that they unconsciously laid the foundations of a French colonial empire. The establishment in Algeria shaped the future colonial policy of France, for it was on the land of the Days that she made her first great experiment in colonisation in the nineteenth century. In course of time Algeria came to be regarded as an extension of France, a sort of "France nouvelle". With the conquest of Algeria, France became a Moslem Power second only to England and Turkey, and possessed common frontiers with two Moslem States. Her influence and prestige were bound to be felt in that new world, and her interests were to be no longer exclusively European and Christian. The affairs of the Moslem world became of great

importance to France, since any religious or political movement in that world must have repercussions in the French North African possessions. (1) But this European thrust into the very heart of North Africa had other important consequences, for it did not fail to shake to their very foundations the institutions that had existed there for centuries. Tunis as well as Morocco became no longer secure; they were destined to fall victims to French imperialism. But the danger was felt to be more pressing in the case of Tunis, because of her small size, her less warlike population and her many attractions. Indeed she seemed to have been marked down as the first future victim of France.

It was natural for the new colonial Power to cast her eyes on the Regency since there existed no distinct natural, linguistic or racial frontier between the "France nouvelle" and Tunis. The conquest of the one must bring in its train the conquest of the other; Romans, Arabs, the Berber dynasties proved that theory. For their part, the French could not disclaim what nature and history had preordained. Once she had decided to keep Algeria, it became of vital importance to France to watch over happenings in Tunis and Morocco. France was well-aware, moreover, that the community of religion, language and historical evolution recognised no artificially drawn frontier. In point of fact, no precise political boundary was ever laid down between Algeria and her two kindred neighbours. Between the three countries existed

1) Not only in Tunis but in the whole lands surrounding the eastern Mediterranean, was France interested. Her Algerian subjects passed through these lands during their pilgrimage to Maccah. See Doc. Dip. Français T. I. No. 8.

territories that constituted no man's land, occupied now and then by semi-barbarous, semi-nomadic tribes who defied authority, and who moved from one country to another as they pleased. It is true that attempts had been made to draw a definite frontier between Tunis and Algeria, but these attempts ended in failure, for the two neighbours were not anxious for their success.

North Africa provided France with an ample outlet for her energy and with a military school for her soldiers. The example of Great Britain was jealously emulated by her neighbour across the Channel. France showed a strong disposition to extend "The national patrimony" and Algeria served as a strong base for a future extensive French empire in North Africa. To French politicians of the forties North Africa was not only a "school of war" but also a "school of patience". Most of the great French soldiers of the latter half of the nineteenth century had received their training in that admirable school. In one of his enraptured moods, Thiers pointed to the Atlas mountains "as a kind of military school where all the officers of... (the French) army are inured to danger, vigilance, to presence of mind, proving from all his military souvenirs that there can be no better soldiers than those who have served against the white horse."⁽¹⁾ The French military

1) De Remusat: Thiers, P. 68—69.
 In 1905 Hanotaux wrote in the same sense, when he was describing the character of MacMahon. The historian and states-man said, "Algeria was the training field of all the soldiers of that generation. In Algeria any army small in members, but composed of picked men, subjected to the constraint of military duty and daily peril. There the tradition of the first Empire was still a living one. Gallantry, quick sight, spirit, endurance, versatility were indispensable qualities." Contemporary France Vol. 2 pp. 7, 8

authorities in Algeria would have gladly marched into the Regency had it not been for the firm attitude assumed by the Governments of Louis Philippe and Napoleon III.

In the thirties Palmerston formulated the English traditional policy towards Tunis. The Turkish establishment in Tripoli and the British warning succeeded in inducing France to modify her views with regard to Tunis. Instead of a policy of gradual military penetration, there evolved a new French policy of preserving the status quo in the Regency. It is strange that both France and England, strove hard to maintain a status quo, which remained until 1881 unexplained and undefined. The two rival Powers, joined from the sixties onwards by Italy, differed widely from each other in their conception of this status. Indeed, the difficulty of defining that term suited French diplomacy well, for this difficulty left open a wide door for such interpretations as suited the requirements of the French imperialistic policy.

The new French policy was based on two main foundations, the reluctance of France to share common frontiers with the Porte, and the security of her Algerian possessions. Algeria had to the French ear the same sound and significance that India possessed to the English. Algeria was the scene of the "grandest French achievement". During the period between 1830 and 1869, 150,000 French soldiers had lost their lives in the difficult land of Algeria; and an equal number of European settlers had perished by the sword of the proud and embittered natives.⁽¹⁾ To keep in subjection two million virile natives, sworn to undying hatred of France, was a task in itself sufficient

(1) Roberts, French Colonial Policy. Vol. 1. p. 177.

to occupy the French mind. France was not ready to undergo her sacrifices in vain; she was determined to stay in Algeria undisturbed by any outside influence. Left to her own resources, Tunis was not in a position to cause embarrassment to the French in North Africa. But the establishment of Turkish rule in the neighbourhood of Constantine was bound to raise endless troubles for France. Although the French Government seemed to have temporarily given up the idea of annexing the Regency, yet they were determined to prevent the Porte by force from exercising any political influence there. Once this decision was reached, the successive French Governments, during the period between 1830 and 1881, energetically opposed the efforts of Constantinople to re-establish her sovereignty in the Regency. On many occasions, France made it clear to the Porte that she would not tolerate any interference on its part in the affairs of Tunis; she pointed out that the rights and privileges enjoyed by the Bardo should remain intact. In Tunis, France vigorously recommended a policy of non-concession to Turkey, persuaded the Bay to consider his own interests as distinct from those of the Porte, and frankly told the Regent that she recognised him as an independent prince. (1) When Ahmad Bay visited Paris in the forties, he was given a royal reception, the protests of the Turkish Ambassador went unheeded. France readily accepted the decorations granted by the Bay to her representatives and officers, and in her turn was very generous with her own decorations. As regards the efforts made by England to bring about a rapprochement between Tunis and Turkey, France resorted to threats in order to

(1) F.O. 102/58. Memorandum of Wood, Aug. 26, 1859.

prevent such an improvement. On their part, the French agents at Tunis drew the attention of the Bay to the fact that England aimed at nothing less than depriving him of his political prerogatives and giving Tunis the political status of Egypt. It is interesting to note that France did not conceal from the Tunisian Government her real views and constituted herself the protector of the Regency against the ambitions of the Porte. Such was the traditional policy of France; its first exponents were Thiers and Guizot.⁽¹⁾

In the execution of this policy France never wavered. The Governments of Louis Philippe and Napoleon III never shrank from threats and naval demonstrations to keep Turkish influence out of Tunis. De Moustier, while directing the Embassy at Constantinople declared to the Porte in 1864 that France would never welcome the Turkish Government as her neighbour in Tunis. It was better for the Porte not to give France an interest in the dissolution of the Turkish Empire. This declaration had the effect of warning the Porte against interference with the status quo in Tunis. With equal frankness, the French Government intimated to Great Britain her desire to preserve the status quo; on that point both Walewski and Drouyn de Lhuys were insistent. When Lord Cowley was instructed in 1864 to seek information about the French view with regard to Turkish-Tunisian relations, Drouyn de Lhuys remarked, "The policy of France. . . . was clear and provident. She had a capital interest at stake - that of Algeria - and it

(1) See Thiers to Roussin. May 31, 1836. Guizot to Lagau, French Consul in Tunis, Dec. 8, 1847. Marshall Clauzel to Minister of War. Dec. 26, 1835 in Serres: *La Politique Turque*. pp. 142, 149, 156, 196, 282, 283, 371, 372.

was safer for her, he must add for Turkey, that if that interest should be compromised by any proceeding in the Regency of Tunis, France should have to deal with Tunis and not with the Porte, since in the latter case no one could foresee to what complications it might give rise."⁽¹⁾

The traditional policy of France aimed essentially at French predominance in Tunis. The French Government never encouraged equal opportunities for all in the Regency; she worked assiduously for an exclusively privileged position for herself; English and Italian interests did not count much in her consideration. It may be right to maintain that it is difficult to isolate from one another the political and the investment motives of European imperialism in the East; but in the case of Tunis, the political motive was most important and most distinct; it was recognisable from the first. It was the political motive which led France, and perhaps in a lesser degree Italy and England, to risk their capital and to undertake enterprise. The political element was the main motive behind French efforts to reserve for themselves a predominant position in Tunis, and up to 1870 they succeeded in establishing a semi-protectorate over that country. The presence of the well-disciplined armies of France in Algeria within striking distance from Tunis, the periodical but efficacious naval demonstrations, the decorations she lavished on the Bey and his ministers, and her cultural influence,⁽²⁾ assured for France a supreme position in the Regency. It should also be remembered that most foreign officials in the service of the Bey were already French, and that important public works were

(1) F.O. 27/1537. Cowley to Ruseell. No. 1054. Dec. 18, 1864.

(2) The diplomatic language of the Regency was French.

executed mainly by French contractors. In 1856, the English Consul found his French colleague enjoying an unequalled influence, and it was to deprive France of that supremacy that he dedicated his efforts. The struggle for influence between France and England was real and bitter. The French were the more eager to fight England through the safer channels of trade and diplomacy, since their military efforts had failed in India, Canada and the Near East. The French Government resorted in fact to the old tactics of acquiring concessions, sending battalions and fleets to protect them, but the political control of the Regency was the central aim all the time. For her part, Great Britain was not willing to let these French attempts pass unnoticed. The old rivalry between Sir Thomas Reade and de Lesseps was therefore revived. A war of concessions was declared; claims and counter claims were put forward with the result that concessions were annulled before they were carried out. The agents of the two powers bitterly complained of the conduct of each other. Wood accused de Beauval of attempting to destroy English interests "by depriving the Bay of his freedom of action"; (1) the French agent described Wood as "the implacable enemy" of France. Although England had succeeded in preventing France from establishing a virtual protectorate in 1864 (2), yet, up to 1870,

(1) F.O. 102/71 To Russell. Apr. 23, 1864.

(2) The French Consul-General demanded under the threat of war the abrogation of the Constitution, the dismissal of the Bay's Ministers, the introduction of French advisers. De Beauval conceived that "owing to the proximity of Algeria, France was entitled to occupy altogether an exceptional position in the Regency, to the extent of exercising complete surveillance over its internal and foreign affairs, that consequently no foreign interests should be allowed.... to develop.... and no foreign enterprises such as the establishment of banks, the construction of railroads, the working of mines etc. should

French influence remained supreme. Wood found his advice disregarded in face of the recommendations of his French colleague, "who was backed by sixty thousand troops five days from the capital". "My individual exertions", reported the English Consul-General with regret "were surrounded with such doubt and uncertainty in the presence of circumstances and facts which gave French policy and French assurances a plausibility and a semblance of an earnestness which I could not bring in support of ours".⁽¹⁾

There existed in the sixties a divergence of opinion about Tunis in France. A section of the French Government did not entertain any views of conquest, while another was in favour of annexation. Though the views of the first party seemed to have had the upper hand, yet both seemed to have been favourable to the extension of the Algerian frontier to the Majerdah enclosing Bizerta in French territory. The military authorities in Algeria, especially Randon and MacMahon, supported that idea enthusiastically.⁽²⁾ One party considered that France was already sufficiently occupied in Algeria, where

be undertaken without the previous permission and consent of France". See Wood to Russell, Apr. 21 22, 24 to Russell and to Vice-Admiral Sir Robert Smart. See also F.O 102/72. Despatch of Aug. 30, 1864.

In this crisis the English Government went so far as to instruct their Consul that "If any fresh attempt should be made by French agents to interfere in the internal affairs of Tunis, and especially to dictate to the Bay as to the choice of his Ministers.... you are instructed to advise the Bay not to yield to such attempts but to leave them to be reported to the British Government who will thereupon claim from the French Government a fulfilment with regard to such matters of the repeated and formal declarations made by M. Drouyn de Lhuys and the Emperor that the French Government would abstain from interference in the internal affairs of Tunis". F.O. 102/75. Draft to Wood. Jan. 10, 1865.

(1) F.O. 102/60. Wood to Russell. Sep. 29, 1860.

(2) F.O. 102/72 Statements by Wood, Nov. 26, 1864.

the experiment of colonisation had not yet proved successful. On the other hand, Napoleon III himself was haunted with strange ideas about North Africa. To him, the nationalist idea could be made applicable also to the Arabs in Algeria;⁽¹⁾ he gave expression to this view when he spoke of an Arab kingdom on the North African coast. But his dream of federating Europe in a league of peace drove him to the belief that it was possible for the Powers to find an outlet for their energies in colonising the non-European parts of the Mediterranean. In opposition to the changeable doctrines of the Emperor were ranged the commercialists, the people of the South, of Marseilles, who were always in favour of a French forward policy in North Africa; their opinion seems to have carried much weight with the French Government. Yet despite all the temptations which the Regency afforded, the trouble which began to appear east of the Rhine decided the French Government not to sacrifice the friendship of England and Italy. France was content to enjoy her practical political predominance in Tunis.

The disasters of 1870 changed the whole situation. France lost her supremacy in Tunis. Both English and Italians aspired to replace the French. Yet with the rapid recovery of France, her influence gradually reasserted itself. This took place when Roustan was appointed to Tunis in 1874. Young, active, resolute, vigilant, and resourceful, Roustan restored French influence to its previous position. It was mainly to him that France was indebted for the successful preparation of the

(1) Roberts: *History of French Colonial Policy*, Vol. 1. P. 178. Faucon: *La Tunisie*, Vol. I P. 217.

protectorate. His patience, his culture and his inborn sense of diplomacy had won for him the esteem of men and women. Even Wood, his natural opponent, could not but praise "the tact and intelligence with which Roustan carried out the policy of France."⁽¹⁾ By training and natural endowments Roustan was the most suitable agent for France. In Paris he was well trained for the diplomatic career; he afforded a good contrast to Wood whose education in England was limited to what he received at school at Exeter. From 1856 to 1874 Roustan represented his country in different parts of the Near East. Smyrna, Cairo, Alexandria and Bairut were the schools where he received his practical experience. If the Mediterranean was to Wood the most important link between the Atlantic and the Indian Empire, to Roustan it was mainly a French sea, for France was the one Great naval Power whose shores were washed by its waters. The Near East and North Africa were lands where her crusaders, conquerors, traders, and missionaries left a marked impression and undying influence. With these memories and with this prestige Roustan earnestly believed in the necessity for French political predominance in the Mediterranean. His appointment to Tunis gave him exactly the opportunity he desired to secure for France her lost dominant position in the Regency and consequently an assured influence in the whole Moslem Near East. In 1874 he found French influence still suffering from the results of the French-German War. The agents who had represented France during the years between 1870 and 1874 were not very distinguished men. De Botmiliau was a tired old man, and his position

(1) F.O. 1021/11. Wood to Salisbury May 10, 1878.

possessed no attractions for him. He had advised his Government to settle once and for all the Tunisian question by assuming a protectorate over the Regency; but he had failed.⁽¹⁾ He had witnessed the predominant French influence fall to that of a second class Power, and was grieved to see Turkey and Italy hurry to take advantage of the French disasters. De Vallat, a former Consul-General in London, was appointed in August 1873, as a Minister Plenipotentiary⁽²⁾; he was charged with the task of dismissing the Khaznahdar from power. It took him one year to bring the mission to a successful issue. French influence which had been slowly growing through the dismissal of the Khaznahdar and the administration of Khair-ed-Din received a severe shock in 1874, when Bismarck warned the Bardo against the sinister designs of France. Germany pointed out to the Bay that she would not tolerate any capitulation on his part, or any change in the political status of the Regency. She also demanded that German interests, which were in fact completely unimportant at that time, should be placed upon the same footing as those of the most favoured nation. What remained of French influence was wasted by de Billing who kept his position as French agent for several months. Through the forced but foolish interference of his

(1) At the End of 1871, de Botmiliau described in the most pessimistic terms the irremediable condition of Tunis, and recommended a French protectorate. He pointed out the necessity for France to adopt a new policy, for the old policy of preserving the autonomy of Tunis had in his conception miserably failed. The Consul was, however, advised not to precipitate matters, but to be considerate in his dealings with the Bardo, and to co-operate with his colleagues. Doc. Dip. T. I. No. 106. de Remusat to de Botmiliau, Jan. 10, 1872, and footnotes.

(2) This new appointment carried with it political significance because it indicated a recognition of the complete independence of the Bay.

English wife, he involved himself in childish intrigues against the Tunisian Government with the result that he was finally recalled.

That French influence did not completely collapse after 1870 was due to several main reasons. In the first place though France had been defeated on the Continent, yet her colonial heritage remained generally uninjured. She preserved her overseas possessions and was determined not to part with them. The suppression of the violent Algerian revolt in 1871 proved that France, though humiliated and beaten in Europe, was determined not to give up her Empire in North Africa. Even when Italy prepared her expedition in 1871 against the Regency, it was considered in French circles that in case Rome occupied the Regency, France would extend her eastern frontier to the Majerdah, enclosing Bizerta in French territory, thus providing a natural frontier between the African possessions of the two Latin Powers.⁽¹⁾ Fortunately for France, the Italian occupation of Tunis did not take place. The Firman of 1871, which declared the Regency an integral part of the Ottoman Empire, did not give the Turks any privileged position. The Turks had already too much on their hands in Europe to concentrate great attention on Tunisian affairs. In fact they did not even care to appoint a permanent Turkish representative in that new "province." The Firman of 1871 lost much of its importance since France refused to recognize it; Paris expressed her doubts whether the Porte had the right to issue a firman to Tunis at all and regarded the whole affair "as an innovation

(1) Granville Papers (G. D. 29) 337. Issue of a Firman to the Bey. Printed for the use of the Foreign Office Jul. 28, 1881. N. 2 Secret. Wood to Granville, May 10, 1871.

now made for the first time".⁽¹⁾ The Government of Thiers considered in fact that the entente between France and England was equal to the task of protecting the Regency against foreign interference. Though France still could not afford to see Tunis transformed to a "hostile centre" to the great establishment in Algeria, yet her conduct suffered a sea change. Her language assumed a conciliatory and moderating tone. What she demanded was the good administration of an independent Tunis, a task in which she welcomed English and Italian co-operation.⁽²⁾ At that time France was naturally averse to any aggrandisement; Algeria provided an adequate field for colonisation. For it was in 1871 that France began her real work of the pacification and colonisation of Algeria, a task which was bound to increase her interest in North Africa as a whole. The dismissal of the Khaznahdar, the old enemy of France, and the appointment of Khair-ed-Din contributed to the revival of French influence. The good relations which existed between Khair-en-Din and Roustan until the end of 1876 did not fail to enhance French prestige. The fact that a Frenchman was vice-president of the Mixed Financial Commission spared France a great humiliation in the Regency, since it checked with great success the speedy development of other European interests. Villet did in fact oppose his veto to every concession antagonistic to French interests. The triumvirate constituted of Roustan, Villet and Khair-ed-Din successfully handicapped the promotion of Italian interests in the Regency.

(1) F.O. 102/103. No. 400. Elliot to Granville. Nov. 14, 1871.

(2) Doc Dip. Fr. T.1. No. 65. Remusat to de Broglie. Oct. 9, 1871

The year 1874, Roustan's first year in Tunis, witnessed a great drive on the part of France for economic and political dominance in Tunis. This energy did not fail to arouse the alarm of Turkey and Italy.⁽¹⁾ The climax was reached when Roustan succeeded in obtaining for the Bona-Guelma Company the concession of the railway from Tunis to the Algerian frontier. The political significance of this concession was considerable, since it placed the most fertile and rich part of the Regency under the practical control of France. Khair-ed-Din himself was fully aware that in granting that concession he had placed the industrial, agricultural and commercial future of the Regency in the hands of a French Company.⁽²⁾ After the completion of the railway the distance between the city of Tunis and the Algerian frontier would become a matter of a

(1) A certain Mr. Gay, formerly of the French Foreign Office, came especially to Tunis to submit a project for the excavation of the ancient port of Carthage by a French company. The project included the concession of a large tract of land in the immediate vicinity of the port. Another Frenchman applied for the concession of a railway from Tunis to the sea ports of Susa and Sfax. But this concession had already been granted to an English company. A third but more important scheme was presented by de Lesseps for a canal in the vicinity of Gabes, in the southern part of the Regency, for the purpose of forming an internal sea to Constantine in Algeria. This last project meant that a large part of the Regency was to be submerged for the exclusive benefit of Algerian trade. The rich province of Jarid would be thus separated from the Tunisian mainland and would be eventually annexed by France. But the three schemes were bound to fail owing to the stiff opposition of the English Consul-General. With regard to the last scheme, Wood pointed out to the great difficulties Egypt was encountering with reference to the Suez Canal, and made it clear that it was inconceivable to him that the discussion of such a problem would be confined to France and Tunis alone. F. O. 102/103. Wood to Derby, Aug. 4, 1874.

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2, No. 49. Roustan to Decazes May 9, 1876. The railway passed through the grain districts which in ancient times formed the granary of Rome. See F. O. 102/106. Wood to Derby, Aug. 31, 1874.

few hours. This meant that the despatch of French troops to the capital of the Regency would be greatly facilitated.

Roustan co-operated with Villet and Khair-ed-Din so long as they shared his conception of French interests. But when Villet began to criticise his conduct, Roustan insisted on the withdrawal of this too honest financial agent. The removal of Villet did not end the Consul's cares, for the latter always insisted that the financial agent must be subordinated to the head of the diplomatic mission. "The little cordiality" which governed Roustan's relations with Le Blant, a successor of Villet, in the end forced Le Blant to resign, since Roustan conceived that "he was entitled to have his (the inspector's) support in the settlement of French claims against the Tunisian Government, notwithstanding that the inspector was in its pay and service and consequently bound to deal with the claims brought before him with strict impartiality".⁽¹⁾ With Khair-ed-Din it was more difficult to deal. To demand of the Bay the dismissal of his Prime Minister would meet with certain refusal. But the Turkish-Russian War afforded Roustan a good opportunity. The Bay, entertaining doubts as to the loyalty of Khair-ed-Din, listened with attention to Mustafa ibn Ismail who had already thrown himself into the hands of Roustan. It was through this Minister that the French Bona-Guelma Company obtained permission to carry their railway across the frontier to Algeria. For this valuable service the French Government rewarded him with the "Legion of Harbour" and assisted him to reach the premiership.⁽²⁾ Nor was Roustan alone in advocating French supremacy in Tunis. He was backed by his

(1) F. O. 102/123. Wood to Salisbury, May 6, 1878.

(2) F. O. 102/111. Wood to Salisbury, May 10, 1878.

Government. Though the Conservatives professed anti-imperialist, anti-expansionist principles, their successive ministries up to their final downfall in 1877 gave complete support to the imperialist manœuvres of their Consul. Both de Broglie and Decazes were staunch believers in the French traditional policy. In 1876, Decazes wrote: "Tunis is the very entry to Africa, and is the opening of our Algerian possessions. We could not tolerate the establishment of any European Power there without danger to the security of our colony, and we should be obliged, in such a case, to engage in a struggle of extreme gravity or suffer a situation in which we should bear the burden of arrangements by which the others would profit"⁽¹⁾ Thus in 1878 the armies of France were within striking distance of the capital, and she was represented by a most energetic agent. France had most of the Tunisian Debt in her hands, and controlled the finance through the vice-president of the International Financial Commission. Telegraphic lines were her monopoly, important railways were in her possession, and the Prime Minister was her protégé. She possessed a predominant position.

IV. *Pinna and Italian Interests,*

The position of Italy in Tunis on the eve of the Berlin Congress was not far inferior to that of France. The first important Italian claim to Tunis was based on geographical proximity. Since the time of the Phœnicians this proximity had promoted commercial and political relations between Tunis and the Italian peninsula. The historical evolution of the central

(1) Quoted by Langer in "European Alliances". P. 218.

Mediterranean was not of less importance. Carthage had been the first victim of Roman imperialism in the Mediterranean. For centuries Tunis remained a part of the Roman Empire, practically a granary for Rome, a colony of exploitation. Africa had given Rome some of its emperors. From Tunis the Vandals attacked and despoiled the Eternal City. After having conquered the Ostrogoths, Justinian found himself forced to add Tunis to the possessions of the Eastern Empire. When Islam swept away Byzantine rule from North Africa, it crossed into Spain and Sicily. It was from Tunis that the Aghlabids conquered Sicily and raided Calabria. Masters of Sicily, the Normans ruled for a time in Mahdia and Susa. After them came the Pisans, Genœse, and Venetians to impose their rule on parts of the Tunisian coast. The Italian Republics were the foremost trading countries of Europe in the early Middle Ages, and they held that position so long as the Mediterranean remained the main avenue of commerce. As the Crusaders had brought Europe into direct and permanent contact with the Moslem countries of the Mediterranean, it was the Italians who derived the greatest material benefit. Indeed the Italian Republics possessed prosperous settlements on the coasts of the Byzantine and Moslem Mediterranean, and were busy in transporting trade between the different Mediterranean countries. The Italian Republics were the first to establish consulates; the Pisans were among the first to have a consul elected by the "curia maris" in Tunis, but it was the Venetians who were the first to establish a regular trading line with Tunis.⁽¹⁾ As Tunisian regulations for trade were few, and the control

(1) Villari: Italian Expansion. pp. 17-19.

exercised by the authorities was not rigid, all vessels enjoyed freedom from annoying trading restrictions and the market for European trade was eventually prosperous. Sicily and Malta served as political and cultural links between the Tunisian promontory and the Italian mainland. The Arabic names of many Sicilian places, Arabic influence on Sicilian and Italian literature, the existence of Roman names among many Tunisian cities, the remains of Roman coliseums, temples and aqueducts, all bear witness to the close relationship between the two countries.

It was only in the nineteenth century that Italians began really to settle in Tunis. The French conquest of Algeria opened North Africa to European settlers, and the Constitution of 1861 encouraged emigration on a large scale. It was mainly Italians who availed themselves of these precious opportunities and in a very short time they out-numbered the other foreign colonies. As the English colony, which was constituted of Maltese, spoke and wrote Italian, it was natural that the Italian language became the first foreign language in the Regency.

The attention of Sardinia was first drawn to North Africa in the thirties of the nineteenth century. The Mediterranean at that time was in process of transformation; the Egyptian demand for compensation after the Greek War of Independence was raising the Eastern question in an acute form, while the relations between England and France were not very cordial. It was then that the Cabinet of Turin devised a plan by which the vexatious problems of the Mediterranean would be finally settled. By this plan, Tripoli was to go to Egypt, Algiers to the Order of Malta and Tunis to Sardinia! Italian statesmen based this solution on the fact that, as a

second class Power, the presence of Sardinia in Tunis would not arouse the jealousy of the two rival maritime Powers and would be sure to end tension in the Mediterranean.⁽¹⁾ Although that offer was politely refused, yet the small kingdom of Sardinia never lost interest in a country where many Italians had managed to rise to high positions,⁽²⁾ and where Italian schools and institutions flourished. Still in the process of unification, Italy began to think in colonial terms, and events in the Mediterranean did not pass unnoticed. When in the late fifties, the project of the Suez Canal was being carried out, the young Italy could not conceal her jealousy; the idea that she should occupy a strip of land on the Red Sea found favour among such prominent men as Ricasoli and Garibaldi.⁽³⁾ But it was in the Mediterranean proper that Mazzini and the young Italians sought the future of their fatherland.⁽⁴⁾ Tunis was marked as the first Italian colony. "One of our principal paths to progress," wrote the leader of Young Italy, "is a mission to civilisation, to be carried out at the first possible opportunity on the shores of Tunis. Just as Morocco belongs to Spain, and Algeria to France, so does Tunis, the key of the centre of the Mediterranean, belong to Italy.

It was in the sixties that Florence began to take a serious political interest in the affairs of the Regency. During the insurrection of 1864 Italian fleets demonstrated side by side with the French and English fleets in the waters of Goletta.

(1) Serres: *La politique Turque*. pp. 22—23.

(2) Raffo was practically the Foreign Minister of Tunis for a long time. Castelnuovo occupied the position of the doctor of the Bay.

(3) Villari: *Expansion of Italy*. P. 29.

(4) Quoted by Broadley: *The Last Punic War*. Vol. 1. p. 161.

The Italian press prophesied the collapse of the Bardo, and its tone deliberately betrayed a wish for the annexation of the Regency. Even before that insurrection the Italian Government never professed the slightest faith in the liberal reforms undertaken by the Bay and did their best to impede their execution. The Italian colony, which began to take keen interest in what was going on in the Regency, wondered why Italy should not seize the opportunity of the insurrection to lay hands on the coasts of Tunis. During that crisis the Italians could not conceal their unfriendly feeling towards France, for it was, no doubt, impossible for Italy to raise claims with regard to Tunis and remain very friendly with her Latin sister. Indeed the Italian colonists displayed great jealousy of the overwhelming influence of France but could only express their anger against Gambarotta, their Representative, whom they accused of inactivity and shortsightedness. He did not follow the example of de Beauval, threatening the Bay, bullying his ministers and communicating with the insurgents. The activity of Wood in attempting to smooth differences between the Bardo and the leaders of the revolt, in getting in touch with the Turkish Commissioner and in opposing French claims passed unnoticed by the placid Gambarotta who neither asked for concessions, nor urged his Government to interfere. No wonder that the unfortunate agent was recalled and replaced by Pinna.

What seemed to encourage Italy was the possible desire of Napoleon III to see the attention of the young kingdom diverted from completing the unification of Italy. The Emperor was reported to have said in 1864 that he would not personally object to the Italian occupation of Tunis. The report

was believed to be true by Wood;⁽¹⁾ but it is possible that he might have heard it from Italian sources. The French Government itself was sure to be hostile to any such idea. In any case the Italian Government refused to entangle itself in adventures abroad when Venice and Rome were not yet incorporated in the new Italy. The young kingdom was not in a position to seek foreign complications; reconstruction, political, economic and cultural was more pressing at home. But Italy was not averse to the peaceful penetration of the Regency and was determined more than ever to oppose French ascendancy. Fully imbued with these principles the new Consul, Pinna, arrived in Tunis in 1865.

The task of the Italian Agent was not to leave England and France undisturbed in continuing their rivalry. A new competitor himself, he stepped into the arena with fresh vigour and determination. His first step was to make a compact with the Prime Minister, Khaznahdar, and to point out to the Bay that neither the policy of independence advocated by France nor the Turkophil policy of England was going to lead him anywhere. The only way open for Tunis was to declare herself a neutral country. French condemnation of that newly advocated policy was sufficient to dissuade the Bay from giving any more attention to it. On the other hand, Italy was not sufficiently strong to support the policy recommended by her agent. The failure of this scheme never disheartened Pinna who now confined himself to playing upon the apprehension

(1) On Oct. 27, 1874, Wood reminded the Foreign Office that "in 1864, the Italian Government obtained the sanction of the Emperor of France to send a military expedition to take possession of the Regency which was prevented by the energetic remonstrance of Her Majesty's Government." F. O. 402/99. Wood to Derby, Oct. 27, 1874.

of the Bay. By experience Es-Sadik had discovered that the more rivals he had in Tunis, the safer he would feel. The Bardo was glad to conclude with Pinna the famous Treaty of 1868 by which Italian residents were granted the rights of possessing real property and of exploiting the mines of Jaba Er-Rasas. This Convention was of great significance, since it reproduced the clauses of all European treaties with Tunis and since the Italian colony outnumbered all other European colonies. That meant that Italian residents would not only become the commercial and business class but the largest propertied foreign community in Tunis.

Although in the seventies Italy did not suffer from over-population, yet she suffered from poverty and brigandage. After Italian unity had been achieved, it was discovered that Italy was even poorer than had been at first believed. The provinces of the south were not an asset but a burden on the more fully developed north. The necessity of emigration was already felt in the thickly populated areas. Italy found out that she was losing tremendously through that process of emigration, for it was only the strong and healthy who could emigrate. The number of emigrants to South America and the United States was increasing every year. This phenomenon had its drawbacks, for, far from enhancing Italian prestige in distant lands, what happened was the reverse. The immigrants were, as a matter of course, either ignorant or semi-skilled workmen settling among superior communities. This alarming problem occupied the mind of all Italian statesmen, who now directed their attention towards North African shores. On the southern coast of the Mediterranean Tunis was an easy prey for colonial ambitions. The Tunisian native population through

the ravages of civil war, ill-administration, famines and the inadequacy of sanitary conditions was remaining stationary. Although there was a high birth rate, yet this fact was neutralised by a high rate of mortality. The unexploited rich resources of the Regency together with the very generous privileges bestowed upon foreigners and the non-materialistic native outlook made Tunis a very desirable country. Italy must have assured access to that tempting virgin land. It is not surprising therefore that a large number of Italians preferred to settle in a country so near to their homeland. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Italian immigrants consisted mainly of merchants and business men from Leghorn, of Jews and refugees who fled from the persecution and the misery prevalent in the Italian mainland. But it was otherwise in the second half of the nineteenth century; immigrants were mostly poor people who came from the south and Sicily.⁽¹⁾ There were already several shipping lines connecting the two countries of the central Mediterranean.⁽²⁾

Although Italy did not feel in the seventies a pressing shortage of essential raw materials and foodstuffs, yet she always thought in terms of the future. There was a definite desire on the part of Italian capitalists to find new profitable spheres for investment, a desire which was encouraged by the Government. Tunis was the most obvious part of the world where Italian capital subventioned by the Italian Government could find opportunities for enterprise. As England and France had economic control of most parts of the Mediterranean,

(1) *Ibid.* P. 57.

(2) Solmi: *The Making of Modern Italy*. 1925. P. 140.

it was but natural that Italy would give to Tunisian affairs a good deal of her attention. Once her unity was achieved, Italy became more and more conscious of her magnificent position in the Mediterranean; she was well aware that it was in that sea, so full of Roman and Italian memories, that the young Italy would play her part in history. The question of Tunis became in Italian estimation second only to the problems of Italy herself.

Italian imperialism was no better than English or French; it was guided mainly by self-interest. It depended upon the still approved thesis that might is right. This was the case in the crisis of 1871, to which the English Consul did not fail to give his testimony. "There can be no doubt," he testified, "that the policy of the Italian Government has been an aggressive one towards Tunis since they have entertained the idea of forming a colony in Africa."⁽¹⁾

Until 1871, apprehension of danger to Tunis came from France; but, after the disasters of the French-German War, Italy pressed for succession to the French inheritance in the Mediterranean. This tendency became all the more dominating after the establishment of the Italian Government in Rome. Not only in Tunis but in the whole Mediterranean, the Italian agents sought to raise the influence of Italy to a position of equality with France. Their claim was based on two main facts; in the first place, Italy had become a great Catholic Power with a legitimate right to succeed to the inheritance of the Papacy. Secondly the weak attitude adopted by France in 1871, and probably her desire not to irritate Italian feeling so

(1) Granville Papers. (G D.29). 337. Printed for the use of the Foreign Office: Jul. 28, 1881. no. 2. Wood to Granville. May 10, 1871.

long as French interests were not seriously injured, seemed to have encouraged Italy in pursuing her imperialistic policy. Italy seized the opportunity of French disasters to interfere in the affairs of Tunis "with the ambition and avowed object of colonising that country." (1) For this reason she demanded jurisdiction over property held by Italian residents and Tunisians in their employ "as an encouragement and additional guarantee to the colonists"; (2) and in support of that policy she was prepared to take action. The long awaited opportunity came at last, when an Italian domicile was alleged to have been violated by the local police. Italian national pride seized that pretext to express itself in the establishment of Italian dominion over Tunis. The Bardo offered reasonable satisfaction which was rejected; the Italian Consul hastened to suspend his diplomatic relations with the Tunisian Government. In that fateful year France was exhausted and had sufficient on her hands in Algeria. It remained for the English Consul to offer his mediation which was naturally unavailing. The irritation of the Italian colony reached such a degree that "efforts of every description to force the adoption of coercive measures," (3) were made. In the Italian Camera it was declared that the time had come for Italy to redress the wrongs of the past, and to vindicate her violated rights. (4) In fact the Bay was offered no alternative but to appeal to the Porte to protect its "province" from ultimate extinction. In the meantime he did

(1) Doc. Dip. Français. T. 1. No. 8. Jules Favre to Voguë. Jun. 12, 1871.

(2) Granville Papers (G.D.29) Vol. 337. Issue of a Firman to the Bey. Printed for the use of the Foreign Office, May 28, 1881. no. 2. Wood to Granville May 10, 1871 and Inclosure no. 5. of the same date.

(3) F.O. 102/90. Wood to Granville, Jan. 23, 1871.

(4) See F.O. 102/111. Paget to Granville, Jan. 17, Feb. 6, 8, 1878, and enclosures.

not fail to despatch a mission to Florence with the purpose of developing his case. It was only through the interference of England and Turkey that the Italian expedition never left la Spezzia. Paget had indeed remarked to Viscouti Venosta, the Italian Foreign Minister, that "pressure could be exercised in other ways than fleets and guns",⁽¹⁾ while his Turkish colleague simply declared that any attack on Tunis would mean an attack on Turkey.⁽²⁾ Italy found it therefore wiser to devote the resources of the young kingdom to the pressing problem of internal reconstruction. The commission of arbitration which was composed to settle the dispute of the Gadeida decided to the astonishment of Italy in favour of the Bardo. But the disappointment of Italy was so great when the Porte issued the Firman of 1871 that she was inclined to join with France in protesting against the rapprochement between Tunis and Turkey. Count Barbolani, the Italian Minister in Constantinople, made it plain to the Porte that though his Government was little disposed to raise a question with the Porte respecting the Firman, yet they regarded the step as "inopportune and ill-advised".⁽³⁾ This step coincided with an announcement made by the Italian press that the Porte felt no good-will towards its new acquisition, for preparations were made in Constantinople to despatch a commissioner and a fleet to Tunis for the purpose of exercising more influence over the Regency.⁽⁴⁾ This report proved to be a mere invention.

(1) F.O. 45/180. Paget to Granville, Feb. 20, 1871.

(2) F.O. 45/180. Herries, English Chargé d'Affaires at Rome, to Granville, Feb. 19, 1871.

(3) F.O. 102/103. no. 400. Elliot to Granville, Nov. 11, 1871.

(4) Granville Papers (G.D.29) 337. Issue of a Firman to the Bey. Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. Jul. 28, 1881. Inclosure I in No. 6. Wood to Elliot. Jul. 12, 1871.

Italy should have learned from this crisis many useful lessons. In the first place England would not see with indifference Italian ascendancy in Tunis. Secondly France, though humiliated and weak, was not willing to abandon her position as a great colonial empire. Yet the favourable attitude of Germany seemed to have encouraged Italian aspirations. It might probably be true that Italy reassured herself with the hope that the recovery of France from her recent disasters would occupy French energy for a long time. Italy could not bear the thought of a dominant French influence in a land so near to Sicily. But she was soon awakened to find that her disappointment at the rapid recovery of France only equalled German astonishment. The irritation of the past was soon revived, hope gave way to anxiety and pessimism. The advent to power of Khair-ed-Din was not to allay Italian fears, for according to Wood, Italy regarded the new Prime Minister as "a serious obstacle to the execution of designs, which whatever they may be now, had originally no less object than the conquest of the Regency."⁽¹⁾ Rumours were therefore circulated about this Minister's alleged desire to pave the way for a French protectorate. The Italian Consul did not fail to show his sympathy for the fallen Minister and co-operated in stirring up an insurrection, but he ultimately failed. Nor was his Government idle in Constantinople; with the co-operation of Berlin, it excited the suspicions of the Porte against the fabricated designs of Khair-ed-Din. Italian jealousy was intensified by the fact that France was at that time under legitimist and clerical influences, so hateful to Italy. To

(2) F.O. 102,99. Wood to Derby. Oct. 27, 1874.

handicap the growth of French influence in Tunis became an Italian national task. Pinna made a tour in the Tunisian coastal towns accusing the Bardo of fanaticism and bad faith; he even went so far as to incite the people he addressed to insurrection.⁽¹⁾ He deliberately involved himself in secret combinations to destroy the Financial Commission which Italy regarded as a repository of French influence. With the connivance of some Austrian bankers of Trieste, he endeavoured to substitute an Austrian-Italian bank for the Commission. Such efforts were described by the English Consul as "intrigues and mystifications resorted to to deceive and surprise our good faith."⁽²⁾ Despite the sympathy shown by Austria to Italian claims, the efforts of Pinna were bound to fail since Wood made it clear that "no interference would be allowed with the Finance Commission, which had been instituted with the direct concurrence of our respective Governments, without their knowledge and sanction." The English and French Representatives were perfectly agreed in 1875 to give the Commission their full support and "to prevent similar financial jobbing".⁽³⁾ The failure of the tour and the effort to subvert the Commission were followed by the despatch of an Italian geographical mission to Tunis which numbered military names among its members. To outward appearance, the purpose of this mission was to ascertain the practicability of an inland sea. But there was no doubt as to its political importance. It was to impress France that Italy was not ready to tolerate any exclusive French influence in Tunis. To the Bay it was meant to signify that Italy was ever

(1) F.O. 102/101. Wood to Derby. Jun. 21, Jul. 6, 1875.

(2) F.O. 102/103. Wood to Derby. Jun. 19, 1875.

(3) Ibid. See also Wood to Derby. Jul. 6, 1875.

on the watch. The members of the mission did not shrink from hinting that Tunis must afford to be a sphere of Italian influence, for both Italy and Prussia, as Colonel Galvogni, a prominent member of the mission, observed, were among the have-nots; they had no military schools of their own. It was pointed out that England should be content with Gibraltar and Malta; Algeria should provide a sufficient field for French expansion; and in order to redress the balance of power in the Mediterranean Italy should be allowed a free hand in Tunis.

To prevent France from establishing a protectorate in Tunis became a main principle of Italian diplomacy in the seventies. Although Italy was well aware that she was not in a position to undertake a work of colonisation herself with her impoverished resources, yet she relentlessly pursued her aim. On the other hand, she realised that the support of Great Britain was desirable and indispensable. For it was mainly due to English manifestation of displeasure that Italy postponed her action in 1871. She seemed to have expected that in return England would use her influence to prevent French economic penetration. Many times did Menabrea, the Italian Ambassador in London, attempt to arouse English suspicions by uncovering French designs upon Tunis. When rumours were rife that France intended to negotiate a protectorate with the Tunisian dictator in 1875, Visconti Venosta was alive to the necessity of common action on the part of England and Italy "to prevent a contingency so widely at variance with their common interests."⁽¹⁾ As the Italians took fright whenever a concession was granted to France, the anxiety felt in Rome was always

(1) F.O. 102/101. Wood to Derby. Feb. 6, 1875.

communicated to the British Government by Menabrea, the ever enthusiastic Italian Ambassador in London. Indeed, the cooperation of England was sought by Italy on all occasions when ever the Tunisian question became critical. In 1876 Italy raised the alarm when it was alleged that France was entertaining the idea of getting the concession of the railway from Mater to Bizerta and of a French bank. Menabrea did not fail to remind Lord Derby that France aimed at nothing but the political extinction of the Regency; the Italian Ambassador also pointed to the fact that all railways, telegraphs and mines were already or would soon be in French hands.⁽¹⁾ It was even reported that the Italian Government endeavoured to persuade the Great Powers to recognize the neutrality of the Regency, but that a certain Great Power objected to the suggestion.⁽²⁾ The Italian interest was so great that no Italian statesman could ever be in a position to neglect purposely the interests which Italy possessed in the Regency. But in 1876 and 1877, the Eastern question came to a crisis and drew the direct attention of the maritime European Powers from the central Mediterranean to the Balkans and the Orient. The theory of upholding the territorial integrity of Turkey came to an end in the spring of 1878.

(1) F.O. 102/104. Wood to Derby. Jun. 22 and Aug. 12, 1876.

(2) F.O. 102/101. Wood to Derby. Oct. 12, 1875.

CHAPTER III.

THE BRITISH AND GERMAN OFFER OF TUNIS TO FRANCE

1. *England and the Traditional Policy of Maintaining the Integrity of the Ottoman Empire.*

During the nineteenth century the interests of Great Britain in the Turkish Empire were Indian, Mediterranean, political, religious, commercial and financial. In dominating the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey controlled the shortest routes to India; the importance of these routes was repeatedly emphasised by English statesmen. The strategic interest came into prominence when the long all-sea route came to be regarded as completely inadequate both for commercial and military purposes. That Turkey, who commanded the junction of the overland routes was weak and amenable to English influence and pressure, was a fact well-established in the minds of British statesmen. Moreover, the vast dominions of the Ottomans provided great facilities for English trade, for by treaty and "Capitulation", the import duties were fixed for the benefit of British products and manufactures. The great importance of the Turkish market had been first realised during the Napoleonic Wars when the major part of Europe had been practically closed to English trade. Since that time England rose to a dominant economic position in the Near East.

No wonder then that Great Britain suspected the motives of Russian interference in Turkish affairs, and with great concern viewed the Russian advance towards the Mediterranean. In the English conception Turkey stood as a great bulwark against Russian supremacy in the Near and Middle East. The Russian danger was in fact an important factor in determining the British policy towards Turkey. This danger was first seen by Pitt who energetically stressed the British interest in the survival of the Ottoman Empire. Canning formulated the policy of the integrity of Turkey, though he refused to give a formal guarantee; but the greatest advocate of the Turkish alliance was Palmerston.

For a dozen years Palmerston had to face every aspect of the Turkish problem. In his opinion Turkey was a good occupier of the route to India, an indispensable Power to equilibrium in Europe. His words are significant:

“If Russian conquest should lead to the Christianising and civilising of the inhabitants of that country (Turkey,) these advantages and no one can estimate them higher, would be counterbalanced by the consequences that would result to Europe from the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire, I say then that undoubtedly the British Government would feel it to be their duty to resist to the utmost any attempt on the part of Russia to partition the Turkish Empire The integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire are necessary to the maintenance of the tranquility, the liberty, and the balance of power in the rest of Europe.” (1)

(1) See Temperley: *The Crimea*. pp. 72, 73, 93.

On more than one occasion, Palmerston made declarations emphasising the soundness of the policy of maintaining Turkish territorial integrity. The Palmerstonian policy culminated in Crimean War, and despite the fact that this War had brought with it great waste and disappointment, England remained on the whole faithful to the pro-Turkish policy till the further development of the Eastern Crisis in 1876.

So long as Turkey was able to thwart Russian penetration towards the Mediterranean and the Middle East, England was ready to give her support. That the Turkish Empire was able to survive and to play her part as a European and Asiatic Power was a hope entertained by Great Britain since the thirties. It was conceivable that if Turkey were given opportunity to set her house in order: reform her army, organise her finances, stamp out corruption, and ameliorate the conditions of her Christian subjects, she would become capable of resuming her position as a Great Power. That conception was fortified by three main ideas. In the first place there was the difficulty of driving out the Sultan and his Moslem subjects from Europe without entailing wholesale massacre of Christians in other parts of the Ottoman Empire. Secondly the Slavs of the Balkans were not sufficiently advanced or united to build up a respectable State worthy of replacing Turkey in Europe. Thirdly the Turks had always proved themselves better fitted to resist Russian aggression than either the Slavs or the Greeks

In England the success of the Turks in the military sphere was recognised from the first; but in the realms of administration, justice, finance, and liberal government, Turkey disappointed even her most enthusiastic friends. It is true that solemn declarations were periodically made, various Khattis

Sherif Hamayouni were promulgated, even a very liberal constitution granted, but all proved of no great avail. It is doubtful whether the Turks were very serious in undertaking to reform themselves; in fact it seems that they had only adopted reforms to conciliate public opinion in Europe when there was a threatening Russian danger. The vicious influence of the Palace was undoubtedly the greatest obstacle in the way of progress. With but few exceptions, there was an almost total absence of men who could understand reform in the Western sense. The institutions of the Turkish Empire with the exception of the army continued to be mainly based upon the old legacies of Central Asia, Byzantium and Mediaeval Islam.

The apparent Turkish immobility was, no doubt, due to traditions of long standing which could hardly keep pace with time and change. But there were also other subversive influences from outside which were counteracting the new spirit fostered by England and France. The interests of economic penetration, the excited rivalry between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, the international obligations with which Turkey was over-burdened, the clash of political interests, and the agitation of revolutionary committees all these were admittedly very serious obstacles in the way of reform. The extra-territorial rights, the so-called "Capitulations", made real administrative, legislative and judicial reform almost impossible. Europe had to be consulted and the consent of at least the Great Powers had to be secured before any attempt at real change could be made. The intrigues of Russia in the Balkans engendered unrest and revolt, and in her desire to reach the "mer libre" she naturally opposed any progressive movement in Turkey.

There remained another important factor which made the Turkish question very problematical. The only reasonable way of solving it was the voluntary dissolution of the Turkish Empire. Turkey was a heterogeneous empire, composed of different races and creeds. National feeling had been engendered by the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, and the literary and romantic movements of the early nineteenth century. The successful revolts of Serbs and Greeks set a conspicuous example to the other nationalities in the Balkans. The national movements of the subject countries were incompatible with the existence of the Turkish Empire not only in Europe but also in the Near East.⁽¹⁾ Turkish rule was no doubt very bad; but the real difficulty, as Layard pointed out, had always been how to replace it. That was the problem for England especially after she had discovered that the Turks

(1) Professor Langer's description of the conflict between the interests of the subject nationalities and the Turkish State is very illuminating: "The Western idea of nationality presupposed a territorial basis, and therefore its triumph was just as dangerous for the Turkish Government as for the Austro-Hungarian or Russian Governments. The result was a fundamental conflict in the ideas of reform as entertained by the liberal Turks and those put forward among the Christians. "It may be well said that the nineteenth century played a game of hide and seek with the word "reform" as applied to Turkey", says Gabriel Hanotaux. The so-called Young Turks took their ideas from the French Revolution and desired the institution of a strong centralised government which would knit the parts of the empire together more closely than ever. What the Christians desired was the very reverse. If they did not actually demand independence or union with their co-nationals outside the confines of the empire, they at least demanded a semi-independent position with complete autonomy-in other words, a large measure of decentralisation. As for the European powers, they rarely specified what they meant by reform, some being more interested in the maintenance of the Empire, while others concerned themselves with the position of the subject nationalities."
 "Alliances and Alignments." See pp. 61, 62.
 Mr. Emin adopts the same view. See: Turkey in the World War 1900, p. 28

were not in a position to understand or carry out satisfactorily the extensive reforms she desired.

As the Russian danger was no longer feared during the fourteen years that followed the Congress of Paris in 1856, English faith in Turkey began to decline, especially when no notable reforms were being undertaken. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the transfer of the Khedive's bloc of shares in it in 1875, thanks to Disraeli, gave England a direct route to India through Egypt. The Suez Canal was destined to become the principal gateway to India and in a sense the spinal cord of English communications with the whole East. By "outgeneralling the French Government", Disraeli succeeded in fortifying the position of England in the Near East and Red Sea. The fact that the English Government was the greatest single share holder in the Canal was conducive to more direct British attention of Egypt and did not fail to arouse some doubt as to the soundness of the traditional policy of maintaining Turkish territorial integrity.

Then came the Eastern Crisis of the seventies;(1) the Bosnian insurrection proved in the first place the reluctance of the Turks to introduce timely and effective reforms. Their failure to put a decisive end to the insurrection did nothing to convince Europe or England in particular of Turkish energy and resource. More alarming to British opinion was the defection of the Porte in meeting its financial obligations. And although the steady advance of Russia in Central Asia was gravely viewed in England, especially by those interested in Indian affairs, yet it became more and more clear in Great Britain

(1) "The Eastern Crisis" frequently mentioned in this chapter is taken to mean that of 1875-1878.

that instead of putting a stop to Russian expansion, the Treaty of Paris had diverted Russian energy to Central Asia, where Turkey was of no use against threats to India. The futility and waste of the Crimean War moreover, had deprived Russia of many of her old English enemies, and during the Eastern Crisis, influential voices were even raised in support of her claim to bring salvation to the Balkan peoples. Gavard, the French Chargé d'Affaires in London, was perhaps right when he reported in 1875 that "Personne ne songe plus, il est vrai, à sauver la Turquie de sa ruine..... La question se réduit donc à préserver dans le cataclysme inévitable la route de l'Inde ... Pas une discordance sur ce point."⁽¹⁾

Although the spirited foreign policy of Disraeli showed a great interest in Eastern affairs, yet the enthusiasm of the Great Conservative was tempered by strong imperialistic sentiments, by a deep rooted belief in "England's magnificent and awful cause". At the beginning, the general policy of Disraeli as regards Turkey was to safeguard British interests by upholding as far as possible her independence and integrity. Disraeli was far from admiring the Porte for its own sake; "all the Turks may be in the Propontis", he wrote to Lord Derby in 1876. The sympathy of the Queen, was wholly on his side; for the Prime Minister knew how to flatter the vanity of women.

As Disraeli entertained the Russian suspicions of Palmerston, he was not unwilling to give support to Turkey against Russian designs. The clash in Afghanistan, together with the Russian ambitions in North Persia and Azerbaijan

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr lière. Série. T. 2, No. 12.

did not fail to disturb relations between the two imperialistic Powers. The growth of Pan-slavism aroused the apprehensions of Great Britain as well as those of the Central Powers. England in fact wondered whether Russia really aimed at challenging British rule in India.

But the Bulgarian atrocities of 1876 removed any consideration for the Turk in England; suspicion of Russia was temporarily forgotten. Turkey was denounced as "a Government tempered by assassination and maintained by massacre." As the Bulgarian atrocities were not the only crime committed by the Turks, the Ottoman Empire was bound to lose most of its friends in the British Isles: English public opinion was indeed insistent upon departure from the traditional policy of Turkish territorial integrity. To no man were these atrocities more outrageous to humanity and civilisation than to Gladstone, who was most fitted to lead the anti-Turkish movement in England. But it was Salisbury who undertook the actual task of putting an end to the policy of Turkish territorial integrity.

Gladstone had at one time believed in the formula of Palmerston and Stratford, and had shared their distrust of Russia. But these views soon suffered a great change, and the devout Christian in Gladstone decided him to side with the Christians of the Balkans. The verdict of the electors in 1874 in favour of his chief opponent seems to have deprived parliamentary life of most of its attractions, and was perhaps one of the reasons that led the great Liberal to resign from the leadership of the party. He had for long yearned for a life of religious contemplation, longing for

“an interval between an active career and death.”⁽¹⁾ The “taint of Jesuitism” which never left him, his keen interest in ecclesiastical questions undoubtedly influenced his way of thinking. But the simple delights of Hawarden, in the midst of parks and trees, did not indicate that the weary “little Englander” had given up his anti-imperialistic views or his belief in England’s great mission to civilisation. That this Island should remain the champion of liberty and justice in Europe was a conviction with Gladstone. But his absorption in religious matters for two whole years seems to have engendered a sense of irresponsibility and prejudiced views of predominantly Christian colour. The Bulgarian massacres aroused him to pronounce the final condemnation of the Turk. “It is impossible”, he declared in Parliament, “to go on with mere repetition of promises. Europe, the Christian conscience, the conscience of mankind will expect some sort of security for the redress of great and dreadful grievances than mere words can afford.”⁽²⁾ With a wholly deficient knowledge of history, he branded the Turkish race as “the one great anti-human specimen of humanity”.⁽³⁾ The memory of the Crimea contributed no doubt to his belief in the necessity of aiding the Christian populations of the Balkans to throw away the Turkish yoke, and rid themselves once and for all of this “problem of Christendom”, this “historical calamity”. In his “Bulgarian Horrors”, a pamphlet which he composed “in bed with pillow props”, after a severe attack of gout and frightened by “the shades of Bajazets, Amuraths and

(1) Eyck: “Gladstone”, 1938, p. 247.

(2) Wirtwein: “Britain and the Balkan Crisis” 1935, pp. 36-38.

(3) Morley: “Life of Gladstone” Vol. II, p. 553.

Mahmouds", Gladstone composed the indispensable rules of decency and humanitarianism which other countries should observe in the treatment of subject peoples and insurrections. He asserted with great emphasis the impossibility for England to reconcile the fate of the Christian races of Turkey with the traditional policy of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The Bulgarian atrocities were by no means justifiable, yet the "Bulgarian Horrors" could only be composed by a Gladstone. The expulsion of the Turk "bag and baggage" from Bulgaria, which he advocated, was welcomed by public opinion; in fact the whole pamphlet was greeted with great enthusiasm. There is no doubt as to the humanitarian element in the "Bulgarian Horrors"; no doubt that "the woes of the Bulgarians had weighed upon his mind"; but how far the pamphlet was motivated by party politics and the general dislike for the Turks it is difficult to assess. The three factors, however, are definitely there; sentimentalism was, moreover, not altogether absent.

From the time that Gladstone published his pamphlet it can be safely maintained that the traditional policy of England towards the territorial integrity of Turkey was bound to come to an end. "The Bulgarian Horrors" was not the last word of the great Liberal in condemning the Turk. In 1877, it was followed by "Lessons in Massacre", a pamphlet in which he asserted that the Porte had been "thoroughly satisfied with the repression, and had nothing to do but to imprison, try and hang Bulgarians."⁽¹⁾ In the "Paths of Honour and Shame",

(1) The pamphlet was "An exposition of the conduct of the Porte in and about Bulgaria since May 1876. See p. 16.

which was published early in 1878, he appealed to Englishmen not to lend their support to the Turkish cause. "Turkey", he argued, "must not look to us for support... how near we have been walking to the edge of a giddy precipice of guilt and shame. But we are to assume that now, when Turkish power is smitten to the ground, this danger has gone by.... the battle of the Turk against Russia has not been a battle for freedom. What he fought for was the power to perpetuate ascendancy to commit injustice".⁽¹⁾ The general attitude of the Liberals was hostile to Turkey; the Bulgarian massacres did not fail to open a new field for party politics. Even the balanced Lord Granville was not unfavourable to the expulsion of the Sultan from his Slav territories.

The general attitude of the Church and press was not less hostile. The condemnation of the Turk was almost universal in England.⁽²⁾ So great was the indignation of public opinion that even the pro-Turk Queen and Conservatives dared not uphold the cause of Turkey. In Parliament Disraeli declared that far from approving a policy of cruelty and massacre, England was only fulfilling her international obligations.

Perhaps the best apology for the maintenance of the traditional policy in the seventies was made by Sir Henry Elliot. The English Ambassador in Constantinople wrote on September 4th, 1877:

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- (1) This pamphlet was an article sent to the Press on February 25, 1878. See pp. 10, 11, 24, 31. There is no doubt that the tone of this article was much milder than that of "The Bulgarian Horrors".
- (2) See "Papers on the Eastern Question". Published by the Eastern Question Association. 1877. This book constituted a condemnation of Turkey; it is a collection of articles by Members of Parliament and Churchmen.

“To the accusation of being a blind partisan of the Turks, I will only answer that my conduct here has never been guided by any sentiment or affection for them (the Turks), but by a firm determination to uphold the interests of Great Britain to the utmost of my power; and that these interests are deeply engaged in preventing the disruption of the Turkish Empire is a conviction which I share in common with the most eminent statesmen who have directed our foreign policy, but which appears to be abandoned by shallow politicians or persons who have allowed their feelings of revolted humanity to make them forget the capital interests involved in the question... We have been supporting what we know to be a semi-civilised nation, liable under certain circumstances to be carried into frightful excesses; but the fact of this having just now been strikingly brought home to us all cannot be a sufficient reason for abandoning a policy which is the only one that can be followed with a due regard to our own interests.”⁽¹⁾

Yet the declaration of Lord Derby left no doubt as to the fact that “any sympathy felt in England towards Turkey (had) been completely destroyed by the occurrences in Bulgaria... and to such a pitch had indignation in all classes of English society risen... that in the extreme case of Russia declaring war against Turkey, Her Majesty’s Government found it practically impossible to interfere in the defence of the Ottoman Empire.”⁽²⁾ Gladstone was of course so contented to witness this change of feeling that he wrote to the Duke of Argyll:

(1) Quoted by Seton-Watson: “Disraeli and Gladstone” pp. 62-63.
 (2) *Ibid.*

“A healthier air has been generated by indignation at the Bulgarian massacres, which have thrown us back on our rather forgotten humanity.” The atrocity campaign which imperilled the position of the Conservatives determined the English Government to maintain a policy of neutrality during the Russian-Turkish War.

It was after the outbreak of the War that public opinion in England began to modify its extreme views with regard to Turkey. The fate of the Caliphate was not a matter of indifference to Great Britain since it involved the religious loyalties of the Moslem Indians. Nor could England be in a position to favour the fall of Constantinople into the hands of Russia. Disraeli might possibly have entertained exaggerated views about the strategic importance of Constantinople to India, but impressed with the reactions of public opinion in 1876, he seems to have begun to envisage the total disappearance of Turkey from Europe. As a great imperialist and opportunist, Disraeli was not even averse to the partition of Turkey “under the friendly auspices of England”. The procedure, however, of the three Continental Powers was somewhat wounding to his pride. This feeling was shared by the Queen who resented more than ever Bismarck’s alleged reference to England as ceasing to be a Great Power.⁽¹⁾ Though the Government were seriously perturbed by the campaign waged by Gladstone, yet their aim remained the disruption of the three Emperors, alliance. The rejection of the Berlin Memorandum, the dispatch of the fleet to Besika Bay, the attempts to win the support of Italy were demonstrations of the sentiment that prevailed in

(1) Buckle: Vol. V, p. 450. Disraeli to Lady Bradford, Nov. 15, 1875.

official quarters in London. It is likely that Disraeli might have taken action in support of Turkey, for he apprehended that if the Turks were left in the lurch they would find no alternative but to reach a direct understanding with Russia. But the Prime Minister had not the full support of the Cabinet; dissension was rife, and Derby, Salisbury and Carnarvon exercised a restraining influence. A certain indolence and irresolution grew with Derby as he became older; these two unfortunate characteristics, combined with a lack of any great imagination or intellect, hastened his forced resignation from the Cabinet and the end of intimate relations with Disraeli.

The successor to the Foreign Office was Lord Salisbury, a resolute and realistic advocate of a forward policy. Salisbury disliked Turkey more than Derby; yet the influence he exercised upon his pro-Turk chief from the spring of 1878 onwards was almost unique. Salisbury did not share Derby's irresolution and lack of energy, and was not afraid to assume serious responsibilities. Salisbury's views on Turkey were partially based on the conviction that the Turks were helplessly unable to reform themselves. "Their unreasonable disposition and the total disorganisation of their Government"⁽¹⁾ strengthened that conviction. In his opinion, no stability or prosperity could ever reign in a country where all authority was concentrated in the hands of a despot without the moderating and healthy influence of an established aristocracy. From the beginning he recognized that the existence of a weak Turkey endangered British communication with India, and that the only satisfactory settlement

(1) "Life of Salisbury" by Cecil. Vol. II, p. 129. Letter to Lytton, Mar. 2, 1877.

of the Eastern Question was to eliminate Turkey as a sovereign Power from Europe. He considered that the Turkish alliance was a disgrace to England,⁽¹⁾ and that it was high time the traditional policy should come to an end. European and Christian sentiments were not without their importance in shaping the views of Salisbury. He did not consider it worth while to shed British blood in the defence of a country ruled by "stupids", "idiots", and unnecessarily "obstinates"; even his views of Midhat were not complimentary to the great liberal Turk.⁽²⁾ Salisbury's contempt for Turkish statesmen led him to believe in the method of coercing them, for according to him any attempt to "convince the Turk is about as easy a matter as making a donkey canter". He could not share the fantastic view of his chief that the route to India passed through Constantinople; he persisted in the opinion that "no protection would set the Turk upon his legs again", and that the time had come to defend British interests directly by "some territorial rearrangement".⁽³⁾ His conviction that Turkish machinery would crumble by itself even if Turkey were not attacked by Russia, led him to consider other methods for safeguarding the road to India. By the occupation of Egypt or by some other point in the Mediterranean, English interests would be satisfactorily guaranteed. "I would have devoted," he declared, "my whole efforts to securing the road to India by the acquisition of Egypt or Crete, and would in no way have discouraged the obliteration of Turkey", an empire which he wished "had gone to pieces".⁽⁴⁾

(1) Ibid. Vol. II, p. 84. Letter of Sep. 13, 1876.

(2) Cecil: Life of Salisbury, Vol. II, pp. 115, 116, 123.

(3) Ibid. Vol. II, p. 130.

(4) Salisbury expressed that wish in April, 1878. Ibid, Vol. II, pp. 122, 146, 243.

As Foreign Secretary, Salisbury succeeded in convincing his chief of the necessity of a partial partition of Turkey. For being no less imperialistic than the Prime Minister, Salisbury, in full agreement with Disraeli, sought substantial guarantees for the security of English interests in the Mediterranean and the Near East. The British lack of trust in the good faith of the Russian Government became equal to their lack of trust in the Porte. The English Government had therefore to secure British interests against the machinations of both St. Petersburg and Constantinople. The failure of the English scheme for a Mediterranean League strengthened the view of the necessity of obtaining adequate compensation, should Russia retain her conquests in Bağoum and Armenia. The decision to occupy Cyprus, secured for England "the key of Western Asia" and "a new Gibraltar" (sic!) (1) France could take another part of the Ottoman Empire, Tunis. The ground was to be prepared by Layard who worked hard to draw the attention of the Foreign Office to the importance of Asia Minor with relation to the route to India. If Turkey was "to go straight and retain her remaining Asiatic possessions, she must accept a kind of British protectorate". (2) From Cyprus, it was hoped, England could supervise reforms in Asia Minor, and check Russian advance towards Syria and Mesopotamia. As the Porte was not wholeheartedly willing to accept British protection after the war with Russia was over, Salisbury, while praising the

(1) In her study of Salisbury's policy in 1878-80, Professor Penson maintained that Salisbury decided to take Cyprus as "A symbol to Russia and the people of Asia Minor of Britain's determination to defend her interests". See "Studies in Anglo-French History" pp.131 132.

(2) Salisbury himself regarded the acquisition of Cyprus as compensation for Russian conquests. After Headlam Morley: "Studies in Diplomatic History" p. 193. & seq.

qualities of the Moslem population of Anatolia, insisted that the Porte "must recognise that it need (ed) protection". Before the threat of the "disruption" of his empire, the Sultan agreed on May 26th, 1878, to abandon Cyprus as the price of future English protection.

II. *British-Italian Relations.*

The development of the Eastern Question in 1876 opened an era of compensations. The Russian intransigence, war, and victory did not fail to arouse the fears and hopes of the other Great Powers. The successes in the Balkans and Asia gratified the ambitions of the Russian Government. Austria-Hungary secured with Russian and German consent the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thus restored the balance of power in the Balkans. The Cyprus Convention satisfied the English appetite. All these satisfactions of amour-propre were at the cost of Turkish territory, and demonstrated strongly the desire of the four Great Powers to put an end to the "territorial integrity" of Turkey which the Treaty of 1856 had sanctioned.

But the Cyprus Convention, far from ending the partial partition of Turkey, encouraged the Mediterranean Powers to follow the English example. The British occupation of Cyprus upset the balance of power in the Mediterranean to the detriment of France and Italy. From the time the Convention became public, England could no longer exploit the thesis of Turkish territorial integrity for the advancement of her own interests in the Mediterranean. In the realm of imperialism, England had successfully vied with Russia and Austria-Hungary; her case was even worse, for she struck the blow while

professing deep interest in the preservation of Turkey. The publication of the secret arrangement on Cyprus was bound to arouse jealousy and protest in both Paris and Rome.

Salisbury foresaw this eventuality. He was well aware that Italian diplomacy generally aimed at the preservation of the status quo in the Mediterranean, and therefore could not be indifferent to any change in the balance of power in that sea. That France was anxious that her influence in the Eastern Mediterranean should not be undermined was a fact well-known to Salisbury. As Russia, Austria-Hungary and England had accomplished their aims at the cost of Turkey, Salisbury, constant in his view of the provisional nature of Turkish proprietorship, saw no reason why France and Italy should not help themselves to Turkish territory in North Africa. Tunis and Tripoli might doubtless provide ample compensation for France and Italy. He had no respect for the territorial integrity of Turkey,⁽¹⁾ and he could not recognise the importance of Turkish interests in these "two provinces". As he had no objection to the partition of even the Moslem territories of Turkey, Salisbury was quite ready to depart from the Palmerstonian policy which had systematically opposed French

(1) In her study of Salisbury's policy, 1878-1880, Professor Penson maintained that Salisbury aimed at "a system of protection" for Turkey. "Running through the whole of Salisbury's negotiations of this period", Professor Penson wrote, "is one thread. Sometimes almost invisible and undoubtedly weak, it nevertheless justifies the statement that Salisbury had a consistent design. He wanted to substitute practical and limited obligations for the "pure mockery" of the outworn Tripartite Agreement. Austria-Hungary in Europe, Britain in Asia Minor, France in Tunis, represented three aspects of one policy. The protection of the Ottoman Empire, a "protection" on the Indian Model, was Salisbury's new watchword in the place of independence and integrity".

See "Studies in Anglo-French History", pp. 140, 141.

expansion in the direction of Tunis. How it came about that France was offered Tunis without any regard being paid to Italian aspirations was essentially due to the refusal of Italy to co-operate with England after the signature of the San Stefano Treaty.

The strategic importance of Italy in the very centre of the Mediterranean, with a position dominating the gateways of Africa, the Tyrrhenian and the Adriatic enhanced her prestige, as a Mediterranean Power. The memories of ancient Rome, of the economic prosperity of Venice, of Pisa and Genoa, combined to inspire the successive Governments of Italy with hope in the future of their country. The difficult problems in which the Austrian Empire was involved after 1866, the disasters of 1870 which relegated France to impotence, the German watchfulness over French movements, all these encouraged Italy to claim growing interest in the fate of Mediterranean countries. England and, in fact, all Europe soon became aware of the strong position which Italy occupied, and by 1876 Italy might be said to possess the political status of a Great Power. The constructive rule of the Right, the reorganisation of the army and navy, made the alliance of Italy both important and desirable.

The conflagration of the Eastern Crisis, the policy of non-commitment adopted by France, the apparent solidarity of the Imperial Powers, all these combinations placed England in a position of isolation and impotence in Europe. Although Disraeli was not willing to see France humiliated once more in 1875, and felt more than ever the usefulness of French co-operation in Eastern affairs, yet he entertained pessimistic views upon the military power of France. This opinion is revealed in a letter he wrote on September 6th, 1875.

"It is curious that since the fall of France, who used to give us so much trouble, the conduct of foreign affairs for England has become infinitely more difficult. There is no balance and unless we go out of our way to act with the three Northern Powers, they would act without us, which is not agreeable for a State like England. Nor do I see, . . . any prospect of the revival of France as a military puissance. She is more likely to be partitioned than to conquer Europe again."

"When I entered political life there were three Great Powers in danger - the Grand Signior of the Ottomans, the Pope of Rome and the Lord Mayor of London. The last will survive a long time; but the fall of France has destroyed the Pope and will ultimately drive the Turk from Europe."(1)

Besides the fact that France was not willing to entangle herself in problems of doubtful issue, Decazes, the Foreign Minister, acted as a partisan of Russia. This disposition was not concealed in the Conference of Constantinople.(2) Austria-Hungary was on friendly terms with Great Britain, but she was unwilling to undertake a military campaign against Russia in defence of purely English interests. The co-operation of Germany with Britain against Russia was impossible, since Bismarck had no direct interest in Eastern affairs. The only possible ally for England was thus Italy.

During the Eastern Crisis there had always subsisted in England doubts about the real aims of Italian diplomacy.

(1) Buckle. Vol. VI, p. 13.

(2) See French-English relations

The Russian sympathies of Count Tornielli, the Secretary-General of the Italian Foreign Office, strengthened English suspicions. The visit of Salisbury to Rome on his way to Constantinople at the end of 1876, though it confirmed the existence of some Russian influence at the Court, yet gave Salisbury the impression that Italy was determined not to commit herself to any policy of action on the Russian side.

The menacing character of the Russian danger in the spring of 1878 prompted the English Government to make inquiries in Rome concerning current rumours about Italy's Russian sympathies. In reply, Paget gave it as his conviction that "The Italian Government had been and continued to be perfectly loyal and straightforward." "The Depretis cabinet considered their interests the same as those of England," and were therefore ready to co-operate with the English Government in any future conference.⁽¹⁾ Paget based his argument on the plea that Italy was as much interested as England in maintaining the balance of power in the Mediterranean. His views were strengthened by the repeated declarations of Depretis that his Government "might even join an alliance with England and Austria if war should become necessary in defence of their common interests."⁽²⁾ Such intentions were communicated by Paget to London, where they did not fail to arouse optimism with regard to Italian co-operation.

The personality of Agostino Depretis seems to have inspired confidence in English as well as Austrian quarters, though Italian opinion differs widely with regard to his

(1) F.O. 45/337. Paget to Derby, no. 175, Mar. 1, 1878. See no. 208, Mar. 14, and no. 212, Mar. 16, 1878.

(2) *Ibid.*

political endowments. To the historian Solmi, Depretis was "a lawyer, very accomplished in debate and in avoiding parliamentary snags, but lacking political insight." (1) It may be that the estimation of Giolitti, a successor to the premiership, is nearer to the truth. "Depretis", wrote Giolitti, "was a man who had in a high degree one of the principal gifts of a politician, good sense. He did not perhaps possess other exceptional qualities." (2) The Austrian appreciation of the character of this statesman is very consistent with the role played by Depretis in the seventies and early eighties. In Haymerle's opinion Depretis "was more reliable, had understanding, a clear insight, and real influence with the Government and parliament." (3) Depretis was the leader of the moderate left party, and was probably the most tactful and realistic among the ministers of the left. It is possible that he made his offer of co-operation to the English Government with the hope that they might exercise a restraining influence over Austria-Hungary with regard to the occupation of Bosnia. For on one occasion he had intimated to Paget that "the policy of Austria . . . continued for him (to be) a perfect mystery", (4) though in the same breath the Italian statesman maintained that "under no circumstances would Italy form an alliance

(1) *The Making of Modern Italy* p. 137.

(2) "Memoirs." 1923. p. 50.

(3) January 1878, Haymerle, the Austrian-Hungarian Ambassador in Rome, wrote:

"Bei alledem muss ich sagen, dass unter den Candidaten die für das Ministerium des Aussern genannt worden waren, Herr Depretis mir relativ der genehmste war; er hält auf den Ruf der Loyaltat, hat Verstandniss, einen klaren Geist und wirklichen Einfluss in der Regierung und im Parliamente; . . . or (hat) gute Absichten." Vienna Archives, no. 1. C. To Andrassy. Jan. 5, 1878.

(4) F. O. 45/337. no. 176. Paget to Derby, Mar. 11, 1878.

against Austria. (1) This attitude was not disheartening to the English Government. It is not certain how far Depretis would have gone in carrying out his offer of co-operation after he been officially informed of the Austrian decision to occupy the two Turkish provinces. (2) It should be remembered here that Depretis was in great doubt as to whether France would join in any understanding between England and Italy against Russia; he did not conceal this opinion from the English Ambassador whom he frankly told that France would "observe the strictest reserve." (3) In any case the Depretis cabinet fell on the 9th March, 1878, before Disraeli could communicate with them on the subject of a Mediterranean League.

The Depretis Ministry were bound to fall since solidarity among the Left deputies was gone. A party of the Left followed the Premier; another followed the lead of Nicotera who, according to Paget, was the first to bring the party into discredit.(4) A third followed Francesco Crispi, while the discontented members grouped themselves around Cairoli. The resignation of Nicotera and Crispi from the Government undermined the position of Depretis. The growing unpopularity of Depretis in Parliament owing to his railway policy and to the suppression by royal decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce made the resignation of the cabinet well-nigh inevitable.(5)

(1) Ibid, no. 194. Paget to Derby, Mar. 11, 1878.

(2) The Austrian communication was made in Rome the day before Depretis resigned; it was made in "the vague and reticent terms in which it was always the habit of Baron Haymerle to speak". Ibid.

(3) F.O. 45/408. no. 5. Paget to Derby. Mar. 15, 1878.

(4) F.O. 45/337. no. 194. To Derby. Mar. 11, 1878.

(5) Vienna Archives. No. 30. B. To Andrassy, Mar. 16, 1878. In his report, no. 26. B. of Mar. 3, 1878, Haymerle stated that while the resignation of Nicotera was due to "Ungeschicklichkeit", Crispi's was due to a "Moralfrage".

It would have been more fortunate for Italian interests, if a ministry had been formed by Sella or Minghetti, but unfortunately the Right, despite its efficient leadership and solidarity was a minority in Parliament.⁽¹⁾ The vote of the chamber together with the advice of Sella left the King no alternative but to call upon Cairoli to form an administration. The new Premier, was above all, "uno dei primi patrioti d'Italia"⁽²⁾ an honest man with very advanced liberal views. General Ciadini, who was destined to play a dramatic part in the Tunisian question, described him as "un agnello", meaning that Cairoli was more of an idealist than a practical conspirator.⁽³⁾ Cairoli was one of those public men who had played an important part in the Trentino agitations, and consequently "his name (was) not calculated to inspire confidence in the sagacity of the foreign policy of Italy under his direction."⁽⁴⁾ But the assurance made by Depretis that no change would be brought about in foreign policy and the guarantees insisted upon by the King, gave England some encouragement to discuss the scheme of the Mediterranean League with Italy. Paget was soon to meet with disappointment.

The instability of the political situation in Italy could not contribute to a constant foreign policy. The situation was complicated still further by the appointment of Count Corti to

(1) Giolitti's opinion with regard to the merits of Right and Left is not without interest here. "The Right", he wrote, "represented an abstract culture, and was possessed of a higher efficiency than the Left; the merits of the latter and its strength was due to the fact that it reflected more faithfully the state of mind of the masses". *Memoirs*, p. 49.

(2) Vienna Archives. No. 30. B. Haymerle to Andrassy. Mar. 16, 1878.

(3) *Ibid.*

(4) F.O. 45/337. no 184. To Derby. Mar. 8, 1878.

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A Pavian aristocrat of conservative views, Count Corti was expected to work in harmony with the radical Zanardelli and Seismid Doda.⁽¹⁾ His appointment showed the great difficulty which Cairoli must have experienced in finding a suitable foreign minister among the Left. For the appointment of Corti was doubtless not due to a recognition of the good qualities of the former Italian Ambassador to Constantinople; in fact Corti was offered the Foreign Office only when the repeated efforts to induce Signor Farini, a prominent member of the Left, ultimately failed. It should be borne in mind also that Corti had accepted this difficult position only out of consideration to the king's request.⁽²⁾ It is to be presumed that Corti had put forward certain conditions before he could accept office.

The statement which Cairoli made in Parliament concerning the foreign policy of the new Government was not very encouraging to the friends of Italy; it was very vague and undefined. The object of Italy, he declared, was the maintenance of peace; but at the same time "Italy (would know how to cause herself to be respected." ⁽³⁾ It was unfortunate that the Mediterranean League proposal would be presented to Italy during the administration of Cairoli. The Italian Government were secretly invited to join with England in forming a Mediterranean League for the protection of their

(1) Ministers of the Interior and Finance.
For further information about Count Corti, see Italian Austrian Relations.

(2) So Corti informed Paget. F.O. 45/428, Paget to Derby, Mar. 26, 1878.

(3) F.O. 45/337, no. 232, Paget to Derby, Mar. 26, 1878. See also "L'Italie", Sitting of Mar. 26, 1878. The quotation is Paget's.

common interests in the Mediterranean and Black Sea. (1) The proposed understanding consisted in "not allowing a change in the balance of power hitherto maintained as to communications between the Mediterranean and black Sea as a consequence of the War or arrangements attending its termination." (2) It was held in London that the proposal should be communicated to the other Mediterranean Powers, France, Austria-Hungary and Greece when a definite answer was received from Italy. A favourable answer was never returned. The intention of Austria-Hungary to occupy the two Turkish provinces was the stumbling block. To Corti no less than to Depretis, the attitude of Austria-Hungary was suspect. In fact Corti went so far as to inform Paget that Austria "would be gained over by Ignatiev", (3) An Austrian-Russian understanding was already in the air, and Italy understood that the price of Austrian consent to Russian acquisitions was the occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina together with Albania and the Vardar Valley to Salonica.

No less important in defeating the English scheme were the personal views of Count Corti himself. No doubt could be entertained as to his desire to be friendly with England; he expressed his desire to remove Count Torielli, whose sympathies were definitely pro-Russian, from the Foreign Office, a desire which Paget did not "regret". But Count Corti made it clear to the English Ambassador when the latter handed him a "Memorandum" on the Mediterranean League scheme that

(1) F.O. 45/428. Derby to Paget, Mar. 13, 1878. The idea of a Mediterranean League was Disraeli's; that Italy was the first to be invited was his also. Derby was opposed to the whole scheme.

(2) Ibid.

(3) F.O. 45/428 no. 10. Paget to Derby, Mar. 28, 1878.

found only disappointment in his effort to obtain English support for Italian claims to compensation in the event of the dissolution of Turkey.⁽¹⁾

In the economic and social spheres there was still much to be achieved. The poverty, illiteracy, and brigandage which prevailed in the south needed much attention and expenditure which Italian finances were not in a position to supply. Participation in any war on whatever side was out of the question, and Italy was not very certain of the peacefulness of English intentions. "The finances of Italy are not in a very flourishing condition and consequently to enable her to undertake a foreign war she would require a pecuniary assistance from her ally."⁽²⁾ The report of Paget was a true portrayal of the financial helplessness of Italy.

The increased taxation aroused discontent in the somewhat loose and poverty-stricken south. Discontent was the more widespread there since the Conservative Governments were mostly recruited from the north. The profound differences of north and south, the local patriotisms made the amalgamation of Italians in one compact unity a major problem for any government.⁽³⁾

(1) According to what Derby told Gavard, the French Chargé d'Affaires in London, the talks with Crispi were not very important. Gavard added that Crispi did not leave London with a favourable impression. See *Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. No. 211. Gavard to Decazes. Oct. 20, 1877.*

(2) F.O. 45/337. no. 167. Paget to Derby. Feb. 26, 1878.

(3) With reference to local patriotisms, C. Pellizzi wrote: "Italy was a small country with so many capitals, and each capital had its own traditions of life, culture, politics and administration. The suppression of a capital very often meant the destruction of a tradition... Thus the unification of Italy resulted in a partial destruction of the civilisations of the peninsula." See Gardner: *Italy* p. 232.

Such differences impeded the work of internal reconstruction, coloured party politics and influenced foreign policy. While the north was generally irredentist, the south was more interested in the Mediterranean; whereas the north was more attached to France, the south advocated a reconciliation with the Central Powers at the cost of French friendship. The northerners were generally in favour of a cautious foreign policy, the southerners clamoured for a forward policy. (1) The situation was rendered more complicated when men of the north were to co-operate with men from the south in one ministry. The position would be still worse if an administration were formed of either northerners or southerners only. Such was the situation in the spring of 1878; the Cairoli Ministry was nicknamed by the south as "ministero lombardo", and was certain to meet with the opposition of Crispi and Nicotera, the leaders of the south.

Italian foreign policy was further complicated by the fact that during the reign of the King it never knew unity of direction. Difference of opinion on foreign questions was the rule rather than the exception. As a constitutional monarch on the British model, the Italian king should not interfere with the actual direction of foreign relations. But that was not the case of Vittorio Emanuele II. His personality, the great part he had played in the unification of Italy entitled him to a great influence on domestic as well as foreign affairs. As he had once told Haymerle, the Austrian Ambassador in Rome, nothing could be effected in Italy without the King's approval and that

(1) See Doc. Did. Fr. T. 2. no. 194. De Noailles, French Ambassador in Rome, to Decazes. Lettre Particulière of Aug. 10, 1877.

of parliament.⁽¹⁾ Vittorio opened his doors to the Ambassadors of the Great Powers, and discussed with them matters of foreign policy, sometimes at the expense of his ministers. As a matter of course he could not conclude any agreements, but he could give a version of Italian foreign policy, very different from that of the Consulta. The influence which Vittorio Emanuele II exercised on foreign relations was such that Torani once remarked to Salisbury, when the latter was on his way to Constantinople, that England "ought not to underrate the influence of personal feelings in sovereigns."⁽²⁾ But the Italian King had no constant foreign policy. Deep-rooted patriotism, the natural result of which would be hostility to Austria, vivid memories of co-operation in the battle-field that nourished French loyalties, and personal feelings of security which recommended an entente with the Central Empires, these contradictory factors could only contribute to inconsistency in the King's views.

Divergence of opinion between the Foreign Minister and the Secretary-General was another element of confusion. In Italy of the Left before the advent of Mancini in 1881, the Foreign Minister was usually more interested in domestic affairs, party politics, and parliamentary life; he sometimes held the premiership as well. But the Secretary-General in Italy was more prominent than the Foreign Under-Secretary in England or the "Directeur des Affaires Etrangères" in France; he knew precisely what was going on in the Italian Foreign Office, and actually enjoyed more liberty and initiative in dealing with the diplomatic representatives in Rome; he was

(1) See Italian-Austrian Relations.

(2) Cecil: "Life of Salisbury", Vol. II, pp. 106, 107.

real Foreign Office.⁽¹⁾ As this official was well-aware of the Foreign Minister's indifference to detail in the Office, he often developed "dictatorial" tendencies in treating those under his control, and sometimes went so far as to formulate a foreign policy of his own.⁽²⁾ The instance of Count Torielli is very striking. While Depretis was more inclined towards co-operation with England and Austria-Hungary, Torielli was definitely pro-Russian. It is not strange then that the foreign representative in Rome might have different impressions of Italian foreign policy if he happened to see Depretis and Torielli separately. For the bureaucratic discipline in the Italian Foreign Office was not very strict in the sense that the Foreign Minister might remain ignorant of a conversation that took place between the Secretary-General and a foreign representative. Conscious of the confusion at the Consulta, those Italian Ambassadors who possessed initiative assumed great freedom of action and followed policies of their own making. No great harm, however, would have been done, if the Italian Ambassadors had harmonised their foreign policies; what happened was the reverse. While Menabrea followed in 1877 and 1878 a pro-English policy in London, Nigra pursued unswervingly a pro-Russian policy in St. Petersburg. In this way each ambassador neutralised the action of the other and embarrassed the Consulta. No wonder then that on one occasion Paget was obliged to make unpleasant remarks to Corti on the conduct of Italian foreign policy. "I did not see how the diplomatic relations of Italy with foreign countries were to be carried on if the representatives of Italy abroad were allowed to

(1) *Ibid.* Salisbury to Lord Derby, Nov. 30, 1876.

(2) See Granville Papers. (G.D. 29). Vol. 182. Private. Paget to Granville. Jun. 7, 1880.

direct and control the policy of the Government instead of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.”⁽¹⁾

That Italy was in need of the concentration of all her energy on internal reconstruction did not in fact convince England of Italian sincerity. The British Government could not understand that their recognition of the value of Italian support came too late. The lectures on political morals which England delivered in the Tunisian crisis of 1871⁽²⁾, and the failure of Crispi's mission to London in 1877 were not completely forgotten in Rome. On the other hand, the failure of the Mediterranean League scheme cured the English Government of their optimism with regard to Italian support. They also came to the conclusion that Italy was not wholly cured of Russian sympathies; not only was Count Corti averse to the proposed English scheme for a Mediterranean League, but he had shown his reluctance to give even diplomatic support to the English view of the unrestricted revision of the whole Treaty of San Stefano.⁽³⁾ As both Disraeli and Salisbury could

(1) Good evidence for the independent attitude of the Italian diplomatic representative was afforded by the refusal of Nigra to carry out his instructions “to urge Prince Gorchakov to consent to the unrestricted discussion of the whole Treaty (San Stefano) as required by Her Majesty's Government.” “Nigra has thought it better to say nothing.” Moreover Nigra advised Corti “to keep quiet just now”. See F.O. 45/338. Nos. 263, 269, 271. Paget to Salisbury of the 12, 12, and 18 Apr. 1878.

(2) See Ante, Chapter II.

(3) “Some deputies”, told Paget that “so long as Russia was engaged in a war... (in order to) better the conditions of the Christian population of Turkey, the sympathies of the Italian people both in and out of the Chamber were in her favour - but when the conditions of the Treaty of San Stefano became known... the tide which set in her favour suddenly turned against her. The change, however, was not in favour of British policy; it was because Russia had violated the principle of nationality. Hence the explosions of Cavalotti in the Camera. See F.O. 45/338. Nos. 261, 271; Paget to Salisbury, Apr. 10, 18, 1878.

not be content with mere platonic friendship, they were inclined to think that Italy was not willing to play the part of a Great Power. The English Ambassador in Rome, whose influence on shaping the views of the Foreign Office upon Italian affairs could not be disregarded, had been disgusted at Depretis's reticence and had at one time given him a lecture on the advantages of frankness towards England.⁽¹⁾ Nor were the contentedness and frankness of Corti more satisfactory to the British Foreign Office. Nor did the vast difference of opinion between Corti on the one hand and Cairoli and his friends on the other⁽²⁾ induce England to entertain any longer the view that Italian foreign policy constituted an element of stability and peace in Europe. It is not surprising therefore that England proceeded immediately to the defence of her interests in the Near East by the agreement with the Porte about Cyprus, and deliberately disregarding Italian aspirations in the Mediterranean, she intended to buy French consent by the offer of Tunis. When in November 1881, Italy complained of British indifference to Italian claims on Tunis, Paget replied that "If Italy had accepted the proposal (of the Mediterranean League)

(2) "Unless", declared Paget to Depretis, "there was the utmost frankness and unreserve in our communications, I said, it was evident that we should end by being all at cross purposes, and instead of our coming to any agreement, we should fall into the most complete confusion, and perhaps something worse." F.O. 45/428. No. 5. Paget to Derby. Mar. 15, 1878.

(1) "I am bound to say", wrote Paget, "that I did not find Count Corti's language on (the Mediterranean) topic as satisfactory as that which M. Depretis was in the habit of employing. It appeared to me that his Excellency was rather anxious to avoid any discussion whatever on the subject."

Salisbury's comment on the conduct of Corti is: "Corti will stand a good deal of scolding." F.O. 45/338, no. 302. May 8, 1878.

it would have placed her in a fair position to claim a participation in any question which might subsequently have arisen affecting the balance of power in the Mediterranean.”⁽¹⁾

III. *Italian-Austrian Relations.*

The inconsistent policy which Italy adopted towards her great Adriatic neighbour led to no better result. The completion of Italian unity in 1871 had begun a new chapter in Austrian-Italian relations. In the new Italy, Austria had a strong and very unpleasant neighbour, the unsettled question of the Trentino and Trieste remained a thorn in the Italian side. Despite the fact that the acquisition of these provinces could not figure in the practical programme of any Italian government during the seventies, the problem of unredeemed Italy was a real cause of tension between Vienna and Rome. This tension was not due to a deliberate effort on the part of the Quirinal to create trouble, but it was kept alive by the periodic agitations of the “Italia Irredenta” revolutionary party. The fact that the desire to acquire the two provinces was there all the time, though in the realm of aspirations, and that this desire found sympathy amongst some members of the various Italian Governments, was annoying to Austria. Nevertheless, during the administration of the Right which came to an end in 1876 relations between Austria and Italy were not wholly unsatisfactory. The proposed Italian expedition to Tunis in 1871 was not without the tacit approval of Austria. Italian designs on the Regency found sympathy not only in Vienna but also in the financial circles of Trieste. Such an attitude

(1) F.O. 45,432. no. 430. Paget to Granville. Nov. 29, 1881.

could be explained by the fact that Austria was always anxious to divert Italian attention from the Trentino to the Mediterranean. While, on the other hand, Italy, devoting all her energy to internal reconstruction, was greatly disturbed by the acuteness of the Vatican question especially after the advent of the French Monarchists to power in 1873. The presumed clerical leanings of Versailles and its possible alliance with the Papacy caused the young kingdom no little alarm.⁽¹⁾ It was thereby considered imprudent in Rome to estrange Austria, when the unity itself of Italy was in no trifling danger. The same reason brought Italy and Germany together, the more so since Bismarck was excitedly waging his Kulturkampf. The visit of Vittorio Emanuele II to Vienna and Berlin, the return visits of the Austrian and German Emperors were demonstrations of the rapprochement that took place between Italy and the Central Powers. These visits were shortly followed by the decision of the two imperial Governments to raise their legations in Rome to embassies. This decision was taken in the spring of 1876 in the last days of the Minghetti Ministry.⁽²⁾ The Austrian Chancellor was not unwilling to reach a lasting agreement with Italy; and to give a substantial proof of his desire, he promised to co-operate neither with Conservative France nor with the Vatican as regards the claims of the Papacy.⁽³⁾ The Austrian approval of the well-balanced foreign

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- (1) This alarm was well described by de Noailles, the French Ambassador in Rome, when he reported: "Aussi le spectre du cléricisme, c'est-il, de nouveau dressé devant eux; et pour les Italiens, le cléricisme, c'est la destruction de l'unité italienne, c'est le pouvoir temporel rétablie de force par la France. Les imaginations s'exaltant, on voyait déjà le Maréchal préparant une nouvelle expédition de Rome". Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2., no. 173. May 23, 1877.
- (2) Vienna Archives. no. 8 A-B- Wimpffen to Andrassy. Mar. 4, 1876.
- (3) Memoirs of Crispi, Vol. 2. p. 2.

policy of Visconti-Venosta and the desire to divert Italian attention to the Mediterranean was such as to induce Andrassy seriously to consider giving some satisfaction to Italian amour-propre. So he seized the opportunity of the Royal visit to Vienna in 1876 to suggest to General de Robilant, the Italian Ambassador, that Austria would not raise any objection to Italian expansion to Tunis. The famous reply of Robilant was as curt as it was decisive: "Non vogliamo saperne di terre africane".⁽¹⁾ Despite the rejection of the Austrian offer, when Visconti-Venosta fell, Wimpffen, the Austrian Ambassador in Rome, felt bound to express Austrian "regret de lui perdre."⁽²⁾

The rise of the Left to power in March 1876 caused no little alarm to Austria in spite of the fact that Melegari, the new Foreign Minister, assured Wimpffen that Italy did not intend to change her foreign policy. Austria was well aware that the new Foreign Minister had no influence whatever with the Camera. The Left Ministry might probably have been able to keep their promises to Austria had not the Eastern Question developed to dangerous dimensions. The grave complications in the Balkans did not fail to influence the direction of Italian foreign policy; they gave rise indeed to the serious question of compensation and territorial modification. In Italy, in particular, the Eastern Question excited strong hopes for the return of the Trentino and Trieste. In an article published at the end of 1876, the "Opinione" claimed that, in case Austria received

(1) Torre maintains that the offer was repeated, but that the Austrian suggestion went unheeded. The reason was, according to Torre, Italian "astensione dalla politica coloniale." See Curatulo: "Francia e Italia" 1915, p. 94.

(2) Vienna Archives, no. 8 A-B. Wimpffen to Andrassy, Mar. 4, 1876.

compensation at Turkey's expense, Italy must obtain compensation, "ein Gebietsabtretung".⁽¹⁾ The agitation of the "Italia Irredenta" in the spring of 1876 created so much ill-feeling between Italy and Austria that the latter country decided to leave the embassy at Rome unoccupied till 1877. This step greatly offended Italian pride and the position of De Robilant in Vienna became untenable. In Rome King Vittorio Emanuele II grew so unhappy that he began to express vague hopes of revenge; in complete dejection he told Crispi, the President of the Camera, that "he (the King) had no hope of any settlement forthcoming from the War in the East and (that) he also was of the opinion that it was too late and that there was no room for us." The Italians who failed in Custozza and Lissa to achieve their aims by the sword, were forced in the end "to resort to cleverness as diplomatists."⁽²⁾ The mission of Signor Francesco Crispi in the autumn of 1877 was to secure Italian ends by the use of this new method, diplomacy. It was designed to sound European opinion on the problem of frontier rectifications. It is indeed a fact that the precise aims of the mission were shrouded in mystery, and equally vague is our knowledge of the exact replies which Crispi received from the various capitals. But it is certain that the mission did not end in any substantial gain for Italy.⁽³⁾ To Decazes, Crispi might

(1) Ibid. no. 16. Haymerle to Andrassy, Feb. 4, 1878. See also "Bersagliere" Oct. 1876. Doc. Dip. Fr. T.2 Footnote to No. 116.

(2) Memoirs of Crispi. Vol. II, p. 9.

(3) Haymerle reported details about the mission of Crispi to Central Europe. According to Haymerle, "M. Depretis paraît enchanté des résultats du voyage de M. Crispi." Depretis told the Austrian Ambassador that Crispi had hesitated to visit Vienna but it was the Italian

have pointed to "the aggressiveness of the German race",⁽¹⁾ and the ties that bound the two Latin sisters; with Bismarck, the Italian statesman might have discussed a partial partition of France, but Crispi was nevertheless given to understand that Germany would not allow any coercion of Austria, and that any Italian attack on the Trentino and Trieste would meet with the combined forces of the two German Empires. In Vienna Crispi must have been given precise answers to his vague allusions to the question of Italian frontier rectification. On the other hand Andrassy must have made it clear that Austria would welcome friendly relations with Italy, if Italy would show a similar sentiment.⁽²⁾

As late as January 1878 the Austrian suspicions of Italy remained: Andrassy was still greatly disturbed by systematic irredentist agitations. Moreover he accused Italy of attempting to embroil Austria with Russia by proposing an Austrian-Italian demarche at Constantinople to save Montenegro. Of these views he made no secret. In a conversation with de Voguë, the French Ambassador in Vienna, Andrassy made remarks "peu bienveillantes" about the "esprit remuant" of the Italian cabinet and their designs on Albania.⁽³⁾ Haymerle believed

Premier who urged him to go there and to assure Andrassy of the good will of Italy.

The language of Depretis gives the impression that Crispi was charged by the Government to undertake that mission, though Cialdini, the Italian Ambassador in Paris, informed Decazes that Crispi was not charged by the Italian Government with any mission and that consequently they could not be responsible for his actions. See Vienna Archives, nos. 63-A, 63 A-H. Haymerle to Andrassy, Oct. 27, 1877, and Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. 210. Decazes to Harcourt, French Ambassador in London, Oct. 19, 1877.

- (1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. Decazes to Harcourt, Sep. 20, 1877.
- (2) Vienna Archives. no. 1. A-K. Haymerle to Andrassy. Jan. 5, 1878.
- (3) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 192, and footnotes to Decazes, Jul. 18, 1877.

that even the King was not in a position to control the political situation, and Vittorio Emanuele himself was aware of the existence of the Austrian suspicions. In an interview with the King, Haymerle drew the attention of the Italian sovereign to the attacks of the Italian press against the territorial integrity of Austria-Hungary, attacks which made the resumption of normal friendly relations between the two countries most difficult.⁽¹⁾ In complaining of the unnecessary suspicions of Austria, the King gave the assurance that he was determined more than ever to honour the promises he had given the Austrian Emperor in 1876; he said:

“Vous ne cessez pas de vous méfier de moi, j’ai donné ma parole à l’Empereur d’être son ami; je la rapelle à chaque occasion pour prouver que je ne veux pas m’y soustraire; il n’est pas bien de donner si peu de valeur à ma parole. On reparle toujours d’expéditions projetées contre le Trentin, de visées sur le Trentin et même sur l’Albanie; je n’y songe pas. Les individus qui chez nous mettent ces choses en avant, nous les considérons comme des chiens. Rien ne se fera ici que moi et le Parlement ne permettent; et moi j’ai donné ma parole.”⁽²⁾

After the death of Vittorio Emanuele it was only the perspicacity of Depretis which prevented a breach in the relations between the two neighbours. In Austria’s conception, Depretis, though “nicht sehr expansiv”, was nevertheless the most

(1) Haymerle was possibly referring to the attacks of the “Arena” and “Secolo” of Milan.

(2) Vienna Archives. no. 1, A-K. Haymerle to Andrassy, Jan. 5, 1878.

reliable of all Left statesmen; he desired to be on cordial terms with Austria.⁽¹⁾ But with the complete military victory of Russia, the helplessness of Turkey, and the developments of the spring of 1878 in the Balkans, the question of frontier modification was once more excitedly raised, and a pamphlet entitled "Trentino e Trieste" which gave expression to Italian aspirations was widely circulated.⁽²⁾ It was indeed wondered in Italy what would be the Italian share in Turkish spoils; would it be Tunis, Tripoli or Albania? Would Austria cede the Trentino and Trieste if Italy consented to an Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina? Yet even with this excitement and the agitation of the "Irredenta", Haymerle was convinced that the Depretis cabinet were resolved to pursue a policy of peace.⁽³⁾

The position of the Depretis cabinet, however, was rendered difficult by the decision of Austria to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Italian Premier was well-aware of the fact that San Stefano was prejudicial to Italian interests; of that he informed Haymerle, but he was equally frank when he observed that the proposed Austrian occupation "would be very much regretted by the Italian Government."⁽⁴⁾ It was apprehended in Rome that the acquisition of the Turkish

(1) "Er (Depretis) werde die Bewahrung der Guten Verhaltnisse zu uns mit ganz besonderer Aufmerksamkeit verfolgen."
See Ibid.

See also F.O. 45/337. no. 167. Paget to Derby, Feb. 26, 1878.

(2) Vienna Archives. no. 16. Haymerle to Andrassy, Feb. 4, 1878.

(3) "Die Maenner die jetzt an der Spitze des Italienischen Staatswesens stehen", wrote Haymerle, "haben das hoechste Interesse dass gewisse Geruechte Lügen gestraft und constatirt werde, dass Italien die Traditionen der politischen Revolution aufgegeben hat, und, in europaischen Staatensysteme, ein Element des Friedens geworden ist."
Ibid.

(4) F.O. 45/337. no. 197. Paget to Derby. Mar. 11, 1878.

provinces would not only extend Austrian territory in the hinterland of the Adriatic but would also lead Austria to the Aegean. Tornielli had at one time expressed himself in that sense. When Haymerle, in his evasive manner, intimated that the occupation would be only "temporary", Depretis expressed his fear that the so-called temporary occupations usually ended by being permanent; in addition he warned Austria against the folly of increasing her Slav population which would naturally look towards Russia.⁽¹⁾

But Austria was not ready to listen to Italian advice though she was willing to discuss compensation. Depretis had "very decided opinions... relative to the desirability of maintaining the balance of power in the Mediterranean", and was conscious that Italy would be alone in objecting to the Austrian acquisition. For these reasons the Italian Premier seems to have welcomed the Austrian offer. And since the Austrian Ambassador was careful not to leave any doubt that Austria excluded the problem of the rectification of frontiers and the Adriatic from any discussion of compensation, Italian attention was naturally directed towards the African shore. In fact Depretis intimated that in the event of Austrian annexation of the Turkish provinces becoming inevitable Italy would expect the support of Vienna in acquiring compensation in the Mediterranean. He even referred to Andrassy's desire to give Italy compensation in Tunis, but remarked that Italian occupation of Tunis would inevitably bring Italy into serious conflict with France.⁽²⁾ It is certain that Andrassy promised to raise no objection to the Italian going into Tunis. But what Depretis

(1) Vienna Archives. no. 30. B. Haymerle to Andrassy, Mar. 15, 1878.

(2) Ibid.

seems to have expected was that Austria would promise to support Italy in case she was involved in trouble with France. That was of course asking too much. It is possible that in 1876 Andrassy might have given his support to Italy for the simple reason that in that year France was not in a position to risk a war for the sake of Tunis. In 1878 the international position of France was quite different.

Such discussions were temporarily dropped when Depretis resigned. The advent of Cairoli to power did not inspire much confidence in Austria,⁽¹⁾ The Austrian Ambassador did not fail to warn Depretis of the policy which his successor might pursue towards Austria.

“Ich Sagte Depretis”, wrote Haymerle “der mir in diesem Sinne sprach: Faites bien comprendre à Votre successeur que si nous avons parfois l'air de ne pas voir les menées des émigrés et des révolutionnaires c'est que nous avons eu confiance en Vous et Vos Collègues; ce serait autre chose si nous y découvrons la main du Gouvernement. S'abstenir de tout encouragement direct ou indirect, c'est un devoir dont nous réclamons l'accomplissement, pas parce que

(1) “Benedetto Cairoli ... gehoerte lange der republikanischen Fraktion an und war Teilhaber an allen garibaldinischen Unternehmungen. Dar er selbst verwundet wurde und mehrere seiner Brüder im Kampfe fielen, so war man rasch bei der Hand dem Namen eine Art Gloriale zu schaffen. Patriotismus und Ehrlichkeit rühmt man ihm nach; staatmaennische Eigenschaften oder Verwaltungstalent haben selbst seine eifrigsten Bewunderer in ihm nicht entdecken koennen... Fuer uns hat vor allem die Personenlichkeit Cairoлис Interesse; Er ist Lombarde, nahe ein Fuenfziger, mit einer Graefin Sizzo aus Trient vermaehlt Solche antecedenten und Verbindungen, die stets auf Cairoli lasten werden, muessen natuerlich die Freunde guter Beziehungen zwischen den beiden Nachbarlaendern besorgt machen.”
Ibid, no. 30 D. Haymerle to Andrassy, Mar. 16, 1878.

nous craignons le moins du monde ces menées mais parce que nous voulons être respectés dans nos droits; les preuves d'amitié viennent après."(¹)

The reply to Depretis was that his successor knew quite well that "pour être respectable, il faut respecter les autres",(²) and that the change of ministry would not be accompanied with a change in foreign policy. The assurances which Cairoli gave the King, together with the appointment of Corti to the Foreign Office, were of a somewhat reassuring nature.(³) The Austrian-Hungarian Empire was therefore willing to offer once more a friendly hand to Italy. On his part, the new Foreign Minister was equally anxious to accept this friendly though with some reserve.

The personality of Corti is very interesting. He was a doctor, a man of Right sympathies and of wide diplomatic experience.(⁴) He possessed the tact and insight of Depretis, but he was distinguished for energy and thorough frankness which the fallen Prime Minister lacked in a large degree. Corti had his own distinct foreign policy; it was a policy of peace free from alliances and entanglements. By temperament he was averse to adventures abroad, and he entirely disapproved

(1) Ibid.

(2) Ibid.

(3) With regard to the conduct of Cairoli and the personality of Corti, King Umberto told Haymerle "On m'avait fait de Cairoli un épouvantail; je dois dire que jusqu'à présent je le trouve très sensé, et puis nous avons Corti comme une garantie." That was on Apr. 27, 1878. Ibid, no. 42A. E. Haymerle to Andrassy.

(4) Born in 1823, graduated in medicine 1842; in 1846 began his diplomatic career in Sardinia; in 1850 became a Secretary in the London Legation; in 1864 became Minister in Stockholm; then was appointed to Madrid, afterwards to Washington; in 1875 he represented Italy in Constantinople.

of the policy of compensation which found general acceptance among Italian statesmen. The policy of compensations he rejected as "cousue de fil blanc qui peut peut-être tenter Depretis et consorts,"⁽¹⁾ but he stood for the maintenance of the status quo, a policy which he regarded as applicable to both Europe and the Mediterranean.

There is no doubt that, as a patriotic Italian, Corti resented the Austrian decision to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina, but as a practical statesman, he would not see any advantage accruing to Italy from refusal to recognise a step which had behind it the approval of the Great Powers. That is why he could not understand that the consolidation of Austrian interests in the Orient would be detrimental to Italy.⁽²⁾ He was indeed thankful when Austria assured him that she entertained no designs whatever on Albania. The position of a man of the Right in a Radical cabinet was inevitably fraught with difficulties. The task of converting an unsympathetic and suspicious group of colleagues was hard for Corti; the poor Foreign Minister had to produce periodically some tangible evidence in favour of his policy. "Il n'aurait pas accepter le portefeuille s'il avait dû douter du concours de ses collègues, mais il ne pouvait pas nier qu'il faudrait les travailler encore."⁽³⁾ The statement of the Austrian Ambassador points to the fact that Corti had no free hand in the direction of Italian foreign relations.

(1) "Er sei im Prinzip ueberhaupt gegen die Compensationen-theorie" ran the Austrian judgment on Count Corti. Vienna Archives. Teleg. of Haymerle, no 89. Apr. 1, 1878.

(2) "Je ne conçois pas", Corti Declared to Haymerle, "la politique qui dans la consolidation des intérêts autrichiens en Orient voit une lésion des intérêts italiens". Ibid. no, 37 A-G. to Andrassy. Mar. 30, 1878.

(3) Ibid.

The decision of Austria-Hungary to occupy the two Turkish provinces did not induce Corti to change his mind. To the Austrian offer of Tunis, Tripoli or a Mediterranean island the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs remained entirely irresponsive, even when Haymerle stressed the necessity for Italy to consolidate her position in the Mediterranean.⁽¹⁾ The attitude of Corti forced Haymerle to report home that "Tunis, Trippolis, unsw. seien unpopulär wegen möglicher Complicationen und Aufgaben."⁽²⁾ Corti must have had undoubtedly the support of the Cabinet, whose general sympathies were democratic and pro-French, in refusing to turn France into an irreconcilable enemy. Moreover, Italy was not sure of English or German support in the event of French armed opposition.

The definite rejection of the Austrian offer, the difference of opinion in the Italian cabinet concerning the Austrian move in the Balkans, a dissension with which the European Courts were acquainted,⁽³⁾ the dissatisfaction and apprehensions of Italian public opinion, the unsettled character of Italian foreign policy, all these combined to arouse increasing suspicion in Vienna. The alleged existence of Russian influence in the

(1) "Je l'ai (Corti) parfaitement approuvé" reported Haymerle, "qu'il serait toujours bon de savoir ce qui pourrait convenir à l'Italie, pour renforcer sa position maritime dans la Méditerranée si l'on criait après une compensation." Ibid. Teleg. no. 89. Apr. 1, 1878.

(2) Ibid.

(3) "Conte Corti", wrote Haymerle, "me raconte personnellement qu'il avait bien des luttes à soutenir avec Cairoli mais qu'il en fera une question de portefeuille à ne par être entravé dans sa politique d'entente avec l'Autriche", Ibid.

Paget reported that Corti had "no slight difficulties with some of his colleagues... on account of Bosnia and Herzegovina." The chief opponents to the Austrian policy of Corti were Cairoli and Zanardelli. See F.O. 45/338. nos. 272, 273, 305. Apr. 22, 22, May 15, 1878, to the Foreign Office.

Consulta, and the refusal of Italy to receive compensation simply meant that the Quirinal was not willing to renounce its claims north of the Adriatic. After the rejection of the repeated offers of Andrassy, no Austrian statesman was anxious to see Italian aspirations in the Mediterranean realised, an attitude to which Germany gave her full approval.

IV. *German Relations with Italy and France.*

By the end of the spring of 1878, the German attitude was unfavourable to Italian aspirations in the Mediterranean. It is true that Prince Bismarck had encouraged Italy in 1877 to take possession of Tunis out of mere spite to France. There is a great possibility that he might have given in 1874 his moral support to an Italian occupation of Tunis, driven no doubt by his hostile sentiments towards the clerical Conservatives who had brought about the fall of Thiers a year before. It is equally possible that he would have raised no objection to the repeated Austrian offers of compensation to Italy. How far Bismarck was informed of these offers it is difficult to say. But it is beyond doubt that in the spring of 1878 the German Chancellor offered Italy "something" which Corti was certain to decline.⁽¹⁾ This was in keeping with Bismarck's policy; in the seventies he was the interested apostle of the idea of compensation; he firmly believed that there was sufficient room in the Orient for the ambitions of the Great Powers.

Yet the conduct of Italian foreign policy was not very reassuring to Bismarck. Its hesitant character soon struck him,

(1) "C'est surprenant, dit le Conte Corti, tout le monde nous offre quelque chose, même Prince Bismarck". Vienna Archives. Teleg. of Haymerle. Apr. 1, 1878.

neither Cairoli nor Corti impressed him as strong men. German suspicions of Italy were born before 1878; they had their origin in 1876 when the Left with their radical wing of Irredentists rose to Power. Bismarck was well-aware that the development of the Eastern Question had stimulated Italian appetite for Austrian territory. The great influence which Count Tornielli wielded in the Italian Foreign Office, the Russian intrigues of Chevalier Nigra, the Italian Ambassador in St. Petersburg, the visit of Signor Crispi to Germany and the strange bargains which the Italian President of the Camera had negotiated, such behaviour was bound to belittle Italian prestige in the eyes of the German Chancellor. The irredentist agitation for Trieste was also irreconcilable with his policy of maintaining Austrian territorial integrity. No wonder then that Bismarck found no alternative but deliberately to ignore Italian aspirations in the Mediterranean and to attempt the task of winning French good-will by the offer of Tunis. It is strange how England, Austria, and Germany attempted, though separately, to win the support of Italy, to give Italy an opportunity of assuming her responsibilities as a Great Power in the concert of Europe, even at the cost of France. But suffering from acute uncertainty, Italian statesmen refused to take a chance which a Cavour might have gladly seized. The failure of Italy to shoulder her responsibilities as a great Mediterranean Power convinced England, Germany and Austria of the necessity of inducing France to abandon her isolated "recueillement" and to participate as an equal partner in the settlement of European questions. But no State took greater interest in winning French friendship than Germany. The evolution of French-German relations made it possible

for Bismarck to give some satisfaction to the amour-propre of Republican France.

The period extending from the fall of Thiers to the rise of the Republicans was noted for the tension in French-German relations. The rapid economic and military revival of France alarmed Bismarck, and proved that she could not be eliminated as a Great Power from Europe. The scare of 1875 made Germany realise that European sympathy, especially that of England and Russia, was not with the victor of Sedan. Even in France it was claimed that the treaty which deprived France of Alsace-Lorraine could never have a permanent character. Although the delegates of the "grande nation" had given their consent to its humiliating clauses, yet voices of protest were not by any means wanting. Outside the National Assembly, the cry for revenge, for the restoration of the lost provinces was so strong as to cause irritation in Germany. No French statesman ever gave up the hope of redeeming the lost territory; but this hope never constituted a practical programme of any French Government. Nevertheless, the fact that it existed did not fail to annoy Bismarck considerably.

The rapid recovery of France was another alarming fact to Germany. The activities of the Catholics in Germany which were supported morally by the Pope, and the refusal of the clergy to obey the Laws of May 8th, 1873, coincided with the dismissal of Thiers from office; and Thiers, a Conservative Republican, was something of a persona grata to Bismarck. The new Government of the Legitimist MacMahon and the Conservatives was not free from clerical influence. Bismarck would have resigned himself to the situation in France, had it not

been for the impolitic conduct of the French bishops, who did not conceal their sympathy with the German clergy. The activities of the Catholics meant for Bismarck the creation of a State within a State, and consequently the disruption of the German Empire. Often the German chancellor declared that "entre nous et les cléricaux, il y a une guerre à mort".⁽¹⁾

Moreover, the French relations with Russia were developing to such proportions as to revive Bismarck's fear of war on two fronts. The suspect conduct of Gontant-Biron, the French Ambassador in Berlin, his intrigues with the Empress, whom Bismarck suspected of "Catholic-French ancien regime tendencies",⁽²⁾ the cool attitude of Russia towards Germany, the efforts of Decazes, the French Foreign Minister to draw Russia to the side of France, and the mutual jealousy and distrust between Bismarck and Gorchakov, the combination of these was bound to increase German fears. German foreign policy always aims at avoiding war on two fronts; to this danger no statesman was more sensible than Prince Bismarck. To prevent an alliance between Russia and France was one of the important bases of his diplomacy. The vacillating attitude of Russia which persisted until the development of the Eastern Question in 1876 indicated that France was not isolated in Europe while the sympathetic feelings of England towards her neighbour across the Channel were a source of profound irritation to Prince Bismarck.

Down to 1877, that is to the final downfall of the Monarchists, the attitude of the German Chancellor was on the whole provoking, threatening and intimidating. It is certain

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. 1^{re} Série. T. 2. no. 198. D. Aunay to Decazes. Aug. 31, 1877.

(2) After Hanotaux: "Contemporary France" Vol. 11, p. 394.

that he was all for peace and that he had no desire to attack France, but he was decided at the same time on preserving German unity and on maintaining German superiority in arms. He had to be assured that the violent advocates of revenge would not reach responsible positions. If France desired the establishment of good relations with Germany, she must not identify herself with the Pope or clericalism. In the meanwhile Bismarck spent every effort to isolate France by making advances to Russia, Austria-Hungary, England and even to Italy. He was not willing to see, as he once confessed to Hohenlohe, "that France should become powerful or considered enough abroad to gain allies."⁽¹⁾ Tension between the two countries reached its climax in 1875 when alarm was raised in Berlin at the rapid progress in the reorganisation of the French army. Germany understood that "the French Government's plans for bringing the army into condition for striking extend far beyond the needs of a peaceful policy. The war scare of 1875 had confirmed Bismarck's views on the trend of English and Russian policies. As he could not understand "England's unfounded suspicion", he bitterly complained of British sympathy for the aggressor of 1870,⁽²⁾ and pointed out "the unconcealed French desire for revenge." Lyons, who in German conception, lived "entirely in the Catholic and French atmosphere following the policy of Norfolk House,"⁽³⁾ was held responsible for "untruthfulness and mischievous statements" on German relations with France.⁽⁴⁾ Bismarck's conclusion

(1) Mitchell: *The Bismarckian Policy*. p. 12.

(2). Dugdale: *German Diplomatic Documents*. Vol. I. no. 279, Bismarck to Muenster, May 14, 1875.

(3) *Ibid.*

(4) The other accomplice was Count Beust who enjoyed German suspicion whether he was in Vienna, London or Paris.

was that Germany could not count on the benevolence of British policy in time of trouble.

The high sounding and vain phrases of Gorchakov and the interference of the Czar on behalf of France in 1875 had demonstrated the frailty of the Three Emperors Alliance. To disarm the suspicions of Germany's unpleasant friends, Bismarck was willing to divert Russia from flirting with France to the Balkans, though he was ever mindful that it was also in the Balkans that Austria must have a sphere of expansion. To England he did not hesitate to offer Egypt. But the most important step to be taken was to attempt conciliating France herself. He began to see the advantage of giving some satisfaction to French amour propre, for the policy of bullying and intimidation did not prove in the long run a very safe one. As early as January 1875 his new idea took shape, and when in April of this year, Decazes expressed the possibility of an understanding between the two nations, Bismarck seized the opportunity to give more serious consideration to the idea of territorial compensation. But whether Bismarck approached the Quai d'Orsay on that subject in 1875 remains to be discovered. In any case, in his despatch of the 10th January, 1875 to Hohenlohe, the German Ambassador in Paris, Bismarck set forth his views on French German relations with special reference to Tunis and the problem of compensation. The German Chancellor thought that France could find in North Africa or the Turkish Orient a wide field for her political activities.

He wrote:

“Ew. pp. Kennen aus den Ihnen abschriftlich mitgeteilten Berichten der Kaiserlichen Botschaft in Konstantinopel

und des Deutschen Konsulats in Tunis die Meldungen, welche uns über das Bestreben der franzoesischen Regierung, das Lehensverhaeltnis zwischen Tunis und der Pforte zu loesen und die Regentschaft in ein Abhaengigkeitsverhaeltnis zu Frankreich zu bringen, im Laufe des verflossenen Jahres zugegangen waren. Wir haben uns einige Jahre frueher solchen Versuchen widersetzt, weil es uns unmittelbar nach unseren Kriege mit Frankreich, und solange der Friedens-Vertrag noch nicht ausgefuehrt war, angemessen schien, franzoesischen Machtaeusserungen entgegenzutreten, um die Ueberhebung, welche der franzoesischen Politik eigen ist, nicht aufkommen zu lassen. Im regelmaessigen Lauf der Dinge ist es aber für uns in erster linie kein nachteil und zu bekaempfendens Bestreben, wenn die franzoesische Politik in Nord Afrika und dem türkischen Orient ein Feld ihrer Taetigkeit sucht. Die Absorbierung der Kraefte, welche Frankreich dort verwendet und festlegt, und die Haendel, welche es sich dort schafft, bilden einen Abzug für seine aggressiven Tendenzen gegen Deutschland. Allen andern grossen Maechten, mit Einschluss von Italien und selbst von Spanien, liegt es naeher als uns, im Mittellandischen Meere eifersüchtig auf Frankreich zu sein.

Auch in Konstantinopel haben wir gegenwaertig kein Interesse der franzoesischen Politik entgegenzutreten, soweit sie sich nicht mit der paepstlichen identifiziert; und auch diese Ausnahme wurde wegfallen, wenn der Roemische Stuhl seine unertraeglichen Ansprueche aufgabe, die ja wesentlich mit der Person und dem Ehrgeize des jedesmaligen Papstes zusammenhaengen.

Indem ich Ew. pp. diese Betrachtung mitzuteilen mich beehre, habe ich nicht die Absicht Ihnen Anlass zu irgend einer unmittelbaren Ausserung zu geben; aber ich haelte es für ein Bedürfnis Ihrer dortigen Stellung dass Sie von dieser meiner Auffassung Kenntniss erhalten, damit Sie nicht derselben in zufaelligen Gespraechen entgegenreten. Sollten Ew. pp. meine Auffassung nicht teilen, so bitte ich ganz ergebenst um Entwicklung Ihrer Ansicht".(1)

It is not certain that Bismarck made any serious official offer of compensation to France before the advent of the Republicans to power. For throughout the two years which preceded the Dufaure Ministry, Bismarck was still haunted by the nightmare of ultramontanism. The direction which French diplomacy followed did not encourage him to develop his idea of compensation to a monarchical France. Nor were the French themselves ready to accept an offer that would certainly embroil them with England and Italy. Bismarck confined himself therefore to expressions of displeasure and complaint against the behaviour of France and did not conceal his delight in her misfortunes. He was glad to see the Suez Canal shares secured by his "amis, les Anglais". His views were carefully developed by the German press whose tone had always been violently hostile to France. The German press discovered in the English purchase a new humiliation for the hereditary enemy, a natural result of Sedan. Such attacks were not only directed against clericalism or ultramontanism; the person of the French Foreign Minister was not immune; neither was the

(1) Grosse Politik. Band I. no. 194.

President of the Republic. No improvement could indeed be effected in French-German relations so long as Decazes directed French foreign relations, and the Legitimist Gontaut-Biron remained the representative of France in Berlin. The coup of the 16th May, 1877, did not fail to arouse alarm in German official circles notwithstanding the great pains which the French Agent in Berlin had taken to point out that the step was taken to avert the danger of radicalism.⁽¹⁾ The view was not, moreover, concealed that France could not possibly follow a peaceful policy with the Monarchists in power, and that a liberal republic in France could no longer be identified with anarchy; on the contrary it would constitute a solid guarantee for peace.

How Bismarck came to the conclusion that it was in the German interest to have a republic in France is not easy to explain. He himself had given different accounts in different circumstances, though his predominant motive remained as always the preservation of peace. Was the republic more favourable to peace, because it stood in no need to "redorer dans le creuset de la victoire le prestige indispensable aux dynasties sans racines?"⁽²⁾ But what about the Bourbons? Perhaps a better explanation was given in Bismarck's despatch of the 18th November, 1883 to Reuss, his Ambassador in Vienna.⁽³⁾ A republic in France would serve as an "abschreckendes Beispiel;" the progress of democracy and socialism in Western Europe would prove effective in rallying together the monarchies of the Continent. Bismarck was not blind to

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. No. 186. Contaut-Biron to Decazes, Jul. 1, 1877.

(2) That was part of the explanation he had given to St. Vallier in 1879. See Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 369.

(3) "Grosse Politik", Band III no. 676.

the fact that a French republic though not completely "bundnisfähig," could find allies and wage war against Germany. "Ich sehe deshalb", he argued, "in der Fortdauer der Republik nicht notwendige eine Friedensgarantie, wohl aber die Wahrscheinlichkeit einer fortwährend zunehmenden innern Schwäche, und einen lehrreichen Vorgang für alle Republikaner und solche, die es werden möchten."⁽¹⁾ But the value of this view is open to question since it was not recorded until Bismarck had studied the working of a republican system in France for five consecutive years.

In any case, the French elections in the autumn of 1877 realised Bismarck's hopes, for the Republicans won a great majority. The Broglie Ministry resigned on November 26th, and the Republican Dufaure cabinet was formed on the 13th December 1877. The advent of the new Government was enthusiastically welcomed in Berlin. The German press, while maintaining its violent tone against MacMahon, was very courteous to Dufaure and his colleagues. The fact that the French cabinet contained protestant blood, and would never follow a clerical policy was reassuring to Berlin. The "Anglo-Saxon" Protestant French Foreign Minister who was at the same time a Greek scholar, was compared in Germany to Bunsen and other German savants. The proposed appointment of the Comte de Saint-Vallier was accorded a similarly hearty welcome. On December 14th, Waddington invited Gontaut-Biron to communicate to the German Government the sincere desire of France to base her future relations with her great Rhine neighbour on "mutual confidence."⁽²⁾ On December 30th, 1877,

(1) Ibid

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 219.

Gontaut-Biron presented his letters of recall, and the German Chancellor was rid for ever of the annoying gossip of the daughters of the ultramontane Ambassador,

The year 1878 opened thus a new era in French-German relations. The pacifist policy of the Republicans was wholly after Bismarck's heart; they had, indeed, shown themselves agreeable to Bismarck in every possible way. Their leaders, and prominent among them, Cambetta, the advocate of revenge, the "fou furieux", decided to renounce temporarily the "revanche" policy and the idea of a Russian alliance. Decazes had always identified French policy with friendship to Russia, and was willing to go so far as to support Russian claims to the territories lost in 1856; in return he expected from Russia more than she could really afford to give. He was soon to be disappointed, for he discovered at last that Russian friendship was "un peu platonique".⁽¹⁾ On the other hand, the serious development of the Eastern Question made Russia realise that the flirtation with the French Monarchists was of no practical value as compared with whole-hearted German support. It became of vital importance to Russia to win once more the good-will of Bismarck, the more so since England strongly demonstrated her hostility to Russian moves in the Balkans. To French surprise, the Russian press even waged an anti-French campaign, and the French Chargé d'Affaires in St. Petersburg reported home that Germany had won back great popularity.⁽²⁾

(1) Ibid, no. 117. May 28, 1877.

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 203, Sep. 22, 1877.

The reaction among French Republicans was almost instant. For three years France had taken Russia into her intimacy but failed to obtain any substantial gain. The continuance of such a policy could not commend itself to the leaders of the French Republican Party. Moreover, a pro-Russian policy was certain to lead to complications with England whose alliance Gambetta advocated. It was well understood in Republican quarters that even if France succeeded in concluding an alliance with Russia, this step would be of no great advantage since England was certain to join the other side. It is not surprising therefore that the Republican leaders should decide upon a policy of opportunism, a policy neither of abdication, nor of complete "recueillement", a policy which, according to Hanotaux, was "une transaction entre les témérités d'une politique belliqueuse de revanche et les faiblesses d'une politique d'abdication."⁽¹⁾ The essence of this new policy was friendship with Great Britain and Germany.

With this new trend in French foreign policy, Bismarck was well-acquainted. His communication with the Republicans even before their accession to power was not a wholly secret matter. After the coup of May 16th, 1877, the leaders of the Republican party were not unwilling to respond to Bismarck's overtures. Before his death Thiers has spoken openly of "a possible understanding between France and Germany, of the acquisition of territory by France, as the consequence of it."⁽²⁾ Whatever the nature of these overtures might have been, they gave rise to the wildest rumours in which the name of Gambetta was frequently mentioned. With the Republicans in power

(1) See Pinon: "France et Allemagne." 1913. p. 49.

(2) F.O. 27/2304. no. 65. Lyons to Derby. Jan. 25, 1878.

there is no doubt that Bismarck began once more to give careful consideration to the idea of compensating France. The rumours current at this time about his intention to obtain French consent to a German annexation of Holland by the offer of Belgium are devoid of common sense. Bismarck was resolutely averse to French expansion in Europe, but he was well aware of the great interests which France claimed to have in Syria and Tunis.

The new guidance which Waddington gave to French foreign policy especially in connection with the Eastern Question was wholly satisfactory to Germany. The new French Foreign Minister maintained close contact with the German Foreign Office in all important foreign questions. Though he was aware of French reluctance to participate in a Congress in Berlin and that "there would be a great cry against it among the public,"⁽¹⁾ yet Waddington was ready to assume the responsibility of accepting the invitation and of defending his action before parliament. Germany gave a proof of her good will by participation in the Paris Exhibition: France found no alternative but to accept Berlin as the meeting place of the Powers. This conciliatory step was adopted by France not indeed for the establishment of intimacy but for the creation of a friendly atmosphere between the two nations. This policy Waddington declared, "France was determined honestly and steadily to pursue," for the country was already entirely tired of the war scares which distinguished the reign of the Right. The reasons behind such an attitude were German desire for peace and the French need "to execute great public works, and to carry out projected plans for public instruction."⁽²⁾

(1) F.O. 27/2306. no. 218. Adams to Derby. Mar. 8, 1878.

(2) *Ibid.*

Before he accepted the invitation to the Congress, Waddington made his famous reservations. The Berlin cabinet recognised them as "wise and prudent", and wholeheartedly approved the idea of limiting the field of discussions.⁽¹⁾ Thus in July, as "a Frenchman ready to sacrifice a certain amount of amour-propre", the French Foreign Minister, "went calmly and quietly" to take part in the Powers' deliberations.⁽²⁾ The objection of Count Corti in April to accepting Austrian and German offers of compensation set Bismarck free to offer "La poire tunisienne" to France.

V. *British-French Relations.*

The spring of 1878 witnessed also a great improvement in British-French relations. Before this time relations between France and Great Britain were cordial but not confidential. The apparent solidarity between the three continental empires had aroused the English Government to realise the danger of isolation. German supremacy in Europe was not a welcome fact to Great Britain; in point of fact Disraeli saw in Bismarck, "really another old Bonaparte who must be bridled."⁽³⁾ The friendship of France became therefore of great importance. The British desire to "encourage confidence and goodwill on the part of France towards England" found expression in the pro-French sympathies of the Prince of Wales. To see France worsted in any future struggle was far from the thoughts of even the pro-German Queen. So when the crisis of May 15th, 1875, threatened war between Germany and France, the

(1) *Ibid.*

(2) F.O. 27/2307. no. 293. Adams to Derby Mar. 28, 1878.

(3) Buckle: "Life of Disraeli". Vol. p. 421.

sympathetic attitude of Great Britain, and her intervention to preserve peace did not fail to win French gratitude.

Yet the English purchase of the Suez Canal shares from the ruler of Egypt marked a change in French feeling towards England. Deep resentment was felt in France, public opinion was inclined to look upon the deal as "une sorte de prise d'Egypte, et comme une prélude au partage de l'Empire ottoman".⁽¹⁾ The Quai d'Orsay did not regard the English move in a better light. With bitterness, Decazes described the British conduct as "absolument imprévue" though during the negotiations for the sale of the shares, he abstained from interference in order not to alienate British opinion. With the conflagration of the Eastern Question his behaviour left no doubt as to the Russian sentiments of the French Government.⁽²⁾ But partisanship for Russia was far from meaning that the Duc Decazes had hostile feelings towards Great Britain; he was always courteous and conciliatory. Yet the views of the French Right in general and of Decazes in particular were more continental than Mediterranean. To conclude an alliance with Russia was the ultimate aim of French Foreign policy until the end of November, 1877, even if the achievement of this end might entail temporary neglect of Mediterranean interests.⁽³⁾ It was admittedly difficult for Decazes to conciliate the hope for a Russian alliance with the desire to preserve British friendship, but the difficulty of the task did not

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T.2. no. 16. Decazes to Laboulaye, French Charge in St. Petersburg, Nov. 27, 1875.

(2) F.O. 27/2305. no. 145. Lyons to Derby, Feb. 12, 1878.

(3) Ibid.

discourage him from trying. Therefore he acted as the mouth-piece of Russia in Western Europe, and in his communications with England on the Eastern Question his main object seemed to be "to bring her round to Russian views and to obtain with the Russian Government the credit of having done so."⁽¹⁾ Such was his method of compromise; and such was the motive which drove him in 1877 to give much credit to the current rumour about a German intended threat to Western Europe if England were engaged in war with Russia in the East.⁽²⁾

The foreign policy of Decazes was then far from being approved in London. But the fall of the pro-Russian Ministry did not bring with it a proportional improvement in the relations between the two neighbours. The Marquis de Banneville and Waddington, the successors of Decazes, were more inclined to concentrate French diplomatic effort on Mediterranean affairs; they regarded French and English interests in the Levant as "nearly identical". Both Ministers were of the opinion that the common interests of France and England were endangered by the Russian victory, and that as far as the peculiar position of France would admit, the two countries should concert their efforts for the defence of these interests. Yet despite these convictions, the French Foreign Office was reluctant to give up so quickly the attempt at the Russian alliance. Suspicion of Germany was the main reason. Through lack of support, of confidence and diplomatic experience, Waddington was amenable to this view. In his first conversations with the British Ambassador, Waddington expressed his unwillingness to abandon Russian friendship for fear of finding

(1) Such was the comment of Lyons. *Ibid.*
 (2) F.O. 27/2304. no. 2. Lyons to Derby. Jan. 1878.

himself "tête à tête" with Prince Bismarck whether the latter was "an enemy" or "a tempter". In January and February, the French Foreign Minister was ready to believe that it was the German Chancellor and not Russia who was setting obstacles in the way of peace. Fear of Germany was in fact paralysing to French freedom of movement, fear of German aggressive designs, and fear lest any action might give offence to Germany.⁽¹⁾

No wonder that a certain timidity, hesitancy, and inactivity characterised French foreign policy in the first three months of 1878. Waddington repeatedly declared that France could not depart from her policy of complete reserve. "It would be impossible" Lyons was told, "For the French Government to associate themselves with any step which might possibly be a prelude to active intervention."⁽²⁾ For France was careful not to diminish her means of resistance to invasion which she always believed to be imminent.

The conduct of France was not encouraging to any real entente between her and Great Britain. France did not venture to give official support to the moderate step taken by England at the end of 1877, to enquire whether the Russian Emperor was willing to listen to overtures of peace.⁽³⁾ She did not join in the English declaration as to the invalidity of arrangements made without the participation of the Treaty Powers. Moreover, the character of French German relations was very suspect in London. The English Government misunderstood and distrusted Bismarck and consequently suspected his recent deals with

(1) See F.O. 27/2304. nos. 2, 16, 28. Lyons to Derby. Jan. 1 to 5, 1878.

(2) Ibid.

(3) F.O. 27/2305. no. 145. Lyons. to Derby. Feb. 12, 1878.

France. London was disturbed lest France should give way before alleged German temptation to expand at the expense of Belgium.⁽¹⁾ Though Waddington emphasised the determination of the French Government to respect their northern frontier, yet England remained unconvinced. At least Lyons persisted in his opinion that a rapprochement between France and Germany at the cost of some other country was not altogether excluded from the French programme. "Your Lordship is aware," wrote Lyons to Derby, "that a close understanding with Germany is not rejected from the creed of the Ultra-Left Party, and if that party should be beguiled into believing that it found security in such an understanding, it might be easily led to make use of the restored naval and military strength of France with a view to gratify the popular craving for military renown or territorial aggrandizement; and it is certainly not to united action with England in the East that popular feeling would point."⁽²⁾

Great Britain was aware of friendly communications between Waddington and Bismarck. The concurrence of the French Government in the despatch of ships of war to Constantinople had been in fact only given after the approval of

(1) The rumour was current that Bismarck intended to annex Holland, to buy French support by the offer of Belgium and that of Italy by Nice and the prospect of acquiring Austrian territory. The visit of Gambetta to Italy in January 1878 strengthened this rumour, for it was alleged that he was charged with the mission of bringing about an understanding between Germany, France, and Italy. Waddington emphatically denied the truth of any of these rumours; Gambetta was not charged with any mission; neither did he return with any suggestions from Italy. In February Waddington expressed to Lyons his belief that territorial changes in Western Europe were not occupying the attention of the German Chancellor. *Ibid.* See also no. 146. Lyons to Derby, Feb. 12, 1878.

(2) *Ibid.*

Germany. Despite the repeated declarations of Waddington that France desired to be on cordial terms with England, the English Government persisted in their opinion that Waddington did not feel at liberty to commit the French Government to engagements antagonistic to Germany and Russia. Moreover, there existed in London grave concern about the nature of French designs on Egypt,⁽¹⁾ and about the unfriendly feeling of French public opinion towards England. Lord Lyons took great pains to describe the feeling which prevailed in France towards her great maritime neighbour:

“As regards foreign politics there is no doubt that the embarrassment of England is looked upon with some complacency. This does not appear to be the feeling of the present Government, at all events, I have seen no sign of it in the present Minister for Foreign Affairs, but it may nevertheless exercise an unfavourable influence on the contemplated conference. France cannot be expected to expose herself to danger from Germany by making common cause by any other Power. She will be unwilling to imperil the hopes she still cherishes of forming an alliance with Russia. She will be disposed to treat the interests of the Western and Mediterranean Powers as English interests rather than French interests, and will be far from willing to make any sacrifices for the advantage of England. She will be jealous of the position of England with regard to Egypt. She will aim at preparing the way for the restoration of French predominance in that country, or failing that, of establishing

(1) Ibid.

a joint protectorate or a general guarantee with a view to impeding free action on the part of England with regard to the Suez Canal or to Egypt in general. In fact France still nourishes a resentment - a resentment none the weaker for being wholly unreasonable against England for not having come to her help in the war of 1870.

It may, perhaps, be well that I should repeat in conclusion that I am here merely describing a state of opinion common among Frenchmen in general, which, whether or no it be shared by the Government, is likely to have a certain influence on the foreign policy of the country."(¹)

How far this picture of the situation is true, it is difficult to say. But it gives the impression that Lyons was not wholly unbiased and that England was as jealous as France. Yet the views of Lyons were endorsed by Russell. The English Ambassador in Berlin entertained the same suspicions about the character of French-German relations. They were definitely not platonic. Russell imagined a coalition of Germany, Russia and France bent on opposing English claims. The Treaty of San Stefano did not involve in his opinion any serious French interest. "We may fairly assume that France is not in a position to take an entirely impartial view of Eastern affairs, and that she will think to serve her interests best by placing her voice at the disposal of Russia and Germany in the Congress", ran his conclusion.⁽²⁾

The instability of the internal situation in France at the beginning of 1878 did not encourage England to place undue

(1) Ibid. no. 130. To Derby, Feb. 8, 1878.

(2) F.O. 64/903. no. 213. To Derby. Mar. 17, 1878.

confidence in her neighbour. The position of the Marshal President was insecure. By training and temperament, MacMahon was not really qualified for the position he occupied. His prestige and influence were greatly diminished, even among his own party, owing to the weakness and vacillation he had shown in November and December 1877, and because he failed to fulfil the promises he had repeatedly given that he would never allow the direction of military affairs to be taken out of his hands. The prospects of the Right coming once more into power were indeed very small. Since December all elections whether departmental or municipal pointed to the fact that the Republic was steadily gaining ground.⁽¹⁾

The position of the Dufaure Ministry was also precarious; it could not count on undivided Republican support and its continuance in Office was not certain, for though it commanded a majority in the Chamber, it was in a minority in the Senate. England would have been willing to trust in the assurances of Waddington, if she could be convinced that his tenure of office was secure. But his protestant blood, his English education and his American wife were unpleasant qualifications in the eyes of Frenchmen and especially in those of the Quai d'Orsay. Moreover, Waddington was not entirely free in the direction of foreign relations; he had to consult his colleagues in all serious questions concerning foreign policy.

The end of March saw a change in French-English relations. The co-operation of France was becoming more and more important to England, since the fall of the Depretis cabinet in Italy was bound to raise doubts in London as to

(1) F.O. 27/2307. no. 267. Adams to Derby. Mar. 21, 1878.

the support which the Consulta was ready to give to British claims. The refusal of Corti to listen to the Mediterranean League scheme made England realise her isolation. The appointment of Salisbury to the Foreign Office put a timely end to the hesitation and dissension which reigned in the British cabinet. Salisbury saw the need of co-operation with France in Eastern affairs, and with his accustomed energy tried to prevent any rapprochement between Russia and France. Suspicion of the nature of French-German relationship was diminishing, since the belief was beginning to gain ground in London that Bismarck was more inclined to support the joint interests of England and Austria-Hungary in the coming Congress.

On the other side of the Channel, Waddington was gathering more experience and confidence. In spite of the fact that he was aware of the reluctance of France to attend a European Congress in Berlin, he himself found no alternative but to participate in the deliberations of Europe. France might feel humiliated in seeing the stipulations of the Paris Treaty of 1856 so radically altered; she might be tormented by the memories of Frankfurt; she might be apprehensive lest she would be forced to lose some valuable friendships, but France could not stand aloof. She must bear her responsibility as a Great Power and contribute to general peace and concord in Europe. By her comparative impartiality and disinterestedness she would certainly increase her prestige in Europe.

Despite the bitter complaints that the systematic interference of the Republicans with the army was damaging to its discipline, the military might of France gave the country new confidence in her future. This new confidence was well

expressed in a conversation the Marshal President had with the British Military Attaché. "The French are a military nation," declared the Marshal. "Our army is now sufficiently reorganised.... to show other nations that in any future European complications, they will have to reckon with us."⁽¹⁾

The experience of three months in power decided the Republicans definitely to join the English side, and to rid themselves of many of their German suspicions. For it became obvious that, without the friendship of Germany and the entente with Great Britain, France would never be able to play her part as a great Mediterranean Power. No doubt that Waddington had the full support of the Ministry when he expressed the sincere desire of France to act in concert with England in Egypt. He began to admit that there were solid grounds for the position England was taking up, and to share the English view that the whole Treaty of San Stefano should be submitted to the Congress. There was no lack of backing in the French Press: the "Journal des Débats", the "République Française", and the "Temps" rendered full justice to the English view on the sanctity of treaties.

The language of Waddington became more confident as to the rôle which France should play in the Congress. He expressed the firm determination that if the sole purpose of the Congress was to be to give sanction to the entire Treaty, France would not participate. The object of France, he declared, was not to acquire territory for herself, but she had certain reservations to make: Egypt, Syria and Tunis must not form an object of discussion in the Congress. He expressed

(1) F.O. 27/ 2309. no. 588. Strictly Confidential. Conolly to Lyons. May 6, 1878.

his strong opposition to any arrangement that would allow the Russian fleet to have an establishment in the Mediterranean.⁽¹⁾ Waddington went even further, and, to the English surprise, expressed suspicion of Russia; he pointed out the inconsistency which characterised Russian professions and Russian deeds.⁽²⁾ The French press endorsed Waddington's views; it could not hear of a Treaty that amounted to a Russian protectorate of Turkey.⁽³⁾

What Waddington regretted was that, owing to her peculiar position, France was unable to defend by force, conjointly with England, the cause of European public right and international treaties; but none the less France was willing to give her full moral support. His courtesy reached such a pitch that when he was informed of the British desire to occupy Mitylene or some point in the neighbourhood of the Dardanelles, he did not raise any objections. Waddington in fact assured the English Representative that the occupation "would be taken quietly in this country". But he made that conditional on English recognition of the equality of the French position in Egypt. The French Foreign Minister also suggested that in the event of the Congress being convoked, there should be a preliminary interchange of views between the British and French Governments. As his declaration of May in the chamber might have thrown some doubts on his attitude, Waddington was careful to assure Britain that France would exert her moral weight on the British side, and would take her stand

(1) See F.O. 27/2308. nos. 362, 375. Lyons to Salisbury. Apr. 18, 23, 1878.

(2) F.O. 27/2307. no 293. Adams to Salisbury. Mar. 28.

(3) It is interesting to note that Waddington emphatically denied any relation between the Quai d'orsay and the Press.

upon the sanctity of treaties.⁽¹⁾ To Salisbury such an attitude was satisfactory; but the English Foreign Secretary was well aware that if England came to defend her interests "by some territorial rearrangement" she would be certain to meet with the jealousy he was willing to remove. England, he hoped, might obtain the assent of France to territorial changes in the Eastern Mediterranean by the offer of Tunis.

The idea of giving France compensation in Tunis in return for English freedom of action in the Eastern Mediterranean did not originate with Salisbury. As early as 1876, some English politicians seem to have entertained the idea that Britain should avail herself of Bismarck's suggestion to take possession of Egypt, and they considered the possibility of giving Tunis to France as compensation. Hohenlohe recorded in his "Memories" that Lord Odo Russell broached this idea to Gontaut-Biron, his French colleague in Berlin. Whether the idea originated with Russell himself or with the British Foreign Office no definite answer can be given. The statement of Hohenlohe is itself vague and gives a rather personal impression. "Odo Russell", wrote Hohenlohe, "said that England no more proposed to take Egypt than France to take Tunis. Gontaut replied that Tunis was of no importance to France as she was glad to have a neighbour that would cover her frontier.

(1) Replying to an interpellation brought forward by M. Dréolle, Waddington declared: "the part which France intends to play is not an active one; it is the part of a disinterested spectator, the part of a friendly adviser, who is on good terms with all the Powers of Europe without exception. French policy is one of neutrality, neutrality in the present, and neutrality in the future. What influence France seeks to exercise is a moral one, always in favour of peace. France is free from engagements except those which constitute the public law of Europe." See F.O. 27/2309. nos. 408, 412. Lyons to Salisbury, May 10, 14, 1878.

This Russell declined to recognise; he seems to have been holding out this prospect to France as a compensation.”(1)

It should be borne in mind that this sounding came only one year after rumours had been circulated about French designs on Tunis. The reply alleged by Prince Hohenlohe to have been given to Russell's suggestion could be easily explained by three main facts; in the first place, the French Ambassador was certain of German opposition in the event of France taking any initiative in the matter; and secondly, the idea of giving England a free hand in Egypt in return for liberty in Tunis was unthinkable for any French politician. Thirdly, the Quai d'Orsay was and had always been conscious that Great Britain entertained no aggressive designs on the Regency.

Whatever the case might be, the question of giving Tunis as compensation to France was seriously considered by both Salisbury and Bismarck. For in April and May, 1878, Münster, the German Ambassador in London, approached Salisbury on the subject and found him sympathetically responsive. Unfortunately no detailed record of such conversations was discovered yet; but it seems beyond doubt that Münster pointed out the fact that France was intent on taking Tunis. On May 11th, Salisbury communicated his views on the subject to Lord Lyons. “Tunis”, wrote the Foreign Secretary, “is of course an extension of French territory and influence of which we should not have the slightest jealousy or fear.”(2) But what

(1) “Memoirs”, Vol. II, pp. 172, 192. May 10, 1876.

(2) Newton: “Life of Lyons”, Vol II, p. 139. And German Diplomatic Documents (Dugdale). Vol. II, p. 94 no. 289. Münster to Bismarck. Apr. 20, 1878. Thus Bismarck's intimation to Waddington in Berlin was not “one of the sallies he sometimes indulges in and to which he himself attaches no importance”, as Blowitz thought. The correspondent of the “Times” in Paris further stated: “Bismarck himself

Salisbury was not certain about was "how France would wish to have it." The views of Lyons were not very encouraging; "I have never found that the acquisition of Tunis recommended itself to French imagination,"⁽¹⁾ he replied. But Salisbury was not disheartened; he persisted in his opinion, and was ready to buy French consent to his Eastern policy by the offer of Tunis.⁽²⁾

VI. *The Berlin Congress.*

Waddington accepted the invitation to participate in the Berlin Congress with the understanding that the questions of Syria, the Holy places, Egypt and Tunis should not be discussed by the Powers. The French reservations had been communicated to all participants in the Congress, who all agreed that only questions arising "directly and naturally from the Russo-Turkish War" should be treated. The policy of the Quai d'Orsay was further explained in general terms by Waddington in the French Chamber on the eve of the meeting of the Powers. Though France was vitally interested in peace, and sought no gains for herself, she was determined to maintain the status quo in the Mediterranean and public law in Europe.

told me, 'On first seeing Lord Beaconsfield I said to him, you ought to have an understanding with Russia instead of thwarting her. You might leave her free at Constantinople and yourselves take Egypt, which would compensate you for your complaisance. France would not be vexed as may be imagined, and in any rate, Tunis or Syria might be given to her as an equivalent.' Blowitz himself confessed that he had taken that "for a jest". "Times" Apr. 5, 1881.

(1) *Ibid.*

(2) No complete idea can be formed about this particular question until the Salisbury papers are opened to researchers.

"Nous avons été guidés dans nos réserves," declared Waddington, "par les intérêts français et par l'intérêt général de l'Europe... des grands intérêts de l'Europe, mais elle y ira avec l'autorité que donne l'absence de toute convoitise; elle y ira avec un désir sincère de travailler au maintien de la paix avec la ferme volonté de conserver sa neutralité et avec un sentiment profond du droit public de l'Europe."⁽¹⁾

In French eyes the conclusion of the Cyprus Convention between England and Turkey violated both the status quo in the Mediterranean and the public law of Europe. Waddington was informed of the Convention of the 21st May on July 7th, just five days before the close of the Congress. His annoyance and perplexity could be easily imagined. But the indignation of public opinion in France was far greater.

Both Republicans and Monarchists condemned a Convention that had been concluded behind the back of the Powers and especially France. The "selfish" English behaviour had "caused consternation in Europe", and was completely inconsistent with the noble principles which Great Britain had always professed during the Eastern crisis. The irritation in Paris was such that "one could not see at this moment... what turn public opinion might take on the subject."⁽²⁾ Lyons was thankful that Salisbury had Waddington under his influence, "at a distance from the excited spirits here."⁽³⁾

(1) This declaration was an answer to a friendly interpellation by Léon Renault. "Journal Officiel". Jun. 8, 1878.

(2) F.O. 27/2311. no. 551. Lyons to Salisbury. Jul. 10, 1878.

(3) Newton: "Life of Lyons." Vol. II, pp. 152-153.

The attacks of the French press were characteristic. In deep contrast to the conciliatory language of May, the language of July was sarcastic and bitter. The press pointed to the bad impression which the secret Convention had made in an all-trusting France. The "République Française", the chief organ of the Republican party and the mouthpiece of Gambetta, devoted her leading articles to attacks on the English conduct;

Le Gouvernement anglais, qui avait pris des attitudes nobles, des airs chevaleresques, pour se poser en champion du droit des gens, de l'équilibre européen, du respect des traités et du libre arbitre de leurs signataires a tiré un coup de pistolet diplomatique qui aura un grand retentissement dans le monde, mais qui n'accroîtra pas la renommée de la Grande Bretagne. L'Angleterre va prendre "Cyprus"; sous prétexte de protéger la Turquie,... elle saisit sa part du gâteau offert à l'appétit des puissances dépourvues de scrupules...; autant nous avons été sympathiques à une politique équitable et loyale, autant nous avons droit de nous montrer sévères pour une politique qui ne lèse pas les intérêts des puissances méditerranéennes, mais qui blesse singulièrement la dignité de tous les membres du Congrès. Si ceux-ci, lorsqu'ils se sont rendus à Berlin avaient su que, dix jours auparavant, l'Angleterre avait conclu un traité séparé avec la Porte Ottomane, peut-être quelques-uns d'entre eux seraient demeurés dans leurs pays et n'auraient pas eu l'attention de prêter leurs concours à une œuvre viciée dans son essence...

Le Gouvernement britannique, par l'organe de ses ministres avait affirmé à plusieurs reprises son horreur pour les traités séparés..., et du moment même, on peut le dire,

où il se déclarait si explicitement, il s'engageait lui-même dans cette voie obscure et détournée... Dans cet arrangement vraiment merveilleux, la Porte s'est mise en quelque sorte sous la suzeraineté de l'Angleterre.

Il est beau d'être d'origine à la fois orientale et vénitienne; il est beau de rêver pour son pays la prépondérance en Asie, qui sait? Même l'empire de l'Asie; il est habile... de prononcer les mots les plus respectables, de faire état des principes les plus élevés; il est adroit surtout de ne tenir aucun compte de tout cela et de fouler aux pieds son passé d'il y a quelques semaines pour faire main basse sur une île qui est à la fois la sentinelle du canal de Suez et celle de la tête de ligne du futur chemin de fer de l'Euphrate.”⁽¹⁾

The “République Française” went even further, and recommended that the French Plenipotentiaries should not give their approval to the Convention, and that if it was not submitted to the Congress, they should threaten to leave without signing the final treaty.⁽²⁾ For no doubt the Convention had made of the Sultan a vassal of the English crown, a matter which France, as a great Mediterranean Power, could not view with indifference. The new British acquisition had certainly disturbed the balance of power in the Mediterranean and it was doubted whether the Great Powers would acquiesce in a British Protectorate of Turkey.

The organs of the Opposition were not less hostile; they pointed out that as the British Government dared not take

(1) “République Française” Paris July 10, 1878; Enclosed in F.O. 27/2311. no. 549. Lyons to Salisbury, Jul. 10, 1878.

(2) Ibid and no. 556. Lyons to Salisbury Jul. 11, 1878.

Egypt, they had established themselves in a position dominating Alexandria and the Suez Canal. The "Constitutionnel" described the British conduct as shameful and misrepresented "the courtesy and kind feeling" which the Prince of Wales had manifested during his recent visit to France. Having got wind of what was taking place in Berlin, it ridiculed the idea that France should accept Tunis as compensation. Under the little of "Un Peu de Philosophie", it urged that France should not take part in the "traffic of territories and nations"; France must keep her hands free of engagements. In plaintive language, the Constitutionnel gave vent to the offended French feeling".⁽¹⁾

"L'émotion est très grande dans le public.... elle n'est ni provocatrice ni menaçante pour personne; elle se renferme dans une résignation amère et chagrine. On sait qu'il n'y a rien à faire. Nous ne pouvons pas plus empêcher ce qui se passe que nous ne sommes pas prêts à le réparer. Notre décadence et notre abaissement suivent leurs cours.

Un bon symptôme, c'est précisément la conscience profonde et générale de notre situation présente, malade et précaire.

Certains journaux cherchent à nous consoler trop vite. Un peu de philosophie servira notre dignité, trop de philosophie blesserait le patriotisme.

Notre diplomatie a été chloroformée, nous peuple français, on nous a endormi par la capiteuse fumée des hommages prodigues.

(1) Jul. 13, 1878.

Au moment où l'île de Chypre était livrée à l'Angleterre, le Prince de Galles était parmi nous, ne manquant aucune fête, aucune réception officielle, se multipliant pour nous charmer. . . ., la bouche pleine de caresses pour cette France qu'il aime profondément.

Depuis vingt-quatre heures, on nous conte que l'Angleterre, pour adoucir notre surprise, et notre dépit, nous réserve quelque cadeau précieux. Des imaginations se donnent déjà carrière dans le champ des conjectures flatteuses et savoureuses.⁽¹⁾

The "Union", a Legitimist organ, asserted that with the signature of the Berlin Treaty, the disgrace of France would be complete. "Le traité de Francfort", wrote the newspaper, "a consacré en 1871 notre chute en Europe; le traité de Berlin, en 1878, va consacrer la fin de notre rôle dans le Levant". The "Union" maintained that the Dufaure Government was "tout à la fois dupe et complice dans cet œuvre". It alluded to the sittings of the Congress as staged comedies, to the French Plenipotentiaries as having "joué leur petit rôle sérieusement, sans voir ce qui passait dans la coulisse sans soupçonner même le denouement de la pièce", to find themselves in the end "les Georges-Dandin de cette farce". With the signature of the Treaty of Berlin France would find herself permanently displaced in the Orient.⁽²⁾

Suddenly a change was noted in the language of the Republican press. The "Journal des Débats" which had once

(1) July 13, 1878.

(2) July 13, 1878.

remarked that "the traditions of England were not quite lost for they still survived in the hearts of a woman and of an aged statesman",⁽¹⁾ adopted very conciliatory terms towards England; the British action was even justified. Undoubtedly inspired by Waddington, the "Débats" wondered why should Russia, a despotic and conquering Power, have unrestricted licence in Asia. The Convention was a contract concluded between two willing parties. While Austria would superintend reform in European Turkey, England would undertake a similar task in Asia Minor.⁽²⁾

The "Débats" might well have added and France in North Africa. The articles of the Débats seem to have had a calming influence on French public opinion, though there subsisted bitter complaints about the methods of British diplomacy. Lyons was in fact right when he reported; "The irritation felt in this country with regard to the Convention is...., I trust, in some degree diminishing. It does not subside so speedily as I would fain have hoped would be the case. The suggestions of some violent action on the part of France, such as the recall of the French Plenipotentiaries from Berlin before the signature of the acts of the Congress have been dropped but bitterness of feeling seems to continue."⁽³⁾ It is true that the "Republique" continued to vent this state of feeling but the subject of the Convention was soon dropped from its editorials. The secret of the change became public knowledge exactly three years later.

(1) Buckle: Disraeli, Vol. VI, p. 343.

(2) F.O. 27/2311. no. 556. Lyons to Salisbury Jul. 11, 1878.

(3) F.O. 27/2311. no. 559. To Salisbury.

In Berlin the conduct of Waddington and Saint-Vallier, the French Plenipotentiaries, had been very satisfactory to both Lord Salisbury and Prince Bismarck. French cordiality had been essential to the success of the Congress, since Italy adopted a wholly neutral attitude. Though the conduct of Corti was on the whole correct, yet his acquiescence in the proposed Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was not given with good grace.⁽¹⁾ Whenever the question of British interests was raised, Italy did not give any marked support. No wonder that Salisbury was wholly indifferent to Italian aspirations and to Italian amour-propre; in fact the Cyprus Convention was not communicated to the Italian Plenipotentiaries until after they had seen it in the newspapers. For his part, Prince Bismarck shewed no sign of sympathy to Italian claims.

When the Cyprus Convention was communicated to Waddington, he was alive to the kind of reception it would meet with in France. The Republicans would not welcome a diminution of French influence in the Mediterranean; the Convention was indeed considered a new humiliation for France. A Republican Government could not endorse a treaty which

(1) Great Britain was well acquainted with the fact that Cairoli and some of his colleagues were strongly opposed to the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that they were supported by an influential group of the Left which counted Depretis among its members. Cairoli based his view, of which he made no secret, on the plea that "an aggrandisement of Austria would create a considerable excitement in Italy, and that if it were allowed to pass entirely unnoticed by the Italian Government it might create for them great difficulties at home." The Cairoli group seem to have been encouraged by the persistent assertions of Menabrea, the Ambassador in London, that Great Britain would not frown upon Italian annexation of the Trentino through the peaceful channels of diplomacy or through war. England had of course given categorical denials to such reports and made it clear to Cairoli, who occupied the Foreign Office, during the absence of Corti in Berlin, that the raising of the

would definitely mean a defeat for Republican diplomacy. Greatly excited, Waddington told Salisbury that France was left no alternative but to withdraw altogether from the Congress. Both Salisbury and Bismarck were prepared for this eventuality. The British Foreign Secretary did not hesitate to communicate to Waddington the express desire of the British Government to give France a free hand in Tunis, and thier promise to attempt no change in the status quo of the Near East without previous consultation with the French Government. If Austria had undertaken a civilising mission in the Balkans, and England in Asiatic Turkey, with the full approval of Britain, France could contribute to the cause of civilisation in North Africa. That is the explanation of his famous remarks to Waddington respecting Tunis. "Do what you like there; you will be obliged to take it; you cannot leave Carthage in the hands of the Barbarians."⁽¹⁾ Lord Beaconsfield confirmed Salisbury's offer. On his part, Prince Bismarck, who had no respect for Turkish territory, assured the French Representatives of full German approval.

The question might be raised as to the original author of the Berlin offer. It is already well known that the idea of

Trentino question in the Congress would definitely be met with British and German disapproval.

When it became known among the public that the Congress had confided the military and civil administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria, great excitement prevailed in Italy; the press condemned the proposal, the Government was attacked, and the windows of the Austrian Consulate in Venezia smashed. It was even reported that, influenced by the agitation of the public, Cairoli instructed the Italian Representatives to assert Italy's right in the Trentino, an instruction with which Cortt refused to comply. See F.O. 45/339. nos. 332, 345, 351, 2, 369. Paget and Macdonell to Salisbury Jun. 5, 29, July 2, 2, 23.

(1) See Chapter IV.

compensating France did not originate during the Congress with either Bismarck or Salisbury, although it is true that Bismarck gave the idea earlier consideration. Bourgeois and Pagès⁽¹⁾ entertained the view that it was Bismarck who approached Waddington first: it was he who seized the opportunity of the Cyprus Convention to force England to follow his line of policy towards France; "il est bien vraisemblable que ce fut Bismarck, car l'offre de la Tunisie est liée à toute une politique que Bismarck n'a pas dû improviser."⁽²⁾ The reluctance of Salisbury to ratify on record his verbal declarations in Berlin might support this opinion. Bourgeois and Pagès did not base their idea on any substantial evidence. The belief that Salisbury gave no consideration to the problem before the meeting of the Congress, a belief which is not altogether reasonable, might have given rise to the opinion expressed in the "Origines et Responsabilités de la Grande Guerre". The logic and sequence of events are in favour of a contrary view. Salisbury was the author of the Cyprus Convention, and was already prepared to square France. Waddington was bound to communicate to him the views of the French Government on the Convention as soon as he, Waddington, was acquainted with its contents. The views of the French Government were not by any means favourable; they were in fact of a threatening nature; hence the Salisbury-Waddington deal. The British offer coincided with the desire of Prince Bismarck to satisfy French amour-propre; and anxious that the Congress would end in success he gave his sanction to the British-French

(1) *Les Origines et les Responsabilités de la Grande Guerre*. 1921.

(2) *Ibid.* pp. 191, 192.

agreement. The testimony of Waddington himself removes all doubt. "Le Prince de Bismarck m'a déclaré, après avoir eu connaissance de la proposition anglaise, que l'Allemagne y donnerait son complet assentiment."⁽¹⁾

According to Hanotaux, the French Representatives, before leaving Berlin, drew up a motion to be placed before the Congress, and despatched it to Paris in order to obtain the approval of the Marshal President and the cabinet. As soon as MacMahon set eyes upon the document he flew into a rage and exclaimed: "Ils veulent nous f.... l'Italie sur le dos.... Jamais je ne consentirai, je ne veux pas qu'on nous jette dans une nouveau querelle."⁽²⁾ The cabinet appear to have agreed with the Marshal. The version of Marcère is quite different. MacMahon together with General Chanzy, and Marcère himself, were of the firm opinion that the possession of Tunis was indispensable to the security of the French African colony. "Il (le maréchal) était", wrote Marcère, "resolu et aurait volontiers engagé l'affaire, dont le succès souriait à son patriotisme et aurait jété un reflet de gloire sur sa présidence". But it was the cabinet who thought that the time was not opportune for such a step.⁽³⁾

The apparent difference if not conflict between the two statements shows how far documentary records are lacking. That Hanotaux, a successor to the French Foreign Office and a historian, was well acquainted with the details of French foreign policy at that time, is a fact beyond doubt. On the

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 330. Waddington to Harcourt, French Ambassador in London. Jul. 21, 1878.

(2) La France Contemporaine. T. 4. p. 388.

(3) Ibid.

other hand, Marcère was a member of the Dufaure cabinet, and should have a first-hand knowledge of the problems discussed by the Council of Ministers.⁽¹⁾ It is incontestably true that both the Marshal and the Cabinet were loath to adopt any measure that would embroil France with Italy; a fact which might be attributed to a subsisting suspicion of the English and German motives. But the fact that Britain and Germany had associated themselves with the offer was sufficient to make Italian opposition of no great importance. In the second place the idea that Waddington thought it necessary to bring the matter before the Congress is not wholly beyond question. If the idea was ever brought forward, it is most likely that the refusal might have come not from MacMahon or the French cabinet but from Lord Salisbury. It is an already established fact that he had always been averse to the publication of his talks with Waddington on the subject of Tunis. He never committed himself to anything like definite statements concerning the Regency, either to Parliament, or to the Italian Government, and even kept his Consul-General in Tunis in complete ignorance of the views of the British Foreign Office. When later Waddington demanded a written assurance, Salisbury gave it reluctantly, and only on condition that it should be kept secret. He had always been apprehensive lest Italy should create trouble in the Congress; and although he had actually considered providing her with compensation in Tripoli, he might have expected that Italy would not sign the final Treaty if the Powers acquiesced in a British possession of Cyprus together with a French occupation

(1) Marcère was Minister of the Interior.

of Tunis. Attention must also be given to the manner in which Salisbury made his famous declarations; he gave a promise that Britain would raise no objection to a French acquisition of Tunis, but he studiously demurred from guaranteeing British support to Paris, in the event of opposition from Rome. Waddington himself recorded that when he discussed the matter with the Marshal, the latter gave it as his personal opinion that France should not miss this valuable opportunity; she must hasten to realise an aim which she had always been pursuing and which Great Britain had always relentlessly opposed.⁽¹⁾

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 330. Jul. 21, 1870.

CHAPTER IV

*After The Berlin Congress.
1878-1880.*

I. *A Scheme for a French protectorate.*

France had good reasons to accept the prize offered in Berlin. In the first place there was the urgent need to restore the balance of power in the Mediterranean after the disturbance caused by the June Convention between England and Turkey. French public opinion was not averse to obtaining some advantage for France as a set off against the British occupation of cyprus and protectorate of Asia-Minor. Imperialism had received an immense stimulus from Disraeli's foreign policy. The jealousy of England which characterised French diplomacy throughout the nineteenth century in connection with Mediterranean affairs was in itself sufficient to prompt the French to follow the British example. And France was not unequal to this task. Though she had experienced untold miseries in 1870-1871, yet during the years following she never suffered from a sense of inferiority, her financial and military strength inspired her with hope in the future.

From 1871 onwards North Africa seems to have possessed a special attraction for Frenchmen. Even in 1870, voices had been heard in favour of an energetic colonial policy. Prevost-Paradol, a promising young Frenchman, after surveying the critical situation in Europe, and observing that "France and Prussia were running against each other like two express trains which could not be stopped", had pointed to this bright spot in North Africa, where France had already laid the foundations of a prosperous "France Nouvelle". This was the spot where the mother country could find fresh sources of wealth, energy and greatness.⁽¹⁾ As soon as France had begun to regain her confidence, Thiers considered that French diplomacy must find "compensation pour les pertes subies."⁽²⁾ In 1874, the economist Paul Leroy Beaulieu, a firm believer in the advantages of colonisation, published his work, "Colonisation Chez Les peuples Modernes", in which he pointed out the shortsightedness of the "revanche" policy. "We must tell our country the truth", he said, "we must dispel the illusions which would lead us to new catastrophes. In the face of 45 millions (Germans) which will become 60 in twenty years the hope for revenge is chimerical."⁽³⁾

The rise to power of the Republicans in 1877 meant that France had temporarily abandoned the idea of revenge and was now intent on seeking compensation abroad. It was impossible for France to continue sapping her energy in "des regrets stériles"; she stood in need of movement in order to

(1) Mantoux: *France and Colonial Power*. p. 11. Hanotaux: *Pour L'Empire Colonial Français*. 1933. pp. 93, 94.

(2) See Pinon: *France et Allemagne*. 1913. pp. 26, 27.

(3) After Carroll: *French Public Opinion and Foreign Affairs*. 1931. pp. 85, 88. See also "La Revue Politique et Littéraire" of Mar. 28, 1881.

restore her lost prestige. Europe no longer provided any scope for French enterprise, while North Africa was as wide as it was open. Some fifty years ago France had found an outlet for this suppressed instinct in the conquest of Algeria; a conquest which had carried with it French civilisation and French ideas. Republican France had to complete the great work which the Monarchy had just begun but not yet finished.

The world itself was in the throes of change. French capital seeking investment abroad was accumulating. France was beginning to feel the need for colonies, not as outlets for an increasing population, but as foreign markets, for food supplies and raw materials. In addition, her navy was in need of new "points d'appui", with which the Tunisian coast abounded. The interest of France in Tunis was historical, financial and resultant on the possession of Algeria. Republican France was not prepared to abandon the traditional policy of the July Monarchy and the Second Empire, especially when the opening of the Suez Canal added to the importance of Tunis as a strategic centre. The completion of Italian unity and the natural rise of Italian ambitions in the Mediterranean had given the position which the Regency occupied an added importance.

Though there was a strong party especially among military men for the immediate annexation of the Regency in 1878, (1) yet France was still unprepared for such an enterprise. The "revanche", though it undoubtedly constituted no foreign policy for the Dufaure cabinet, was still a national dream; to its partisans any military venture abroad was looked upon as an insult to those who had given their lives in 1870. The

(1) F. O. 27/2361. no. 28. Lyons to Salisbury. Jan 10, 1879.

protagonists of concentration on continental affairs counted no less than the whole Right and Extreme Left. The bitter reaction against the shipwrecked adventures of the Second Empire was not entirely lost in France. "L'Empire", wrote Jules Ferry, "a dégoûté notre pays des aventures. Les désastres d'une guerre insensée, entreprise sans alliances et sans préparations ont développé dans les masses profondes de la nation ce culte obstiné de la paix."⁽¹⁾ Almost all economists with the exception of Léroy Besulieu regarded colonisation as an expense ⁽²⁾ and thought that France was adequately occupied in Algeria.

The solicitude of France, moreover, was still mainly centred in her own security in Europe. She was not willing to raise in the Near East or in the Mediterranean problems which might cost her the support or goodwill of any of the Powers in the event of future adversity. Despite the fact that the French army had attained a comparatively high level of efficiency, yet the total effacement of the Marshal President in military matters and the marked political partisanship among the officers were real impediments to perfect discipline. The army was in a transitional period; it was undergoing a difficult process of republicanisation.

The instability of the governing institutions was not an insignificant element in deciding French foreign policy. The position of the Republic was not yet permanently established. The struggle between Right and Left was not wholly settled; the truce upon which all parties seem to have agreed extended for the period of the Paris Exhibition, that is to say, for the

(1) Préface des Affaires de la Tunisie. 1882. In Robiquet: Discours et Opinions de Ferry. vol. 5. pp. 522-3.

(2) Roberts: History of French Colonial Policy. 1929. Vol. 1. p. 12

period of the Paris Exhibition, that is to say, for the summer of 1878; the senatorial elections in the autumn were to decide whether the Republicans would be destined to dominate in the Senate as they had dominated in the Lower House.

Not less important was the inexperience of the Left in the domain of foreign affairs. Its attention was still occupied in party politics. The Royalist parties discovered in the Congress a means of disparaging the Republic and the Dufaure Ministry. Even among the Republicans themselves, satisfaction with the conduct of Waddington in Berlin was not unanimous. The position of the Ministry was far from secure, and it was foretold that at the meeting of the Chambers at the end of October 1878 the Left would endeavour to substitute for the Dufaure Government one less moderate and less conservative. The monarchical majority in the Senate and the Legitimist views of the President were another element of confusion. The influence which the Marshal President exercised on foreign policy was not completely insignificant. No important matter connected with the foreign relations of France could be finally settled without his approval. Constitutionally he could not exercise any great influence. But MacMahon was allowed on many occasions to attend cabinet meetings and to take an active part in deliberations. With the advent of the Left, it is true that the President lost all influence on domestic affairs; but his past training in Algeria, his share in the Italian and Crimean campaigns entitled him to express his opinions on Mediterranean affairs especially on those concerning North Africa. This balancing influence of the President was steadily losing ground, and it was obvious that MacMahon could not for long remain in his humiliating position. Even if his position

were secure, MacMahon could not contribute to a stable foreign policy. Vivid memories of his training in North Africa, which gave this part of the world a certain attraction to all soldiers of his generation, were not consistent with the general policy of "recueillement" which the Right favoured.

On the other hand, Republican energy was devoted to propaganda for the Republic, and to the secularisation and modernisation of education. Thus internal questions made it difficult for the Republic to carry out a well-planned foreign policy. The Republicans were further disquieted by the trend which British policy was taking in Egypt and were fully determined to safeguard the financial, political and cultural interests of France in that country. Above all, the mystery of German motives was not very encouraging to the adoption of a conspicuously active policy; were Bismarck's motives to drive a wedge between France and Italy, or were they primarily intended to divert French attention from Alsace-Lorraine? The nightmare of isolation was indeed weighing heavily upon French nerves. Republican statesmen were puzzled by the extremely generous attitude of Prince Bismarck; the early communications between Waddington and Saint-Vallier, after their return from the Congress, devote no little space to the discussion of the German motives, and they even betray a grave sense of anxiety. Saint-Vallier, the warm partisan of conciliation with Germany, dispatched to Waddington his "doutes", while the latter inquired of his Ambassador in Berlin whether it was advisable for France to "solliciter ce service (German support in the Tunis question) de l'ennemi d'hier."⁽¹⁾

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. t. 2. nos. 367, 369. Despatches of Jan. 2, 5, 1879.

The conviction that Italy was certain to resent deeply a French "coup de main" on Tunis was an important factor in deciding France to postpone the final solution of the Tunis question. The French appear to have always felt that the neighbourhood of the Regency to their Algerian possessions had bound her fate to France. At that time, moreover, Italy was not considered a very serious rival, although of late, the French were being accustomed to look upon the Tunis question as one concerning their relations with Italy. Paris was therefore ready to square Rome. The establishment of Italy in Tripoli would cause no great inconvenience to French North African possessions even if Tunis were added to them. Waddington was attracted by the idea of introducing civilisation into the Moslem world of the Mediterranean; England in Asiatic Turkey, France and England in Egypt, France in Tunis and Italy in Tripoli.

France, however, seems to have been conscious of the fact that Italy would not regard Tripoli as adequate compensation. At least Waddington was doubtful whether the prize would suit her at all, although he himself saw no reason why it should not. France found it, therefore, advisable to avoid any "action d'éclat" in Tunis; she would rather concentrate her energy on promoting the French influence by peaceful means as far as possible, since a sudden stride would result in irreconcilable Italian enmity. As early as the beginning of July, when Salisbury presented his offer, Waddington made it clear that an immediate annexation of Tunis was out of the question under the circumstances. Thus in the July of 1878, France decided to accept the British and German offer. The annexation "pure and simple" of the Regency did not

commend itself to the French cabinet, since it would entail military action and the certain hostility of Italy. But the idea was firmly held by all Frenchmen that the influence of France in Tunis should be avowedly and incontestably predominant. The French Government were resolved to obtain the formal recognition of Europe of a French exclusive protectorate over Tunis, and to prevent by force the attempt of any Power to establish herself there. But annexation would become inevitable if France was interfered with in any way.⁽¹⁾ Nor would any provocation from the Bardo, or any preference for another Power meet with indifference on the part of France, for then she would be obliged to act firmly and quickly.

Waddington returned from Berlin to find France indifferent to the deliberations of the Congress and the details of the Treaty. The Russian and Austrian acquisitions were regarded as a matter of little importance to France. All attention was concentrated upon the "Anglo-Turkish Convention" of the 4th June which had "come upon France as a surprise", and which had been greeted by all parties with "an explosion of wrath and indignation." Though the violence of language had greatly diminished, and the bitterness of feeling was manifestly subsiding, yet the surprise which the disclosure of the Convention had caused was beyond expectation. Insinuations had not been wanting that France should retaliate by a "coup de main" over Cheos, Rhodes or Crete, and the French public was not averse to "springing a surprise against England."⁽²⁾

(1) So Waddington told Lyons on Mar. 12, 1879. F. O. 27/2364. no. 291. Lyons to Salisbury. Mar. 12, 1879.

(2) F.O. 27/2312. no. 617. Lyons to Salisbury. Aug. 7, 1878.

This state of feeling did not fail to make a profound impression upon Waddington, and was certainly one of the main reasons that prompted him firstly to seek guarantees that the prize offered in Berlin would not be lost, and in the second place to carry out as soon as possible the decisions of the French Government concerning Tunis. Therefore on the 19th July he got in touch with his Consul-General, and informed him that France might be led to impose her protectorate over the Regency. Roustan was instructed to enlighten the French Foreign Minister on the following points. Was it possible that the Bay would easily be led to sign a treaty of alliance with France recognizing her exclusive protectorate together with the military occupation of such strategic points as Goletta and Bizerta? In the event he rejected this proposal what resistance could the Bay make, and how many troops were necessary to enforce the French demand? Was there any danger in an Italian occupation of Tripoli?(¹)

Next day, the views of Roustan reached Paris. A French Protectorate the Bay might accept, driven no doubt by the desperate financial situation; but the Bay would not easily consent to the establishment of French military garrisons, for he "had been brought up in the terror of this eventuality." The Bay's powers of resistance were not considerable, the population by no means warlike, trained or equipped; the Kabyles, the tribes of the interior and borders, might be the only serious obstacle in the way of invasion, but they could be isolated in their mountains. The best method of procedure was for Roustan to negotiate in his own private capacity with

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 328.

the Bay, and in this way the French Government would be committed to no inconvenience in case the Bardo refused to acquiesce in the French demands.⁽¹⁾

The optimistic report of Roustan coincided with encouraging news from London. Beaconsfield and Salisbury had returned to the British capital on July 16th, and were given a cordial reception. In the Lords, Beaconsfield had emphasised the friendly character of British-French relations, and alluded to France as "one of the Great Power of the world, and with a future—a commanding future." He had maintained that throughout the last crisis the British conduct had been guided by the desire to win the French good-will.

"We avoided Egypt", he had declared, "knowing how susceptible France is with regard to Egypt; we avoided availing ourselves of any part of the terra firma, because we would not hurt the feelings or excite the suspicions of France. France knows that for the last two or three years we have listened to no appeal which involved anything like an acquisition of territory because the territory which might have come to us would have been the territory which France would see in our hand with suspicion and dislike."⁽²⁾

The effect of the Paris Exhibition upon French English relations had been very beneficial; the visible and enduring interest of the Prince of Wales in the great French undertaking had strengthened the social and political ties between the two countries. Waddington was quick to seize this favourable

(1) Ibid. no. 329.

(2) Buckle. Vol. VI. pp. 350, 353.

opportunity, and communicated at once with the Marquis d'Harcourt, his Ambassador in London. He sent him two despatches dated the 21st July and containing details on the private talks he had had with Salisbury and Beaconsfield in Berlin. The first despatch treats of the questions of Syria and Egypt. The Cyprus Convention, Waddington wrote, had let him to examine with Salisbury the problems of the Mediterranean. France would be prepared to recognize the role of England as an Asiatic Power with paramount interests in India, Asia Minor, Persia and Afghanistan if England recognized the French claim to equality of interest in the Mediterranean. Harcourt had to remind the British Ministers that they had acknowledged the fairness of this observation.

The second despatch is concerned with Tunis. The famous declarations of Salisbury regarding "Carthage" and "the Barbarians" had been pronounced in answer to Waddington's remark that France was not in a position to annex the Regency; but these declarations had left no doubt as to the intentions of Britain respecting the Tunis question. In Berlin the fate of Tunis had been discussed with the British Representatives in more than one conversation; Beaconsfield had renewed and confirmed the offer of Salisbury; the Prince of Wales had given his sanction to the deal on the 21st of July. What Waddington insisted upon, was that these verbal declarations should be clearly and precisely recorded in a written form. Complete satisfaction on this point was necessary; otherwise relations between the two countries would be "singulièrement refroidis", and France would be left no alternative but to reconsider her attitude towards Great Britain.⁽¹⁾

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2 nos. 330, 331, 332. See also Granville Papers (G.D.29) Vol. 143. Printed for the Use of the Cabinet. May 12, 1881.

The British Ministers could hardly rest from the toils of the Congress before they were called upon to face a new problem. The country had not been unanimous in welcoming the Cyprus Convention, and the Government was attacked in unmeasured language, Gladstone going so far as to describe the Convention as an "insane covenant", its secret negotiation as "an act of duplicity". He had even expressed his fear that the Convention had deprived England of the esteem of the European nations, and might reduce her to "moral insularity."⁽¹⁾ Such declarations, though incapable of diminishing the popularity of the Conservative Government, nevertheless caused Salisbury and Disraeli no little annoyance. Unrest in Afghanistan and Russian moves in central Asia were arousing concern while the proper execution of the Berlin Treaty was beginning to cause anxiety in London.

In such an atmosphere, the Marquis d'Harcourt communicated to Salisbury the two despatches of Waddington. The apparent impatience and exacting demands of the French Foreign Minister afforded another source of annoyance, while on the other hand French hesitation to adopt a determined line of policy towards Tunis did not win British respect. Salisbury was well-aware of Italian dissatisfaction with the Berlin Treaty; he was possibly certain that any official revelations about Tunis might lead Italy to side openly with Russia or at least to obstruct the execution of the Treaty. This largely explains his annoyance; it is not that Salisbury deplored what he had concluded in Berlin with Waddington, for the offer of Tunis had been the result of a calculated study of Mediterranean questions.

(1) Morley: Gladstone. Vol. II. p. 578.

When D'Harcourt read Salisbury the two dispatches of Waddington, the disappointment of the British Minister was complete, for he found that the familiar language he had used in Berlin was reproduced in an official dispatch which might be one day published. Therefore he had to interrupt the French Ambassador making discouraging remarks. Though Salisbury did not deny having used such words as Waddington reproduced, yet he demurred "a little to his quotations, and was exasperated by his "vivacious French." To Lyons Salisbury complained that Waddington "had made him talk of Tunis and Carthage as if they had been his personal property, and he (Salisbury) making him (Waddington) a liberal wedding present." "What I told him", added Salisbury, "was that if a state of things should arise in which there was no other obstacle to his occupying Tunis that objection would not be made."⁽¹⁾ But to the French Ambassador, the British Secretary observed that England could not dispose of what she did not possess: he would prefer to have his declarations recorded in a more diplomatic form. He could not, however, give any definite answer before consulting the cabinet.⁽²⁾ Salisbury's general attitude did not inspire Harcourt with great hope. "Je ne sais," he reported, "si ses dispositions (Salisbury's) se sont modifiées depuis votre séjour à Berlin, si l'opinion de ses collègues ou la tendance générale du monde public anglais a pu agir sur lui et donner à ses idées un autre cours."⁽³⁾

(1) Jul. 24, 1878. Newton: Lyons. Vol. 2. p. 158.

(2) Radowitz was then right in his opinion that Salisbury was "sometimes difficult to tie down... (and) he always making the impression of being ill pleased with the whole thing." Quotation from Seton-Watson: Gladstone and Disraeli. p. 439

(3) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 334. Harcourt to Waddington. Jul. 24, 1878.

Salisbury reviewed the question with Beaconsfield,⁽¹⁾ and it was considered unwise to drive France into the Russian camp by receiving her overtures with coldness. Of the fact that France meant serious business there existed no doubt in the British Foreign Office. French friendship was becoming in fact of growing importance to England since the stipulations of the Berlin Treaty had still to be carried out, and since the attitude of Italy was very doubtful. It is not surprising therefore that on the second day, the 26th July, Waddington was informed that if he agreed to rewrite his dispatch in a more diplomatic form and avoided "putting categorical questions which... (England) might not be able to answer precisely", the question would be better received by the British cabinet.

"I think", wrote Lord Salisbury, "that his dispatch... would more properly take the form of a statement, in general terms, of the territorial points on the African coast in which France takes an interest, leaving us to make such assurances as we may think we can properly give and which we will certainly make as cordial as we can."⁽²⁾

Waddington was only too glad to agree; the new diplomatic version of Salisbury's declaration in Berlin took this form: "Faites à Tunis ce que vous jugerez convenable; l'Angleterre ne s'y opposera pas et respectera votre décision... il (Salisbury) regarde comme moralement impossible que le régime actuel put durer à Tunis, et qu'aux yeux du cabinet il appartient

(1) Salisbury had received copies of Waddington's two dispatches.
 (2) See Doc. Dip Fr. T.2. no. 334. Harcourt to Waddington, Jul. 24, 1878. And Newton: Lyons. Vol. 11. pp. 155, 156.

à la France de presider à la régénération de ce pays consacré par de grands souvenirs.⁽¹⁾

No record is yet discovered about the deliberations of the British cabinet in connection with the question of Tunis, but it is certain that Beaconsfield and Salisbury succeeded in convincing their colleagues of the necessity of giving satisfaction to the French demand. The result was the famous despatch of August 7th, in which Salisbury described in some detail the private conversations he had had with Waddington in Berlin on the subject of Tunis. In this despatch Salisbury officially complied with the French request, recognising the natural ascendancy of France in the Regency; but at the same time he firmly abstained from a public promise of non-opposition, the despatch of August 7th being secret. He also made it clear that France had to solve the Tunisian problem with Italy without expecting the support or the interference of England on French behalf.⁽²⁾

"I have the honour", Salisbury wrote to Lyons, "to inclose to Your Excellency a copy of a despatch from the Minister of Foreign Affairs in France, which was handed to me on Saturday by the French Ambassador.

The subject to which it relates was referred to more than once in the very satisfactory conversations which I had

(1) Ibid. no. 336. Waddington to Harcourt. Jul. 26.

(2) In a letter of Jul. 20 to Lord Lyons, Salisbury had stressed these points. He said that "If France occupied Tunis to-morrow, we should not even remonstrate. But to promise that publicly would be a little difficult, because we must avoid giving away other people's property without their consent, and also because it is no business of ours to pronounce beforehand on the considerations which Italy would probably advance upon that subject. See Newton: Lyons. Vol. 11. pp. 155, 156.

with M. Waddington at Berlin. They were of a private character, and did not differ in their circumstances from those which daily took place between the various plenipotentiaries, I did not therefore, at the time make any note of them, or transmit any summary of them to Your Excellency, as it is usual to do after conversations of importance taking place at the Foreign Office. I am consequently unable to affirm that M. Waddington has reproduced the precise words made use of then by himself or by me. I am rather disposed to think that, though he has used the form of quotation, he merely desired to indicate the general bearing of our communications, and especially the amicable feelings towards France by which my language was inspired, So far, and without being able to confirm the exact phrases attributed to me, I have great pleasure in bearing witness to the general justice of his recollections.

Instead, however, of offering any verbal criticisms upon them, it will be simpler to state in a few sentences the views Her Majesty's Government entertain upon this subject.

They have witnessed with lively satisfaction the success of the experiment conducted by France in Algeria, and the great work of civilisation which it is accomplishing in this country. They have never been unaware that the presence of France on those shores, supported as it is by an imposing military force, must have the effect of giving her, when she thinks it fit to exercise it, the power of pressing with decisive force upon the Government of the neighbouring province of Tunis. This is a result which they have long recognised as inevitable and have accepted without reluctance. England had no special interests in this region which could possibly

lead her to view with apprehension or distrust the legitimate and expanding influence of France.

On the future destinies of this Province it is unnecessary to speculate. I think M. Waddington must have misconceived me in understanding that I foreboded an early fall to the existing Government of Tunis. My information would rather lead me to expect that, if it is disturbed by no external shock, it may last for a considerable time. With respect, therefore, to an event which may be distant, I will only say that it will not alter the attitude of England. She will continue to recognise, as she does now, the natural results of the neighbourhood of a powerful and civilising country like France, and she has no counter-claims of her own to advance,

There is, one consideration, however, to which I drew the attention of M. Waddington, and to which I ought not to omit all reference upon the present occasion. France is not the only country which lies in close proximity to Tunis. I have no means of knowing the exact views of the Italian Government upon this question; but I have grounds for believing that it is one to which their attention has been drawn. Her Majesty's Government must not be understood as having arrived at any opinion upon the position which Italy may take up in reference to the region under discussion; for as no communications have passed between the two Governments on this matter, any such opinion would have been formed in entire ignorance."⁽¹⁾

(1) Blue Book. Tunis. 1881.

Though only half satisfied with the British communication, Waddington's anxiety came to an end and he felt free to continue his inquiry in Tunis. On the 27th July he had instructed Roustan to report precisely upon the impression made in Tunis by the current rumours about the British offer, and to comment on the reactions of the British and Italian Agents. Above all Roustan was to prepare a project of a convention with the Bey establishing a French protectorate, and to make observations on the political and financial situation which his experience might suggest.⁽¹⁾

Roustan's reply included a memorandum which, according to the French Diplomatic Documents, does not figure in the archives of the French Foreign Office. For full enlightenment, however, Roustan was called to Paris for consultation. His visit occupied the greater part of August, by the end of which the French cabinet was still unable to reach a final decision respecting the protectorate. There were indeed many obstacles to overcome. In the first place France must neutralise the action of Sir Richard Wood⁽²⁾ whose hostility was still regarded as relentless; on this question Waddington was preparing his protests to England. In fact, he had paved the way in a private conversation he had with Salisbury on the 4th September; In the same conversation the problem of compensating Italy was also discussed. Secondly, Waddington had to take into account the religious agitation which prevailed in the Moslem world as a result of San Stefano and Berlin, and which if further provoked would complicate matters for France in North Africa.

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 337.

(2) Wood was knighted on Dec. 1, 1877.

It was found imprudent to "presser des solutions qui fourniraient un nouvel aliment au fanatisme".⁽¹⁾ Thirdly, France had to remove the hostility of the Italian Agent, a task which would prove impossible; and although the hope was entertained that Tripoli might give satisfaction to Italy, yet France did not come to a final decision on this matter, for again she was apprehensive of a Pan-islamic war against her in North Africa, if such a design became known. In any case Waddington was somewhat shy of broaching the idea to Italy. For these combined reasons the question of the protectorate was shelved; on the 1st September Waddington informed Roustan that some time must elapse before France could be in a position to raise once more the question of the protectorate.⁽²⁾

II. *The End of English-French Rivalry.*

In Tunis, the Salisbury-Waddington agreement was no secret. The "Montagsblatt", an Austrian newspaper, spread the news that "it was no longer a matter of doubt that England offered the annexation of the Regency to France, but that Waddington declined the offer stating that he desired to return to France with clean hands."⁽³⁾ Austrian and French papers circulated the sensational piece of news. Consternation and alarm were almost universal in Tunis. The Bey, unable to understand the alleged sudden change in British policy, and wondering whether he could receive any effective aid from Italy, was greatly disturbed. The pathetic fate of Algeria loomed before the eyes of the distressed population. Sir Richard Wood

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T.2. nos. 339, 340. Waddington to Roustan. Sep. 1, 5, 1881.

(2) *Ibid.*

(3) Blue Book. Tunis 1881. Wood to Salisbury. Jul. 23. 1878.

apprehended the shipwreck of his life's work. The Italian colony could not believe that any Italian statesman could acquiesce in a French acquisition of Tunis.

As Salisbury kept his Agent in Tunis in complete ignorance of the whole affair, the latter seeing the great harm in leaving these fears to germinate unchecked, was obliged to make inquiries in London. On the 7th August, the same day on which Britain complied with Waddington's demand that she should place on record her verbal private declarations in Berlin, Salisbury made this short communication to Wood: "I have to inform you that no offer of annexation of Tunis has ever been made by Her Majesty's Government."⁽¹⁾ As far as diplomatic terms were concerned, Salisbury's statement was not altogether inaccurate. But of what had really taken place, the British Consul-General was not informed. The English communication appeased but did not convince the Bey, for fresh rumours were circulated by the Austrian, French, Italian and Arabic press. The prolonged state of alarm which reigned in the Bardo was well described by Roustan.

"Le Bey", wrote the French Consul-General, "passe par des alternatives continuelles de crainte et de confiance. Dès que le langage de la presse l'inquiète trop vivement, les agents anglais et italien viennent le rassurer en lui affirmant qu'il n'a jamais été question au Congrès de Berlin ni ailleurs de nous laisser exercer des droits quelconques sur la Tunisie; que nous essayons de l'intimider; de surprendre sa bonne foi; que notre situation intérieure ne nous permet pas de jeter les yeux au delà de nos frontières."⁽²⁾

(1) Ibid.

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. Footnote to no. 364. To Waddington, Dec. 9, 1878.

The French Agent took advantage of these rumours, and of the fine reception the Sultan had given General Khair-ed-Din, the former Tunisian Prime Minister, to promote the distrust of the Bay: in fact Es-Sadik was assured that Great Britain had actually invited France to annex the Regency, but that "France could not give a greater proof of her disinterestedness and friendly feeling towards His Highness than by the rejection of this offer."⁽¹⁾ To counter such manœuvres and to reassure public opinion, the indefatigable British Consul-General resorted to a new plan of his own invention; giving Lord Beaconsfield's speech of July 18th a significance which the British Prime Minister never intended or expected, Wood had the speech translated into Arabic and published in the Tunisian Gazette; in this speech Lord Beaconsfield stressed British interests in the preservation of Turkish territorial integrity. Moreover, Wood took great pains repeatedly to declare that such rumours were utterly groundless, and delivered a letter "in person" to the Bay assuring him of "the sincere interest which Her Majesty's Government took in his prosperity and the well-being of the Regency."⁽²⁾ The British Consul went so far as to communicate to the Bay that he was instructed by his Government "to take every suitable occasion for inducing him (the Bay) to dismiss from his thoughts any apprehension of sinister intentions on the part of either France or Italy."⁽³⁾

This was more than French patience could endure. Waddington found no alternative but to communicate to Salisbury the substance of Roustan's reports respecting the hostile

(1) F.O. 102/111. Wood to Salisbury. Aug. 12, Oct. 10, 1878.

(2) Ibid. Wood to Salisbury. Aug. 12, 28, 1878.

(3) In this Wood was only carrying out his own instructions. Ibid. Salisbury to Wood. Oct. 19, 1878.

conduct of Wood; but Waddington received the assurance that the British Consul acted on his own initiative, not according to instructions from home. In point of fact, the British Consul received no indication whatever as to the line of policy he should follow in questions arising between France and the Bardo. Therefore he continued unrestrained his efforts against France with the result that Waddington officially approached Lyons on the matter pointing to the fact that Wood had not only used the most aggressive language but appeared to have given to his presence in his post a significance unfriendly to France. Waddington's hint meant that nothing less than the withdrawal of Wood could appease France. (1)

To visit Sir Richard Wood, a capable representative of so long a service, with reproof or dismissal was repugnant to Salisbury. In face of French incessant demands, he appeared reserved, even evasive. Salisbury was not indeed very happy about French co-operation in the Near East, a co-operation which had been dearly bought. This attitude did not fail to impress the impatient and suspicious French Ambassador who began at once to speak of the "insatiables appétits du commerce anglais" and even reported home that the idea was taking root in London that as France was given a free hand in Tunisian affairs, she should leave England undisturbed in Egypt. The hostility of Wood and the evasion of Salisbury led France to look east of the Rhine for diplomatic support. The Sancy affair gave Waddington exactly the opportunity he was waiting for.

(1) F.O. 27/2371. no. 28. Lyons to Salisbury. Jan. 10, 1879.

The Sancy, affair unimportant in itself, was sufficient to aggravate a situation already strained. Sancy, a French concessionnaire, had a long record of difficulties with the local Government. In July 1877 he had renewed his concession, but for some reason or other he was unable to fulfil his obligations. On December 9th, 1878, the Bardo thought it advisable to withdraw the concession, and refused Roustan's suggestion for a commission of inquiry. The whole affair had no novelty, but it afforded a good pretext for the French Government to give a hint to the Bardo of what they can do. On his part, the Bay desired to test the authenticity of the current rumours about the British offer in Berlin. He therefore attempted to take over the land at Sidi Thabet; the concessionnaire refused to yield; the Bay stressed his territorial rights, supported no doubt by the British and Italian Agents. Though the French Government were not yet prepared to take the initiative and impose their will by military force, yet, as Lyons reported, "they would be driven to do something if intrigues and underhanded ill-will persisted there."⁽¹⁾ In fact Waddington could be silenced by ample reparations, an official apology, and the dismissal of responsible officials. But these demands were submitted to the Bay in the form of an ultimatum, to answer which no more than 48 hours were allowed. In case of non-satisfaction France would be obliged to dispatch her fleet and occupy strategic points on the Tunisian shore.⁽²⁾

In the meantime diplomatic action was taken in Berlin. Saint-Vallier was to explain to the German Government the French complaint, and the hostility of Wood. The French

(1) F.O. 17/2361. no. 10. Jan. 3, 1879.

(2) DoC. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 372. Waddington's. Jan. 8, 1879.

Ambassador was to inquire whether Germany would not object to a French protectorate over Tunis. Bismarck's declarations of 5th January at Friedrichsruhe were far beyond any which a French statesman might expect or dare ask for. The anti-German feeling which prevailed in Russia at the time had made French friendship a matter of vital necessity to Germany. To Saint-Vallier's surprise, Prince Bismarck spoke "spontaneously" of Tunis and urged France not to postpone the solution of the question.

"Eh bien", said Bismarck, "... je crois que la poire tunisienne est mûre, et qu'il est temps pour vous de la cueillir; l'insolence du bey a été le soleil d'août de ce fruit africain qui pourrait bien maintenant se gâter ou être volé par un autre si vous le laissez trop longtemps sur l'arbre."

Penetrating into the innermost mind of the French, Bismarck discovered their suspicions of the aims of his diplomacy. He proceeded therefore to discuss his own motives, demonstrating his sincerity and good-will towards France. He was aware of the difficulties which the Republic was meeting with at home and its desire to be respected abroad. Germany, he declared, was interested in supporting a republic "sage et modérée" and in giving satisfaction to the amour-propre of the French nation, which had given substantial proofs of its peaceful intentions. Bismarck was wholeheartedly willing to support French policy in the Mediterranean, "sa sphère d'expansion naturelle". In return he expected that France would no longer entertain against Germany "des griefs et des douleurs", the legitimacy of which he could not dispute though it was not

in his power to redress. His main motive was the preservation of peace: the Emperor wanted to pass his remaining days "glorieux et tranquille", while he, Bismarck, was not disposed to undertake another war.

With a strong emphasis on Tunis, the German chancellor condemned "l'insolence d'un petit potentat sauvage", and dwelt on the intransigence of the foreign consuls. With Austria, he had found no difficulty; the Austrian Consul was officially rebuked. With England the matter was not so easy, Salisbury being "a clergyman laïque obstiné et maladroit." Bismarck had had to point out to the British Government that Germany regarded friendship between the two Western powers as a guarantee for an enduring peace. He had expressed his surprise to see England compromising her relations with France "par les agissements hostiles à la France d'un de ces agents secondaires", and had thereby instructed Bülow to express himself in this sense to Russell. Bismarck then indicated his willingness to record in a precise diplomatic form these declarations, which he invited the French Ambassador to regard as official.⁽¹⁾

Fortified with German support, Waddington opened once more with England the question of Sir Richard Wood, exploiting to the full the part which the British Consul-General had played in instigating the Bay to defy France in the Sancy affair.

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 369. Confidential. St. Vallier to Waddington January 5, 1879.

The reports of Hohenlohe and Bülow had enlightened Bismarck upon the French views on the question of Tunis. For further information about Bismarck's attitude, see *Grosse Politik*. B. 3. nos. 655, 656, 657. Jan. 2, 3, 5, 1879.

Entirely unimpressed by the defence elaborated by Lyons, Waddington observed coldly that "the difficulties the French Government had to contend with in dealing with Tunis were immensely increased by his presence." It was not, added the French Minister, that Wood had not received proper instructions, or that he had deliberately disobeyed them; "but it was not to be expected that a man who had lived all his life in the atmosphere of rivalry and jealousy which surrounded consulates in Eastern countries, could abstain altogether from contests for predominant influence." Waddington emphasised the "regard for harmony with England", which he had shown in removing Baron des Michels, from Egypt, simply because this Agent was not prepared to act in concert with the British Consul there. The French Minister saw no reason why the representatives of France and England in the Moslem parts of the Mediterranean should not be so carefully selected as to ensure harmony between the two countries.⁽¹⁾

The climax was reached when Waddington decided to write Salisbury a private letter demanding the withdrawal of Wood.⁽²⁾ The comment of Lyons on French sensitiveness gave sufficient warning to Salisbury:

"No cordial relations", wrote the Ambassador, "could be maintained between France and any other power which she suspected of trying to thwart her in Tunis."⁽³⁾ "It is the place about which they are more susceptible at this moment,

(1) F.O. 27/2361. no. 28. Lyons to Salisbury. Jan. 8, 1879.

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 375. Jan. 14, 1879.

(3) F.O. 27/2361. no. 28.

and the irritation they would feel at any interference with them there, would overpower at all events for the time, all considerations of the general advantages of being well with England.⁽¹⁾

The German reminder together with Lyon's warning, and the fear of driving France into the Russian camp decided Salisbury to accede to the French demand. Wood was therefore enjoined to assume an entirely neutral attitude as a prelude to his retirement. The Sancy affair was thus concluded in a satisfactory way to France; Roustan received the official apologies of the Tunisian Prime Minister before all the staff of the French Consulate, the chief French residents, and an assembly of invited Tunisian nobles; the German and Austrian Consuls were ready with their congratulations: and Wood was wholly discredited in the eyes of the Bay.

Salisbury informed Waddington "in the most informal way in the world", that he had suppressed the Consulate-General in Tunis.⁽²⁾ The pretext which had been invented for sending Sir Richard Wood to retirement was the intended reorganisation of the Consular Service in the Orient as a result of the Berlin Treaty. Tunis was to be placed on a reduced footing; Wood received a promise of a full retirement pension, a "regret for losing his valuable services", and a recommendation to the Queen for an honorary recognition of his services. As it was superfluous for him "to dwell on the mental distress which the sudden resolution of Her Majesty's Government had caused him", Wood bowed with submission. His active career

(1) Newton: Lyons. Vol. II. p. 165. To Salisbury. Jan. 14, 1879.

(2) Ibid. pp. 173, 174.

came to an end on April 1st 1879 after 53 years of uninterrupted service in Constantinople, Syria and Tunis. With the removal of Wood, British-French rivalry can be said to have come to an end. His successor, Reade, a former Consul in Smyrna and a son of Sir Thomas Reade,⁽¹⁾ was appointed to the post on the 23rd June 1879, and was instructed to assume an attitude of complete neutrality and reserve.

III. *Italian Diplomacy after Berlin.*

Italian hostility remained the only serious obstacle in the way of the French in Tunis. Waddington had already seriously considered the question of compensating Italy both in Berlin and after his return from the Congress. He was anxious to divert Italian attention from Tunis, but as he was aware that his own Government were not in a position to urge upon the Porte the necessity of granting its property to others, he suggested to Salisbury that in the interests of peace and cordiality between the Powers, England should obtain from Turkey the cession of Tripoli to Italy.⁽²⁾ The failure of the French Foreign Minister to obtain British intervention led him to seek direct contact with Rome. On August 19th, 1878, he had already informed Cialdini, the Italian Ambassador in Paris, that France had no aggressive designs on the Regency, that she did not entertain the idea of occupation without previous consultation with Italy and without recognizing the legitimate Italian right to ample and satisfactory compensation. In his

(1) Sir Thomas Reade occupied the Consulate-General in Tunis from 1824 to 1849. He undertook to carry out the Palmerstonian policy with regard to North Africa.

(2) F.O. 27/2356. no. 584. Draft to Lyons. Sep. 10, 1878.

despatch of October 13th to de Noailles, the French Ambassador in Rome, Waddington expressed the French view more clearly; the communication was in fact a serious warning to Italy. In this despatch the importance of Tunis to the French African possessions was adequately stressed; so was the French determination to resist by force any Power who dare attack the territorial integrity of the Regency. "L'Italie", wrote Waddington, "ne peut caresser des rêves de conquête en Tunisie sans heurter à la volonté de la France et sans risquer un conflit avec elle." De Noailles was instructed to make preliminary soundings at first; if Corti shewed interest in the subject, the French Ambassador was to discuss the question of compensation, avoiding at the same time any reference to the British offer.⁽¹⁾

There was no direct evidence that the contents of this despatch were conveyed to the Italian Government. The French printed documents, and the British diplomatic records give no hint. No enlightenment can be extracted from the scarce Italian diplomatic documents available. It is doubtful whether the Italian Government, kept in the dark by Salisbury, had any exact knowledge of the real designs of France or the changed attitude of Europe during the years 1878 and 1879, though they always suspected the existence in Paris of some more or less vague schemes for a French protectorate over Tunis, the information coming, no doubt, mainly from the Italian Representative in the Regency. It is true that de Launay suspected the existence of a confidential French-British understanding about Tunis.⁽²⁾ Nevertheless the Italian Government were not

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 352.

(2) Memoirs of Crispi, Vol. II. p. 100.

willing to base their Tunisian policy on mere suspicions and hypotheses. It was not useless to discover at least the real attitude of Great Britain and Germany. No wonder then that opposition to French influence received a new stimulus.

Such opposition forced Waddington to enquire in Berlin whether Italian pretensions found favour with Prince Bismarck and secondly to apply for German diplomatic support. On these two points, he received ample satisfaction. Bismarck assured Saint-Vallier early in January that despite the fact that no cordial relations existed between Germany and Italy, he had charged Bülow to inform de Launay, and Keudell⁽¹⁾ Depretis that Tunis lay in the "French orbit", that French action there was justified, and that Germany could not admit that Tunis was "un prolongement à l'Italia Irredenta." In that conversation the language of the German Chancellor about Italy was exceptionally bitter and sarcastic. If the Italians grew troublesome, he was determined "à les envoyer promener; car s'il y a noce quelque part dans le monde, ce n'est pas un motif pour qu'on leur doive le gâteau." When Saint-Vallier suggested "un but de promenade," Bismarck, while objecting to Albania, approved of Tripoli. He moreover promised to approach Italy in that sense.⁽²⁾ It is not known whether Bismarck ever discussed the question of Tripoli with Italy during the period preceding the French protectorate, for his past experience was not encouraging to the adoption of such a course, though it is certain that he did make a hint to Italy, which seems to have passed unheeded.⁽³⁾

(1) German Ambassador in Rome.

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 369. St. Vallier's. Jan. 5, 1870. Grosse Politik. B. 3. no. 657. Herbert Bismarck to Bülow, same date.

(3) Ibid. T. 3. no. 367.

The rivalry between France and Italy was bound to become more heated, to grow even into a serious conflict as a result of the Berlin Treaty. The evolution in the attitude of Italian public opinion and the direction which Italian foreign policy was obliged to take were largely responsible for the new development in Italian-French relations respecting Tunis. In the July of 1878 there was an unmistakably perceptible change in the views held by the Italian public with regard to the foreign policy of the Cairoli Ministry. The declaration of May 4th in which Corti had emphasised the necessity of a policy of neutrality and liberty of action had met with the approval of Italian public opinion.⁽¹⁾ Yet when Corti attempted the difficult task of translating theory into practice, he was condemned and even insulted. The passive line of policy which he studiously pursued was labelled as unpatriotic and imprudent. The first blow to Italian pride was the disturbing news from Berlin that the military and civil administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina was confided to Austria. Disturbances broke out at once in Venice and the Austrian Consulate was attacked. Great excitement and consternation reigned in the Italian press; the "Riforma", the organ of Signor Crispi, taking the lead, severely censured the foreign policy of the Government, and charged Austria with having stirred the Bosnian insurrection. The radical Irredentist newspapers were implacably hostile.

The Greek and Roumanian questions afforded other causes for complaint. Corti's attitude was entirely disappointing to the advocates of the cause of nationality. In a meeting of indignation which was held at Naples and attended by some

(1) In the Senate. F.O. 45/338. Paget to Salisbury.

influential generals and deputies, allusions were made to the abuse of power which prevailed in the decisions of the Congress. Public demonstrations followed the meeting, and telegrams expressing sympathy with the "Italia Irredenta" abounded.

With the publication of the Cyprus Convention, it was felt that the humiliation of Italy was complete. Even in official circles it met with entire disapproval. In the press it was received with bitter criticism. Even "l'Italie", which was noted for its moderation and connection with the Italian Foreign office, spoke sarcastically of "the profitable bargains which Britain was making." The "Opinione", one of the leading papers, lamented the total absence of justice and honesty from diplomacy, and described Italy's position as precarious and fraught with danger. The "Perseveranza", in pointing out the unpreparedness of Italy when she joined the Congress, condemned the Powers "leagued together with secret pacts." The "Diritto", which represented the views of the Government, went so far as to declare that as the Convention had upset the balance of power in the Mediterranean, the Italian Representatives should make loud their objection if ever the Convention was presented to the Congress. But the attacks of the "Riforma" were certainly the most persistent and the most violent; Corti was the main target, and his resignation its main objective. He was accused of incapacity, worthlessness; had he not exposed Italy to the scorn and contempt of Europe?(¹)

The general result of the Congress was far from agreeable to Italy, who had left Berlin with clean but empty hands. The sense of humiliation so offending to the vanity of a young

(1) F.O. 45/338. nos. 3, 360. Macdonell to Salisbury. Jul. 10, 15, 1878.

nation, the helplessness of Italy in the military and financial spheres, the vexatious comment of the European press upon internal Italian affairs contributed to greater irritation in the country.

The excitement of Italian public opinion knew no bounds indeed. Rumours were current about what seemed to be inevitable ministerial changes; meetings were organised by the Italian Irredenta party for the denunciation of the Berlin Treaty. In the meeting in Rome at the end of July, it was strongly asserted that the Congress had wilfully betrayed national aspirations for unity and independence, that the sacred right of Italy to the Trentino and Trieste was contemptuously disregarded, and that the Treaty of Berlin was a second edition of the Treaty of Vienna. In such gatherings the right of Italy to compensation was affirmed, and the resignation of Corti, "ce modéré inconnu", was insisted upon. The Monarchy was not even immune from blame, the red flag was hoisted. The "Italia Irredenta" went further, recommended agitation against Austria, staged a hostile demonstration before the Austrian Embassy, and demanded a sudden descent on the Trentino. Excitement was bound to increase when the "Riforma" published a letter of July 15th, 1878, making not altogether incorrect revelations about Italy's want of activity and initiative. It referred to the repeated German offers to Italy and especially to Bismarck's advice to Crispi to "dare" occupy Albania.⁽¹⁾ Nor was the attitude of the Right unreservedly acquiescent. Regretting the confusion prevailing in Italian foreign policy,

(1) The statements of the "Riforma" were firmly denied by the German Press. For the agitations of the "Irredenta" and "Riforma", see F.O. 45/338, 339. Reports of Macdonell to Salisbury.

Minghetti spoke of diffidence abroad and vain hopes at home; he criticised Cairoli's policy of "liberty of action", and alluded to Italy's unwise refusal to co-operate with England after San Stefano, "The liberty of action," the leader of the Right declared, "had merely left Italy in the dark as to everything and rendered her incapable of doing anything."⁽¹⁾

Before the violent reaction of public opinion, confusion reigned in the Consulta. It is an established fact that Cairoli had little sympathy for Corti's foreign policy. The departure of Corti to Berlin seems to have upset the balance in the Ministry in favour of a less moderate policy. For, no doubt, the Ministers of War and Marine lacked Corti's argumentative powers and were therefore effaced before Cairoli, Zanardelli and Doda. The Italian Foreign office itself was far from having a well-planned foreign policy; it was kept in ignorance of the real trend of opinion in foreign countries. Notwithstanding repeated British denials in Rome, Menabrea in London continued his reports about the supposed benevolent attitude of Great Britain towards an Italian annexation of the Trentino. Such reports did not fail to have some influence upon Cairoli, and upon Maffei, the Secretary-General, a statesman of no great diplomatic skill.⁽²⁾

Cairoli was indeed torn between his irredentist sympathies and the moderate views advocated by the King and the non-radical members of the Ministry. The difficulties of the Government in handling the situation were further increased

(1) F.O. 45/341. no. 465. Enclosure. Paget to Salisbury. Nov. 2. 1878.
 (2) Maffei was appointed Secretary-General on Jun. 3, 1878; he had been Italian Minister in Athens, and for many years a Secretary of the Legation in London.

by the fact that Cairoli and his radical colleagues had been and were still connected with the "Italia Irredenta". Exasperated undoubtedly by the marked and prolonged silence of Austria, and influenced by the reaction of public opinion and the reports of Menabrea, the sympathetic Cairoli decided to make some concessions to public opinion. The refusal of Corti to abandon his views did not dishearten the Prime Minister, for in July and August 1878 Maffei declared to the British Representative in Rome that "the question of frontier rectification could not now be abandoned by Italy . . . The Trentino question was of no secondary importance." "The Powers likewise," he added, "were now bound to take into consideration the wish so freely expressed by Italy, to see the northern frontier safely secured and this vexed point which might endanger the peace of Europe definitely settled."⁽¹⁾

Great Britain did not give any serious attention to these claims; neither did Austria-Hungary whom Italy did not dare approach on the matter. The return of Corti on August 10th, did not, however, alleviate Cairoli's cares, nor was it destined to cultivate cohesion in the cabinet, for while Corti was most anxious to act in concert with the other Power on all matters connected with the execution of the Berlin Treaty, Cairoli was personally opposed to the proposal of urging upon the Porte the necessity of carrying out the provisions of the Treaty, as he considered that such a step would be regarded by public opinion as approval of Austrian policy in the Balkans.

The question of representation in the Egyptian Ministry hastened the fall of the Cairoli Government. Both Cairoli and Corti sought to divert Italian attention from Europe; they

(1) F.O. 45/338. nos. 371, 378, 381. To Salisbury. Jul. 27, and Aug. 5, 6, 1878.

wanted to give some satisfaction to Italian amour-propre by demanding equal representation with England and France in the Egyptian Government. Cairoli hoped that by taking such a step, the Government would undoubtedly improve their position before the public and before parliament; but these hopes were also shattered. For neither France nor Britain was ready to accept Italian co-operation in the affairs of Egypt. The two Western Powers failed to see "the special interests which Italy had in Egypt." They expressed their unwillingness to place the land of the Nile under "a sort of foreign protectorate", and refused to give an international character to the Egyptian Government. Great was the disappointment of Italy. Italy, who had forfeited the friendship of the Central Powers, found no sympathy in England and France, Italian isolation was complete. Dissension in the cabinet was coming to a head, not only on questions of foreign policy but on domestic affairs as well. The radical members of the cabinet were for liberty of thought and meeting, and did not give the least consideration to suggestions of restraining the "Italia Irredenta". Corti, together with the Ministers of War and Marine resigned in October, and the whole Ministry gave place to a Depretis administration on December 13th, 1878.

Depretis's efforts to improve Italian relations with Austria and England eased a little the tension in Italian foreign relations, but they inaugurated a new epoch in Italian relations with France. The new Minister saw the urgent need of soothing the tension at home; something must be done to counterbalance the successive failures of Italian diplomacy in the Balkans and in Egypt. In Tunis, Depretis was certain of no Austrian or British opposition. In fact Italian interest was bound to

increase in this part of the Mediterranean as a result to the English occupation of Cyprus.

Although there was marked difference of opinion in Italy about general foreign policy, yet on the question of Tunis, the nation was unanimous that the Regency must be maintained as a dependency of the Ottoman Empire. This conviction had taken root early in 1878. Despite the fact that the Government had at the beginning continued to confine their efforts to the development of Italian interests in Tunis, yet they were resolved not to tolerate the seizure of this country by any other Power.⁽¹⁾ The circulated rumours about the British offer did not fail, therefore, to arouse intense anxiety in Italy, especially when the "Riforma" reproduced an article by the "Temps", said to have been inspired by the French Government, affirming the authenticity of these rumours. Corti seems to have been vaguely conscious that certain offers, the details of which were obscure, had been made not only to France but also to Italy.⁽²⁾ He himself, "attached no great importance to these offers, no more than he did to that casually made to him at Berlin of Baghdad."⁽³⁾ What he feared was that the French might view such offers in a different light."⁽⁴⁾ Macdonell, probably not yet informed about the Salisbury-Waddington deal, assured Corti that "whatever the French Government might think, he (Corti) certainly would not for a moment suppose that Her Majesty's

(1) F.O. 45/377. Paget to Salisbury. Feb. 10, 1879.

(2) De Launay's letter of July 18, 1878 confirmed the fact that the Italian Representatives in Berlin suspected the existence of an offer of Tunis to France. The letter ran thus: "It would be wise to keep our eyes open in Paris as regards certain possible agreements" *Memoirs of Crispi.* Vol. 11. p. 100.

(3) F.O. 45/340. no. 402. Macdonell to Salisbury. Aug. 26, 1878.

(4) *Ibid.*

Government could offer to dispose of that which was not theirs to dispose of." It may be remembered that Corti did not refer to any German offer of Tunis to Italy during the Congress.⁽¹⁾

The inquiries of Cialdini in Paris were not altogether disquieting. On the 19th August, Cialdini stated that Republican France gave him these assurances that France felt the necessity of consulting with Italy on all Mediterranean questions and that she would neither occupy nor acquire Tunis without reaching beforehand an agreement with Italy.

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- (1) It is alleged that during the Congress Bülow offered Tunis to Corti, but that the latter refused for fear of estranging France. There is no reference whatever in British Foreign Office records, French or German printed documents about any such offer taking place. There is no detailed record available of an Italian document which affirms that any such offer was ever made. The only important available source of any reliability is Corti's article in the "Historische Vierteljahrschrift 1926. P. 460, where Corti alluded to a letter on the subject by Count Corti to the King dated 15. 8. 1878. The details of the letter as well as the date of the alleged offer of Bülow are not given. In his article (The European Powers and the French Occupation of Tunis in the American Historical Review. Vol. XXXI. 1925-1926) Professor Langer discussed how the story originated and developed, and basing his arguments on mainly German and Italian sources, he attempted to judge the authenticity of the story. The impression which the Documents Diplomatiques Français give is that no serious German offer was ever made. In reminding Saint-Vallier of the German offer in Berlin, Waddington said: "Le chancelier de l'Empire et M. de Bülow nous ont témoigné à cette époque qu'ils reconnaissent toute la valeur que devait présenter pour nous, à raison du voisinage immédiate de nos possessions d'Afrique, le maintien de la situation privilégiée que la force des choses, nous assigne dans la Régence, ils nous ont donné les assurances les plus amicales de leurs volontés de n'en contrecarrer en rien le développement." Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 366. To St. Tallier. Dec. 29, 1878. See also no. 367. Jan. 2, 1879.
- The report of the alleged German offer to Italy seems to have first appeared in 1830. On Jun. 10, the French Premier, Freycinet, rejected the report as without foundation. He said: "Quant aux suggestions que le prince de Bismarck aurait faites au Comte Corti pendant le Congrès de Berlin, relativement à la Tunisie, elles sont contraires à toute vraisemblance." Ibid. T. 3 no. 159. If the offer to Italy ever took place, it must have been made before the communication of the Cyprus Convention to the French Representatives.

The Italian Ambassador in Paris wrote :

“Che la questione di Tunisi non era mai stata posta sul tappeto e che non se n'era nemmeno parlato a guisa di passeggera conversazione nel Consiglio dei ministri. Aggiunse che se in seguito alla posizione fatta alle Potenze mediterranee dal Congresso di Berlino e soprattutto dal trattato anglo-turco, sorgesse la necessità o la convenienza di prendere qualche misura di precauzione nel bacino del mediterraneo a tutela degli interessi, non si farebbe nulla, assolutamente nulla, senza previo e completo accordo con l'Italia. Aggiunse che a parer suo, si perde sovente in profondità e in forze ciò che si guadagna in estensione e superficie, che l'Algeria è un inciampo, un peso, una debolezza per la Francia; quindi egli essere personalmente contrario all'acquisto di Tunisi.

Pur tuttavia - seguito - l'avviso altrui potrebbe prevalere, ma io vi do la parola d'onore che sino a quando io farò parte del governo francese, nulla di simile sarà tentato, nessuna occupazione avrà luogo di Tunisi o d'altro punto, senza andare di concerto con voi, senza prima riconoscere il diritto che avrebbe l'Italia di occupare un altro punto d'importanza relativa e proporzionata.” Cialdini then added: Ieri al tardi venne da me il signor Gambetta, al quale io desideravo parlare nuovamente su questo argomento. Egli mi rinnovo con maggiore colore ed espansione le assicurazioni già datemi tempo adietro che il governo francese attualmente al potere ed il partito repubblicano che lo sostiene non avevano pensato mai l'occupazione di Tunisi; cosa che non entrava punto nelle loro viste. E se mai arrivasse il giorno in cui fossero condotti ad occuparsi di un simile progetto,

essi si porrebbero anzi tutto d'accordo coll'Italia, non potendo convenire alla Francia di farsene una nemica irri-conciliabile; mi prego di dire al governo del Re che, a parer suo, fra i vari risultati del Congresso di Berlino spicca la necessità di unire sempre più massime poi sulla questione orientale e mediterranea.⁽¹⁾

Though Cialdini had found these declarations completely satisfactory, yet the importance of the question together with the excitement of public opinion led Italy to ascertain the real position of Great Britain. Salisbury's answer to the inquiries Menabrea made, was that "as between France and Italy, Her Majesty's Government could express no opinion on the question adverse to Italian views."⁽²⁾ Paget was instructed that in case he was questioned about the British offer in Berlin, he must express himself in that sense.⁽³⁾ These assurances did not succeed in removing Italian suspicions, since they were immediately followed by the high handed French proceedings in the Sancy affair, and the final recall of Sir Richard Wood.

However, the only policy open to Depretis was to cultivate British friendship, endeavouring at the same time to drive a wedge between Britain and France. The price he was willing to pay was the recognition of the superiority of British interests in the Mediterranean.⁽⁴⁾ The equality of French influence he was not willing to recognise. On many occasions he even expressed his deep mistrust of France; "he did not feel

(1) Quoted from Torre in Curatulo: *Francia e Italia*. 1915. pp. 86, 87.

(2) F.O. 45/375. no. 19. Draft to Paget. Jan. 6, 1879.

(3) F.O. 45/375. no. 16. Jan 6. 1879.

(4) F.O. 45/379. no. 178. Paget to Salisbury. Apr. 25, 1879.

quite at his ease as to what the French Government might possibly be contemplating.... If (they) should have any designs upon Tunis it would of course be understood that Italy could not be indifferent to their being carried out.”(1)

In London, Menabrea was busy with his sensational reports about the black designs of France on Tunis. He kept on informing Salisbury “in more earnest and abundant language of the danger to Italy and to all other Mediterranean Powers to be anticipated from the ambition of France, which would not be contented with anything less than the conversion of that sea into a French lake. He insisted that it was the fixed design of France not only to absorb the Government of Tunis, but to extend her sway along the southern shore of the Mediterranean as far as the mouth of the Nile.”(2) On such anticipations Salisbury expressed no opinion. The French scheme for uniting the heart of Africa with the Mediterranean, enlarged and developed by the enthusiastic but Francophobic Menabrea, gave the Italians another opportunity for complaint; but they seem to have received no consolation from Salisbury.

The Depretis Administration was of short duration; it lasted till July 3rd, 1879 succeeding only in making protests and complaints against the conduct of France which went for the most part unheeded. A Cairoli Government followed, for he was only statesman in the Chamber who could command a majority. The new appointment was destined to arouse endless suspicions and misunderstandings respecting Italian foreign policy. Mutual suspicion between France and Italy was

(1) Ibid.

(2) F.O. 45/376. no. 303. Draft to Paget. May 26, 1879.

coming to a head. Torielli⁽¹⁾ had been speaking "in a somewhat ruffled tone about the French Government", while the French Ambassador in Rome had not been "much more placid in speaking about Italy."⁽²⁾ In Waddington's conception Italy was "une puissance trop jeune, de trop nouvelle formation, ayant encore trop à faire chez elle;" she had no determined foreign policy but just "des velleités et des aspirations secrètes." He regarded Italian Ministers as "des gens qui ne savent pas ce qu'ils veulent." "Je n'ai jamais pu", he said on one occasion, "m'accomoder à leur politique fausse et incertaine." He considered the campaign which Italy was undertaking in the whole Mediterranean against France as uncalled-for jealousy.⁽³⁾

Despite his pro-French sympathies, in his declaration in the Camera on foreign policy, Cairoli maintained that as far as the Tunisian question was concerned "the duty of the Government was to be vigilant over the national interests."⁽⁴⁾ He took no notice of the conspicuously unfavourable attitude of Prince Bismarck⁽⁵⁾ and remained faithful to the policy of liberty of action. His mouthpiece, Maffei, who had been reinstated to the Secretaryship-General declared that Italy intended to keep aloof from combinations with other Powers. For any idea of joining the Central Powers was infinitely repugnant to

(1) He had been reinstated by Depretis to his former position in the Italian Foreign Office.

(2) F.O. 45/380. no. 236. Paget to Salisbury. May 25, 1879.

(3) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 352. Waddington to de Noailles. Oct. 13, 1878. And Vienna Archives. Wimpffen to Haymerle Private. Mar. 5, 1880.

(4) F.O. 45/382. no. 340. Paget to Salisbury. July 23, 1879.

(5) On his visit to Vienna in September Bismarck while paying a visit to the French Ambassador there, treated de Robilant with complete indifference. See F.O. 45/380. no. 236. Paget to Salisbury. May 25, 1879. Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 467. Teisserenc de Bort to Waddington Sep. 26, 1879.

Cairoli, who stood stranded between his revolutionary past and his responsibilities as Prime Minister. In this way the good impression which the Depretis Government left was thoroughly removed. The confidence of Austria and Britain was lost through the agitations of the "Italia Irredenta" which greeted his administration.⁽¹⁾ On the other hand he did not win the good will of France.

This irredentist agitation reached its climax in January 1880 when the life of General Avezzana, a "gran patriota", and the leading member of the "Irredenta", came to an end. The Government was well-represented in the funeral, in fact Cairoli was one of the pall bearers. It was reported that the views of the "Irredenta" found complete sympathy in Governmental circles. Though he knew that the "Irredenta was more noisy than formidable," Haymerle replied by the adoption of strong measures, by the military reinforcement of the Tyrol garrisons. Supported by Germany, the drastic Austrian procedure aroused consternation in isolated Italy which had nearly lost the good will of Britain and France.⁽²⁾ The Cairoli Government found themselves constrained to denounce the "Italia Irredenta" and to declare their resolve to prevent any further agitation. Friendship to Austria was at once advocated by almost all parties and was preached in most organs of the Italian press.

The crisis of the early months of 1880 discouraged entirely all Cairoli's hopes of satisfying Italian aspirations in the Trentino. After this bitter experience, there remained Tunis

(1) Austrian suspicion of Cairoli and his colleagues never abated. "Sortis des rangs de la révolution et ne trainant leur existence que grace à elle, les ministres n'osent plus opposer la moindre digue au courant révolutionnaire." Vienna Archives. Wimpffen to Haymerle. Oct. 29, 1880.

(2) With regard to the ill-humour of Italy towards Britain, see F.O. 45/403. nos. 112. 116. Paget to Salisbury. Mar. 13, 14, 1880.

to absorb the attention of the Italian Government as well as that of the Italian public.⁽¹⁾ The ambitions of Rome in the Regency received a further stimulus from the advent of the Liberal Ministry to power in England. Italy had sincerely applauded Gladstone's attitude towards the Mediterranean policy of his predecessor. The Government of Gladstone in fact released Cairoli from the necessity of joining the Central Powers. He saw that Italian claims in the Mediterranean could be advanced without the alliance of Austria-Hungary.

The personal views of Granville on the Tunis question, which were not completely identical with those of his predecessor, and of which he made no secret, were not without their influence on the mind of Cairoli. In July 1880 the Liberal Foreign Secretary confided his views to Menabrea:

"Her Majesty's Government were not in a position to make a present of Tunis to France or to any other Power, it was a dependency of Turkey. They had no wish to oppose the preponderating exercise and development of French influence in that Regency, but I reserved, as my predecessor in Office had done, my opinion upon questions raised by Italy in connection with Tunis."⁽²⁾

Granville went further and told the Italian Ambassador that he, the Foreign secretary, believed that "the French Government took a very high tone on the subject."⁽³⁾ It is not surprising therefore that the Italian claims which previously had

(1) Ibid.

(2) F.O. 45/400. no. 370. Draft to Paget. Jul. 10, 1880. It may be remembered that in his diplomatic correspondence, Salisbury never alluded to Tunis as part of Turkey.

(3) Ibid.

insisted mainly on the unlimited right of Italy to advance her economic and commercial interests, developed into "the exercise (of) a certain influence in Tunis in consideration of interests of long standing in that country."⁽¹⁾ The Italian Government were determined to resist the development of French influence by allowing the question of Tunis to assume a national importance.⁽²⁾ In the summer of 1880 the conflict for predominance between France and Italy⁽³⁾ came to a crisis.

IV. *Italian-French Conflict.*

In Tunis itself the old Consul Pinna had been removed on July 31st, 1878. The appointment of Mussi, was largely due to his friendship with Crispi and Cairoli.⁽⁴⁾ Without any previous notice to the Bay, Mussi arrived on the 5th August and declared that he was entrusted with a special mission, a declaration which gave rise to many conjectures. Though Maffei denied the authenticity of the Consul's claims, yet it is true that Mussi took upon himself the negotiation of an Italian protectorate over Tunis.⁽⁵⁾ Failing to achieve this end, he endeavoured to convince the Tunisian Prime Minister, Ibn Ismail, of the advantages of ceding Bizerta to Italy. This attempt having met with no success, Mussi returned with a modified proposal by which Bizerta was to be declared a free port.⁽⁶⁾

(1) Ibid no. 413. Draft to Macdonell. Jul. 28, 1880.

(2) 45/406. 361. Macdonell to Granville, Aug. 9, 80.

(3) The comment of Lord Granville upon Italian change of policy ran thus: "The feeling in Italy for foreign enterprises had been encouraged by the Government to please the national vanity and as a means of diverting the attention of the Italian Irredenta.... This may be the beginning of a serious difficulty with France." See F.O. 27/2431.: Comment of Granville on Lyons's despatch. no 545. of Jun. 29, 1880.

(4) F.O. 45/340. no. 428. Macdonell to Salisbury. Oct. 1, 1878,

(5) Corti informed the British Representative that he had given Mussi no authority to make such suggestions.

(6) F.O. 102/411. Wood to Salisbury. Aug. 26, 1878.

But the Italian Agent had no chance of success so long as Roustan remained in his post and maintained his "more intimate relations with the present Prime Minister (which) afforded him the opportunity of knowing and of entertaining the proceedings of his Italian colleague."⁽¹⁾ Receiving no real support from Rome, Mussi's unguarded action had the opposite result of compromising the position of Italy. Corti's disapproval ended in the recall of the Italian Agent in October 1878.

Yet the mission of Mussi was not in vain, for in the first place he provided the Italian Government with a report on the position of France in Tunis which he described as all supreme; in the same report he also pointed out that France was bent on possessing Bizerta.⁽²⁾ Secondly, it demonstrated to the Italian Government the need of appointing to Tunis an Agent well-versed in Eastern affairs. Maccio, the new Italian Consul-General, was reported to have possessed "the reputation of being not only energetic but exceedingly persistent in his pretensions which he seldom abandoned, without regard to consequences once he had decided to put them forward. It was also said that he was very susceptible with regard to the position which Italy was entitled to hold and that he lost no occasion to make that position felt by the Government or the authorities to which he was accredited."⁽³⁾ He was Roustan's colleague in Cairo and at Bairut, where the feeling of jealousy and the lack of cordiality between the two Consuls led them on occasions to interrupt their personal relations; in fact they

(1) *Ibid.* Wood to Salisbury. Sep. 24, 1878

(2) Torre in Curatulo's "Francia e Italia", 1915. p. 95.

(3) *Ibid.* See also Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 366.

had not been on speaking terms for two years. Maccio arrived on December 20th, 1878 on board a ship of war and made a ceremonial disembarkment. His pompous entry into the capital was that of a conqueror, not of a mere Consul-General. Italian marines with bayonets and flags surrounded his carriage, while a band played. This conduct was understood in France as the signal of an "intervention plus accentuée du cabinet de Rome" Indeed it was intended to make a lasting impression on the mind of the Bay.

In the meanwhile important developments were taking place in France, which tended to stimulate France's Tunisian policy. The appointment of Waddington to the Premiership certainly strengthened his position in the cabinet. The sympathy with which Grévy, the new President of the Republic, met outside France, the favourable attitude of Prince Bismarck, who was frightened by the alarming unrest in Russia, all these combined to increase Waddington's confidence in his own foreign policy. The consent of Britain to any step Waddington might take in connection with Tunis was also counted upon. Salisbury's conduct respecting Tunis had been on the whole satisfactory to France. He did not only recall Sir Richard Wood, and reduce the Consulate-General in Tunis to a mere Consulate, but he refused to recognize the claims of the Porte on Tunis; for when he was informed of Khair-ed-Din's⁽¹⁾ wish to extend the direct authority of the Porte to the Regency, Salisbury instructed Layard, his Ambassador in Constantinople, to communicate to the Sultan that the latter "would do himself nothing but harm by meddling with Tunis."⁽²⁾

(1) Khair-ed-Din had been appointed Grand Vizir.

(2) F.O. 27/2358. no. 834. Jun. 28, and F.O. 27/2371. no. 777. Drafts of Salisbury to Lyons. Jul. 22, 1870.

Waddington, therefore, felt free to revive once more the project of the protectorate. This problem became the more important since Waddington's suspicion of Italy was continuously increasing. From Rome and Tunis came reports full of instances about Italian ill-will towards the development of French interests in Tunis. Moreover, the attitude of Prince Bismarck towards Italy was entirely agreeable to Waddington's taste. The German Chancellor appeared to have desisted from counting Italy among the nations possessing a consistent foreign policy.⁽¹⁾ "La politique de l'Italie", he was reported by the French Ambassador to have said, "est celle du malade qui souffre dans son lit et veut occuper celui du voisin pour voir s'il n'y trouvera pas le soulagement de ses maux."⁽¹⁾

The Sancy affair placed France in the necessity of demanding guarantees for the future. Past experience had shown Waddington the advisability of making some concession to the susceptibilities of the Bay. In place of a protectorate, France was ready to conclude a defensive alliance with the Bay, by which the latter would engage to demand French military help in case of attack by another Power. For ensuring the security of the Regency France must occupy in certain eventualities some points in Tunisian territory. France was, moreover, ready to recognise the religious tie between Tunis and the Porte. Negotiations, however, were left to the initiative and care of Roustan.⁽²⁾

On the 28th July 1879; the French Consul-General, presented the Bay with a project of a treaty. The latter, stiffened no doubt by the energetic attitude Maccio was assuming

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 2. no. 440. Reporte of Saint-Vallier of Jun. 27, 1879.

(2) Ibid. no. 449. Waddington to Roustan. Jul. 22, 1879.

evaded any discussion of the project, but observed that he had always counted on France for the preservation of the status quo. Roustan, who was in a favour of a more active policy, and who had no admiration for Waddington's excessive caution, did not press the discussion of the question. As Waddington's attention was somewhat occupied in the Greek frontier question, he was not ready yet to use force in order to convince the Bay of French good intentions. Moreover, the German-Austrian alliance directed French thoughts once more towards Europe. The secrecy in which the details of the gigantic alliance were shrouded created a disquieting impression in France; the assurances of both Bismarck and Andrassy as to the defensive character of the alliance did not completely remove French anxiety. The project of the protectorate was once more dropped.

The apparent indecision of the French Government prompted Roustan to undertake a campaign of alarming reports about conditions in Tunis. The policy of moderation, he pointed out, would not only cost France her dominant position, but would inevitably arouse discontent among the Algerian border tribes who suffered sufficiently from the endless razzias of their Tunisian brethren. The importance of frontier incidents was deliberately magnified. In the second place he laid much stress on the fact that the activities of Italy in Tunis were intended mainly to undermine the French position. Alluding to the hostile attitude of the Italian press, he claimed that "toutes les reclamations de nos nationaux sont soumises à leur censure, et deviennent parfois l'objet des démarches officielles de leurs agents." He, moreover, referred to the violent attacks against his own person which were being undertaken by the "Avenir de Sardaigne", an organ connected with Maccio.⁽¹⁾

(1) Ibid. no. 454. Roustan to Waddington. Aug. 21, 1879.

Such reports did not arouse great enthusiasm in Paris, for the position of the Waddington Ministry was growing daily insecure. Waddington, the principal member of the cabinet, was not a leader of men; he did not possess the argumentative powers of a great parliamentarian. His pronounced faith in the sincerity of Prince Bismarck, the total incapability of some members of his Ministry were among the reasons that contributed to his resignation. From the Left he met with jealousy and ill-humour. Gambetta, the acknowledged leader of the Republican party, had given the Waddington Government only a qualified general support. Between the two men existed, in fact, personal and political hostility. "Le double courant qui existe en France - la politique officielle du cabinet et la politique occulte de Gambetta" was detrimental to the prestige of the Waddington Government.⁽¹⁾ From the Radicals and the Conservative Republicans he could receive but reluctant support. Upon the Right, Waddington could not count, since Ferry's educational bills had the effect of widening the breadth between the Republic and the Monarchical parties. Waddington resigned on December 21st, 1879. Freycinet was appointed both Premier and Foreign Minister on December 29th.

Italy had no cause to mourn the fall of Waddington; in point of fact she hoped that his successor would show more consideration for Italian claims. The first three months of 1880 passed with both France and Italy occupied in European affairs. Irredentist agitations were already compromising Italy's relations with Austria and Germany. The serious military

(1) Waddington expressed himself in that sense to Wimpffen. Vienna Archives. Wimpffen to Haymerle. Private, Mar. 5, 1880.

preparations of Austrian-Hungary near the Italian frontiers did not fail to arouse French anxiety about the prospects of peace in Europe. The instability of the European situation then prevented the French Government from concentration on colonial affairs. They had no desire to see Europe plunged into a war, in which France might be obliged to join. In the second place, they would not welcome the humiliation and defeat of Italy. Even de Noailles, who had hitherto shewn no sympathy towards Italian pretensions, was so disquieted as to advise Cairoli to give Austria no further cause for complaint, of which advise Freycinet disapproved. Nevertheless, it was Freycinet himself who made inquiries in the various European capitals to ascertain the real attitude of Austria.⁽¹⁾ The departure of Hohenlohe from the Paris Embassy had, moreover, aroused misgivings in France. While Freycinet did not attach to the departure of the German Ambassador any hostile connection, yet "tout le monde ne pense pas comme moi", he thought. Yet the French Foreign Minister was apprehensive lest Hohenlohe's successor might not be so sensible and friendly towards France.⁽²⁾

With the relaxation of tension in Europe, both France and Italy resumed the cultivation of their interests in Tunis. This time the contest developed into a conflict of so serious a nature as to influence the general character of French-Italian relations. The rise of the Liberals to power in England contributed indirectly to the development of the struggle. The fact

(1) He had written: "J'ai la conviction qu'il est fâcheux pour nous qu'une querelle s'engageât entre l'Italie et l'Autriche car elle pouvait être le commencement de complications générales." See Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. nos. 33, 35 of Feb. 25, 26, 1880.

(2) Ibid. T. 3. nos. 32, 33, 36, 37, 41, 42. Feb. 1880.

that the Gladstone Ministry showed no decided sympathy for either party in connection with Tunis begot a certain irritation in Paris. France saw the necessity of stressing more than ever the French point of view and endeavoured to oppose the development of Italian interests by every possible means. On the other hand, the Italians, exaggerating, no doubt, the favourable attitude of the Liberal Government in England, went to extremes in advancing Italian interests. Collision was the outcome.

The French point of view was elaborated by De Freycinet. In a despatch to Saint-Vallier, the French Foreign Minister wrote :

“A nos yeux en ce qui concerne particulièrement la Tunisie, il était pour nous d'un intérêt évident, politique et stratégique tout ensemble, que le développement graduel des relations qui unissent la Régence à l'Algérie ne fut entravé par aucune influence étrangère, que pour nous comme M. de Radowitz lui-même venait de le reconnaître justement, la Tunisie était en quelque sorte une annexe de notre grande colonie africaine et que notre liberté d'action en Algérie était intéressée au premier chef à ce que notre influence fut dominante à Tunis et à ce que la politique du bey ne fut point entraînée en dehors de notre orbite.”⁽¹⁾

On the other hand, “l'Italie”, expressing the views of the Italian Government, clearly conveyed the meaning that “Italy would never admit the French claim to acquire political ascendancy in the Regency.”⁽²⁾ Freycinet, himself,

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3 no. 142. Jun. 2, 1880.

(2) F.O. 45/406. no. 361. Macdonell to Granville. Aug. 9, 1880

was aware of the fact that Italy "claimed to be on a footing of equality and even to be entitled to struggle for a superior position in the Regency."⁽¹⁾ Neither the French nor the Italians were prepared for a middle solution; a compromise was considered by both parties as out of the question.

The prelude to the conflict was the application of the French Bona-Guelma Company for the construction of a port at Goletta. The demand was refused, but Maccio could not feel comfortable until he applied for permission to lay a telegraphic line between Sicily and Tunis, and to establish an Italian telegraphic station in the capital. Roustan protested at once claiming that the three Telegraphic Conventions with Tunis gave France a monopoly of telegraphic lines. Maccio contested the exclusiveness of this right. France warned Italy that Paris would never allow a third interpretation of conventions between her and Tunis, and that the procedure of Maccio was wounding to French susceptibilities.⁽²⁾ Moreover, protests were made in Tunis and were successful, for the weight of the Bay's favourite, the Prime Minister, was on the French scale.

Bitterness of feeling between the French and Italians in Tunis was not to subside. The concession of the Goletta railway engaged the opponents in a fiercer battle. Relations were to become worse when Cialdini, who was in the habit of periodically resigning his office, tendered his resignation. The non-appointment of a new Ambassador was considered

(1) F.O. 27/2432. no. 579. Lyons to Granville. Jul. 8, 1880.

(2) See Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3 nos. 140. From Freycinet. 143 from de Noailles Jun. 1, 2, 1880.

as a manifest want of understanding between France and Italy. In fact de Noailles was instructed on April 30th, to communicate officially to the Quirinal the urgency of nominating a new Ambassador; he was also instructed that in case French request was not complied with in eight days, he had to take an indefinite leave.⁽¹⁾ The reappointment of Cialdini, however, did not mean that relations between the two countries became cordial. The development of the Goletta railway question rendered an understanding between France and Italy in connection with Tunis an impossibility. The Italian press pointed to the interference of the French Government with the development of Italian interests. Referring to the "excellent relations" which had once existed between France and Italy, the "Italie" said: "Tout est changé aujourd'hui: une guerre sourde a commencé; l'agent français à Tunis fait tout ce qu'il peut pour rendre difficile et subordonnée à la sienne la situation de notre agent, mille coups d'épingle sont données à ce dernier, mille intrigues sont dirigées contre lui; bref il semblerait que la France et l'Italie qui vivent en honne amitié sur le continent, soient là bas à la veille de se déclarer la guerre."⁽²⁾ The Italian press went further, reminded France of her precarious position in Europe and stated that "Tunis in French hands would form a serious menace to the maritime position of Italy."⁽³⁾ On their side the French complained bitterly of the over enthusiasm of the Italian Consul and of the complicity of the Italian Government.

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 104. Freycinet to Noailles Apr. 30, 1880.

(2) May 30, 1880.

(3) F.O. 45/406. no. 326. Enclosure in Paget's despatch of Jul. 10, 1880.

The short railway between Goletta and Tunis was owned by a British Company which lost interest in the concession since it brought no considerable profit. To the French, the railway was of great importance, since it would give the French railway between Tunis and Algeria an outlet on the sea. The same reason was sufficient to decide Italy to purchase the line, for she could not tolerate French monopoly of both telegraphic lines and railways. Therefore the Rubattino Company proceeded to negotiate with the British owners. Of this the French got wind and hurried to outbid the proposed Italian offer: they paid 105,000 pounds. By itself, the Italian Company could not possibly vie with the French Bona-Guelma Company. Thus on behalf of Rubattino, Maccio, supported by his Government acted quickly.⁽¹⁾ The original contract was carefully studied and it was found that transaction must have the sanction of the High Court of Justice in London. In the British capital it was decided that the concession was to be sold by public auction. The French and Italian Governments agreed to leave the two companies to fight their own battle. But it was after the Italian acquisition of the concession that the French Government definitely knew that the Italian Government had promised Rubattino 6 per cent interest on the capital sum of £165,000.

(1) Roustan described thus the effect of the French move on the Italians: *L'irritation des Italiens, depuis l'achat du chemin de fer se manifeste avec une vivacité telle que je vois arriver le moment où il ne sera plus possible de la contenir par les moyens ordinaires et de résister par la seule force de notre influence à la pression de plus en plus violente qu'ils exercent au Bardo. M. Maccio harcèle et intimide le Bey et le Premier Ministre.* Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 100. To Courcel. Apr. 27, 1880.

The Rubattino purchase was greeted with immense enthusiasm in Italy; it was regarded as a national victory. The Italian public was jubilant; the press declared Rubattino had deserved well of the country. The "Opinione", while admiring British impartiality, spoke of the Italian acquisition as having "a salutary civilising influence." Maffei, himself, according to Paget, "could not contain his glee," and his feeling was shared by all Italian statesmen. In a word, it was loudly maintained in the press that Rome had a right to Carthage even before France ever existed.⁽¹⁾

The Italian procedure caused profound resentment in France, it was regarded as offensive, and as disturbing to the status quo which Italy had always professed to maintain. According to Cialdini's despatch of the 19th August 1878, France had undertaken not to adopt any step which would disturb the status quo without previous consultation with Italy; now, in French eyes, it was Italy who opened fire first, and Freycinet entertained the idea that on the destiny of Tunis there should be no discussion with Italy. As regards Italian attempts at political ascendancy in Tunis, he had no illusion. He was aware that the Italian Government endeavoured to supplant French influence. Even Granville, who could not be regarded as partial to the French, had "noticed that under the guise of purely commercial operations, the Italian Government were pursuing objects in the main if not wholly political."⁽²⁾ De Freycinet had no wish to interfere with the private enterprises of Italian subjects in Tunis; but enterprises

(1) See Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 207. De Noailles to Freycinet. Jul. 14, 1880. And F.O. 45/406. no. 319. Paget to Granville Jul. 8, 1880.

(2) F.O. 45/401. no. 413. Draft to Macdonell. Jul. 28, 1880.

of public utility, such as telegraphic lines, railways and ports, they must be undertaken by France and France alone, for she was the only Power who possessed a legitimate right to political preponderance. This was his unchangeable view, of which he did not hesitate to inform General Cialdini. After the conclusion of the Goletta deal to the advantage of Italy, the Italian Ambassador inquired whether Freycinet was disposed to ratify the assurances which Italy had received from Waddington concerning the fate of Tunis; Cialdini also communicated that in the conception of the Italian Government the status quo in Tunis consisted in "an equilibrium of influence."⁽¹⁾ Freycinet seized this opportunity to make clear the position of the French Government. Stressing the importance of Algeria to France, the French Foreign Minister distinctly pointed out that France regarded Tunis as "annexe naturelle et l'entrée militaire de notre possession africaine."⁽²⁾ He defined what he meant by French political preponderance, and asserted that Italy's efforts to obtain telegraphic lines, and her success in obtaining the Golleta railway were admittedly prejudicial to this preponderance. France would not object, he maintained, to competition between French and Italian individuals, but to competition between the two Governments, France would oppose a definite no.⁽³⁾

"Dans le domaine des intérêts privés, ai-je dit au général," said de Freycinet, "Liberté absolue entre les Français et les Italiens, disputez-nous la palme, enlevez-la nous si

(1) (2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 214. To De Noailles. Jul. 16, 1880. footnote.

(3) Ibid.

vous le pouvez, nous n'avons rien à dire. Que vous ayez en Tunisie des agents habiles et zélés pour protéger vos nationaux, nous n'avons rien à dire non plus, mais quand il s'agira des entreprises d'Etat, de la direction politique de la Régence, nous ne pouvons admettre ce partage, qui serait une menace perpétuelle pour nous et une source inévitable de conflits. Nous nous demandons de respecter les faits et de vous abstenir de tout ce que nous devons envisager comme des empiètements et, parlant, comme des procédés peu amicaux à notre égard."(¹)

Freycinet added that as a good neighbour, Italy should have dissuaded her nationals from disputing French rights in the Goletta railway. But what had happened was the reverse. As the General did not seem much impressed, the French Foreign Minister invited the French Ambassador in Rome to communicate to Cairoli as quickly and as distinctly as possible the French views on the subject.⁽²⁾ Again on July 25th, Freycinet himself while observing that France might one day be forced to annex Tunis, pointed to Tripoli as a possible future Italian colony.⁽³⁾

In the meanwhile the French Government were not content with idle protests to Italy. Troops were concentrated on the Tunisian frontier and ships of war anchored in the waters of Goletta. The Bay was requested to grant the concessions of the railways from the capital to Rades, to Susa and

(1) Ibid. See also Cialdini to Cairoli. Jul. 9. 1880. In Caratulo: Francia e Italia. p. 100.
 (2) The above French source. no. 220. Jul. 22, 1880.
 (3) Memoirs of Crispi. Vol. 11. pp. 107, 108.

to Bizerta. A port on the lake of Tunis was also to be constructed by the Bona-Guelma Company. He had to promise not to grant any further railway concessions to Italy. The Bay gave way all along the line. The question might be asked then, if France viewed the question with such grave concern, why did she not take the final step of annexing the Regency.⁽¹⁾ From the beginning the position of the Freycinet Ministry was insecure; in May the Government were even obliged to throw overboard the Minister of the Interior Lepère.⁽²⁾ The personality of de Freycinet, himself, though distinguished in science and in the art of war, was not of the adventurous type; he was reserved and not "expansive" by nature. In diplomacy, he was not yet sufficiently versed; he lacked the experience and personal contact with European statesmen which Waddington had cultivated in Berlin. As far as the Tunisian question was concerned, there was no unity in the Republican party. There existed two groups; one headed by Grévy who considered that Tunis should not stand in the way of friendly relations with Italy; he had once told Cialdini that in his opinion Tunis was not worth a cheap cigar. The second group stressed the importance of French interests in Tunis and counted among its members Gambetta and Freycinet.⁽³⁾ Yet Freycinet's liberty of movement was greatly impaired by the irresponsible conduct of Gambetta, which discouraged any French Government from following an original policy of their own. The speech of

(1) Cialdini had pointed to his chief that the financial support which the Italian Government supplied Rubattino might have led France to annex Tunis. Jul. 22, 1880, Torre in Curatulo: *Francia e Italia* pp. 100, 101.

(2) Granville Papers. (G.D.29). Vol. 171, Lyons to Granville. May 19, 1881.

(3) Torre. p. 103.

Gambetta at Cherbourg, in which he hoped for reparations for past misfortunes and in which he exalted the worship of the army in France, aroused apprehensions in Germany. The speech might, however, have made no profound impression had it not been for the more or less offensive language used by some organs of the Republican press. The question of Alsace-Lorraine was once more raised and the renewed strength of France was demonstrated. It may be remembered that Germany had made friendly relations with France conditional on the understanding that the question of Alsace-Lorraine should not be raised. The language of the French press aroused so much suspicion in Germany that Radowitz told Adams, the British Chargé in Paris, that "the Germans were almost beginning to sleep soundly (*nous commençons presque de dormir sur les deux oreilles*), but we have been awakened, and it will be a long time before we go to sleep again."⁽¹⁾ Although this trouble was set right by de Freycinet's speech at Montauban in which he drew a line between the French policy of peace and a policy of adventure, yet France did not feel sufficiently powerful to slacken her attention on the Rhine. "It was especially with a view to Germany", Freycinet had observed, "that French public opinion was so very susceptible with regard to the employment of any French force abroad, or to contracting any engagement which might lead to a step of the kind." Anxiety was great in France about alleged German designs on Morocco which proved in the end untrue. The development of the Greek frontier question and the possibility of war between Turkey and Greece decided France against any policy

(1) F.O. 27/2434. no. 781. To Granville. Aug. 24, 1880.

of adventure which might involve her in war. "The Ministry so utterly dread being carried away into anything which might lead to war, that they are always hanging back", ran the British comment.⁽¹⁾

The attitude of Great Britain, moreover, was not altogether sympathetic with the French views on the question of Tunis. Though Lord Granville had reluctantly intimated that he would not depart from the policy of his predecessor respecting the Regency, yet France could never forgive his view that Tunis was part of the Turkish Empire. In fact this confession on his part caused a great surprise in Paris. Granville had told Léon Say, the French Ambassador, when the latter alluded to the Salisbury-Waddington talks:

"I found that there was some discrepancy between what was originally mentioned in private conversation and what was afterwards recorded officially... I found also that Lord Salisbury in that despatch (of August 7, 1878) had distinctly reserved any opinion upon the position which Italy might take in reference to Tunis. I said that in the view of Her Majesty's Government Tunis was a portion of the Ottoman Empire, to dispose of which Great Britain had no moral or international right. But her Majesty's Government had no jealousy of the influence which France, from her greater power, and her high civilisation, exercises and is likely to exercise over Tunis."⁽²⁾

(1) Granville Papers. (G. D. 29) Vol. 175. Adams to Granville. Aug. 27, 1880. Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. nos. 133, 142. May 24, Jun. 2, 1880.

(2) F.O. 27/2421. no. 698. Draft to Lyons. Jun. 17, 1880. See Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. 209. Challemeil-Lacour to Freycinet Jul. 12, 1880.

Freycinet had understood from the correspondence that passed between Salisbury and Waddington on the matter that "England admitted and sympathised with the claims of France to predominant and indeed exclusive influence in Tunis. He had hoped that in the event of a conflict with Italy, Britain would throw in her moral weight on the French side, at least England would make it clear to Italy that she could not count on British moral support, but he was completely disappointed.⁽¹⁾ For Granville insisted that "ostensibly there was no difference between this (the French claim) and what was claimed by the Italian Government." He added that (he) "did not wish to give any opinion, unless asked by both parties as to the merits of particular questions, and how far the statements made in regard to them were justified."⁽²⁾ He refused to pose as a French sympathiser.

Moreover the irritation in Italy caused by the French move in Tunis was more than France really expected. The Italians had believed that the construction of the Goletta railway had given them the exclusive right of constructing a port on the lake of Tunis. But these hopes were shattered. The railway and port concessions to France overshadowed the Italian enterprise, in fact the railway from Tunis to Rades on the other side of the lake was meant to ruin their Goletta railway. The concentration of French troops on the Tunisian frontier and the naval demonstration before Goletta, caused so much indignation in Italy that some organs of the Italian press demanded

(1) F.O. 27/2432. no. 579. Lyons to Granville. Jul. 8, 1880.

(2) F.O. 27/2422. no. 1001. Draft to Adams. Jul. 26, 1880. See also Doc. Dip. Fr. 1^{ière} Série. T. 3. nos. 209, 225 of Challengel-Lacour, French Ambassador in London, and Montebello, French Chargé d'affaires, to Freycinet, Jul. 12, 26, 1880.

the speedy despatch of the Italian fleet. Italian statesmen unanimously urged the Government to uphold the honour of the country.⁽¹⁾ Maffei, himself, regarded French procedure as "insolent and barefaced" and as "the equivalent of annexation."⁽²⁾ The recall of the Italian Ambassador in Paris was even considered. The feeling to do France a bad turn was universal in Italy. Having been convinced that France was resolved to annex Tunis, Italy looked forward to a possible conflict between France and Germany.⁽³⁾ The Italian view was described by Maffei when he said: "The unfriendly act coupled with the arrogant and indiscreet tone of the French press, had given offense here, and the question was daily assuming a more national character different in many respects to what the "Débats" and other French journals describe as "prétentions envahissantes" of a young and impetuous nation. The damage caused to the relationship between the two countries was such that the British Representative reported that "the temper of the two nations... might at any moment lead to a serious estrangement."⁽⁴⁾

To the annexation of the Regency France had always been averse in order not to alienate Italy. Gambetta in referring to the offer made in Berlin by Lord Salisbury and Prince Bismarck, reminded Cialdini that it was only out of consideration to Italian susceptibilities that France had not occupied the Regency two years ago, and demanded that in return Italy should be more moderate and prudent.⁽⁵⁾ This declaration

(1) See F.O. 45/406. no. 368. Macdonell to Granville. Aug. 13, 1880.

(2) Ibid.

(3) F.O. 45/407. no. 402. Macdonelle to Granville. Sep. 1, 1880.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Cialdini to Cairoli. Jun. 26, 1880. In *Curatulo Francia e Italia*. p. 98.

was made in July 1880. Even Freycinet, himself was not less friendly though he adopted an attitude of complete firmness. He had assured Cialdini that "if France might be led by the force of circumstances to occupy and annex Tunis, if this event must take place we would not have it brought about at the expense of the friendship which binds us to Italy and which it is our ardent desire to preserve." He even promised that in the event of French occupation of Tunis, "Italy would be informed as long before as possible and would receive our most cordial support in obtaining adequate and worthy compensation in the basin of the Mediterranean, in order that equilibrium of power be maintained between us."⁽¹⁾ But the French sentiment was not appreciated either by Cialdini or by Cairoli, both of whom refused to disclaim Italian interests in Tunis or to discuss compensation, though they were indeed by now fully aware that Germany and Britain would not oppose any steps France might take to maintain her dominant position in the Regency. Cialdini went even so much further as to hint that if France ever occupied Tunis, Italy would certainly reconsider her foreign policy. To Cairoli he pointed out the necessity of strengthening the Italian position by joining the Central Powers. But his advice fell on deaf ears. The idea of concluding such an alliance was in contradiction with the whole past of Cairoli. To abandon his pro-French sympathies was not welcome to the Italian Prime Minister. Even in the conference at Belgirate, Cialdini could not convince Cairoli on this point, though he was somewhat successful in advocating prudence. For, after the end of the conference Maffei

(1) *Memoirs of Crispi.* Vol. 11. pp. 107, 108.

told the British Representative in Rome that "the Government should observe a strict and cautious reserve with regard to the affairs of Tunis." Nevertheless, Italy was resolved not to resume friendly relations with France unless de Freycinet used his influence with the press to cease its attacks on Italy,⁽¹⁾ and withdrew the French ironclads from the waters of Tunis. The Italian demands were conceded only after Maffei had given the assurance that no negotiations for intimate relations with the Central Powers had ever been begun by Italy. Italy saw the necessity of a more prudent foreign policy since her approaches to Britain were met by indifference on the part of Granville and by Macdonell's warning against "the risk Italy would incur in attempting to cope with France in North Africa."⁽²⁾ On the other hand France was not willing to quarrel with Italy. With this agreement between the two countries the Tunisian question temporarily collapsed.⁽³⁾ This took place in the first days of the Jules Ferry Ministry, for with the autumn, the Freycinet Ministry had to resign. Freycinet had excited the "Great Man's" jealousy by his independence and by the Montauban speech. It was the Ferry Ministry who were destined to settle finally the character of French relations with Tunis.

(1) The French press had welcomed the concessions granted to France as a humiliating defeat for Italy. see F.O. 27/2435. no. 921. Adams to Granville. Sep. 28, 1880.

(2) F.O. 45/407. no. 402. Macdonell to Granville. Sep. 1, 1880.

(3) Ibid no. 404. Macdonell to Granville Sep. 3 and F.O. 27/2435. no. 921. Adams to Granville. Sep. 28, 1880.

CHAPTER V.

THE BARDO TREATY.

I. *The Italian Danger.*

The temporary collapse of the Tunis question did not signify that either France or Italy was prepared to accept any modification of her general policy towards the Regency. On taking his summer leave from Freycinet, General Cialdini informed the French Foreign Minister that in the Italian view Tunis provided sufficient space for the activities of both France and Italy. The Italian Government, the Ambassador added, could never acquiesce in the French thesis since they were lawfully entitled to enjoy equal rights in the Regency. Freycinet saw at once the uselessness of all efforts to convince Italy of "the legitimacy" of the French view; but he did not fail to point out to the General that if Italy persisted in her view, a conflict between France and Italy would seem inevitable. France would be left no alternative but to proceed to the annexation of the Regency and thus settle this vexatious and dangerous question once and for all. (1)

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 220. To Noailles. Jul. 22, 1880.

The decisions of the Belgirate conference, though recommending prudence, did not contribute to a permanent slackening of the tension between the two Latin neighbours. For in November Cairoli declared in the Camera that it was still possible for Italy to obtain the concession of a telegraphic line between Sicily and Tunis. He even went so far as to instruct Cialdini to approach the French Government on this subject. This communication caused great irritation in Paris, for it became clear that the Italian Government were decided not to renounce their right to acquire concessions which had repeatedly been declared by France to be the exclusive monopoly of Frenchmen. The French Government found therefore no alternative but to reconsider their policy towards Tunis.

Saint-Hilaire, the new French Foreign Minister, was the admiring disciple of Thiers. He was animated with pacific intentions and valued Italian friendship; but with him as with his master, French interests came first. Little versed in the art of diplomacy, and with no adequate experience in foreign affairs, Saint-Hilaire approved wholeheartedly of the policy of his predecessors, Freycinet and Waddington. He shared, moreover, their Italian suspicions. The relentless hostility of a portion of the Italian press, the frequent unfriendly demonstrations in the Italian parliament and the increasing intransigence of Italian agents made it impossible for any French statesman to entertain other views. The repeated warnings of de Noailles, who was in Paris in the October of 1880, made a deep impression on the French Foreign Office. De Noailles reported on the incessant Italian intrigues and made it clear that "(les Italiens) ne perdent pas un instant de vue cette question de Tunis, et c'est vers elle qu'ils font converger toute

leur politique... Si nous avons un seul moment de distraction, si notre action se retentissait, ils en profiteraient à l'instant et nous serons tous étonnés de leur voir nous braver à l'avenir"(1) These serious warnings were supplemented by the anti-Italian pronouncements of Saint-Vallier. The views of the two Ambassadors were fully supported by de Courcel who believed that the main objective of Italy was to create a Tunisian question. The "Directeur des Affaires Etrangères" repeatedly referred to the "vilaine querelle que nous cherchent là-bas les Italiens."(2) it is not surprising therefore that France was obliged once more to make known her views on the Tunis problem.

"La sécurité de notre possession algérienne", wrote Saint-Hilaire, "exige que la France soit prépondérante en Tunisie... A plusieurs reprises nous avons dû faire savoir au Gouvernement italien que nous ne pouvons admettre de la part d'un aucun Gouvernement étranger ni le partage, ni la diminution à quelque degré que ce soit de notre position supérieure dans la Régence." (3)

The demonstration of the Italian colony on the occasion of the visit of King Umberto to Sicily did not fail to excite French alarm. Before undertaking the journey, the Italian King had told de Noailles that the affairs of Tunis were occupying his mind.(4) This disquieting remark together with the pessimistic comment of de Noailles and Roustan aroused grave

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 286. Noailles to Courcel. Oct. 31, 1880.

(2) Ibid. no. 335. To Chanzy. Jan. 15, 1881.

(3) Ibid. no. 296. Nov. 18, 1880.

(4) Ibid. no. 326. Noailles to St. Hilaire. Jan. 3, 1881.

concern in Paris. It was feared there that the Italian public might regard the visit as a hostile demonstration against France. The anxiety of the French was not to prove unjustified. In January 1881 the Italian colony in Tunis sent a delegation headed by Maccio to greet the King. The Tunisian Government was won over to join in the Italian demonstration. The speeches delivered by members of the Italian delegation were of the sensational type; they stressed the view that Carthage was once a Roman province and consequently should never be separated from Rome.⁽¹⁾ Not content with this, the Italian colony gave Maccio on his return an enthusiastic reception. He was treated as a conqueror. Jubilant Italian residents greeted him on his arrival. He drove through the streets of the capital with the head of the Tunisian mission amid cheers and followed by the whole personnel of the Italian Consulate, all clad in brilliant uniforms. Flags were waved, Italian bands played, flowers and garlands were presented to the returning Consul. This procession was accompanied by provoking language. The rumour was carefully circulated that Italy was determined to defend the cause of Tunis and that 200,000 soldiers were therefore concentrated on the French frontier. This piece of sensational invention aroused great excitement in Tunis for on the next day after Maccio's arrival, the Bay decorated members of the Italian Consulate-General and conferred on the Italian Agent the Grand Cordon of the Nichan Iftikhar.⁽²⁾

In French eyes the general conduct of Maccio remained as hostile as ever; he persevered in using the most menacing

(1) See Chiala. *Pagine di Storia Contemporanea* 1892. Vol. 2, p. 229.
 (2) *Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 347.* Roustau to Saint-Hilaire Jan. 24, 1881.

and impolitic language; he never ceased to protest against railway concessions to France: he repeatedly reminded the Bay that the Italian Treaty of 1868 had stipulated against the establishment of monopolies of any kind:(¹) he continued to incite the Bay against France by drawing his attention to military preparations in Algeria. The intimate friendship which the Italian Agent was resuming with Ibn Ismail with whom he was not on speaking terms for several months, did not fail to give the French more cause for alarm. For Ibn Ismail could use his great influence with the Bay to obstruct the development of French interests. Signs of the new danger were not lacking. The Rubattino Company seemed to have been encouraged to construct a telegraphic line from Tunis to Goletta, the protests of Roustan passed unnoticed. The French observed that the action of Maccio was not only confined to the Bardo; the Italian Agent was getting in touch with the Tunisian nobility in order to spread alarm in the country. In the meanwhile the Italian Government were considering every means to increase their influence in the Regency. The idea of sending to Tunis Italian Franciscan sisters to compete with the French was receiving consideration in Rome.

Not least in importance was the publication at Cagliari of a newspaper in Arabic, "the Mustakel." This paper, which the French believed to be connected with Maccio, devoted the whole of its pages to attacks on French character and French rule in North Africa. While praising the virtue, piety and courage of the North Africans, it dwelt upon what it described as "the decadent and immoral character" of the French. It alleged,

(1) Ibid. Reports of Roustan. nos. 230, 233, 238, 243. Aug. 1880.

so wrote the "Débats", that France never scrupled about the means to achieve her inhumane ends, namely, the enslavement and humiliation of the Moslems.⁽¹⁾ This paper was freely distributed not only in Tunis but also in Algeria. Then came the Enfida affair which was believed in France to be raised by Ibn Ismail with the full approval of Maccio. It is not surprising therefore that the French Government reached the conclusion that "the difficulties which France encountered in Tunis were mainly to be attributed to the action of the Italian Government."⁽²⁾

The Italian danger was not confined to Italian efforts in Tunis. The anti-French campaign which Italy was undertaking in Berlin and London was very irritating to France. It is true that Cairoli had pro-French sympathies and was supported by the Italian Extreme Left in advocating the French alliance. The elections of the autumn of 1880 had resulted in a victory for the Extreme Left which undoubtedly strengthened Cairoli's pro-French views. On the occasion of the inauguration of the monument at Mentana, the speeches delivered in the name of Garibaldi and by other illustrious men had recommended strongly an anti-clerical policy and pressed the necessity of an alliance with France. The French Radicals, Blanqui, Rochefort and Olivier Pain had been invited to join in the gathering of their Italian brethren. But it is equally true that side by side with this demonstration of friendliness and devotion to France, there was a stronger demonstration in parliament which was completely unfriendly. In November

(1) See "Débats". Apr. 4, 1881.

(2) F.O. 27/2491. Lyons to Granville. Apr. 6, 1881.

1880, the Tunisian policy of Cairoli was severely criticised in the Camera by Minghetti and Crispi. French claims to preponderance in Tunis were strongly opposed. The two influential speakers emphasised the need of upholding the independence of Tunis at any cost. Minghetti reminded Cairoli that when the Right was in power, the Italian Government had not shrunk from dispatching the fleet to Tunis to neutralise French action. Crispi, on the other hand, deplored the lack of initiative and courage in the policy of the Consulta. Some organs of the Italian Press went so far as to recommend an alliance with Germany and Austria. It was argued that with the support of the Central Powers behind her Italy could achieve her ambitions in the mediterranean.(1)

The majority in Parliament, the whole Right and Left Centre, were for the upholding of Italian interests in Tunis even at the cost of French friendship. Before the attacks in parliament and the press, which public opinion willingly endorsed, Cairoli was powerless. Though his reply in the Camera was couched in conciliatory terms towards France, Cairoli saw the urgency of making some concession to public opinion. An approach seems to have been made to the Central Powers, but Italy appears to have met with no adequate encouragement; in fact Cairoli was thankful that the overture failed. Cairoli did not repeat the attempt, but he thought he could count on British sympathy if not active support. His mind was beset by tempting illusions. The existence of a Liberal Government in England nourished his hopes. It is true that he had

(1) See F.O. 45/407. nos. 459, 544. Oct. 12, Nov. 29, 1880

experienced some disappointment at the inadequate support which Lord Granville gave in the railway crisis of July 1880. But Lord Granville was soon forgiven, for his friendly references to Italy in the speech he delivered at Hanley made a deep impression in Rome.⁽¹⁾ The speech of the Liberal Minister was a good contrast to Beaconsfield's speech of July 18th 1878 which dwelt exclusively on the necessity of French friendship. Cairoli was also aware of the fact that Granville showed no symptom of favour towards French claims. Even as early as the spring of 1880, Cairoli had been careful to convey to the British Government the assurance that his Government entertained no idea of territorial expansion; he had repudiated the idea that Italy had ever attempted to conclude any separate alliance with Russia.⁽²⁾ His lieutenant in London, Menabrea, had also expressed "his sense of the good-will which England had always shown to Italy and the advantages which his country had derived from her friendship."⁽³⁾

With the real character of Italian-British relations France was not fully acquainted. She had many reasons for anxiety. In the first place there was the reluctance of Lord Granville to ratify unreservedly the declarations of his predecessor. Secondly there was much boasting in Italy about the supposed support which Cairoli was receiving from Great Britain. The report of Paget of December 23rd 1880 illustrates this point:

(1) F.O. 45/408. no. 560. Paget to Granville. Dec. 4, 1880.

(2) Maffei denied that any overtures were made to the Central Powers. But Macdonell, the British Chargé, believed that certain overtures were made. F.O. 45/407. no. 471. Macdonell to Granville. Oct. 16, 1880.

(3) F.O. 45/400. no. 123. Draft to Paget. Mar. 20, 1880.

"The Marquis de Noailles", wrote the British Ambassador, "has occasionally spoken to me in a rather bantering tone respecting the intimate friendship between the British and Italian Governments, which as he states, he now hears ostentatiously proclaimed at the Italian Foreign Office, and he has once or twice, half in joke, half in earnest, asked what were the special engagements or links, by which as he is constantly told, the British and Italian Governments are bound together." (1)

The reply of Paget did not enlighten the French. While denying the existence of any special engagements, Paget remarked that "it was perfectly true that the two Governments were on the best possible terms, and that it was quite natural that they should be so." (2)

The general comment of the Italian press on the foreign relations of France was far from benevolent. The comment on the Cherbourg speech especially was intended to embroil France with Germany. (3) Italy was, moreover, believed to be endeavouring to interest Russia in her cause. This belief was based on the fact that some organs of the Russian press discussed the Tunis question in a very favourable manner to Italy, a fact which led France to make inquiries in St. Petersburg. (4)

France found that the chances of her acquiring Tunis were daily decreasing, and that it was high time to adopt a

(1) No. 577. Paget to Granville.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 235. Reverseaux to Freycinet. Aug. 14, 1880.

(4) Ibid. no. 335. Courcel to Chanzy. Jan. 5, 1881.

more energetic policy, especially when the European situation was gradually changing to Italian advantage. French relations with Germany, though they were still very friendly, yet this friendliness was not proof against change. The German position in Europe was growing stronger, as the Russian Monarchy realised the folly of alienating the only country which was able to support it against the subversive elements of anarchism and nihilism. The fear of war on two fronts was therefore disappearing from Germany and the value of French friendship was proportionally diminishing. Rumours were, moreover, current that a rapprochement was being negotiated between Italy and Germany. Did not some organs of the Italian press advocate the German alliance? Did not Cialdini hint that the policy which France was following in Tunis might lead Italy to seek new political combinations? Symptoms of a possible change of policy in Germany were not by any means wanting. The speech of Gambetta at Cherbourg and the presence of two French Ministers, Ferry and Tirard, in the Alsacian "fête de l'arbre de Noël" caused a strong anti-French campaign in the German press. France was in fact accused of still possessing the *arrières pensées* of war and revenge. The "grotesques assertions of a Mme Adam of a Sieur Reinach of a Paul Bert," made a painful impression in Berlin. Saint-Vallier deplored such activities; he considered them worthy of inspiring "pity and shame", for he believed that the French public as a whole was for peace. In his view these warlike "revanche" protagonists had better keep quiet.⁽¹⁾ France must not alinate German sympathy

(1) "Je ne puis vraiment comprendre", wrote St. Vallier, "le manque de logique des gens qui ne veulent pas la guerre contre le voisin et qui passent leur temps à l'exciter. De deux choses, l'une à mon sens: si nous voulons jouer la partie des batailles contre l'Allemagne, préparons nous et taisons-nous, mais si comme je le crois, nous voulons la paix pourquoi détruire les relations internationales?"
Ibid. no. 321. To Saint-Hilaire. Dec. 30, 1880.

if she desired to exercise any political influence outside her own frontiers. The support of Germany was of the most vital importance, since it could effectively neutralise British ill-will and render harmless the hostility of Italy.

It is not surprising therefore - that the value of German support could not be overlooked by the Ferry Ministry. Saint-Vallier was instructed to sound Prince Bismarck on the German attitude concerning the question of Tunis. As Bismarck's chief aim remained the preservation of peace, the "revanche" activities of 1880 made him still more eager to direct French energy to the colonisation of Tunis. His support, moral and diplomatic, was very pronounced; he still appreciated the value of giving satisfaction to French amour-propre. In his declarations at Friedrichsruhe, the German Chancellor once more made plain his attitude, explained his motives, and described the character of German-Italian relations.

En vous appuyant à Tunis et dans la Méditerranée," Bismarck told Saint-Vallier, "je n'ai nullement, comme le prétendent M. le duc Decazes et les politiques de son école, l'arrière pensée de vous encourager à des aventures dont je profiterais ensuite pour vous attaquer et vous arracher quelque lambeau de territoire; hélas nous n'en avons que trop pris de votre territoire et nous le payons par de lourds embarras;... je n'ai donc aucune des idées machiavéliques que l'on me prête; mon objectif est très simple et mon intérêt moins compliqué. J'ai la conviction qu'un grand pays comme la France a besoin de rencontrer des satisfactions dans sa politique extérieure, et comme je ne puis malheureusement pas vous en donner sur le terrain de l'Alsace-Lorraine,

je desire le faire partout où il n'y a pas un intérêt allemand en opposition avec l'intérêt français. Je crois que si vous trouvez dans la Méditerranée de quoi répondre à votre besoin naturel et légitime d'expansion les idées chez-vous se trouveront avec moins d'amertume vers vos provinces perdues et la paix, les bons rapports entre vous et nous deviendront plus sûrs et plus faciles... Ne cherchez donc pas mes motifs cachés, j'aime mieux vous le dire franchement...

“En ce qui touche particulièrement Tunis, j'ai dit à tout le monde, aux Anglais, comme aux Italiens, lors du Congrès de 1878, que je regardais la Régence comme une partie du domaine forcément placé dans la sphère d'action de votre colonie algérienne, que je vous approuverais si vous y établissiez votre pouvoir par un protectorat ou sous une autre forme.

“... aux bruits repandus cet été par quelques journaux, sur un prétendu rapprochement, une sorte d'alliance intime entre l'Italie et nous. Depuis 1866, je suis guéri de l'Italie... 1870 m'a ôté mes dernières illusions.... Crispi a complété la mesure de l'éloignement que j'éprouve pour eux... successivement il m'a proposé la mutilation de la France et celle de l'Autriche....

“Pour des conseils à l'Italie, des exhortations à plus de sagesse, l'invitation de bien vivre avec vous, de ne pas vous chercher une querelle ou jê lui donne tort, je suis prêt à faire ce que vous pouvez désirer.”⁽¹⁾

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 307. St. Vallier to St. Hilaire. Nov. 29, 1880;

The favourable attitude of Germany removed the apprehensions of the French Government and encouraged them to settle definitely the character of their relations with Tunis. Saint-Hilaire did not fail to dispatch to Prince Bismarck the thanks of the French Government.

II. *The Pan-islamic Danger.*

Side by side with Pan-germanism and Pan-slavism, developed Pan-islam. But the imagination of European statesmen gave the Islamic movement a dangerous character and a dynamic vitality which it never came to possess. The French, more susceptible than other nations to the awakening of the Moslem world round the Mediterranean, were anxious to check the growth of the movement before it could do irreparable harm. In this way alone they deemed they could save their North African possessions.

The Pan-islamic movement differs from Pan-germanism and Pan-slavism in three essential respects. In the first place, its basis was neither racial nor linguistic. Far From desiring to override the rights of other people, its aim was not political domination. Bryce might have expressed the erroneous Western conception of the movement when he described it as "an attempt to renew the aggressive movement of the Moslem peoples against the Christian."⁽¹⁾ Thirdly the movement was less effectively organised and had no clear or definite purpose; its methods were far less systematic and harmonised. It was in fact more of an emotional force than a carefully cultivated

(1) *International Relations*. 1922. p. 23.

creed; it did not reach the stage of a well-developed sentiment. The general aim of the movement was the gradual deliverance of the Moslem East from the heavy fetters of European imperialism. The main unifying factors were the all-powerful religious bond and the feeling of deep humiliation which the East was suffering at the hands of the West. The reasons which gave rise to the movement were the political, cultural and economic decadence of the Moslem East, and its egoistic exploitation by European imperialism.

The prelude to the movement was the attempt of Muhammad Ali to form an empire of the Arabic speaking countries, from Egypt and the Sudan, Syria, Palestine and Arabia. This effort came to grief thanks to Palmerston. But if military power failed to achieve the unification of the Near East under the leadership of Egypt, in the second half of the nineteenth century and from the very depths of Afghanistan shone a ray of new hope. Gamal-ud-Din-el-Afgani began a powerful movement in which the political element was clearly perceptible, a movement which was bound to repair the failure of Pan-arabism. The variegated activities of this great philosopher, journalist, lecturer, and political agitator were not confined to the heart of Asia; Persia, India, Turkey had witnessed and benefited from his infinite zeal. He stayed in Egypt eight years communicating with students from all parts of the Moslem world. The Azhar University in Cairo experienced the greatest spell of activity and excitement of its whole nineteenth century history. Gamal-ud-Din's great achievement lay in the advocacy of religious reform and political free thought. He stood for liberal institutions; and to achieve this ambition he appealed to the nascent sentiment of patriotism.

The introduction of Western culture and science to the Near East facilitated the work of the great Afghan. But it was his student Muhammad Abduh, an Egyptian, who undertook the difficult task of releasing the Moslem religion from the fetters of medievalism and of rigid orthodoxy. He endeavoured not unsuccessfully to adapt the Moslem religion to modern life and modern civilisation. Muhammad Abduh was not without a political program which, though dominated by patriotism, yet had as its chief aim to eliminate the political and economic dominance of Europe. But Muhammad Abduh's claim to fame was his theological reform and it is in this sphere that he made his great contribution to the cause of Pan-Islam.

But the driving power of the movement was Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid. The humiliation of Turkey in Berlin left the Sultan without any single European friend. The Ottoman Empire was subjected to foreign interference even in the government of her Asiatic subjects. The insistence of the second Gladstone Government upon the minute carrying out of the Berlin Treaty to the prejudice of Turkey stimulated the Sultan's desire to look out for new allies. It seemed that the only hope for Turkey lay in her Islamic territory and the vast Moslem world, especially after Berlin had stripped her of most of her Christian possessions. Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid thought he could frighten Europe by the use of the gigantic resources of Islam.

On its part the Moslem world had good reasons for looking towards Turkey for countenance and support. In a larger degree than Turkey they were the victims of the West. The financial breakdown of the Near East and of North Africa, the economic control of Britain and France were not welcome

facts to the Moslems. British rule in India, French rule in North Africa, the loss of Caucasia, the Russian protectorate over Central Asia, the menacing danger that beset Persia, Arabia and the Moslem possessions in Africa, all these misfortunes combined to give Turkey, the only Moslem Power with a respectable army, an unrivalled prestige. Her central position, her past glories and her intimate contact with the west justified this choice.

The ruler of Turkey was therefore entitled to a political leadership which no Moslem potentate could seriously dispute or belittle. As Russia was regarded the champion of the Orthodox, so Turkey was considered the chief defender of Islam. The religious aspect of this leadership was in fact of very recent origin. The Caliphate had indeed lost its religious attributes since the eighth century. Before the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Sultans were altogether indifferent to the title of "khalifah", despite the fact that since the sixteenth century the misconception gained ground in the West that the Sultan was invested with certain spiritual powers. It may be borne in mind that even the "khalifah", himself, had no spiritual or priestly authority in the Western sense; he was no Pope, his powers were essentially political and administrative. Though the Turkish Sultans before Abd-ul-Hamid were not inclined to put forward such a claim in the Moslem world, yet in their relations with European powers they did not raise any objection to a privilege thrust upon them by the West, for, in fact, this new privilege gave them the right to interfere in the affairs of countries which had never come under the rule of Turkey.

To the ordinary Moslem the Caliphate meant justice, security and brotherhood. The Moslem was not much impressed by the narrow idea of nationality, but he was influenced by the broader view of a universal unity. This sentiment was dictated by political necessity; no freedom could be achieved if the Moslem countries, with their weak resources, acted individually and on the lines of mere egoistic nationalism. But in uniting their forces, they would be able to make their wishes respected. Of such feelings Abd-ul-Hamid was fully conscious. He therefore took the question of the Caliphate very seriously and thought it possible to create a great Moslem Power composed of all Moslem countries from China to the Atlantic to be governed from Constantinople. The old traditions of the caliphate were thereby revived, and the Sharifs of Maccah kept under Turkish control. Emissaries were sent to all parts of the Moslem world, diplomatic missions were established in countries far away from the Bosphorus. The Turkish press advocated unity under Ottoman leadership, and Constantinople became, after Maccah, the first meeting place for Moslems.

If the Pan-Islamic movement was likely to leave the Mediterranean undisturbed, France would never have thought of opposing it. What alarmed France were the Turkish efforts to revive and to extend the Sultan's authority to North Africa. The French were aware indeed of the fact that soundings were made in Tunis, negotiations of some sort or other were begun with Algerian tribes, and a diplomatic mission laden with presents was sent to Morocco. The Sultan, moreover, had resorted to the North African brotherhoods to arouse universal discontent against France.

It is true that nowhere else did Abd-ul-Hamid meet with more cordial response. French encroachments in this part of the world had awakened these societies to deadly hostility. France had come to Algeria as a conqueror; she had used force as a means to consolidate her conquests, and the results was bitterness against French rule. Although the Algerians were to enjoy a tolerable amount of freedom of belief, yet they were offended deeply by the unconcealed but natural favour which the French Government shew to French and neutralised settlers. That the French were not purely working for the advantage of the natives was a fact of which Berber and Arab in North Africa were conscious. It is unfortunate that France went to Algeria without the experience, foresight, and consideration for native feeling which she was to follow later in the treatment of Tunisians and Moroccans.

North Africa had always been a hatching place for secret societies and brotherhoods which drew their inspirations and methods from the larger associations, the confraternities. The emergence of these associations was a natural reaction against the luxury, profligacy and extravagance which enveloped Moslem social life since the twelfth century. This emergence was gradual, unmarked by any definite crisis. It owed its origin to the religious activities of certain great personages whose conduct was believed to be saintly. These confraternities knew no frontiers; they claimed zealous members throughout the whole Moslem world. The most important of these confraternities are the Bekhtashi, Ikhawan, Kadiryah, Rifaayah, Mulawyah, 'Isawiyah, Tijanyah, Shazlyiah, Rahmanyah, Derkoua and the Sanusyah. Among the North African brotherhoods religion was not infrequently the cover for ulterior political

aims, the chief of which was the expulsion of the French from North Africa. The leaders of these orders enveloped themselves in mystery, and claimed to be in possession of supernatural abilities incomprehensible to the ordinary mind. With its shrines, Zawiyahs, its peculiar forms of devotion, its own forms of discipline, its religious exercises, its beliefs which are not purely Islamic, the African brotherhood was a solid unity in which chastity and poverty were the original and general rules. With its mysticism which culminated at time in ecstasy, the brotherhood believed it could dare everything and do anything. In his despatch of October 4th 1873, Consul-general Wood reported on some of the important confraternities describing no doubt the European conception :

“What is certain is that the Secret Societies, and other religious orders whose ramifications extend like a net over the whole Moslem World... have redoubled their zeal in carrying out the sacred object of their mission, namely the consolidation of Islam as against the Infidels, whether Christians, Israelites or Musulman Princes favourable to Christian Institutions, which are considered by them to be at variance with the teachings and spirit of the Koran, or which are not sanctioned by the Hadis or Traditions of the Prophet.

The most prominent of the religious orders are the Bakhtashy,... the Khowan the Issawyé and Darkawy. From these orders have sprung the secret societies, whose mission, being of a politico-religious character is the more dangerous, seeing that the Emissaries they employ are inspired with the utmost blind religious fervour, which knows no fear, which

disdains to calculate consequences and which sustains them in the performance of the longest and most painful journeys.

The Bekhtashy are rationalists or free thinkers; and as its members appertain mostly to the higher and better educated classes, it is comparatively harmless. The Abdul Kader el Baghdady(s) was originally a purely religious order, but has gradually changed its character; and though (they are not less) active than the Khowan, Issawyè and Darkauoy in disseminating hatred and unrelenting enmity to the Christians, it nevertheless teaches, like the rest, that Mohammedan supremacy and the extermination of the Christians is the divine mission of Islam, leading to paradise,

“But of all these orders and Secret Societies affiliated to them, the Darkawy are the most zealous, the most bigoted and the most indefatigable and uncompromising in the execution of their object. The principal seat of this order is in Morocco.... Their affiliations and branch societies extend to India, Central Asia, Turkey, Syria and Africa, but their propaganda is exercised with greater fervour and fanaticism in the Mohammedan countries where there is a considerable Christian element or which have fallen under the dominion or influence of European Powers.

“Since the Mutiny in India and the massacres in Gedda, Syria and elsewhere, the societies have proceeded with greater caution.

The Emissaries of these societies meet annually at Mecca during the season of pilgrimage to give and receive information to exchange ideas and to concert measures for the

future. Until the introduction of steam communication in the Mediterranean, Red Sea, in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf, these Emissaries had to travel across continents in the character of Derviches, which painful journeys occupied then months and even years”

The words: French, European, Christian, and imperialist meant the same thing to the North African brotherhoods. As to their enmity to the French, and their overenthusiasm for the Moslem cause which meant to them liberty and independence there is no doubt. North Africa had imprinted among them the sense of the mystic, the supernatural and the superstitious. The African oasis in the very depths of the desert, the mountain fastnesses and forests had given them excellent places of refuge which the hand of the enemy could not easily reach. There they built their *Zawiyahs*, which were at once mosques, hotels, hospitals, and meeting places. In these distant refuges were centred the political and religious activities of the brotherhoods, and it was from there that they wielded their most dangerous weapon, propaganda.

Of the activities of these associations, of their relations with the enemies of France, the successive French Governments were informed. In 1870 and 1872 Germany had attempted to get in touch with the North African brotherhoods; the same efforts were repeated by Italy in 1881. The relations between these brotherhoods and Turkey were assuming dangerous dimensions in the spring of 1881. The Flatters mission was massacred by the Tawaregs. The event made a great impression on French public opinion. The *Livre Jaune* of 1881 on Tunis, shows that France was already realising the danger. By her

position, Tunis afforded a good refuge for Algerian malcontents, and a good centre from which the Pan-islamic and anti-French propaganda could be disseminated among North African tribes. The Regency provided in fact a safe place for intrigues and conspiracies against France. This explains the fact that Abd-ul-Hamid, upon whom Khair-ed-Din, the former Tunisian Prime Minister, was exercising a great influence, endeavoured to assume a direct authority over Tunis. Out of spite to France, the Bay's favourite, himself, was not averse to the restitution of direct Turkish control. The Turkish and Tunisian efforts were not frowned upon by the Italian Government. Thus in French eyes, Tunis was not only gradually feeling the increasing authority of the Sultan, but at the same time becoming a dangerous spot, a Pan-islamic centre, and a meeting place for the propagandists of the various brotherhoods. The danger was growing daily acute since it was receiving the support of Italian agents and of some organs of the Italian press. (1)

To the Turkish manœuvres, Tissot, the French Ambassador in Constantinople, drew the attention of the French Government. (2) Tissot was "disposed to be violent on all matters where French African interests were concerned" and was "very bitter against the Turks. (3) But his reports, excited

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- (1) As early as August 1880, de Courcel told Adams, the British Chargé: "The Italian (are) intriguing in favour or with the Porte at Constantinople, because they get the Sultan to exert authority in their favour at Tunis. He (Courcel) . . . added that France would never allow any exercise of authority on the part of the Sultan there, they would sooner bombard Constantinople." Granville Papers (G.D. 29). Vol. 175. Adams to Granville. Aug. 17, 1880.
- (2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. nos. 60, 61. Mar. 13, 14, 1880.
- (3) Granville Papers. Vol. 190. Dufferin to Granville. Oct. 18, Nov. 1, 1881.

as they might be, appear to have carried great weight in Paris. It may be remembered that in connection with this question of Tunis, there existed in Constantinople two currents of opinion: that of the Palace and that of the Porte. The Porte, constituted of the Turkish Ministry, was more prudent but not infrequently ignorant of the intentions and deeds of the Sultan and the small clique around him. Thus while the Porte was outwardly assuring France that it would never follow a policy detrimental to French interests in North Africa, the Palace found interest in arousing discontent and in creating embarrassments for France in this part of the world. Despite the fact that the French Government gave sufficient and repeated warning to the Porte that they would never recognize Turkish authority in Tunis and that they would never tolerate any attempt on the part of Turkey to change the status quo in the Regency, yet they finally came to the conclusion that unless France undertook a serious demonstration of force, the Palace would continue its schemes undisturbed. This necessity became the more urgent when the alarming reports of Tissot were confirmed by Roustan who informed the French Government that the Porte was making military preparations on the Tripolitan frontier.

But the French Government were ready to give the Bay another chance; they were prepared to abstain from taking military measures which might arouse opposition at home. In January the Ferry Government repeated the efforts of Waddington, and of Freycinet (1) to convince the Bardo of the

(1) In the spring of 1880, Freycinet instructed Roustan to present to the Bay the text of the Convention which had been drawn in 1879 and which was slightly modified. But the attempt failed.

advantages of a French protectorate. Roustan was to warn the Bay of Turkish intrigues against his throne and his life, and to indicate that gone were the days when the Bay could find security in the rivalry between France and Italy. The only way now open for Es-Sadik was to "se confier loyalement à la France", by signing a treaty of guarantees ensuring his own independence and personal security. Otherwise, Roustan was to add, things would come to such a pass that France would be obliged to defend by force her interests - without giving the least consideration to his own rights.⁽¹⁾

In the end it became obvious to France that through the medium of negotiations alone, the Bay would never accept the protectorate. She was now tired indeed of the same argument which the Bay always opposed to her proposals, namely, the repugnance of the Moslems to fall voluntarily under the protection of an infidel Power. The French Government were beginning to realise the wisdom of Roustan's advice. The Bay, according to the militant French Consul-General, being "an ignorant and fanatic prince", would only be convinced by the use of force. A French military and naval demonstration would bring home to the Bardo the sincerity and the resolve of France to secure not merely "platonic declarations", but solid and permanent guarantees.⁽²⁾

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. St. Hilaire to Roustan. Jan. 30, 1881. See also footnote.

(2) This advice was given in May 1880. Ibid, no. 109.

III. *British Opposition: The Enfida,*

The Enfida affair brought France a new opponent; it brought Great Britain into open hostility with France in Tunis. From November 1880 onwards the French Italian rivalry was eclipsed by the struggle which raged between the French and British Consuls. The Enfida was a vast estate, 66,000 hectares of the richest land in the Regency, which the Bay had granted to Khair-ed-din when the General was in favour. After leaving Tunis for Constantinople, the Tunisian ex-Prime Minister saw the advisability of selling it to a Marseilles Company. The bargain aroused the natural anxiety of the Bardo since it would place a rich province under the control of France. The Bardo therefore denied Khair-ed-Din the right to dispose of the estate. But the protests of the Tunisian Government passed unheeded by the French Company on whose behalf the Ferry Government interfered. In fact Saint-Hilaire had even instructed Roustan to register the contract of sale in the French Consulate and to give the Company his full diplomatic support. (1)

The Bardo did not forgive the interference of the French Government. As the French Company tried to enter into the possession of its new property, it soon found that a British subject, Levy, was claiming the right to the estate. According to the Moslem rite of Malik, the Shafaah gave the adjoining neighbour of the property the right of pre-emption. Claiming that he was in possession of a bordering estate, Levy disputed the legality of the French purchase, demanded the protection

(1) Doc. Dip Fr. P. 3. no. 324. Jan. 2, 1881.

of the British Consul, and proceeded to take possession of the property. As the representatives of the French Company attempted to take the estate by force, Levy protested to the Bay and to the British Consul against deliberate violation of domicile.

The French had reasons to believe that Levy was not a bona fide purchaser, and that he was only an instrument in the hands of the Bardo to obstruct the development of French interests. In their opinion Levy was not possessed of sufficient financial resources to make so considerable a purchase; they saw also that the Tunisian Government were exploiting the Capitulations, the right to British protection, for their own advantage. Saint-Hilaire therefore warned the British Government and Reade against being trapped in the Tunisian manoeuvre. But neither Reade nor Granville was prepared to accept the French point of view and thought that Levy was entitled to fair play. The protests of Levy were in fact sufficient to arouse Reade to action. The British Consul had been for long inactive, a passive element in the Tunisian situation. The Enfida affair afforded an opportunity for Reade to show "the Levantine Consular animus" in him, to express the energy he had suppressed for nearly two years. For two years he was only allowed to complain of the insufficiency of his salary and of the poverty of the British Consulate in personnel and resources. Now he found a cause to defend; he began with Roustan a long correspondence full of strong language and lengthy arguments; he protested to the Bay, recalling the rights granted by the Capitulations. Reade did not stop here; he joined the anti-French front in Tunis and shewed his sympathy with Italian claims. Broadley, a British Lawyer who had settled in Tunis for

several years, and who had become very influential in the Bardo, undertook to defend the cause of Levy, while Mme Taylor, the correspondent of the "Standard", whom the French believed to be in the pay of the Levy group, published articles protesting against the injustice which a British subject was experiencing at the hands of the French. Questions were even asked in the British parliament about the alleged interference of the French with the administration of justice in connection with the Enfida affair. France, much puzzled by the British campaign, appealed to the "loyalty" of the Bay but to no avail. The dispute between the two Consuls was prolonged until the two Governments decided to take over the discussion of the question themselves, and agreed that neither Government should bring political influence to bear upon the case.

In London, Granville was not easy to deal with. From the very beginning he considered that "the French seemed to be behaving ill on the subject," and was impressed by Lyons' idea that "the French treated Tunis as a safe outlet for the chauvinism which they abstain from using in all other quarters." The British Foreign Secretary believed that the language of Salisbury in Berlin with reference to Tunis had been "indiscreet;" but that the French were also "indiscreet in the way they had excited the hatred of the Tunisians." French foreign policy had given Granville real cause for complaint, especially in connection with the Greek frontier question. Granville had also come to find that "the dual Government" in France of Gambetta, the President of the Chamber, and Grevy, the President of the Republic "was not pleasant to deal with." Respecting the Enfida affair, he was aware that British interference "would have a bitter taste in the French

mouth"; nevertheless he proceeded to the protection of Levy with unabated energy though he wished Reade had never been appointed to Tunis.⁽¹⁾

with such sentiments France was well-acquainted. The reports of Challemel-Lacour were sufficiently alarming. The French Ambassador in London expressed his apprehension that the British procedure in the Enfida question might end to French disadvantage. He further pointed out that England was exploiting the Enfida case to check the development of French influence in Tunis.

"Quand au Gouvernement anglais", wrote Challemel-Lacour, "vous songez toujours, n'avez-vous dit dans votre télégramme, à traiter l'affaire avec lui directement en toute amitié et en toute confiance; me permettez de vous parler moi-même en toute confiance? Eh bien, ces choses là sont bonnes à mettre dans une dépêche officielle, qui peut-être un jour ou l'autre livrée à la publicité. Mais, en fait, vous vous exposeriez à une déception si vous comptiez sur son amitié, et vous auriez grand tort de vous abandonner à cette belle confiance en lui. (2)"

"Je vous ai dit et je vous répète que le Gouvernement Anglais est notre adversaire à Tunis, soit par complaisance pour l'Italie dont la servilité le flatte et dont l'hostilité à notre égard ne lui déplaît pas, soit par une jalousie contre

(1) Granville Papers. (G.D.29). Vol. 171. Private. Lyons to Granville. Mar. 22, 1881. and Vol.202. Private. Granville to Lyons. Letters of Jun. 2, Jul. 12, 1880. Jan. 25. Feb. 2, 9, 10. Mar. 16, 23, 1881.

(2) Ibid.

nous dont l'Angleterre ne guérira jamais. Il faudrait être aveugle pour s'y tromper. "(1)

France had found the procedure of Granville in the matter most disagreeable. Not only had he demonstrated his indifference to French claims, and his reluctance to follow unreservedly the policy of his predecessor, Granville now took action which was regarded in France as most unfriendly. In the first place he suggested that the dispute should be settled by the native tribunals. France found that she would be subjected to the judgment of those authorities of whose injustices and prejudice she was complaining. Refusal to comply with the British proposal was natural then, and arbitration was suggested instead. But France never expected that Granville would go so far as to send a ship of war to Tunis to counterbalance the influence which the dispatching of the *Friedland*, a French ironclad, might exercise. The general attitude of Lord Granville was reflected by his agents. Adams in Paris went so far as to point out that a French occupation of Tunis would prejudice British interests in Egypt. De Courcel found no alternative but to remind the British *Chargé d'Affaires* that "Tunis naturally fell to France. France had never objected to England having Gibraltar or Malta nor even Cyprus and now England seemed unwilling that France should have Tunis." (2)

France believed that even the British Government were beginning to dispute the supremacy of French interests in

(1) Doc Dip Fr. T.3. no.375. To Saint-Hilaire: Feb. 14, 1881.

(2) Granville Papers. Vol. 175. Private. Adams to Granville. Sep. 10, Oct. 1, 1880.

Tunis. She had repeatedly reminded Granville that Great Britain had recorded her recognition of the French right to exclusive predominance. France had believed that the British Consul had ceased to be a factor in the Tunisian situation. Now she was awakened to find Reade disputing her possession of a rich province and supporting Italy and the Bardo in their resistance to French influence. The British Foreign Office not only refused to disavow Reade but went so far as to send a British ship of war, a step without precedent since 1864. The French Government considered that nothing could justify the British conduct and felt that the despatch of the "Thunderer" would give a false impression as to the real attitude of Great Britain towards Tunis. It would undoubtedly arouse new hopes in Rome and in Tunis for further opposition to French influence. It was indeed wondered in Paris whether Granville was willing to settle the Enfida affair or to persist in making "a bad quarrel" with France! (1)

Of French irritation, the British were well-informed, In a series of private letters Lyons described the view taken in Paris:

(1) See Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 396. Courcel to Noailles Mar. 3, 1880. Moderate public opinion in France wondered: "Why should England impede us in Tunis? Her interest there will not weigh in the balance with the friendship of France. We get along admirably together in Egypt. The prosperity of that country is our common work. Wherever England and France go arm in arm wealth and civilisation spread. England has and will have in the Mediterranean interests to which we may lend a helping hand. Neither she nor we have anything to gain by quarrelling. France would never be able to forget that where she found Germany ready to encourage and afford her the means of satisfying her amour-propre a little by showing that she cannot be braved with impunity, England stood out against it" "Times" Apr. 5, 1881.

"The French public," he wrote, "are getting very cross about Tunis. Reasonable people see that we cannot allow our own subject to be bullied, but the French in general do not distinguish between the Enfida case, the Tunisian question regarding predominant influence, Italy and so forth The French allege that the present Government is less friendly to them about that country than the late, Tunis is really a ticklish point in our relation with France "Our whole position with regard to the French in Tunis is particularly uncomfortable. The French press seem to me on the look out to get up cases against the Bey. The Italians, very imprudently for their own views, seem to delight in involving this unfortunate potentate in quarrels with France and Frenchmen, and I am afraid that Mr. Reade's conduct, if not his language, must lead to expectations of support from us which could not be realised in case of need.⁽¹⁾

No wonder then that the British Ambassador, who believed that "Levy was not in fact a bona fide purchaser", wished Britain could wash her hands of the whole affair, and pointed out that "the more philosophically Reade could see the French bully and the Italians intrigue the better." Both Lyons and Granville were apprehensive lest the Bay might delude himself with the hope of British support and so let his differences with the French come to "a regular quarrel."⁽²⁾

(1) Granville Papers. (G. D. 29). Vol. 171. Private Feb. 25, Mar. 15, 1881.
 (2) Ibid. Private. Lyons to Granville Mar. 15, 18, 1881.

IV. *French Hesitation*

But France believed that there was already in existence a regular quarrel. The Italian and Pan-islamic dangers together with British "lukewarmness" and vexatious meddling in the Enfida affair forced France to consider the adoption of energetic measures. The German moral and diplomatic support was sufficient to neutralise the hostility of Italy and to discourage England. The desire to give Italy and Great Britain no further opportunities for interference in Tunis was developing into a resolve and a firm one. Yet there were factors which caused some hesitation in Paris. France, in the first place, was still in favour of a peaceful policy and against adventures of a military character. "La France est affolée de la paix et... demande avant tout à son Gouvernement à couper court à toute velléité d'aventure," wrote de Courcel on January 10th, 1881.⁽¹⁾ Even during the military campaign of August, Adams entertained the same opinion. "It is abundantly clear that the people in general are in favour of peace. They only wish to be left alone and to be allowed to recover from the losses they sustained in 1870, and to indulge in their favourite virtue of thrift"⁽²⁾ The attitude of the Right and Extreme Left had given sufficient warning to the Ministry. In the sitting of November 8th, 1880, de Broglie, and Gontaut-Biron, the leaders of the Right in the Senate, had pointed out that France was abandoning her sacred vital interests for the defence of interests of "fantasy, sentimentality and imagination." The Right

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 331.

(2) F.O. 27/2495. no. 747. To Granville. Aug. 5, 1881.

advocated a policy of "recueillement", a policy which would take into consideration the vital and direct interests of France without compromising the French position abroad. The policy of recueillement the Right defined in these terms :

"Ne nous attacher qu'à des intérêts exclusivement français, sérieux, tangibles, s'abstenir de toute poursuite idéale et sentimentale et, dans nos rapports avec l'Europe, employer toute notre action à la concorde, à la paix, puis, garder à notre profit notre liberté complète d'action et surtout d'abstention, le droit d'agir ou de ne pas agir, le droit de rentrer sous tente, pour y rester au milieu de l'agitation qui se fait autour de nous." (1)

The Ferry Ministry were aware that this feeling was shared by the whole population and even by some members of the cabinet.

Internal instability contributed to a hesitant foreign policy. The working of the party system in France was enigmatic. The Extreme Left adopted an attitude of open hostility to the Government. A considerable number among the "Union Républicaine" was not ready to oppose the Extreme Left, while the Extreme Right was always ready "to vote any way for the sake of making mischief, its principal being that they must get the worst before they could mend." (2) Relationship between the leaders of the Left left much to be desired. The Elysée looked

(1) Journal Officiel. Dec. 1, 1880. Speech of Broglie. See also the speech of Gontaut-Biron.

(2) Granville Papers. (G.D.29). Vol. 171. Private. Lyons to Granville. Nov. 12, 1880.

with uneasiness at the Palais Bourbon. Both Ferry and Saint-Hilaire were not on very cordial terms with Gambetta. The support of "the Great man" could not be relied upon. On the other hand Ferry was always afraid of being abandoned by Grévy, who was "intensely indolent." Neither were the Ministry sure of the wholehearted support of the Left Centre, or of the Conservative Left. Waddington was still brooding on his dismissal from office. The position of the Ferry Government was so weak that on a trifling domestic question, they were defeated in the Lower House and obliged to tender their resignation on the 9th November 1880, after spending some forty days in office. It was only the timely interference of Grévy which prevented a ministerial crisis. The same Lower House granted the same Ministry a vote of confidence only two days later.

Unanimity among the Left with regard to domestic affairs and foreign policy was always lacking, the Ministers, themselves, gladly participated in the battle of opinions and took sides without any regard being paid to harmony in the Ministry itself. The President of the Republic, possessed of no great qualifications, was overshadowed by the President of the Chamber, and between both there was not only jealousy but actual difference on electoral questions. While both Grévy, "who had no intention whatever of going out before his time", and Ferry, who was a devoted worshipper of power, stood for the "Scrutin d'arrondissement", "the Great man" advocated the "Scrutin de liste". Some members of the cabinet went with Grévy, others with Gambetta; but the "Great Man" succeeded in imposing his desire; Grévy gave way for fear of breaking up the cabinet and of giving

Gambetta the opportunity of forming a "Grand Ministère". In such contests the Ferry Ministry were so much interested that it was even suggested to defer French action in Tunis till after the elections of the coming autumn. As Lyons reported, "no body will do anything or commit himself in any way pending the uncertainty of the elections" (1)

To this extent electoral questions and domestic affairs influenced foreign policy. The general situation in Europe was not wholly to French liking. The manifest rapprochement of the three Empires was believed to be somewhat prejudicial to French interests in Europe. "They were opposed to liberal views and liberal institutions. They were reconstituting the "Sainte alliance". So Gambetta told Sheffield, of the French Embassy, when he invited him to breakfast. (2) Up till March 1881 the Ferry Government were themselves far from agreed on a policy of action in the Regency. A new experiment was therefore to be tried. De Billing, a friend of Gambetta's, and a former agent in Tunis, was charged in January 1881 with the mission of bringing an understanding between France and Italy with regard to Tunis; at the same time he was to urge on the Bay the necessity of accepting a French protectorate. The idea of withdrawing both Maccio and Roustan seems to have been entertained in both Paris and Rome. Though the mission of de Billing had no diplomatic or official character, yet the French envoy had conversations in Rome with Cairoli and in Tunis with the Bay and with Maccio. Instead of easing the tension in Tunis,

(1) Granville Papers. (G.D.29). Vol. 171. Private. To Granville. Feb. 8, 1881.

(2) Ibid.

de Billing's mission had the opposite result of increasing difficulties and of rendering the position of Roustan untenable. On Roustan's complaint Saint-Hilaire ordered de Billing to leave Tunis at once.⁽¹⁾

The mission having failed, Saint-Hilaire, after overcoming his own hesitations, recommended to the cabinet in February prompt and energetic action on the frontiers of Tunis. Despite the fact that military preparations near the Tunisian frontier were no mystery and made it difficult for the French Government to withdraw without loss of prestige, yet the members of the cabinet refused to listen to Saint-Hilaire's proposals. The same proposals appear to have been repeated early in March but met with the same result. The majority in the cabinet was in favour of a policy of waiting.⁽²⁾

But the situation in Tunis was developing in such a way as to leave the Ferry Ministry no alternative but to act. The Bay, encouraged by the cordial reception with which his mission met in Sicily, and hardened by the language of Maccio, refused to give any further consideration to French demands. The mission of de Billing had convinced Es-Sadik that Roustan no longer enjoyed the confidence of the French Government. No wonder then that the Bay revised the policy he had hitherto pursued towards France, encouraged no doubt

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 358. and footnote. Feb. 1, 1881. and 362. of Feb. 3, 1881 (and footnote).

(2) Ibid. no. 401. Courcel to Noailles. Mar. 13, 1881. In the diplomatic documents available, there are no records of these deliberations in the French cabinet. Who approved of St. Hilaire's proposals and who did not, is not certain. But it is possible that Ferry and Farre, the minister of War supported Saint-Hilaire. No indication exists as to the dates of these cabinet deliberations.

by his pro-Italian Prime Minister and favourite. The French railway concessionnaires were therefore refused the right to construct a station at Hammam-el-Lif; the suggestion for the establishment of a Crédit Foncier which was designed to undertake banking business in Tunis was flatly rejected. The Bay's attitude in the Enfida affair was openly hostile to France. His Government went so far as to place obstacles in the way of the French railway company so as to prevent it from carrying out its obligations. All these hostile efforts awakened the French Government to the necessity of quick and decisive action.

The pleadings of Saint-Vallier, the warnings of de Noailles, of Tissot and of Roustan, the great influence of Baron de Courcel all pointed to the danger of the policy of waiting. The attitude of Saint-Vallier was very interesting. He demanded more than once that electoral interests, the preoccupations of the moment, internal worries of secondary importance should not prevent the French Government from performing their duty to the nation in settling definitely the question of Tunis before it could assume an international character.

"Vous me dites", the French Ambassador in Berlin wrote, "qu'on veut laisser passer les élections et qu'on agira ensuite... Quelle imprudence et quelle aveuglement! Dans dix mois vous serez en face d'une tout autre situation, en face d'un protectorat italien, d'une alliance secrète organisée et conclue contre nous, et vous devrez reculer de nouveau car ce ne sera plus comme au jour où nous sommes, une promenade militaire à accomplir, mais une guerre européenne à

soutenir pour sauver notre colonie Algérienne. Ah! mon cher Ministre, vous êtes bon patriote, M. Gambetta l'est aussi; voyez-le, entendez-vous avec lui, et faites en sorte que notre pays n'ait pas à subir la nouvelle humiliation, le nouvel amoindrissement dont il est menacé; J'en suis si affecté, si inquiet, si malheureux, que si je m'écoutais je partirais pour Paris y passer 48 heures, vous conjurer, conjurer M. Gambetta, M. Ferry, M. Grévy, la Chambre entière de faire ce que commandent impérieusement l'honneur et l'intérêt de la patrie. Si je ne tenais avant tout à ne jamais rien faire sans votre assentiment, j'écrirais aujourd'hui même à M. Gambetta; je lui exposerais la situation, et je ferais un appel ardent à son patriotisme. Allons-nous donc justifier cette fois encore les dédaigneuses appréciation du prince de Bismarck que je vous rapportais dans mon avant-dernière lettre. Allons nous une fois de plus justifier le mot du prince "Gortchakoff: La France ne compte plus, elle est impuissante à l'extérieur." Nous sommes au pied du mûr, et l'Europe nous observe pour nous juger et savoir si nous sommes encore quelque chose; un acte de fermeté, d'énergique volonté sans danger sérieux, sans effusion de sang, et nous reprenons notre rang dans l'estime des nations; une nouvelle preuve de faiblesse, et nous achevons de nous reléguer au rang de l'Espagne, **Carpe diem**, ce doit-être votre devise aujourd'hui; le jour de demain ne sera plus à nous. Hélas, si notre cher maître et ami pouvait renaître avec quelle ardeur il s'efforcerait d'obtenir ce que je demande à notre gouvernement. Faites voir ma lettre, si vous le voulez, à vos collègues, à M. Grévy, à M. Gambetta, montrez-leur la dépêche que je vous ai écrite à ce sujet dimanche par le

courrier anglais; citez-leur les paroles dédaigneuses de M. de Bismarck le mot le plus dur encore du prince Gortchakoff; faites usage de tous les moyens pour reveiller en eux le patriotisme et nous éviter une faute irremédiable ayant pour consequence un deplorable abaissement; qu'ils comprennent qu'ils ont à choisir entre l'intérêt vital de la France et les intérêts secondaires de leur popularité près de la masse ignorante des trembleurs de profession; au mois d'aôut, M. Gambetta se plaignait à moi, avec toute raison, de l'abaissement moral de notre opinion publique; elle tombera plus bas encore si le Gouvernement ne cherche pas à la relever."(¹)

On the 21st March Saint-Vallier wrote to de Noailles.

"L'affaire de Tunis est, à mon sens comme au vôtre, le plus grave echec et la plus funeste humaliation que je relève dans notre histoire depuis bien des années; jamais, à aucune époque, même pendant la periode tant attaquée de la paix à tout prix de la monarchie de juillet, nous ne nous sommes laissés insulter, braver, évincer, chasser aussi pitoyablement; c'est un oubli de toute dignité, un verdict de faiblesse sans nom, d'impuissance sans remède que nous nous laissons infliger aux yeux surprise de l'Europe qui nous raille et nous meprise. C'est la perte de notre influence de notre situation dans la Méditerranée, peut-être de notre possession algérienne, ou les Italiens enhardis par notre pusillanimité, ne tarderont pas à venir nous attaquer sans que nous sachions et puissions leur defendre d'aller plus loin; avec

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 349. To Saint-Hilaire. Jan. 26. 1881.

les Arabes qui n'ont de respect et de crainte que devant la force et le succès se sera la tâche de huile; et le mal commencé en Tunisie gagnera vite notre colonie mise hors d'état de se protéger par la désorganisation complète qu'y a introduit l'administration inepte de l'incapable M. Albert Grévy. La République je l'écris au Ministre et à ses collègues par chaque courrier, aura à sa charge la perte de l'Algérie comme l'Empire à la sienne celle de l'Alsace-Lorraine. Il est pitoyable de penser ce que ce qui nous désarme, ce qui nous rend inaptes de nous défendre, à faire respecter notre honneur, c'est le souci de misérables intérêts électoraux; notre Chambre qui n'a pour elle ni l'intelligence, ni l'esprit politique, ni les convictions respectables, ne connaît et ne comprend qu'une chose, l'intérêt de sa réélection, et elle sacrifie tout, la grandeur du pays, sa sécurité, son honneur, aux menagements à garder pour une opinion publique stupide de peur vague de lâcheté ignorante, l'abandon coupable. On pleure des larmes de sang quand on assiste à un pareil abaissement et qu'on voit son pays, déjà diminué, mutilé, courir à l'abandon de ce qui lui reste de prestige et d'influence dans le monde.

Vous faites courageusement votre devoir en cherchant à secouer cette torpeur honteuse, Je m'efforce aussi de le faire, mais je doute que nous réussissions.⁽¹⁾

Such were Saint-Vallier's pleadings. The warnings of de Noailles stressed the same danger. In analysing the motives and aims of Italian policy towards France, the French Ambassador in Rome pointed out the impossibility of reaching an

(1) *Ibid.* Despatch of Saint-Vallier, no. 406. Mar. 21, 1881.

understanding with Italy on Tunisian affairs. For according to him, Cairoli was possessed of "an olympic chauvinism" which could dare anything; the Italian premier had always shown his willingness to be induced by his imprudent entourage to follow an energetic Tunisian policy. De Noailles, in drawing the attention of Paris to the fact that no material diplomatic advantage could be obtained by postponing the settlement of the Tunisian question, concluded by the recommendation of energetic action while Europe was still favourable to France.

"Les Italiens", de Noailles reported, "ont prit l'offensive, c'est la guerre à couteau qu'ils nous font à Tunis". "Les Italiens paraissent aujourd'hui plus que jamais persister dans leur résolution d'annihiler notre influence et de se subsister à nous en Tunis... Nous perdrons la Tunisie, l'Algérie sera compromise, et notre tolérance, loin de nous assurer l'amitié de l'Italie nous la fera rencontrer partout comme adversaire. Nous aurons en outre subi un échec diplomatique qui pourra nuire à notre situation générale en Europe".

"Il m'a toujours sembler aussi qu'en laissant cette question ouverte nous laissons subsister un germe de complications qui pourrait, un jour ou l'autre, se transformer en un danger réel pour notre situation générale. Les Italiens, qu'ont fait une cour si assidue à l'Angleterre pour qu'elle intervint dans les affaires de Tunis, n'hésiteront pas d'avantage à se jeter dans les bras de toute autre Puissance, à nous desservir par tous les moyens possibles, à exciter les soupçons contre nous, à nous créer des embarras..."

“Il ne s'agit pas non plus seulement d'une question d'influence commerciale et politique à Tunis; les visées de nos adversaires vont au delà; ce qu'ils veulent réellement, c'est supplanter la France dans la Méditerranée, y prendre, à la suite de l'Angleterre, la seconde place que nous y occupons par l'importance de notre commerce, et se substituer à nous où ils le pourront. L'Italie ne peut espérer atteindre ce but que si nous tombons victimes de quelque grave complication européenne. Aussi le conflit pourrait-il fort bien, un jour ou l'autre, cesser d'être partiel et local et avoir à Londres, Vienne ou Berlin les ramifications les plus dangereuses. Cette question de Tunis ne touche donc pas seulement à nos intérêts, qui sont de plusieurs sortes, dans la Régence, à la sécurité de notre colonie algérienne, à notre prestige sur les côtes de la Méditerranée”. (1)

From Constantinople reports about Turkish designs on Tunis and North Africa continued to reach Paris. Khair-ed-Din, according to Tissot, was using his influence with the Sultan to raise Tunis to the status of a Khedivate. From Tunis itself, the correspondence of Roustan was filled with pessimistic views and with veiled threats of resignation if Paris did not adopt prompt action. Roustan put great stress on the Italian danger, on Turkish threatening designs and on the “obdurate obstinacy” of the Bey. He pointed out that France could preserve neither her predominance in Tunis nor her prestige in Algeria if she did not demonstrate her ability to make her

(1) Ibid. See Reports of de Noailles nos 368, 392, 403, 405. Feb. 9, 24, and Mar. 15, 19, 1881.

wishes respected. Indeed, according to him, she could not retreat now without signing her abdication.⁽¹⁾

The reports of the French Ambassadors and diplomatic agents were well-received in the Quai d'Orsay. Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire, the Foreign Minister, was susceptible to their impressive arguments. The influence which de Courcel, the "Directeur des Affaires Etrangères", an independent and capable man exercised upon the direction of the foreign relations of France, was for energetic action. De Courcel considered that British accessibility to Italian flattery and subordination had aggravated matters for France in Tunis. In his opinion the policy Maffei-Malvano⁽²⁾ had triumphed in hiding behind the British. De Courcel conceived that the French Government would commit a serious political blunder if they obstinately objected to Saint-Hilaire's repeated demands for energetic action.⁽³⁾ But the French Director of Foreign Affairs was not to be disappointed. Solidarity soon reigned in the ranks of the Republicans so far as the Tunis question was concerned. For it was feared that the loss of Tunis might prove prejudicial to the life of the Republic itself. Gambetta would not suffer the Republican regime to meet with a major diplomatic defeat. By the beginning of April the French cabinet decided to despatch a military expedition to Tunis.

(1) Ibid. nos 358. Feb. 1, 1881

(2) Directors of Italian foreign relations.

(3) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 371, 384. Feb. 10, Feb. 30, 1881. De Courcel's.

VI. Expedition.

Since the advent of the Ferry Ministry, military preparations were being made on the Tunisian frontier with a view to preventing the Bay from adopting an openly hostile attitude towards France. It is true that during the last months of 1880 Saint-Hilaire had always denied the existence of "a critical question with Tunis", yet what he described as "movements of cavalry in the ordinary course of the service", was meant mainly to terrorise the Bay. (1) In the meanwhile the French Foreign Minister was communicating with Albert Grévy, the Governor-General of Algeria, to hasten the completion of the railway uniting Tunis and Algeria with the purpose of facilitating the transportation of troops. (2) In the same month, January, the Havas Agency, inspired by the French Foreign Office, published the famous "Lettre d'Alger". In this letter France expressed for the first time to the public her views on the question of Tunis, and pointed to the dangers surrounding her position in that country. (3) In February the French colony in the Regency, instigated no doubt by Roustan, composed a memorandum in which the French interests in Tunis and the injustices to which French citizens were subjected were carefully enumerated. The memorandum was presented to the French Consul-General to forward to his Government. It was also communicated to the French press and commented upon. In this way public opinion in France was prepared for the measures which the Ferry Government were studying for the permanent establishment of French supremacy in Tunis.

(1) See F.O. 27/2439. no. 1199. Lyons to Granville, Dec. 30, 1880.

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr., T. 3. no. 342. Jan. 19, 81.

(3) The letter was dated the 10th Jan. See "Times" Jan. 11, 1881.

In the meanwhile diplomatic action was not neglected. To Italy France made it clear that the young kingdom had better direct its attention towards Tripoli, and that the financial loan which Italy was raising in Paris would surely be stopped if Italian agents continued to raise further difficulties for France in North Africa. (1) Great Britain was reminded of her verbal declarations in Berlin and of her written assurance of the 7th August 1878. Lacour was to make the observation that France's position in Algeria was similar to that of Britain in India; neither Britain nor France could tolerate disorder on their borders. (2) But as the French Government were well aware of the reluctance of Granville to follow unreservedly in the footsteps of his predecessor, they were ready to make new concessions in order to prevent the British Foreign Secretary from raising fresh obstacles in the way of French action.

Until the autumn of 1880 France used to recognise that her interests in Egypt were equal to those of Great Britain. In the December of that year the French Government recognised the superiority of British interests on the Nile and Suez. Saint-Hilaire intimated to Lyons that "he (the French Foreign Minister) was always ready to admit that the British interests in Egypt were more important than those of any other Power." He also admitted that he endeavoured to impress this new view upon the French agents in Egypt. In a like manner French interests "far exceeded those of any other Power in Tunis." (3)

(1) Granville Papers (G.D. 29). Vol. 171. Lyons to Granville Apr. 12, 1881.
 (2) See Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3 nos 392, 403, 405. Reports of de Noailles Feb. 24, Mar. 15, 19, 1881. and no. 420. Saint-Hilaire to Lacour. Apr. 4, 1881.
 (3) F. O. 27/2439. nos. 1198, 1199. Lyons to Granville. Dec. 30, 1880.

French apprehensions as to the attitude which Britain might adopt in case France took military action in Tunis were set at rest when Challemeil-Lacour reported from London that though Britain would undoubtedly view with ill-humour any measures which the French might take, yet she would not contemplate serious opposition. (1) From Germany France received undivided support. The idea gained ground in Paris that the favour which Prince Bismarck was willingly showing would outweigh British reluctance.

There remained the problem of inventing a pretext for taking the proposed military steps, and this was left to the ingenuity of Roustan. Since the autumn of 1880, the French agent was punctual in describing what he considered as the intolerable state of the frontier between Tunis and Algeria. He had repeatedly expressed his regret that the French Government were not always properly informed of the "crimes et délits" of the Tunisian tribes. He stressed the necessity of drawing the attention of the Algerian authorities to the gravity of the situation. The French Government gladly welcomed the idea and instructed Albert Crévy to inform them of all acts of brigandage that were enacted on the frontier. (2)

The French military preparations on the Tunisian border naturally provoked the hostility of the Khamirs, wrongly called by the French the Kroumirs. The Khamirs were warlike mountain tribes, occupying a stretch of country lying to the north west of the Regency. In their mountain fastnesses and inaccessible forests these tribes, mostly Berber, preserved their

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 432. Lacour to Saint-Hilaire. Apr. 7, 1881.

(2) Ibid. no. 348. Saint-Hilaire to Roustan. Jan. 26, 1881.

republican institutions, defied authority and enjoyed a freedom to which the people of the plains could never aspire. The Khamir tribes owed only a nominal allegiance to whoever reigned in the capital, whether he was Carthaginian, Roman, Vandal, Byzantine, Arab, Berber, Turk or the Bay himself. They refused to pay taxes, and with the growing weakness of the Bardo, their independence and unruliness increased. The Bay had too much on his hands in the capital to think seriously of bringing these warlike and liberty-loving tribes into permanent submission. It was not untrue, however, that a large part of their poor arms and munitions were captured from the Bay's troops in earlier skirmishes.

Between these tribes and their Algerian brethren raged since time immemorial almost continual warfare. An act of theft or a love affair was sufficient to bring them into serious conflict. Though the Khamirs were badly armed, ill-supplied, and entirely without artillery, yet in their inaccessible refuges, they could cause no little trouble to an advancing army. There were no roads in the Khamirland; there existed no exact map of their country; and occasional torrential rain would make the conquest of the North Western part of the Regency a serious problem. What further complicated matters was the belief in France that Italian agents were stirring trouble among these tribes.

Conflict with the Khamirs was then inevitable as a result of the concentration of French troops on the frontier. In the middle of February, the Tunisian Consul at Bone, a French protégé, informed Roustan that 300 armed Khamirs crossed the frontier to steal horses. The ambitions of Roustan were at last near realization. "Nous allons agir", he wrote,

“après les dernières nouvelles et sur un excellent terrain que M. Maccio est allé choisir imprudemment, celui des questions de la frontière. Là nous sommes chez nous et personne n'a le droit de s'immiscer, pas plus qu'entre les anglais et les Bœrs... Il (Maccio) a ouvert toutes grandes les portes à la plus légitimes des interventions. (1) France seized this opportunity not only to chastise the unruly tribes of the frontier but mainly to bring the Bay to his senses.

The military procedure presented a most serious problem to the Government. Ferry and his colleagues, in fact all Republicans, were careful to avoid the appearance of war and conquest. For as Lyons reported “(they) were horribly afraid of the effect which they believed any action on their part would produce on public opinion in the Chamber.”(2) Moreover, for a declaration of war Parliament must be consulted and the Ministry were sure that Parliament would give an unqualified refusal. Secondly a declared war against Tunis would present the French with the opposition of all the tribes: it might even provoke a religious war against France in the whole of North Africa. The French Government were determined to spend as little as possible on the Tunisian military campaign and to offend as less as possible Italian and Turkish feelings.

The idea of an aggressive France undertaking military adventures abroad did not recommend itself to the peacefully-minded republicans. The declared aim of France was to be therefore the chastisement of the Khamirs upon whom the Bay had no effective authority and whom the Bay could not bring

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 424. Roustan to Noailles. Apr. 5, 1881.
 (2) Cranville Papers. (G. D. 29.) Vol. 171. Private. Lyons to Granville. Oct. 8, 11, 1880.

to respect the French Algerian frontier. This pretext was communicated to Britain and Italy as the real aim of the expedition. It was only Germany and Austria who were informed that the real aim of France was to free Tunis from foreign influences by the establishment of a French Protectorate.⁽¹⁾ In the invasion of Tunisian territory, France should request the co-operation of the Bey and should give him the most friendly assurances. In this way France would make the least sacrifice in men and money.

“Rassurez Son Altesse le bey”, Saint Hilaire instructed Roustan, “avec la plus vive et la plus bienveillante insistance. Calmez ses craintes le plus complètement que vous pourrez...

Son Altesse doit être bien persuadé que, si nous entrons sur le territoire de ses Etats, ce n'est pas en ennemis mais en protecteurs et pour le soin de notre propre défense...

Repetez à Son Altesse au nom de la République française que nous n'en voulons ni à sa personne, ni à son trône, ni à la durée de sa dynastie.”⁽²⁾

The organisation of the expedition was itself a problem. France had no colonial army. The old monarchical military system had been abolished in favour of the Prussian. Algerian troops could not be employed since the attitude of the native population of Algeria especially in Oran was far from being

(1) “Herr Barthélemy St. Hilaire ausserte sich in sehr präciser Weise, dass von Eroberung oder Annexion nicht die Rede sein dürfe, doch müsse Tunis von jedern fremden Einflüsse frei bleiben. Dies könne Frankreich nur durch ein effectives Protectorat erreichen”. Vienna Archives no. 22. A. Beust to Haymerle. Apr. 7, 1881.

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 455.

reliable. The only obvious solution was that most of the troops for the expedition must be taken from France. The Republicans were not prepared to mobilise a division or two, for this step, as Gambetta told Brackenbury, the British military attache, "would frighten the country and give an impression completely different to what we (the Republicans) desired should have been produced". (1) The Government could not order even partial mobilisation without the sanction of Parliament. The military authorities including the Minister of War, Farre, were aware of the fact that partial mobilisation would have been of great military advantage, as it would test practically the whole arrangement for mobilisation. But the question of the expedition's organisation was considered in its political rather than its military aspects. On the eve of the elections the Government were anxious to avoid provoking prejudice in any part of the country against the newly established republic. This device was therefore resorted to: troops were to be taken from all over France and Algeria, from regiments whose colonels had served in Africa. In this way the whole French expeditionary force contained some 17,000 men and 56 guns. The great part of this force was put under the command of General Forgemol, and divided into 3 columns, the right led by General Logerot, the left by General Delebèque, and the centre, constituted of cavalry, was placed under the command of General Gaume. These columns were to operate in Khamirland and on the western frontier of the Regency. Preparations were made at Bône and Toulon for the other part of the expedition which was constituted of several thousand men and was to proceed to Bizerta.

(1) F. O. 27/2492. To Lyons. Apr. 24.

The idea of sending ships of war to Goletta did not commend itself to the French Government, for they were anxious not to give cause for the other Powers to send their fleets to Tunis. On April 4th, the Chamber passed a bill granting 5, 695, 276 fr. to defray the expenses of the expedition. On the 5th the bill was passed by the Senate. Ferry in the Senate and Farre in the Lower House declared that the aim of the expedition was to chastise the Khamirs and other border tribes for their repeated and deliberate violation of the Algerian frontier. The Government thought that one month was sufficient to bring the campaign to a successful end. Parliament was to adjourn from April 12th, to May 12th, and on its reassembling, the Government would present it with the protectorate of Tunis.

The French Government undertook another campaign not less important than the military. The aim of this campaign was to arouse interest in the subject of Tunis and to convert public opinion to the views of the Government.⁽¹⁾ The chief instrument was the republican press which was for the most part inspired by the Government and by Gambetta himself, who was in complete accord with Ferry as to the aims and the measures to be taken in the settlement of the Tunis question. The republican press, led by the "Temps", "Débats" and the "République Française" had various duties to perform. In the first place it had to justify French action by emphasising and magnifying the hostile attitude of the Bay and of Italy.

(1) Even Beust, the Australian Ambassador in Paris, spoke of the "ardeur, je ne dirai pas belliqueuse, mais bouillante qui se fait jour dans la presse à propos de la question Tunisienne." Vienna Archives no. 4. 6. Jan. 20, 1881.

Secondly it had to reply to the criticisms and attacks of the British press. Thirdly it had to dispose of the claims which the Porte advanced on Tunis. And lastly it had to defend the military measures adopted by General Farre to cope with the military situation.

In the performance of the first duty, the "Republique Française" stated that the expedition was "une simple mesure de police territoriale" (1) Italian agents were alleged to have incited the tribes of the frontier against France by promising the support of the Italian army. The republican press cried for the establishment of at least a protectorate in order to bring both the Bay and the Italians to their senses. Some organs went indeed so far as to demand total and unconditional occupation and annexation of the Regency. (2)

The second task was not less important, since the attitude of the British press under the leadership of the "Times" was not very agreeable to the French Government. The British press had freely striven to prove that Tunis had always been part of the Turkish Empire, and implicitly demanded the intervention of the Powers signatories of the Treaties of Paris 1856 and Berlin 1878. In pointing to what it described as British hypocrisy, the "Débats" reminded the "Times" that Cyprus used to constitute a part of Turkey and that the Gladstone Ministry could never be accused of upholding the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. If France, the "Débats" added, ever thought of establishing protectorates or

(1) Apr. 11, 1881.

(2) Blue Book. Reports of Lyons, Apr. 8, 27, 1881.

making annexations, she had only to follow the British example. (1) It did not forget to allude to Salisbury's declarations about Carthage and the Barbarians. The "Temps" undertook the task of proving that Tunis had no political relationship with Turkey. (2)

The efforts of the French Government were not confined to the French press. The good will of Blowitz, the correspondent of the "Times" in Paris, seems to have been secured. He was shown the despatch of Lord Salisbury of the 7th August to Lyons which registered the British declarations in Berlin concerning Tunis. Blowitz himself admits that a hasty persual of the despatch was allowed him, and he was glad to publish what he had read. The memory of Blowitz proved to be excellent, the despatch published by the "Times" shows little difference from the original despatch of Lord Salisbury. (3) Blowitz, moreover, "authoritatively" stated that "the accord between France and the Beaconsfield cabinet was real and positive; the declarations attributed to Lord Salisbury are authentic." The supposed community of British and Italian interests in Tunis, the correspondent of the "Times in Paris dismissed as groundless. Respecting the British attitude, Blowitz declared that "successive cabinets in England might differ as to the means but not to the great principales of foreign policy and loyally abide by their predecessors' engagements, especially when no paramount interest dictated a change of conduct." (4)

(1) Apr. 5, 1881.

(2) "Times" Apr. 6, 1881.

(3) Lyons suspected that Blowitz was inspired by the French Government. See Granville Papers (G. D. 29). Vol. 171. private. Lyons to Granville. Apr. 12, 1881.

(4) "Times" of Apr. 11, 1881.

The French Government could not have expressed themselves better. The British Government were thus disarmed, and the excitement of French public opinion concerning the British attitude soon subsided.

Perhaps the most enthusiastic man in France for energetic action was the economist and colonialist, Paul Leroy Beaulieu. It was he who courageously preached the advantages of a colonial and expansionist policy. In the spring of 1881 he contributed two long articles to the "Economiste". His language was distinguished by strength, conviction and sarcasm. In the *Economiste* of April 9th, under the title of "De la nécessité de l'Annexion Totale de la Tunisie", (1) he pointed out the disastrous consequence of half measures, even the establishment of a protectorate was not sufficient in his eyes. "There could be" he wrote "no settled peace or security for France in Algeria until the French flag was hoisted on the Bardo". After he advised Italy to go to Tripoli, dealt at great length with the criticism of the British press which he described as full of hypocrisy and nonsense. If the British Government intended to raise difficulties for France, British goods should be subjected to high tariffs.

"L'Angleterre", he wrote, "est une quackeresse qui fait les prédications les plus édifiantes sur le pardon des injures et sur l'amour du prochain. Il y a, paraît-il deux morales, l'une pour l'Angleterre, et l'autre pour le reste du monde. Que direz-vous d'un pickpocket, qui escamoterait avec la

(1) See also his article in the "Economiste" of March 19, 1881.

plus grande aisance le bien du prochain et qui se transformerait gravement en professeur de moral. Si l'Angleterre veut nous envoyer des représentations . . . nous les mettrons soigneusement dans nos archives et nous les publierons dans notre Livre Jaune",

A Livre Jaune the French Government were determined to publish and to present to Parliament on its reassembling. The Livre Jaune of 1881 on Tunisian affairs contains hardly any diplomatic correspondence properly so-called. The circular of Saint-Hilaire of the 9th May is the only diplomatic document of any importance. The Livre Jaune devotes its pages to relations between France and the Regency. Not a document was inserted concerning relations with Britain, Germany or Italy. The Livre Jaune is an apologia for the military measures taken in the spring of 1881. It begins with the famous circular of Saint-Hilaire of May 9th, in which the French Foreign Minister developed the general outline of French diplomacy regarding Tunis, and explained the causes and aims of the expedition.

The Livre Jaune is divided into three parts; the first deals with the unsatisfactory state of the Algerian frontier, and contains reports of the French Agents in Tunis and the Governors-General of Algeria from 1870 to 1881. The second treats of the grave impediments which French influence found in Tunis, and of the unreasonable obstinacy of the Bay. The third contains correspondence about the progress of the expedition till the 2nd May.

The documents assembled in the Livre Jaune could hardly justify the French action. The fact that it was limited to French relations with Tunis begot the suspicion that France's

relations with the European Powers were not wholly satisfactory. There was the feeling that the Ferry Government were hiding something from public opinion. The many despatches abounding in accounts of the razziahs committed by the Tunisian tribes, the statistics about men killed, women wounded, sheep taken, goats lost, camels and asses could only arouse a smile. Yet there was nothing of a sort to justify the serious view taken by the Government. The shortcomings of the *Livre Jaune*, its insufficiency, its lack of information and conviction were soon discovered and played upon by the opposition. The *Livre Jaune* did not pronounce one word in defence of the military organisation of the expedition.

Even the Republican press was not successful in defending the conduct of the Minister of War. The organs of the Conservatives and Extreme Left were quick to discover the weakness of the military steps adopted by Farre, and were not sparing in severe criticism. Not only Farre, the simple "servant of the patron", was ridiculed, Saint-Hilaire and Grévy and the whole republican military system was subjected to merciless attacks. The "*Figaro*" of April 16th, stated that "ce qui se passe pour cette affaire de Tunisie défie la description. Dieu seul sait que je n'ai pas envie de rire quand de braves soldats, appelés de quatre coins de la France vont tomber sous les balles des chenapans qui embellissent les carrières d'Amerique de la Tunisie." The "*National*" pointed to the existence of regiments without colonels and colonels without regiments. The "*Intransigeant*" inquired whether France ever drew any benefit from the deplorable experience of 1870. The "*Petit Parisien*" went so far as to declare that the French army existed only on

paper and could be seen "dans les cartons" in the War Ministry. (1)

"L'armée," it wrote, "après avoir livré à l'ennemi, est maintenant livrée aux avocats, Ce ne sont pas les Prussiens qui lui ont fait le plus de mal, ce sont les républicains C'est vous républicains, vous qui avez sacrifié l'armée, c'est-à-dire la patrie à votre intérêt personnel, à vos rancunes. Que votre organisation militaire est défectueuse. Que votre Minister de la guerre est incapable. Il faut changer l'une et l'autre, Il faut avoir un ministre qui fasse moins de politique et plus d'administration." (2)

But the short time in which the expedition discharged its duty, disarmed temporarily the opposition from further developing its attacks.

VI. Conquest of Tunis.

Before the French began their military operations they informed the Bey on the 6th April of their decision to cross the frontier and demanded the co-operation of his troops. With this communication the Bey could not comply. His argument throughout had been that so long as he was left alone he could keep order, but that foreign interference would only provoke native hostility and perhaps resistance. He, therefore, declined to assume responsibility for the consequences which French action might cause. As to the invasion of his territory he could only protest to Europe against the

(1) (2) After the "Figaro" of Apr. 14, 1881.

deliberate violation of his rights and of international law. But he would avoid a military contest with France, his troops would withdraw before the advance of French soldiers.

The Bay's pleadings did not impress France. Roustan, however, seized this opportunity to inform Es-Sadik of French readiness to disembark troops to preserve order in the capital. As the Bay refused to listen to this proposal, the French Government declared that they would hold him together with the Prime Minister responsible for any violence against foreigners.

On the 24th April French troops assembled on the frontier. On the same day they crossed the frontier without meeting with any real opposition. Kaf and Tabarca were taken without serious struggle. The protests of the Bay to France and to the other Powers went unheeded. Owing to the great natural obstacles, the non-existence of roads, a torrential rain, the progress of the troops was somewhat delayed. The indiscipline shown by one of the regiments which necessitated the removal of its officer, the desertion of some Algerian horsemen caused some anxiety in France. Still the Bay was not brought to his senses; he showed no glimpse of a desire to accept the French protectorate. He even entertained the hope of Europe interfering on his behalf. He had received assurance from Constantinople that the Porte was acting and that a Turkish fleet was on its way to Goletta.

It was hoped in France that the demonstration of force in the Khamirland might be sufficient to frighten the Bay, but this hope did not materialise. The French Government had foreseen that eventuality. Therefore on the 1st of May the other expedition under Bréart landed at Bizerta and occupied the

town. From there it proceeded to the capital. After the fall of Bizerta the Bay requested the mediation of the Powers "placing unreservedly his own fate and the destiny of his State at their disposal", but this last effort was in vain. Even from Turkey help was not forthcoming, while French troops were getting nearer to the capital. On the 12th May they were seen camping a mile and a half from Kasr-es-Said.

Roustan met Bréart and gave him two copies of the treaty, and then presented the General to the Bay. It was 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Roustan assured Es-Sadik that Bréart would present to his Highness an arrangement which secured the Bay's rights and those of his dynasty and which respected the territorial integrity of his country. At the same time the arrangement stipulated guarantees for the mutual interests of France and Tunis. It was now the General who described the object of his mission and proceeded to read the treaty. Es-Sadik was given till 9 o'clock to make his final decision. The Council of State assembled in another room, while the French representatives waited. In the Council voices were raised rejecting the treaty. But after two hours the Bay appeared again with the two copies signed.

At 8 o'clock on the 12th May 1881 the practical independence which the Bays had for so long enjoyed came to an end. The character of French-Tunisian relations was finally settled. France was at last satisfied. The Bay was to be "entouré d'un redoublement d'égards et de prévenances,"⁽¹⁾ but to be deprived of real power. Roustan was nominated a diplomatic representative of the first class and appointed

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 533. Saint-Hilaire to Roustan May 13, 1881.

Resident with an authority all supreme. And a special ship was sent to carry back the Treaty. The terms of the Treaty are :

Le Gouvernement de la République française et celui de S. A. le Bey de Tunis; Voulant empêcher à jamais le renouvellement des desordres qui se sont produits recemment sur les frontières des deux Etats et sur le littoral de la Tunisie, et désireux de resserrer leurs anciennes relations d'amitié et de bon voisinage, ont resolu de conclure une convention à cette fin, dans l'intérêt des deux hautes parties contractantes.

En consequence, le President de la République française a nommé pour son plénipotentiaire M. le général Bréart, . . . qui est tombé d'accord avec S. A. le Bey sur les stipulations suivantes :

Article 1 Les traités de paix, d'amitié et de commerce et toutes autres conventions existant actuellement entre la République française et S. A. le Bey de Tunis sont expressément confirmés et renouvelés.

Article 2 En vue de faciliter au gouvernement de la République Française l'accomplissement des mesures qu'il doit prendre pour atteindre le but que se proposent les hautes parties contractantes, S. A. le Bey de Tunis consent à ce que l'autorité militaire française fasse occuper les points qu'elle jugera nécessaires pour le rétablissement de l'ordre et la sécurité de la frontière et du littoral. Cette occupation cessera lorsque les autorités militaires françaises et tunisiennes auront reconnue, d'un commun accord, que l'administration locale est en état de garantir le maintien de l'ordre,

Article 3 Le Gouvernement de la République française prend l'engagement de prêter un constant appui à S. A. le Bey de Tunis contre tout danger qui menacerait la personne ou la dynastie de Son Altesse ou qui compromettrait la tranquillité des ses Etats.

Article 4 Le Gouvernement de la République française se porte garant de l'exécution des traités actuellement existants entre le gouvernement de la Régence et les divers puissances européennes.

Article 5 Le Gouvernement de la République française sera représenté auprès de S. A. le Bey de Tunis par un Ministre Résident, qui veillera à l'exécution du présent acte et qui sera l'intermédiaire des rapports du gouvernement français avec les autorités tunisiennes pour toute les affaires communes aux deux pays.

Article 6 Les agents diplomatiques et consulaires de la France en pays étrangers sont chargés de la protection des intérêts tunisiens et des nationaux de la Régence. En retour, S. A. le Bey s'engagera à ne conclure aucun acte ayant un caractère international sans en avoir donné connaissance au gouvernement de la République française et sans s'être entendu préalablement avec lui.

Article 7 Le Gouvernement de la République française et le Gouvernement de S. A. le Bey de Tunis se réservant de fixer d'un commun accord les bases d'une organisation financière de la Régence qui soit de nature à assurer le service de la dette publique et à garantir les droits des créanciers de la Tunisie.

Article 8 Une contribution de guerre sera imposée aux tribus insoumises de la frontière et du littoral. Une convention ultérieure en déterminera les chiffres et le mode de recouvrement, dont le gouvernement de S.A. le Bey se porte responsable.

Article 9 Afin de protéger contre la contrebande des armes et des munitions de guerre les possessions algériennes de la République Française, le Gouvernement de S.A. le Bey de Tunis s'engage à prohiber toute introduction d'armes ou de munitions de guerre sur l'île de Djerba, le port de Gabès ou les autres port du sud de la Tunisie.

Article 10 Le présent traité sera soumis à la ratification du gouvernement de la République française et l'instrument de ratification sera remis à S.A. le Bey de Tunis dans le plus bref délai possible.

CHAPTER VI.

THE REACTION OF FRENCH AND EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION TO THE TUNIS EXPEDITION.

1. *The Reaction in France.*

The French military operations did not end with the signature of the Treaty. The tribes of the South and East had entertained the hope that the French operations would be confined to the Western frontier of the Regency. They did not know that the French had already decided to settle the fate of the whole Regency. The submission of the Bay without any struggle removed what remains of respect the Bardo had still preserved. The emissaries of the Porte in Tripoli penetrated no doubt into the Regency and did nothing to contribute to the maintenance of good feeling towards France. The declaration of the Sultan that he did not recognise the Treaty of the 12th May gave the insurrection against the French a legal and religious character. The fact that French troops stayed only one day in the capital confirmed the insurgents in the belief that France was afraid of native resistance. The encouragement of Italian agents helped to arouse passions against France.

No sooner did the majority of the French troops leave again for France and Algeria than the insurrection broke out in the South and East under the leadership of 'Ali Ibn Khalifah. The outbreak was in June, the intolerable summer heat came to the assistance of the insurgents. The French declared that they would co-operate with the Bay in suppressing the revolt, but most of the Bay's troops deserted. The green standard of the Prophet was hoisted, the "Gihad" against the French was announced. Communications were cut and panic prevailed in the capital. To make things worse Abou Amema was threatening a dangerous uprising in Algeria, while the greater part of Tunis was overrun by Arab and Berber horsemen.

The French Government had entertained the hope that Tunis would settle down and that a small army of occupation would suffice. Now they were faced with the problem of reconquering the Regency. The suppression of the insurrection needed the co-operation of the Mediterranean fleet with land forces. A new military expedition constituted of 45,000 men was placed under the command of General Saussier, one of the most important soldiers of the Republic. Action was hastily but strongly taken for the fate of the Republic itself in France was implicated. Gabès and Sfax were bombarded by the fleet. The French forces occupied Tunis and strategic points, and marched into Kairowan, the head-quarters of the insurgents. By October the Tunisian insurrection had collapsed. The tribes had put a splendid fight, but modern warfare is not a question of bravery alone. Their courage was their undoing for their dauntless charges were shattered by artillery. Organisation and the sense of solidarity were entirely lacking in the revolt. Family feuds, tribal jealousies, the total absence of the

sentiment of nationality, all tended to bring about the failure of the insurrection. And as the promised Turkish help never came, most of the insurgents who escaped unharmed fled to Tripoli. The Eastern frontier of the Regency remained for some time exposed to their frequent raids.

It was during the summer of 1881, during the second military campaign, that opposition to the Tunisian policy of the Government reached its height. While military operations were being carried out under the excessive heat of the African sun, the Government and opposition were waging an excited electoral campaign. What prestige the Government had gained when they presented parliament with the Protectorate was lost when news of the insurrection reached Paris. The hardships which French soldiers underwent made the expedition somewhat unpopular. And considerable irritation was felt, when it became suddenly known that the Government intended to fix the date of the elections in August instead of September. This opportunity was eagerly seized by the Right and Extreme Left to advance their political interests. The Tunisian question became a political platform of the first importance. The summer recess of parliament directed the energies of the opposition to attacks in the press and to meetings of indignation. Whether in the press, in meetings or in parliament, the criticisms of the Government's Tunisian policy could be placed in four main categories. In the first place the Government had violated the Constitution by making war without the sanction of parliament. Secondly they had undertaken a war to promote private not national interests. Thirdly the military policy of the Govern-

ment had been defective; the military organisation of the expedition had been detrimental to the discipline and efficiency of the army. Troops had been hastily withdrawn before they could establish enduring order. Lastly, the Tunisian policy of the Government had modified to her prejudice the position of France in Europe.

The criticism of the Right was on the whole more serious, more moderate, and more balanced than that of the Extreme Left. The arguments of the Right were essentially based on the belief that a republican government, with its instability, with its complete dependence on the fickle and badly informed public opinion, was not in a position to pursue a serious or a constant foreign policy. The only practical policy which France could safely follow, they contended, was one of "recueillement", concentrated on continental affairs, which were of direct and vital interest to France. The criticism of the Right was mainly directed against the imperialistic policy which the Ferry Government were inaugurating. The Right found a great mouthpiece in the Duc de Broglie who arose from his lazy "salon" life to defend the cause of "recueillement." The Senate was the place where the serious criticism of the Right was made.

In the sitting of July 25th 1881, the Duc de Broglie in a long and well-reasoned speech pointed out the divergence between the Government's professions and the Government's actions. He emphasised the new difficulties which the Treaty of the Bardo was creating for France. The "second Algeria", according to him, would be an embarrassment to the first, for the subjection of the second Algeria would need money,

men and effort which France direly needed for the consolidation of her position in Europe. The treaty, de Broglie argued, would entangle France unnecessarily in interminable difficulties with the other Powers who enjoyed the privileges of the Capitulations. On her Eastern frontier France would have no longer a weak Bay. Was France going to bring the Sultan also to his senses, de Broglie asked. The Conservative leader concluded by protesting against presenting parliament with accomplished facts. (1)

The criticism and the attacks of the Extreme left were violent in the press and unsparing in the Lower House. In the press, unique ridicule, attacks and even insults were directed by Rochefort in the "Intransigeant". "La Justice", the organ of Clemenceau, followed the example of her sister Extreme Left paper. Such organs of the press did not confine their attacks to the foreign policy of the Government, but with equal violence they attacked the character and integrity of the Ministers and their republican supporters. From the very beginning the "Intransigeant" described the Tunis expedition as "l'aventure et l'affaire ténébreuse", Gambetta as a dictator aspiring to play the rôle of Marius, and as a "Genois de la decadence": Farre was a "mobilisateur", Saint-Hilaire a "pro-sateur", and Ferry "meriting nothing less than deportation"; all "impitoyables (et) ennemis de la France". It maintained

(1) Journal Officiel. Jul. 26, 1881.

In the Lower House, Delafosse and Cuneo d'Ornano, both Bonapartists, made similar criticism on different occasions but met with much less attention.

that "la guerre annoncée par les impatients... est une simple entreprise financière." (1) It wrote:

"Celui qui a inventé les Kroumirs est évidemment un homme très fort. Les Kroumirs: ces mythes, ces fantômes, ces êtres de raison.

Nous sommes sûrs que le cabinet Ferry offrirait trente mille francs à qui lui procurerait un Kroumir, à fin de pouvoir montrer à l'armée... Il y a lieu de croire que finalement tout ce qui restera du châtement exemplaire que le Gouvernement feint de vouloir appliquer à ces prétendus pirates, ce sera une affiche des Folies Bergère, annonçant l'exhibition d'un chef Kroumir qui entrera en scène à neuf heures du soir.

Les Kroumirs vous avaient volé infiniment des bestiaux, que certains français se proposaient dévaliser d'actionnaires...

Vous n'aurez pas la Tunisie et vous perdrez l'Algérie. Nos lecteurs verront plus loin que l'affaire de Tunis est un vol qualifié, compliqué d'assassinat.... Voilà pourquoi cinquante mille soldats sont allés mourir d'insolation et de misère.... Jecker a été fusillé par la Commune. Nous nous demandons s'il méritait plus la mort que les pandours qui, à l'instar du Thénadier des Misérables, vont voler des millions sur les cadavres. M.M. Gambetta et Roustan avaient formé une association dont le but était de faire tomber aux prix du papier les obligations de la dette tunisienne." (2)

(1) Lyons had reported: "As in all these French expeditions, there is a vast amount of dirty pecuniary stock jobbing interests." See Granville Papers. (G. D. 29). Vol. 171. To Granville. Mar. 13, 1881.

(2) Apr. 5, 8, 9, 21, 28. May 12; Jun. 19, 24, Jul. 1, 2, 1881. See also Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 4. no. 148. of Sep. 27, 1881.

In the Lower House, the attacks were led by Clemenceau. In the sittings of May 23rd and November 8th the great Radical voiced the Extreme Left's disapproval of the foreign policy of the Jules Ferry Ministry. It had led, in his eyes, to the loss of friendships cultivated on the battle field. He stressed the opinion that the Government had been actuated in their action by such private interests as the Goletta Railway, the Enfida and the Crédit Foncier. But his motion on the 10th November for the formation of a commission of investigation to assess responsibility failed to win any obvious support.⁽¹⁾ Despite all its strength and violence, all opposition failed to achieve its ends. The elections of the autumn of 1881 proved that the country was not much impressed by the agitation of either Right or Extreme Left. These elections returned 85 Conservatives, 28 Radicals and 370 Republicans. Parliament was not inclined to give serious consideration to the arguments of de Broglie and Clemenceau. "Everyone", wrote Lyons, "seemed gratified with the safe exhibition of chauvinism."⁽²⁾

The chief reason which contributed to this result was mainly the solidarity displayed by the Left on the question of the expedition. Gambetta, Grévy, Ferry, Saint-Hilaire, Waddington and Freycinet forgot their petty differences to bring the Tunis campaign to a successful end. The defence made by the republican press had also a great influence on public opinion. But the one man who took upon himself the onerous task of defending the new experiment in imperialism was not the leader of the Republican party; he was not the Foreign

(1) Journal Officiel. May 24, Nov. 9, 11, 1881.

(2) Granville Papers. (G.D.29). Vol. 171. Private. To Granville. May 24. 1881.

Minister, but strangely enough he was the Prime Minister himself, Jules Ferry.

Before April 4th, 1881, the name of Ferry was not mentioned as having possessed any great influence on foreign policy. There is no record available on the part which was played by Ferry in determining action in the spring of 1881. It is not even definitely known whether he was among the advocates of action or those of waiting, though judging by his later conduct it might possibly be safe to place him among the enthusiasts for active measures. Ferry was a man of ability and energy; and though he lacked suppleness, he was a fierce but balanced antagonist. Unlike Waddington and Freycinet, he was a great orator; but he was not a great parliamentary tactician, an art in which Gambetta excelled. A lawyer himself, and son of a lawyer, Ferry knew how to appeal to feeling and imagination. But the calculated judgment of the man of the North, of Alsace, was not absent either. Ferry believed that as a great nation with great interests and ambitions, France could not resort permanently to a policy of abstention and inaction. To secure, to develop and to extend the French patrimony was with him a sacred duty. He could not think of France playing the part of a great Belgium or being reduced to the political status of Spain. In his speeches and writings he expressly asserted France's need for a vigorous imperialistic and colonial policy. The part which he played in defending the Tunisian policy of the Government and the colonial policy as a whole made him deservedly the father of modern French colonialism.

For Tunis, Ferry preferred a protectorate. The reasons which he gave show his great insight and sense of the practicable:

“Le Protectorat tunisien”, he wrote, “nous fait l’économie d’une guerre de religion.... Le Protectorat n’édifie pas sur une table rase. La métropole d’échargée, grâce à lui, des responsabilités du gouvernement direct, le laisse agir, reprendre son temps.... C’est dans le milieu même, hostile ou refractrice, dont la tutelle lui est confiée, qu’il est obligé de trouver ses moyens de gouvernement. Les gouvernements orientaux ont de grands vices, mais, par leurs ressorts intimes, par leurs racines profondes, ils tiennent au temperament traditionnel, à la constitution sociale, intellectuelle et morale des peuples qui les subissent. Se flatter qu’on les transformera d’un coup de baguette en gouvernements à la mode d’Occident, c’est une folie chimère. Notre devoir est d’introduire dans le monde oriental ce qui manque le plus à la barbarie corrompue; la justice et le contrôle.”(1)

Yet the declarations which Ferry made in parliament concerning the Tunis question were not always consistent. This was partly deliberate, his Government wanted to win the laurels of victory without appearing to be involved in war. The unexpected development of the problem, the outbreak of a dangerous insurrection after the signature of the Bardo Treaty crushed the Government’s hopes and revealed their want of frankness. On April 4th and 11th Ferry had declared that the sole aim of the military expedition was the signal punishment of certain unruly tribes of the frontier. His

(1) Préface des Affaires de la Tunisie.
For the writings, speeches of Ferry, see Robiquet :
Discours et Opinions de Jules Ferry.

statement on May 13th that the Tunis question was entering the stage of negotiation was lacking in truth. It was long after the signature of the Treaty that Ferry frankly told parliament that, in invading Tunisian territory, France had the double aim of punishing the Khamirs and of obtaining solid guarantees for the future. In the sittings of 5th - 9th November he firmly denied that the Government had deceived parliament for "no body" he declared, "could suppose for a moment that the expedition was simply to chastise a few Kroumirs."

Ferry's speech of November 5th in the Lower House is remarkable for its power, length and variegated arguments. Against the usual custom, he began the debate enlisting geography and history in support of his arguments. He criticised carefully what arguments the Right and Extreme Left could produce. His appeal to the sense of patriotism, to the civilising mission of France rose to such a pitch:

"L'expédition de la Tunisie", declared Ferry, c'est la France qui la faisait, c'est la France qui la voulait, et qui l'a acclamée. Elle l'a acclamée, non pas comme une promesse de victoires militaires, de ces victoires faciles, du fort contre le faible, mais par un sentiment plus élevé, comprenant fort bien qu'il y avait là un grand intérêt national à sauvegarder, et qu'en allant en Tunisie, elle faisait de la tâche glorieuse que ses destinées lui ont confiée: le triomphe de la civilisation sur la barbarie, la seule forme de l'esprit de conquête que la morale moderne puisse admettre."

His careful persual of the evolution of the French traditional policy towards Tunis was as correct as it was convincing.

But his stress on the importance of the frontier incidents was unnecessary and lacking in sincerity. His argument that France lost no friendships through her action, that the Porte has emphasised its good-will towards France, and that Italy still valued French friendship by concluding the commercial treaty, could not carry conviction.

The inconsistencies of Ferry's declarations, the fact that Saint-Hilaire cut a poor figure in the Senate as he defended the Government's policy, and the glaring defects of the *Livre Jaune* exposed the Government's lack of confidence, tact and straightforwardness. Saint-Hilaire was "a little garrulous", but not a convincing speaker. The pretexts for the expedition he had described as its motives and his defence was wanting in logic, his academic interests and Greek studies proved of no practical use in influencing his political arguments. The pointed criticism of the military policy of the Government made by Amedée Le Faure who visited several garrisons and camps in Tunis was damaging to the Ministry's position. The zeal and length of Ferry's defence of the Government's procedure gave the impression that they felt guilty of deceiving parliament. In the sitting of November 10th in the Chamber confusion prevailed. A dozen orders of the day were proposed and rejected, and matters seemed to be approaching a deadlock, when Gambetta intervened to save the situation. He proposed this order of the day: "La Chambre résolue à l'exécution intégrale du traité souscrit par la Nation française passe à l'ordre du jour." Having completed this task the Ferry Ministry bowed before the nation's desire to have Gambetta directing its destinies. They tendered their resignation on the 11th November.

During the Gambetta Ministry, the Right and Extreme Left were loud in demanding the reinstatement of the political status of the Regency before the signature of the Treaty. Pellatan and de Broglie demanded "l'abandon" of the protectorate, for the first results of the Treaty, as they pointed out, were revolt, disorder and strained relations with the European Powers. The difficulties which the Protectorate had to face, it was added, were financial, military and diplomatic. France had to guarantee the Tunisian debt and to establish military garrisons for an indefinite period. It was Gambetta who championed the cause of the protectorate and who established its foundations.⁽¹⁾

II. *The British Attitude.*

The attitude of Great Britain towards the French military campaign was neutral but not benevolent. In the House of Commons Mr. Montague Guest showed great interest in the happenings in Tunis. He kept up a continuous correspondence with Broadley, who enjoyed in 1881 a unique position in the Bardo. On several occasions, Guest protested against French procedure respecting the Enfida, and inquired whether Britain had received assurances from the French Government with regard to the maintenance of the status quo in Tunis. In the pages of the "Times" and the "Standard" he found scope for developing his views on French diplomacy. A similar attitude was taken by Sir Drummond Wolff. In the Upper

(1) Senate. Sitting of Dec. 18, 1881.

House Lord de la Warr took upon himself the task of defending the cause of Tunis. He stressed the British interest in the independence of the Regency, declared that she constituted a part of the Turkish Empire, and praised the calmness of the Bay in face of the French high-handed measures. Lord Stanley of Alderley pointed to the danger arising from the unwarranted French action, wondered whether the Salisbury-Waddington deal in Berlin was true and seized this opportunity to condemn "the baseness of the whole of the policy called peace with honour." (1)

After the signature of the Treaty, it became necessary that papers should be presented to Parliament. But the papers published on May 20th failed to put an end to criticism of the French conduct. Lord de la Warr protested vehemently against the glaring breach of international law, referred to the hostility of the Khamirs as non-existent, and wondered whether any value could be attached to further French assurances. Lord Alderley trusted that Granville "would not look upon the Treaty as in any obligation or final." (2)

The sentiments expressed by the British press was not more friendly. In the press as in Parliament, sympathy was on the side of the Bay, the Porte and Italy; but no action was advocated against France. "The Times", taking the lead, showed great interest in the fate of the Regency, but its correspondent in Tunis, Broadley, was an entirely biased spectator. "The Times" declared from the beginning that the French

(1) Hansard. Parliamentary Debates. Sittings of Feb. 7, 8, 10, 21, 22 24. Mar. 10, 22, 25. Apr. 5, 7, 8.

(2) Sittings of May 19, 24, 27.

aim was "to bring to reason the Bay himself." Some of its leading articles were devoted to the criticism of the French procedure. With sarcasm it talked of "the glorious progress" of the French army in a land where it met with "no very formidable antagonist." It was "the Times" which argued that the French must not be left alone to decide the balance of power in the Mediterranean, "the Power that holds Malta must be consulted as to the disposal of Tunis."⁽¹⁾ The French conduct, according to "the Times", had shocked and disappointed British public opinion." A day after the signature of the Treaty of the Bardo, the "Times" wrote:

"It would be idle to pretend that this action of France will not somewhat weaken the sympathy and friendship that are entertained towards her in England.... There is no denying that France has done herself harm with English public opinion by this Tunisian affair. It must be admitted that France has lately been submitting our friendship to tests of some severity. In all the difficult negotiations which have marked the latest stages of the Eastern crisis, this country has received no help from France, but rather the reverse, and dangerously has been compromised by her withdrawal at a critical stage."⁽²⁾

The language of "the Standard" was not so moderate. It wondered whether France should be permitted to gather without hindrance the fruits of her "duplicity and audacity." It referred to the French action as "an outrageous violation

(1) April 14, May 14.

(2) May 13.

of international law and public morality." "No one", it wrote, "can help perceiving, that since the time of the fable of the wolf and the lamb, never has there been so audacious an inversion of parts between an aggressor and his victim."⁽¹⁾ A similar tone was adopted by "the Daily Telegraph." "The Daily Telegraph" pointed to French ambitions as striving to make the Mediterranean a French lake. "France is on her feet again," it added, "is ready to run risks, is as militant and unscrupulous as of old."⁽²⁾

The Government shared the apprehensions of public opinion, and their attitude could not be described as very favourable to France. Despite the fact that Granville saw that "he had no right to interfere with the French in Tunis," especially after "the Cyprus episode" and "the definite declarations of Salisbury", yet he was aware that the French "were playing the part of the Wolf against the lamb" and was not therefore prepared to give them a *carte blanche*. "Our best policy," he supposed, "is to do nothing to irritate the French unnecessarily, and at the same time do nothing to reassure them about the results."⁽³⁾ This was the policy he followed. His statement that "France could not be allowed to seize Tunis without the consent of Turkey or any communication with Europe,"⁽⁴⁾ expresses a passing desire not a calculated opinion. For Granville was no friend of the Turks and was not even

(1) May 4, 11. See also Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 4. no. 9. Lacour to Saint-Hilaire May 16, 1881.

(2) May 12, 14, 16.

(3) Granville Papers. (G. D. 29) Vol. 137. Private. To Northbrook. Apr. 19, May 13. Also. Vol 124. Private. To Gladstone. Apr. 27.

(4) Ibid. Vol. 202. Private. To Lyons. Apr. 6.

ready to protest against the violation of Turkish territorial integrity. Moreover he was not prepared to co-operate with Italy in putting diplomatic pressure upon France.

No wonder then that he confidentially instructed Lyons to appear "as mysterious as he could to what might be our attitude,"⁽¹⁾ and to point out to the French Government that Britain recognized Tunis as part of the Ottoman Empire. Officially, however, Granville did not show any sign of objection to the French confining their action to the chastisement of the unruly tribes of the frontier. He even instructed Reade not only to assume an entirely neutral attitude, but also to advise the Bay to co-operate with the French in subduing the turbulent tribes. Granville, moreover, did not give any great attention to Italian appeals for concerted action against France.

Nevertheless, his language and the remarks of Dilke to Challemeil-Lacour lacked the ring of sincerity. The fervent efforts of the French Ambassador to remove the "scrupules théoriques" of Great Britain met with coldness on the British side. Gladstone pleaded complete ignorance; Dilke, who thought that "the French Ministers reminded him painfully of the members of the Metropolitan Board of Works", looked reserved, while Granville confined himself to expressions of regret that the jealousy between France and Italy had reached an acute form. In Paris, Lyons was aware of the fact "the French language was transparently humbugging throughout,"⁽²⁾ and appeared cynical, while Goschen in Constantinople was not well-disposed towards France.⁽³⁾

(1) Ibid. Vol. 202. Apr. 6.
 (2) Granville Papers. (G. D. 29). Vol. 171. Private. May 13, 1881.
 (3) See Post The Turkish Attitude.

The French conquest of Bizerta which was only 45 miles from the capital, awakened Granville to the gravity of the situation. It led him to consider diplomatic action to check further French aggression. An overture was therefore made to Germany through Lord Dufferin suggesting European mediation between France and the Bay. But the British proposal failed to meet with any favourable response.⁽¹⁾ The firm support of Germany, and the rapidity of French action left Granville no alternative but to accept the accomplished fact. The warnings of Lyons respecting French sensitiveness on the subject of Tunis were not wasted. The other members of the cabinet believed that the clearly recorded declarations of Salisbury had taken the ground from under their feet. Gladstone showed no interest in Tunisian affairs. Bright urged that "we should not make the stir about Tunis, which we made about Algiers fifty years ago." "Had we not enough upon our hands," he remonstrated. Though Northbrook believed that "the most dangerous thing to British interests in the Mediterranean had already been done by the virtual annexation of Tunis and the consequent possession of the French of the port of Bizerta", yet he did not advocate hostile measures against the French. In fact all the members of the cabinet were unanimous on the impracticability of even protest, the French action was justified in their conscience as a counterbalance to the British occupation of Cyprus.⁽²⁾

(1) See Post The Attitude of Germany.

(2) Granville Papers (G. D. 29). Vol. 143. See also Vol 210. Granville to Goschen. May 13, 1881.

It is not surprising therefore that Granville contented himself with the task of reminding France of her repeatedly declared intention not to occupy or annex the Regency. "Her Majesty's Government", he informed France, "dit not view with jealousy the assertion of French influence, so long as it was not exercised in a manner contrary to established Treaty rights or detrimental to the legitimate interests of British subjects". (1) Nevertheless Granville did not hide his dissatisfaction with the inconsistent and contradictory assurances which the French Government had repeatedly made to Britain. In a lengthy despatch he recorded the views of the British Government on the question of Tunis and pointed out the lack of frankness which characterised French declarations.

"Her Majesty's Government", wrote Granville, "cannot conceal from themselves that proceedings of a military nature such as have been instituted by the French, the occupation of Bizerta, the destruction of the fort at Tabarca, seem to be directed to some object beyond the mere chastisement of the disorderly Arab tribes on the frontier. Any measures which would affect the existing state of the African provinces on the Mediterranean could not be a matter of indifference to the European Powers, many of whom, like Great Britain, have special treaties with Tunis, entitling them to most favoured treatment in the Regency, while all would, it is presumed, lay claim to such treatment under their treaties with the Porte. Her Majesty's Government do not desire to give an exaggerated importance to the question

(1) Blue Book, Affairs of Tunis 1881. Granville to Lyons. May 7, 1881.

of Tunis, in its present aspect, or to make any formal proposal of mediation or good offices unless invited to do so by the French Government as well as the Bey; but they cannot ignore entirely the appeals addressed to them by His Highness and by the Porte; still less could they acquiesce tacitly in any arrangements being entered into contrary to their established rights.”(¹)

“Her Majesty’s Government would be wanting in frankness if they allowed M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire to remain under the impression that the proceedings of the French in Tunis have produced a favourable effect on public opinion in this country.

Her Majesty’s Government do not wish to lay too much stress on inconsistencies of language in conversation, or on the various reasons which have been given at Paris and at Tunis for French intervention, first as a protection against the alleged designs of the Sultan for the Bey’s deposition, and secondly for the punishment of the turbulent frontier tribes. But it can hardly be doubted that the Treaty with Tunis goes far beyond any question of the security of the frontier, and amounts practically to a protectorate, which they understood to have been disclaimed.”(²)

After the conclusion of the Bardo Treaty, Lyons, in obedience to his instructions, addressed a note to the French Government, in which he requested Saint-Hilaire to place on record all the assurances France had given respecting firstly

(1) Ibid.

(2) Blue Book. Granville to Lacour. May 20, 1881.

the French intention not to occupy or annex any part of Tunisian territory; secondly the non-transformation of Bizerta to a military port; thirdly the respect of treaties between Britain and the Regency and non-interference with the rights enjoyed by British subjects. Lastly Great Britain stressed the view that no attempt should be made by Paris to secure exclusive privileges for French subjects.⁽¹⁾

The French Government declared in their two notes of the 16th May that the Bardo Treaty gave full satisfaction to British demands. France further promised that no change concerning foreign privileges should be attempted without consulting the Powers interested. As to the establishment at Bizerta of a military port, the French Government engaged that such an attempt would not be made "at present". In acknowledging the French assurances, the British Government recognized the Treaty of the Bardo as fixing the political status of Tunis.⁽²⁾

Granville had no cause to change this attitude as long as British interests were not injuriously affected. Reade was therefore instructed to recognize Roustan as French Resident and as intermediary between the Bay and the representatives of the European Powers. The only complaint Britain made, and this took the form of a friendly advice, was that the consular functions of Roustan should be delegated to another person. There arose also trifling difficulties when the French agents in Egypt and Tripoli claimed the right of protecting Tunisian subjects in these countries.

(1) Blue Book. Lyons to Saint-Hilaire. May 14, 1881.
 (2) Ibid. Lyons to Granville, May 16, 1881.

The Liberal Ministry had to justify their policy before Parliament and public opinion, neither of which was willing to see the French established in Tunis with philosophical indifference. The difficult problem of compiling a Blue Book on Tunis - the choice, the suppression and the modification of dispatches - presented itself. This difficulty was especially felt with regard to the correspondence of 1878 between Salisbury and Waddington. Granville was sufficiently courteous as to consult Salisbury on the problem. The former Foreign Secretary "doubted the expediency of publishing any of those documents", for they were not intended for the public; but he strongly objected to the publication of Waddington's dispatch of July 19th, 1878 in which the French Foreign Minister spoke wildly of an alliance between England and France to check alleged German designs on Holland and Belgium, and which Salisbury thought fit to ignore. (1)

Not all the members of the Gladstone cabinet shared Salisbury's views. Bright thought that "the interests of the public would be served by telling everything to the Parliament and the public". "It is well", he added, "that the public should know how much of evil, of danger has had its origin in the seizure of Cyprus. How much irritation has been caused by it between France and England - between France and Italy". Bright was not the only member to advocate this thesis. Kimberly was of the same opinion. It is true, however, that the members of the cabinet were content with any course

(1) Granville Papers. (G. D. 29). Vol. 143. Private. Salisbury to Granville. May 14, 1881.

Granville would adopt. Though he was glad to lay the whole blame on his predecessor, Granville was reasonable and by no means vindictive. He saw no practicable advantage in publishing the colourful statements of Salisbury concerning "Carthage" and "the Barbarians". (1)

Thus on May 19th Dilke declared in the Commons that the correspondence relating to the affairs of Tunis would be laid before Parliament, and that it would be constituted of five parts; the first would contain diplomatic correspondence previous to 1881; in the second, third and fourth would be published the more recent correspondence; the fifth would relate to the Enfida affair. The papers which constituted the first part were the most important for they acquitted the Gladstone Ministry of all responsibility respecting Tunis. Waddington's despatch of the 21st July which recorded Salisbury's declarations about "Carthage" and "the Barbarians" was suppressed. No reference was made to Waddington's despatch of July 19th. But Granville did not forget to insert in this part his own despatch to Lyons of the 17th June 1880 in which he stated that Britain was not jealous of French predominance in Tunis and that the Regency constituted a part of Turkey. The second, third, and fourth parts contained almost all the important correspondence between Britain on the one side and France, Italy, Turkey and Tunis on the other during the months of March, April, May, June up to July 4th, 1881. Unlike the *Livre Jaune*, the *Blue Book* is a real collection of diplomatic documents; it is of much wider

(1) See Granville Papers. (G. D. 29) Vol. 143.

range, and gives correct information about Britain's relations with the other Powers respecting Tunis. And while the *Livre Jaune* failed to make any deep impression in France, the *Blue Book* was effective in calming passions in England.

As interest in Parliament respecting the affairs of Tunis was confined to a few members who were in contact with Broadley, the sitting of the 27th May in the Lords ended all serious criticism. Lord Granville declared firmly that "in a matter of great importance involving questions of very great delicacy between two great and friendly Governments", he was ready to give details if the Lords desired "a really important discussion on the subject." He was certain all the time that the Tories could not make the Tunisian question a party platform. It is interesting to note that Salisbury courageously rose to defend his own policy. In a vigorous and impressive speech, he declared that Britain had no serious interest in Tunis which could induce her to oppose France. French friendship he believed to be "of the highest importance to this country and to the interest of the world."⁽¹⁾

Yet despite such friendly declarations, the French conduct and the French easy success, did not fail to arouse grave concern in official circles in London. Lyons regarded the French military proceedings as "of evil omen." For though they had not been particularly efficient, they were "hailed with almost unanimous delight by the French people." "Nor does this delight" he added, "seem to be much diminished by the reflection that the expedition was not undertaken

(1) Hansard. Parliamentary Debates. 1881.

without the approval . . . of the German Government, and that the favour shown to it by that Government has been acknowledged with almost humiliating gratitude. (1) Tunis was regarded in England as "the first glass of wine" administered to a convalescent France, "who swallowed it with gusto." (2) Britain was apprehensive lest the convalescent would reach out her hand for a second glass with the approval of Germany, who was regarded in Britain as striving to alienate from France the sympathies of the other Powers. For this reason Lyons gave the warning that Britain must not excite French irritation at this moment, for the result might be a close French-German alliance. For the same reason Britain must not raise with France any question concerning Egyptian affairs. The views of Lyons were confirmed by Walsham, the British Chargé d'affaires in Berlin.(3) Yet the French victory in Tunis directed British attention towards Egypt. The idea that England should receive compensation in Egypt was propagated by the British press. Queen Victoria among others advocated the policy that Britain must assert herself on the Nile(4) But the repeated warnings of Lyons pointing to the danger of such an untimely step, succeeded for the time being in influencing the Foreign Office. The French also made it clear that Britain was entitled to no compensation since their occupation of Tunis was only a counterbalance to the occupation of Cyprus by the British.(5)

(1) F.O. 27/2493. no. 529. To Granville. May 27, 1881. See also F.O. 27/2559. Jan. 3, 1882.

(2) Ibid.

(3) F.O. 64/982. no. 284. To Granville. Jun. 4, 1881.

(4) Letters of Queen Victoria. Vol. 3. p. 223. Letter of Jun. 22, 1881.

(5) Doc. Dip. Fr. T.4. no. 46. Saint-Hilaire to Saint Vallier. Jun. 29, 1881.

Granville himself was not prepared to pick a quarrel with France. But by a strange fatality England found herself in Egypt only one year latter.

III. *The Attitude of Italy.*

The French expedition to Tunis aroused the deepest concern in Italy, for the Italians were conscious from the beginning that the objective of France was far more than the punishment of some unruly tribes. In fact it was believed that the Khamir invasion was fabricated in order to justify French aggression. This view was shared by the greater part of Italian public opinion. "The nation had been encouraged in the idea that any change in the fate of Tunis must necessarily be attended with the gravest consequences not only to the commercial but to the political interests of Italy."⁽¹⁾

The Consulta regarded the news of French action as "of very grave nature." Cairoli was "much agitated" for "the fate of Tunis had atways been and would always be a subject of deep and legitimate public interest to Italy."⁽²⁾ The Italian Minister for Foreign affairs was further alarmed by the number of questions deposited in the Chamber. He hastened to de Noailles for some assurances in order to appease public opinion. The French Ambassador expressed his regret. From England Cairoli did not meet with greater success. On April 6th he had to answer unprepared the questions of parliament.

(1) F.O. 45/428. Paget to Granville. May, 3, 1881.

(2) Blue Book. Paget to Granville. Apr. 7, 1881.

Nevertheless the Italian Prime Minister did not give up all hope; he still counted on the French desire not to alienate Italy. This hope was expressed in such ministerial papers as the "Diritto" and the "Popolo Romano."

In parliament considerable excitement prevailed. The Right accused the Government's policy of shortsightedness and impotence. It referred to the Salisbury-Waddington deal, and pointed out the great menace which a French occupation of Tunis would cause to Italian interests. In reply Cairoli stated that France was entitled to defend her own frontier, and while denying the existence of an understanding between France and Britain about Tunis, he maintained that France had engaged to respect the status quo in the Regency. He added that between Italy and Britain there reigned complete accord on all matters. (1)

The unconvincing declarations of Cairoli failed to impress the deputies who expressed their dissatisfaction. Outside parliament the "Riforma", "Opinione", and "Libertà" insisted on his resignation. It may be remembered that during the whole of April in both parliament and the ministerial press there was care to guard against any references of a hostile nature to France. Though Sella and Crispi regarded a French occupation of Tunis "as an offence to the dignity of Italy," (2) yet both expressed outwardly the most loyal affection for France. (3)

(1) "L'italie" Apr. 7, 8, 1881.

(2) Sitting of Apr. 7 in the Camera.

(3) See "L'italie" Apr. 8, 1881.

Following the advice of the Left leaders, the Ministry resigned on April 7th. Depretis refused to form a Ministry. Sella failed to form a coalition Government of the Right and dissidents of the Left. Cairoli was therefore obliged to remain in office. Meanwhile the excitement in Italy was not destined to subside. The French military measures were considered as characterised by total indifference to Italian interests. The opposition press continued to attack Cairoli as having landed the nation in illusions and isolation. Some organs of the press went so far as to threaten that if France took possession of Tunis, Italy would put her 400,000 troops at the disposal of Germany.⁽¹⁾ But the language of the ministerial press was remarkable for its moderation and conciliatory tone. The "Popolo Romano" went so far as to state that Italy was not yet in a condition to adopt a serious colonial policy.⁽²⁾ The "Diritto" pointed to the necessity of maintaining the most cordial relations with France.⁽³⁾

The hope that Britain might concert her action with that of Italy was still entertained in Rome. In London Menabrea was indefatigable in demanding co-operation in the despatch of ships of war to Tunisian waters and in urging compliance with the Bay's appeal for mediation. For both Menabrea and his chief believed that no diplomatic action would be of any value unless the initiative was taken by Great Britain. But the Italian hopes were to be disappointed. Granville found it advisable to avoid the appearance of anything like combined action with Rome.

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 471. De Noailles to St. Hilaire. Apr. 19, 1881.
(2) April 6.
(3) See numbers of Apr.

The occupation of Bizerta was a heavy blow to Italy. Despite the fact that Depretis had expressed his desire to have an "entente cordiale et fraternelle" with France and though he dismissed the idea of a conflict between the two nations as "completely inadmissible", yet great disappointment and irritation was felt in the Quirinal and Consulta. The hostility of public opinion was bound to increase. For Bizerta was a sensible point for Italy. Its occupation by the French left no doubts about the real intentions of France with regard to the fate of Tunis.

The circular of Saint-Hilaire of the 9th May aggravated the situation. It showed that France would accept nothing less than complete dominance in Tunis. The allusion of the circular to the Bay as being "under foreign and hostile influences" was considered very offensive in Italy. Even the moderate "Popolo Romano" regarded the circular as of "exceptional gravity", while the "Opinione" regretted "its most serious and painful character." The "Riforma" looked upon it as "a slap in the face."⁽¹⁾ Prospects looked very gloomy for Italy. What was Italy going to do? A war with France was impossible. Italy was conscious of her want of power to cope singlehanded with France. Had Italy to beg the support of the Central Powers? It was too late. There prevailed in Rome the belief that Italy had no ally or friend, she had lost indeed the sympathy of Europe. A sense of deep humiliation which Italy had never experienced since 1866 pervaded the country. The Left upon whom the Ministry counted was far from agreeing on a line

(1) See "Times". May 14, 1881.

of policy. The Ministry itself was bewildered and divided. A group led by Cairoli felt so offended as to believe that the French aim was to punish Italy more than the Khamirs. The other represented by Depretis was more interested in internal questions and definitely against any move of a hostile nature to France.⁽¹⁾

The signature of the Bardo Treaty marked the height of tension between France and Italy. The French conquest was regarded as an insult and an injury. "There is no Italian with whom I have spoken" wrote Paget, "who does not express himself to the effect that Italy has been deceived, injured and insulted by the French Government."⁽²⁾ Italy felt isolated and profoundly humiliated. Her estrangement was not likely to be transient. Even the Francophil Garibaldi declared that the French Treaty "had effaced his good opinion of the French Republic which he had served." He seized the opportunity to remind France that Corsica and Nice were no more French than Garibaldi was a Tartar.⁽³⁾ The Consulta could no longer give any credence to French declarations of good-will, though a rupture with France was not seriously considered.⁽⁴⁾

"The Times" of May 14th alleged that as soon as the Bardo Treaty was concluded, the Italian Government communicated with Berlin on the propriety of convening a conference to which France should be invited to submit her Treaty. The

(1) F.O. 45/428. no. 188. Paget to Granville. May 11, 1881.

(2) Ibid. no. 205. Paget to Granville. May 18, 1881.

(3) See his letters of May 19, 21. "Times" May 21, 24, 1881.

(4) F.O. 45/428. nos. 197, 202. Paget to Granville. May 14, 16, 1881.

"Diritto" denied the truth of this allegation. The inquiries which Saint-Vallier made in Berlin confirmed the "Diritto". The French Ambassador was able to gather the information that during the Tunisian campaign Italy had made insinuations about the "incorrigible" conduct and aggression of France. In Rome, according to Saint-Vallier, Keudell had had to listen to "longs exposés de griefs italiens formulés par le Comte de Maffei"; in Berlin de Launay had not been idle. He had made "les plaintes amères"; he had expressed "son regret de voir la France préparer de nouvelles catastrophes comme celles de 1870 en s'aliénant aujourd'hui ses meilleurs amis et en alarmant l'Europe entière par ses vellétés guerrières." De Launay seems even to have had pointed out that France's ulterior aim was to try the efficiency of her young army with the arrière-pensée of attacking Germany. Saint-Vallier, however, came to the conclusion that de Launay did not make the overture mentioned by the "Times".⁽¹⁾ It is true that Cairoli denied to Paget that the Italian Government had made any such appeal to Prince Bismarck. But as long as the Italian Archives are not opened to researchers there is no way of finding the truth concerning the "Time's" allegation. There is no reference whatever in the French or British diplomatic documents to any suggestion of the kind being made to Keudell, the German Ambassador in Rome.

The news of the Bardo Convention made the position of the Cairoli cabinet untenable. On the 13th May hostile interpellations were announced in the Camera. Cairoli declined

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 4. no. 15. To Saint-Hilaire. May 18, 1881.

a discussion of the Tunisian question in parliament in order to avoid an open rupture with France.⁽¹⁾ The Government resigned on the 14th May, Cairoli deciding to attend to his health. Depretis formed a new administration on the 27th. Excitement against France continued. Italy objected to the idea of receiving compensation in Tripoli. She refused to be mixed up in deals which she regarded as dishonourable and contrary to the principles of the Law of nations.⁽²⁾ From Constantinople Corti denied that Italy was offered Tripoli during the Berlin Congress.⁽³⁾ For his part, Saint-Hilaire had not been inclined either to encourage or discourage Italy. Depretis himself was not attracted by the idea of getting Tripoli. Though, in Constantinople, Tissot naively offered Tripoli to Count Corti,⁽⁴⁾ de Noailles thought that the country was too vast to be left to the "impuissantes convoitises des Italiens."⁽⁵⁾

Despite the fact that the Depretis administration was outwardly friendly, the campaign against France was not to be discontinued. It was declared in the press that France was preparing for war and was menacing the very existence of the Italian people. The campaign was led by Crispi in the "Riforma". To Paget, Crispi was "the greatest firebrand in Italy", to the French he was considered as "le grand chef du chauvinisme italien." "Mêlé a toutes sortes d'affaires", wrote de Noailles, "il (Crispi) les transforme en questions nationales, (et) c'est par ce moyen qu'il a gagné le procès de l'oncle Joseph."⁽⁶⁾

(1) F.O. 45/428. no. 205. Paget to Granville. May 18, 1881.

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 4. no. 27. Noailles to Saint-Hilaire. May 29, 1881.

(3) (4) Granville Papers (G. D. 29). Vol. 190. Dufferin to Granville. Sep. 30, Nov. 1, 1881.

(5) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 4. no. 27. May 29, 1881.

(6) Ibid. no. 96. Aug. 14, 1881.

De Noailles believed, moreover, that there prevailed in Italy despite the recent humiliation a vague feeling that Italy was destined to replace France in the Mediterranean.⁽¹⁾

The new Italian Government felt deeply the disadvantage of having France as their southern neighbour, in a position menacing to Sicily and to Calabria. Depretis, himself condemned the French action as "without excuse or justification as it was contrary to all precedent in diplomacy or international procedure." He desired an enduring understanding with Great Britain and wished he could drive a wedge between France and England. "In his opinion," he told Paget, "the Mediterranean must be an English lake."⁽²⁾

But Depretis was more interested in domestic affairs especially the electoral law. Thus Mancini, the new Foreign Minister, with Albert Blanc, the new Secretary-General, exercised great liberty in the direction of Italian foreign relations. The rapprochement with Austria was definitely their work. Mancini was an experienced and great lawyer; he possessed common sense and foresight in diplomacy. He was far from approving the French high-handed action, and viewed with grave concern the menace which the proximity of Bizerta might offer. He held in ridicule the French view that the treaty rights of the other Powers were not affected by the Bardo Convention. His policy was the only possible one Italy could afford to follow. It was a policy of non-recognition and waiting, "a policy of entire passiveness." The Treaty of the

(1) Ibid.

(2) F.O. 45/429. no. 226. Paget to Granville. Jun. 1, 1881.

Bardo was considered of a temporary character and not binding on Tunis. Mancini did not conceal from the French Representative in Rome his view that "the Treaty was without precedent in diplomatic history."⁽¹⁾

As the position of Maccio in Tunis became impossible, he was given an indefinite leave of absence. Mancini, however, instructed the Italian Agent there not to recognize Roustan either as Resident or as the intermediary between the Bay and the representatives of the Powers, but to communicate directly with the Bay. Mancini protested strongly against Roustan occupying the position of French Resident, French Consul and Tunisian Foreign Minister. He complained that Italian exports to Tunis were prevented from entering the Regency under the denomination of contraband of war. He made strong representations about the losses undergone by the Italian colony at Sfax during the French bombardment. He accepted the resignation of Cialdini from the Paris Embassy and was not anxious to appoint a new Ambassador in his stead.

Mancini, however, did his best to calm passions in Italy. He refrained from publishing papers about Tunis, and discharged Cairoli and Cialdini from all responsibility regarding the development of the Tunis question. But unfortunately his endeavours to ease the tension between France and Italy were dangerously disturbed by the Marseilles incident. Hisses were alleged to have been heard from an Italian club during the march of French soldiers who had just returned from Tunis. The Italian club was attacked at once by the mob.⁽²⁾

(1) F.O. 45/431, no. 404. Pégct to Grtnville. Nov. 6, 1881.

(2) This was in June.

Collision between French and Italian workers ensued with many casualties in Southern France. Hostile counter-demonstrations were arranged in Naples, Milan and Messina. The strong measures taken by the two Governments and the moderating influence of both Saint-Hilaire and Mancini averted the danger of a serious conflict.

On questions of foreign policy there seems to have been complete harmony between Mancini and Blanc. Both were aware that in the military and diplomatic fields, Italy could not deal single-handed with France. Hence arose the necessity of finding new allies.⁽¹⁾ The failure to derive any material benefit from British friendship pointed to Central Europe as the only place where Italy could find helpful allies in future adversity. Blanc was convinced that Britain was not prepared to assist Italy against France. On one occasion he had indeed inquired what benefit British policy derived from association with France. It is not surprising therefore that both he and his chief came to advocate the Austrian alliance. It is true that the idea of this alliance was of an earlier origin. It had been seriously considered in the middle of the summer of 1880, as a result of the energetic French drive for monopoly of concessions in Tunis. The idea had found supporters in Governmental circles as well as outside. Cialdini, Crispi and

(1) "Recent events," declared de Launay, "would not tend to increase Italian sympathy for France. On the contrary they must necessarily weaken the confidence of the Italians in the good faith of their neighbour. Indeed, added his Excellency, this was already apparent for the desire (of Italy) . . . to improve the relations with Germany and Austria . . ." "France by her conduct in Tunis opened the eyes of the Italians to what they might expect in the future." See F.O. 64/982. no. 336. Walsham to Granville. Jul. 30, 1881.

Minghetti enthusiastically advocated it. But the majority of the Left had not yet been prepared to sacrifice the friendship of France. After the establishment of the Protectorate such an opposition ceased to exist. The "Irredenta" was openly condemned and rigorous measures were wholeheartedly taken by the Depretis Government to prevent hostile demonstrations against Austria. Blanc found sufficient courage to speak of the Irredentists as "riotous demagogues" and of Italy and Austria as having "every motive and interest for living on the most cordial terms."⁽¹⁾ Indignation against French proceedings was undoubtedly among the chief reasons that prompted Italy to join the Austrian-German alliance. The belief prevailed in Rome that rapprochement with the Central Powers was the only possible way for remedying the humiliation experienced in the summer of 1881. The conclusion of the commercial treaty with France had no great influence upon the political relations between Paris and Rome. "Anti-French feeling now reigns supreme in this country", reported Paget on November 10th, 1881. "In fact", he added, "it would not, I think, be going too far to say that without the French expedition to Tunis, and the various irritating circumstances towards Italy, with which it was accompanied, ... the journey to Vienna, however desirable in itself as a means of placing the relations between Italy and Austria upon a proper footing never should have been thought of by the Ministry now in office; the French Government and Press may therefore consider themselves responsible for the new political situation which Italy had

(1) F.O. 45/431. no. 400. Paget to Granville. Oct. 25, 1881.

created for herself in her foreign relations, or in other words, for having brought Italy into intimate relations with Austria and Germany.”(1)

The efforts of Gambetta to prevent this alliance from taking place by refraining from the annexation of the Regency, by promises of reparations(2) and by his tempting offers to the Italian press,(3) were of no avail in improving the relations between the two countries. For France to regain the good-will of her neighbour, she must withdraw her soldiers from Tunis, a step which Gambetta or any French Minister could never consider. The “Opinione” stated that relations between France and Italy would never improve “unless France did not think herself the sole arbiter of Tunisian destiny.” The view taken by the Italian Government was not different. It was clearly outlined by the Secretary-General:

“It was impossible”, said Blanc, “while matters continued on their present footing that relations between Italy and France could resume their former cordiality. He did not wish to contest the right of France to a predominant political influence in the Regency. Italy would be satisfied to have only such an amount of influence as was necessary for the protection of the interests of her citizens. But according to the present arrangements the authority of the Bay existed only in name. A permanent occupation or annexation

(1) F.O. 45/431. no. 409. To Granville. Nov. 10, 1881.

(2) The details of these reparations are not known.

(3) He had already gained “L’Italie” and the “Pungolo” of Naples to the French side.

of the Regency by France with Bizerta within eight hours sail of the Italian coast, would be a standing menace to Italy, which it would be impossible for her to continue to tolerate."(1)

The French declaration that the Bardo Treaty definitely settled the fate of Tunis, the obvious rapprochement between Germany and the Papacy, the agitation against the Monarchy overcame the opposition of Depretis and Zanardelli to the idea of the Austrian alliance. In the spring of 1882 the Triple alliance was signed. But both Germany and Austria indicated that the alliance did not imply any hostile feeling towards France or any opposition to her policy in North Africa. The diplomatic defeat in the summer of 1881 did not lead Italy to neglect her other Mediterranean or colonial interests. In the affairs of Egypt she demanded an "even subordinate influence" but was insistent on participation if the situation there deteriorated to European prejudice. A part of Italian attention was directed to Assab Bay, while the exploration of Tripoli was begun by a scientific, geographic and military mission, and unofficial contact was made with the chieftains of the tribes there.

IV. *The attitude of Turkey.*

Early in 1878 England, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy recognized the Regency as a Turkish province. The Pan-Islamic idea had naturally directed more Turkish attention

(1) F.O. 45/432. no. 56. Paget to Granville. Feb. 23, 1882.

to the affairs of Tunis, despite the fact that the Sultan had sufficient on his hands in Constantinople. 'Abd-ul-Hamid could not view with indifference a French protectorate over Tunis. As soon as the French declared their decision to punish the unruly Tunisian tribes, the Turkish Government hastened to instruct the Bay to remove the French pretext by taking himself prompt measures to restore order on the frontier. The Regent was also instructed to give complete and immediate satisfaction to legitimate French demands. The instructions of the Porte were couched in the most prudent terms, though the language of the Turkish press, inspired by the Government, and excited by the agitation of public opinion, was by no means friendly to the Bay.⁽¹⁾

In Paris, Essad Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador, protested against the violation of the sovereign rights of the Porte. He expressed the desire of Turkey, however, to negotiate directly with France on the question of the frontier or to mediate between France and the Bay. Both proposals were rejected by Saint-Hilaire who declared that all French Governments had refused to recognize the existence of any political tie between the Porte and the Bardo. He could not therefore accept any official conversation with the Porte on the subject of Tunis.⁽²⁾

In Constantinople the Sultan was "very anxious indeed with regard to the question and looked exceedingly grave."

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 473. Tussot to St. Hilaire. April 22 and "Terjiman Hakikat", a Turkish organ. Inclosure in F.O. 78,3277. no. 287. Goschen to Granville. Apr. 14, 1881.

(2) Ibid. T. 3. no. 485. St. Hilaire to Lacour. Apr. 28.

Though he believed that the French military measures were unjustifiably offensive, yet he was in a plight as to what steps Turkey should take. He saw his Pan-Islamic hopes in North Africa crumbling before the marching French soldiers, and he was afraid lest he might lose his prestige in the Moslem world should he remain inactive. The firm French attitude did not fail to cause deep resentment and humiliation in Constantinople. The Turks were well aware of the fact that their protests would never make any impression upon France unless they were supported by the Great Powers. It is but natural that the Porte should demand British assistance, since Britain assumed after the Berlin Congress so protecting an attitude over Turkey.

It is unfortunate that the Turks had a hostile and by no means agreeable British Representative in Constantinople. Goschen had no faith whatever in the Turks, and conceived his mission in Turkey to consist chiefly in wringing concessions from them, in obtaining as much territory for Greece as possible, in ensuring the security of Armenia and in the execution of reforms. With respect to the Tunisian affair he was very reserved. Assim Pasha, the Turkish Foreign Minister, twice complained to Corti that Goschen seemed ignorant of the real bearing of the Tunisian question and that "he was not in the stream."⁽¹⁾ The Turkish view was not completely mistaken. Goschen was indifferent to the Turkish point of view. But he was far from approving the French action. In fact Goschen had at one time entertained the idea of making a speech on

(1) The Granville Papers (G.D.29). Vol. 189. Private Goschen to Granville. May 10, 1881.

Tunis condemning the French conduct. But the less temperamental Granville advised his Liberal friend "to put as much water in his wine as possible." In the end Goschen came to the conclusion that the speech should not be made.⁽¹⁾

Concerning the Turkish demands for British support, Goschen was of the opinion that "the Turkish Government... could not at the same time neglect our counsels and count on our unaltered and special friendship."⁽²⁾ Of this view he made no secret. From the outset he told the Turks that "he had no instructions to the effect that (England) ... considered English interests to be especially involved in Tunis in any way."⁽³⁾ The only advice he could give was that Turkey should be prudent in order to spare herself further and unnecessary humiliation. But when Said Pasha, the Prime Minister, earnestly appealed to "the friendship of England," Goschen could not contain himself any longer.

"What I had predicted," he pointed out, "had now come to pass. I had always told him and his colleagues that the time would come when they would remember that they wanted the friendship of England; that he now spoke of that necessity, and made promises of reciprocity, but what proof had he given of friendship for England during the past years? In what single case had the advice been taken? In what manner had they received our councils, which were intended for the benefit of the Turkish Empire. The Turks

(1) Ibid. Vol. 210. Private. Granville to Goschen. Jul. 22, 1881.

(2) F.O. 78/3277. no. 296. Goschen to Granville. Apr. 19.

(3) Blue Book. To Granville. Apr. 12.

have done their best to alienate the sympathies of public opinion in England, and it would not be easy to regain it."(¹)

Unimpressed by the cruel though just British reminder, the Turk continued his appeals for the good office of Great Britain. Before such insistence, Goschen had to state that the Tunisian question "could not be dealt with separately with England", and that Britain had no special interests in the Regency, her policy was solely to maintain the concert of Europe.⁽²⁾ Any hope for British support against France with respect to the Tunisian question now came to an end.

The protests of the Porte met with the same disappointment in Germany. The Sultan had counted on his personal friendship with Count Hatzfeldt, but soon found that Prince Bismarck was determined to facilitate things for France. This favour which Germany did not try to conceal, Germany who had until 1878 recognized no authority in North Africa but that of the Sultan, caused great concern in Constantinople. The high-handed and discourteous manner of France was wounding to Turkish pride and dignity. The Sultan was reported to have once exclaimed: "am I the vassal of France that I should take orders from Paris as to what I am to do with my fleet and my army."⁽³⁾ It appeared that the aim of the Powers was only to put pressure on the Porte and to refrain from protecting its interests. Indeed it was declared in the Turkish press that "the justice and impartiality of the Great Powers were merely an illusion."⁽⁴⁾ The only Power who

(1) *Ibid.* Goschen to Granville. Apr. 19.

(2) *Ibid.*

(3) "Times". May 16, 1881.

(4) F.O. 78/3277. no. 301. Goschen to Granville. Apr. 25.

sympathised with the Turkish point of view was Italy. Calice, the Austrian Ambassador in Constantinople, noticed a certain rapprochement between Turkey and Italy. The Sultan once approached Corti wondering how Europe could allow French troops to cross to Tunis. Corti replied that there were States in Europe who would rather see the French army in Tunis than in France. But it may be remembered that Turkey had no great admiration for platonic friendships. (1)

The foreseen failure of all diplomatic efforts, the apparent indifference of Great Britain and Germany decided the Porte to rely on its own resources. A section of the Turkish Government were in favour of despatching the fleet to Tunis, while other members pointed out the further humiliation which Turkey must experience if France decided on armed opposition. (2) The Sultan approved of the first view and serious consideration was given to it. In fact a part of the Turkish fleet was mobilised. When such preparations came to French knowledge, the Ferry Government informed the Porte that the despatching of troops or of ships of war to Tunis would be regarded by France as an act of hostility. (3)

But Turkey had to consider her prestige in the Moslem world; the Sultan was not yet ready to abandon his Panislamic ambitions and was anxious to do something to conceal the weakness of Turkey. The Bay was therefore instructed to make no transactions with France, but before the force of arms the Bay could only sign away his practical independence

(1) Vienna Archives no. 91 B. Calice to Kalnoky. Dec. 13, 1881.

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 487. Tissot to Saint-Hilaire. Apr. 28.

(3) Ibid. no. 510.

together with the nominal suzerainty of the Sultan. Turkey was too impotent to think of war, but she declared the Treaty of the 12th May null and void. Appeals were once more made to Germany but received no response. No serious action against the French in Tunis was now considered since the Sultan, always frightened by the memory of the recent murder of the Tsar was entirely absorbed in the state trials. But the Porte, expecting no longer any European assistance saw the necessity of adopting some active measures. The Turks were fully aware that the first shot in the waters of Tunis might be the signal for the last dismemberment of their empire. But no Power disputed their full authority over Tripoli, and it was from there that they could rouse discontent and organise revolt against French rule. Once more the French Government were not ready to accept fresh troubles from the Turkish side, and warned the Porte against transforming Tripoli into a religious and military centre hostile to France. (1)

When the insurrection broke out in Southern Tunisia, France sent another warning to the Porte declaring that nothing could justify preparations on the Tripolitan frontier, and that it was dangerous to pick quarrels with France. (2) Turkey denying the existence of any hostile feeling towards the French in Tripoli, gave the assurance that the despatch of troops to this province was solely for the purpose of maintaining order. The declaration of France that she still remained the "plus ancienne alliée de la Turquie", did not make any remarkable

(1) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 4. nos. 1, 3, 14. Reports of Tissot of May 13, 14 18. See also no. 33. Saint-Hilaire to Tissot. Jun. 13, 1881.

(2) Ibid. nos. 48, 75. Jul. 1, 21, 1881.

impression in Turkey. The indifference of Great Britain was never forgiven. And despite the fact that Germany had rebuffed the Sultan's appeals, yet Abd-ul-Hamid saw the necessity of testing the friendship of this Great Power. From 1881 onwards German influence gradually rose to reach its climax in the Great War.

V. *The German Attitude.*

The German attitude towards the French proceedings was benevolence itself. Germany was the only Power to encourage France to undertake the expedition, and was the first to recognize the Treaty of the Bardo. It is with great truth that Saint-Vallier observed that had it not been for sincere German support France would have experienced in 1881 the humiliation of 1840. For the "perfidious assurances" (1) of Granville and of Dilke, the "lying declarations" (1) of Italian Ministers, the jealousy and intrigues of Spanish statesmen, all these hostile elements combined were rendered harmless by the avowed and firm support of Prince Bismarck. This friendship was indispensable not only for the success of the expedition but also for the security of France herself. (2)

The truth of this statement is unquestionable. For after the murder of the Tsar in April Prince Bismarck exercised in Europe an influence unparalleled, almost supreme. In French eyes, both Austria-Hungary and Russia followed the advice of the German Chancellor. (3) This supreme influence was used

(1) Saint-Vallier's own expressions.

(2) See Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 495 and T. 4. no. 62. Saint-Vallier to Saint-Hilaire. May 2 and Jul. 10, 1881.

(3) Ibid. no. 69. Saint-Vallier to Saint-Hilaire. Jul. 17, 1881.

in French favour, for Bismarck secured for French action Austrian and Russian approval. Giers told the Turkish Ambassador in St. Petersburg that "the theory of Turkish territorial integrity was no longer applicable to Tunis". Kalnoky in Vienna made a similar declaration (1). The British suggestion for a European mediation between France and the Bay was repulsed. In reminding Dufferin that Germany had annexed two French provinces, Bismarck declared that his Government was not going to obstruct or molest French expansion in North Africa. He could not understand why Britain found it to her interest to "annoy France." "Il serait de meilleur goût", he added, "et plus digne de la (la France) laisser agir sans lui faire de grimaces" (2). The German Chancellor refused to listen to Italian insinuations about French aggressive intentions towards Germany, remarking in the meanwhile that Italy had better occupy herself in her "internal miseries and approaching bankruptcy" (3). The repeated appeals of Turkey were diplomatically ignored. Hatzfeldt, the German Ambassador in Constantinople, was instructed to discourage the Sultan from despatching troops or ships of war to Tunis. (4) In Berlin the German Foreign Office expressly declared that they could not acquiesce in the Turkish point of view, since in their opinion Tunis constituted no part of Turkey. The Porte was advised better to concentrate its attention in what it really

(1) Vienna Archives. Telegram of Kalnoky May 13, 1881.

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 495. Saint-Vallier to Saint-Hilaire May 2, 1881.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 3. no. 513. Saint-Vallier to St. Hilaire. May 7, 1881. See also no. 522.

possessed than to mourn for what it has irrevocably lost; Germany was determined to preserve peace on her western frontiers. (1) Concerning the appeals of the Bay, Bismarck made it clear that the only advice he could give was for the Bay to give complete satisfaction to France by immediate submission.

Of these great services the Quai d'Orsay were fully conscious. The French Government abounded in thankful acknowledgements. The President of the Republic thanked the German Government. The French Foreign Minister acknowledged officially and in public the indispensable German support. In the Tunisian crisis, the sincerity of Prince Bismarck stood the test, and gave rise to the theory that with German support or acquiescence behind them the French could continue the experiment they had begun in Tunis. This was at least the impression of the British Representatives in Paris and Berlin. The whole-hearted German support led Britain to believe that this attitude "might be a part of a great plan to secure German supremacy in Europe".(2)

This suspicion was not only confined to London. In France there arose the desire to free the French Government from "the occult control which Germany had recently exercised over it." (3) The Gambetta Ministry undertook this task. It is both strange and interesting to note that the French themselves never got rid of all their German suspicions. Once more the discussion of German motives was opened. Was

(1) Grosse Politik. Band III. no. 671. Bismarck's. Dec. 22, 1881.

(2) F. O. 27/2559. no. 5. Lyons to Granville. Jan. 3, 1882.

(3) Ibid

Bismarck secretly delighted with the result of what occurred in Tunis? The French were certain that Germany did not give this complete support out of "mere tenderness" to France. It was Saint-Vallier, "partisan résolu de la bonne entente franco-allemande,"⁽¹⁾ who again rose to defend the German behaviour. Bismarck's motives, according to the French Ambassador, were not based on blind machiavellism, or upon "des idées mesquines de haine ou de rancune", they were based on considerations more elevated and more solid, the true interests of Germany herself.⁽²⁾ Despite the convincing arguments of Saint-Vallier, no French statesman could be found willing to depend solely on German friendship. It was this feeling, constituted of the desire to live in peace with Germany, mixed with apprehension of her moves and suspicion of her motives that decided the French Governments not to lose sight of British friendship and good-will.

IV. *The Reaction of Spain and the Other Parts of the Mediterranean.*

The Bardo Treaty produced a lively impression in all Mediterranean countries. The British, Italian and Turkish attitudes have already been discussed. On the Western part of the Mediterranean Spain stood not completely recovered from a generation of civil commotions. The tranquillity which she was apparently enjoying was by no means secure. A dynasty ruled to which the mass of the people were indifferent.

(1) As he described himself.

(2) Doc. Dip. Fr. T. 4. no. 69. To Saint-Hilaire. Jul. 17, 1881.

Military circles were always in chronic dissatisfaction with the reigning administration whether it was Senor Canovas del Castillo's or Sagasta's. In the Cortes there was a strong and determined Republican minority bent on criticism of the ruling institutions. The Monarchy was anxious to divert the attention of both its enemies and allies from domestic affairs. The rapidity and success of the French action in Tunis aroused the admiration, jealousy and apprehension of Spain. It awakened dormant Spanish ambitions in Morocco. Though they considered no immediate action, the Spanish Government, supported by public opinion, wanted to be assured about the future.⁽¹⁾

Spain had always been jealous of the influence which the French wielded in Morocco. She had always upheld the reigning Idrisid Sultanate in Fas (Fez) whose downfall the French were believed to wish to bring about. The thirst of the unpopular Monarchy for glory, to conceal its weak position at home, encouraged the Foreign Minister, the Marquess of La Vega de Armijo, to stress Spanish claims on Morocco. Overtures were therefore made to Great Britain and Germany. To West, the British Representative in Madrid, de Armijo complained of French aggressive designs on Morocco, and declared that "the future of (this country) was undoubtedly a matter of the greatest political importance to Spain."⁽²⁾ To reassure Britain he intimated that Spain would not adopt any steps without first obtaining British approval.

(1) Ibid. no. 59. Jaurès, French Ambassador to Spain, to Saint-Hilaire Jul. 8, 1881.

(2) F.O. 72/1569. Reports of West of Oct. 20, 1880. May 25, Jun. 3, 7, 1881.

Feeling in Spain became very strong against France after the massacre of the Spanish colonists in Algeria and the refusal of the French Government to admit the principle of indemnity. The concentration of French troops on the Moroccan frontier aroused fears and strong protests. The Spanish Government went so far as to suggest co-operation with Britain to protect the Sultan. But the British Government, anxious as they were, to protect the Sultan against both Spain and France, considered that anything like the appearance of preconcerted action might excite French susceptibilities.

The Spanish efforts in Berlin had a better reception. The Spanish Ambassador there declared that the security of Spain demanded that no European Power should exercise a preponderating influence over the Moroccan Empire or its coasts. Despite the fact that the German Government avoided giving an explicit answer, and that they made no diplomatic representation to France in Spanish favour, yet the "Nazional Zeitung" of July 23rd 1881 published a long article which Walsham considered to be inspired by the German Foreign Office. Walsham based this opinion on the fact that Hatzfeldt, who directed the Foreign Office in Berlin, had very strong Spanish sympathies. The article supported the Spanish cause but pointed out that the great obstacle in the way of Spain was not France but Great Britain. It appears that Germany desired to see Spain regaining her position as a Great Power. Yet till the end of 1881 Berlin refrained from giving Madrid any substantial diplomatic aid. (1)

(1) See F.O. 64/982. no. 334. Walsham to Granville. Jul. 28, 1881.

In Egypt, the fate of Tunis offered a vivid example of European justice and methods. The rule of force was bound to awaken Egypt to the necessity of having a strong army which could be relied upon. The fall of Tunis together with Western financial control strengthened the nascent spirit of nationality and patriotism. After the infinite helplessness she had shown in connection with Tunis, Turkey could no longer be considered a strong aid or ally. The Pan-islamic ideal was giving way before the more practicable nationalist idea. The officers of the army seized the opportunity to revive their agitation against foreign influence in the army and administration. But the interests of Great Britain strategic, financial and economic, decided the reluctant Liberal Ministry to follow in 1882 the example set by France.

In all parts of Tripoli, excitement against the French reigned. The Turkish Vali with his reinforced troops and new instructions was extremely hostile. Several clashes occurred between him and the jubilant but haughty French Consul. The tribes mourned the fate of their brethren in Tunis, and deliberately attacked the French near the Tunisian frontier. Tripoli was in fact converted into a hostile armed camp against the French in North Africa. Had it not been for the repeated and firm British warnings that England would not tolerate any French violation of Tripolitan territory, the French might have striven to bring the Pasha and his sovereign to their senses. As was foreseen in Berlin in 1878 Italy was bound soon or late to take steps to restore the balance of power in the Mediterranean. The Italian dream of possessing a colony in that sea, so full of Italian memories, was realised at the cost of Tripoli at the beginning of the twentieth century.

In Algeria, discontent with the French rule and methods led Abou Amema, a Marabout of Moghar, to seize the opportunity of the Tunisian crisis to inaugurate a wide-spread insurrection. Acts of murder and of brigandage became of frequent occurrence. The Spanish colonists were massacred, and the alfa trade was ruined for the whole year. Villages and detachments of French troops were attacked with impunity. It was only after the flight of Abou Amema to Morocco with his men and all his plunder that the French began their work of pacification. As Tunis had settled down so did Algeria but not without a struggle.

On the Western border of Algeria lies Morocco. From time immemorial there had raged between the Algerian and Moroccan tribes a long series of wars of vendetta. The Algerian rebels found in Morocco a safe refuge, for the authority of the Idrisid Sultan was but nominal. In Tangier the diplomatic capital of Morocco, as well as in Fas (Fez) intrigued the Spanish and French Agents, while the British Representative kept a careful watch on both and only interfered to prevent either from having a predominant influence with the Sultan. The French decisive action in Tunis did not fail to strike terror in Morocco. Maulay Hassan at once implored Sir Drummond Hay to communicate to London the Moroccan appeal "that the British Government should take active steps in preventing this country from being converted as Tunis would be into a French province. (1) As in the case of Tripoli the British Government strongly warned France against invading Moroccan territory.

(1) F.O. 99/198. no. 64. To Granville. Jul. 20, 1881.

In Tangier the British Representative advised the Sultan to prevent his tribes from being involved in any quarrel with France and to preach patience and moderation to his temperamental subjects. Though the French repeatedly assured Britain that they would respect Moroccan territorial integrity, they were far from inclined to give Spain a free hand there. The rivalry between France and Spain on the one hand, and the increasing influence of the British and German Agents on the other, delayed the settlement of the Moroccan question. Agadir removed the influence of Germany; the desire of Britain to obtain official French recognition of her undefined position in Egypt, settled the Moroccan question to the advantage of France.

In Tunis itself, the Bey abounded in regrets that he had not accepted the protectorate long ago, and implored the French to treat kindly Ibn Ismail whom he loved more than a son. Roustan became the real ruler of Tunis, but he was not to enjoy his new position for long. The revelations of the "Procès Roustan" were not to his credit, and in order to appease the newly conquered Tunisians the Freycinet Government appointed him in 1882 French Ambassador to Washington. The chief actors in the Tunisian drama soon disappeared from the stage. The Ferry Government, who imposed the Protectorate, resigned in November 1881, Gambetta who settled the question of the Protectorate fell in January 1882. Saint-Vallier ended his diplomatic life in December 1881, De Noailles was appointed to Constantinople in the following year. Cairoli retired into private life, Es-Sadik and Khair-ed-Din would no more wield any real influence. The Regency of Tunis became a real French protectorate.

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DOCUMENTARY MATERIAL.

1. *Foreign Office Records.* (F.O.)

1. F. O. 102 (Tunis) contains the correspondence with the Foreign Office of Richard Wood, Consul-General in Tunis 1855-1879, and of Reade, Consul in Tunis, in the years 1879-1881. The importance of this correspondence lies in the fact that it is essential for any detailed study of the situation in Tunis: it is indispensable for any description of the relations between the foreign representatives and the Bardo and for the relations between the foreign agents themselves. It is mainly upon this correspondence that the first two chapters are based.

The fact that Wood was not an unbiased spectator does not belittle the importance of his vast and rich correspondence. There are to be found among his many and lengthy despatches carefully composed memoranda on the respective positions of the Porte, France and Britain in Tunis. A part of Wood's correspondence regarding the Firman of 1871 was published

in the Blue Book of 1881, Affairs of Tunis. Of his correspondence of 1878 only one dispatch, that of July 23rd was inserted in the same Blue Book.

The same importance can not be attached to the correspondence of Reade. The diplomatic side especially is very deficient. This is of course due to the fact that after 1878 Tunis ceased to be of great political importance to Great Britain. Nearly all the diplomatic correspondence of Reade during the spring and summer of 1881 is published in the Blue Book of 1881, Affairs of Tunis.

Some parts of the consular correspondence of both Wood and Reade are invaluable with respect to the organisation of the various consulates in Tunis.

2. The F.O. 27 (France) 1878-1881 contains the correspondence of Lyons, British Abassador in Paris, and of Adams, Chargé d'Affaires, with Salisbury and Granville. The reports from Paris constitute the most important part of this correspondence. The despatches of Lyons and Adams devote much space to the situation in France and her relations with the Foreign Powers, especially with Great Britain. French views on Tunisian affairs are adequately referred to. The many inclosures, cuttings from newspapers, extracts from the press, and the secret despatches of Conolly and of Brackenbury, the British military attachés, give the correspondence from France an added importance. The despatches of the military attachés to Lyons are of special interest as they throw light on military affairs and party politics in France. Most of Lyons' correspondence with the Foreign Office, and the answers he received during the spring and summer of 1881 are published in the Blue Book, Affairs of Tunis 1881.

3. The F.O. 45 (Italy) 1878-1881 treats mainly of the situation in Italy and of her relations with the Foreign Powers especially with Great Britain. Paget does not seem to have possessed much of Lyons's fairness and neutral judgment. The British Ambassador in Rome was somewhat prejudiced against Italian Liberal Statesmen; he saw events in Italy through his keen conservative eyes. The reports from Rome are indispensable with regard to the relations concerning Tunis between Italy and France on the one hand and between Italy and Britain

on the other. The correspondence from London, whether it was Salisbury's or Granville's, illustrates the great enthusiasm of General Menabrea as regards Tunisian affairs.

4. The F.O. 64 (Germany) 1878-1881 is very disappointing with regard to French-German relations concerning French expansion. There are, however, a few despatches from Russell and Walsham, British Chargé in Berlin, which describe relations between Berlin and Paris from the British viewpoint.

5. The F.O. 78 (Turkey) 1878-1881 is equally disappointing with regard to relations between Turkey and the Regency. A few despatches concerning Tunis can be detected (from) among the voluminous records on Turkish affairs. This may be explained by the fact that from 1878 onwards, the British Foreign Office and its representatives in Turkey were more interested in problems resulting directly from the Berlin Treaty, such as Balkan questions and reforms in Asia Minor and Armenia. Most of the correspondence concerning Tunis took place in the spring of 1881, Goschen was the author. Nearly all his despatches respecting the crisis of 1881 were published in the Blue Book of 1881, Affairs of Tunis. Goschen's correspondence deals mainly with the attitude of Great Britain towards Turkish claims on the Regency.

6. The F.O. 72. (Spain), the F.O. 198 (Morocco), the F.O. 69 (Tripoli) are important in describing the situation in the southern Mediterranean after the signature of the Bardo Treaty.

7. Blue Book. Affairs of Tunis. 1881. Its merit has been discussed in the text.

2. *The "Documents Diplomatiques Français".*

The "Documents Diplomatiques Français" (Doc. Dip. Fr. Première Série) (1878-1881) are of first class importance in any diplomatic study of Tunisian affairs. They are not constituted of official despatches alone, but contain a good number of private letters (*lettres particulières*). The documents concerning Tunis could be divided into . 1. Documents dealing directly with relations between France and Tunis. 2. Documents describing British-French relations. 3. Documents dealing with French-German relations. 4. Documents treating of the

relations between France and Italy. 5. Documents concerning relations between France and Turkey.

The first part gives the impression that a good deal of the correspondence between Roustan and the Quai d'Orsay has been suppressed. What is published, however, gives a clear idea about the constant and resolute endeavours of France for dominance in the Regency. The value of the second part lies generally in the fact that it completes the British Documents rather than that it gives new information.

The third part is the one great and authoritative source on French-German relations concerning the French position in the Mediterranean as a whole, and the question of Tunis in particular. The lengthy and confidential despatches of Saint-Vallier, his lettres particulières, are of great historic value, on account of the fact that they record carefully and in detail the long and interesting declarations of Prince Bismarck. The correspondence of Saint-Vallier expresses, moreover, the personal views of the French Ambassador on the character of French-German relations and refers to his great efforts to improve those relations.

The correspondence of de Noailles with Paris is also of the greatest importance. For among other factors it was his description of the trend which Italian policy was assuming towards Tunis that decided France to take energetic action in 1881. De Noailles could not be accused of having any prejudice against Italy, though he came in the end to suspect their intentions. His correspondence shows that Cairoli was not solely to blame for the Tunisian policy which the Italian Government were adopting, but it held the clique which surrounded the Italian premier as solely responsible for that disastrous policy. The correspondence of de Noailles is indispensable for any study of French-Italian relations from the Berlin Congress to the signature of the Bardo Treaty.

The correspondence of Tissot describes Turkish attempts to check the extension of French influence in North Africa, and to advance the Pan-islamic idea.

Le Livre Jaune 1881. Affaires de la Tunisie. Its contents and worth have been dealt with in the text.

3. *German and Austrian Documents.*

As regards French-German relations during the period 1878-1881 the importance of the *Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette* is confined to the fact that they complete the French documents. The few despatches which the *Grosse Politik* publishes confirm the reports of Saint-Vallier though they do not give any detailed description of the lengthy conversations which took place between Bismarck and the French Ambassador in Berlin.

The Austrian Documents available in the Vienna Archives (1878-1881) give a full description of Austrian-Italian relations before the Congress of Berlin and after. This may be due to the great interest which Austria took in Italian affairs. The correspondence of Haymerle, while he was Ambassador in Rome, of Wimpffen, of Tavera and Wrede (the last two are *Chargé d'Affaires*), gives a very interesting and detailed picture of conditions in Italy, her foreign policy and her ambitions. The personal contact of Haymerle and Wimpffen with Vittorio Emanuele II and Umberto gives to their reports an added significance. There is interesting material on the subject of Tunis in the correspondence of Beust, the Austrian Ambassador in Paris. The short reports of Calice reveal the frantic efforts of the Porte to interest the Powers in its cause. The correspondence of Theodorovich, the Austrian Consul in Tunis, though it give no fresh information, is not biased. The reports of Karolyi, the Austrian Ambassador in London, are of no great importance as far as the views of the British Government on the Tunis question are concerned.

4. *Private Letters.*

The Granville Papers (G.D. 29).

The Granville Papers are of great interest on the subject. An important part of these papers is the correspondence between Lord Lyons, Mr. Adams and Lord Granville 1880-1881. The correspondence of Lord Lyons throws light on internal conditions in France and upon those who wielded real power there. The private letters of Lord Granville reveal Granville's

innermost views upon French foreign policy. Granville's correspondence with Paget, Goschen, Dufferin and Russell is not very important so far as Tunisian affairs are concerned. The interesting correspondence that took place between Granville and the other members of the cabinet in 1881 shows clearly the views of the Ministers on the subject of French-Tunisian relation. There is a large volume devoted to despatches concerning Tunis. This volume covers several years and is printed for the use of the Foreign Office. There are also dispersed in several other volumes memoranda and collections of despatches regarding such aspects of the Tunisian question as the political status of the Regency, the financial situation and consular jurisdiction.

5. *Other Private Letters.*

Other private letters, extracts or summaries of private letters can be found in the various Memoires and Lives of the principal Statesmen of this period. The chief among these Lives are :

Lord Newton : Life of Lord Lyons. (2 vols. Arnold. London. 1913).

Here is to be found some of the private correspondence between Lord Lyons and the Foreign Secretaries on the affairs of Tunis (1878-1881).

A very small part of the correspondence between Salisbury and Lyons during 1878 which concerns French-British relations is published in Lady Gwendolen Cecil's Life of Salisbury. (Hodder and Stoughton. London. 1921).

Lord Edmond's Fitzmaurice's Life of Granville (4th impression Longmans. London. 1905) is of limited importance to those who can have access to the Granville Papers.

G. E. Buckle's Life of Disraeli. (Murray. London. 1920) is of general interest as it describes Disraeli's views on relations between Britain and Turkey, and between Britain and France.

S. Gwynn and G. Tuckwell's Life of Sir Charles Dilke (Murray. London. 1912) is not of great importance on the subject, since it is very general and the information it gives concerning Salisbury's declarations to Waddington in Berlin,

and Granville's communication with Germany soliciting European mediation between France and Tunis, is very general and lacking in chronological precision.

IMPORTANT MEMOIRS, SPEECHES AND BIOGRAPHIES.

Those of direct importance on the subject of Tunis are :

Francesco Crispi's *Memoirs* (collected and edited by Thomas Palamenghi Crispi, trans. by Mary Richard Agnetti, 3 vols. Hodder and Stoughton London 1919) reveal the opinions of a contemporary and influential Italian statesman on the conduct of Italian foreign policy during the period between 1878 and 1881. In his criticism Crispi is very severe on Corti and Cairoli.

Paul Robiquet's *Discours et Opinions de Jules Ferry* (7 vols. Colin Paris) is of the utmost importance. The comments and notes of Robiquet are very useful.

Alfred Rambaud's *Life of Ferry* (Plon Paris. 1903) is not very important as a historical piece of work. Rambaud's admiration for his hero amounts to worship.

The *Memoirs of Prince Chlodwig of Hohenlohe* (edited by Friedrich Curtius, trans. from the first German edition and supervised by George W. Chrystal. Heinemann. London. 1907) throw some light upon French-German relations after 1874.

Khair-ed-Din : *Memoirs*' ("A Mes Enfants," published in the "Revue Tunisiene". Year 1934 by Mzali and Pignon). Their importance lies in the fact that they are the only Tunisian published source about the life of the great Tunisian statesman.

Bismarck, Some Secret Pages of his History. A diary by Dr. Moritz Busch. 3 vols. Translation. Macmillan. London. 1898.

Bismarck : The Man and the Statesman. Reflections and Reminiscences of Otto Prince von Bismarck. Trans. by A. J. Butler. 2 vols. Smith London 1898.

Gambetta, Léon by Joseph Reinach. Alcan. Paris. by Paul Deschanel, a President of the French Republic. Heinemann. London. 1920.

Thiers, Adolphe by de Remusat translated by Melville and Anderson. Chicago. 1889.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES. 1878-1881.

For French parliamentary debates see "Journal Officiel".

For British parliamentary debates see Hansard.

For Italian parliamentary debates see Inclosures in F.O. 45. (1878-1881). The printed Italian parliamentary debates and "L'Italie".

PUBLICATIONS CONTAINING IMPORTANT

DOCUMENTARY MATERIAL.

Broadley, A.M. The Last Punic War, 2 vols. Blackwood 1882. Broadley witnessed the last crisis through which the Tunisian question passed. He arrived at Tunis from India in 1873, after a severe attack of brain fever, and soon succeeded in creating trouble for the British Consul-General, Wood, who was obliged to complain of his conduct to the Foreign Office. Broadley then advocated the cause of Britain in Tunis, and enjoyed great influence with the Government of the Bay, especially after the removal of Wood in March 1879. Broadley had correspondence with Mr. Guest and with Lord De la Warr in the House of Lords. He was the correspondent of "the Times" during the crisis of 1881. Broadley's book is a document in itself as the record of the observations of a well-informed contemporary. Its tone on the whole is quite biased against the French, and generally sympathetic towards Italian claims. Many important English and Tunisian documents are published in this book. Broadley seems to have had access to the archives of the British Consulate in Tunis. But most of the

information he gives on Tunis in the first half of the nineteenth century is derived from Rousseau's *Annales Tunisiennes*.

Chiala, Luigi : *Pagine di Storia Contemporanea*, 3 vols. Le Roux. Torino. Rome. 1892.

Vol. 2. deals with Tunis, and upholds the Italian thesis. Chiala quotes lengthy passages from the Italian press, and from debates in the Camera concerning the Italian attitude towards Tunis, adding his introductions and comments.

Curatulo, Giacomo, Emilio . *Francia e Italia*. Bocca. Torino. 1915.

Curatulo publishes a whole article by Torre which is based solely on the correspondence of Cialdini between the years 1878 and 1881. The documents analysed here clarify Italian foreign policy.

D'Estournelles de Constant. P. H. X. : *Le Politique Française en Tunisie*. Plon, Paris. 1891.

D'Estournelles was a historian, deputy, politician and diplomat. He expresses the French point of view concerning events in Tunis which led to the Protectorate. The book was deservedly crowned by the French Academy and remains the best written on Tunis. It is an indispensable aid to any study of the subject.

Hanotaux, Gabriel : *Histoire de la France Contemporaine*. (1871-1900). 4 vols. Combet. Paris. trans. by J. Ch. Tarver. Constable. Westminster. 1903. An unbiased, well-documented great work by a well-informed historian and statesman.

Langer, W. *The European Powers and The French Occupation of Tunis*. *American Historical Review* 1925-1926. (see preface).

Rouard de Card, E. : *Traité de la France avec les Pays de l'Afrique du Nord*. 1906.

Rousseau : *Annales Tunisiennes*, Bastide, Alger 1864. Rousseau published many treaties concluded between foreign countries and the Regency. The book itself is unreliable.

Serres, Jean ; *La Politique Turque en Afrique du Nord sous La Monarchie de Juillet*. Gaithner. Paris. 1925. The book is full of quotations from diplomatic documents con-

cerning Franco - Turkish relations in North Africa. The investigations of Serres are unprejudiced and his judgments sound.

PERIODICALS.

La Revue Tunisienne 41 vols. published by the Institut de Carthage from 1894 onwards.

It is the most authoritative publication concerning Tunis, her history, geography, literature etc. It also contains invaluable documents on Tunisian history.

Journal Officiel 1878-1881. Debats Parlementaires.

The Times of 1881. The great interest which the Times took in the affairs of Tunis makes it indispensable for any study of the Tunisian question in the nineteenth century.

Le Journal des Débats. Le Figaro, L'Intransigeant, La République Française, Le Temps of 1881 express the views of French public opinion towards the military action in Tunis.

Opinione, Popolo Romano, Italie and Riforma express the various views of Italian public opinion on foreign policy.

The Revue de Droit International et de Législation Comparée, La Nouvelle Revue Politique et Littéraire, La Revue des Deux Mondes of 1881, contain articles about the Tunis Question. These articles express mostly personal points of view, and have no great historic value.

GENERAL WORKS ON TUNIS AND NORTH AFRICA.

For a good bibliography of bibliographies, books, official French reports, "annuaires", catalogues, statistics, articles in reviews with brief comment, see L'Afrique Française du Nord :

Bibliographie militaire des ouvrages français ou traduits en français et des articles des principales revues françaises relatifs à l'Algérie, à la Tunisie et au Maroc (till 1927). Imprimerie nationale Paris. 1931. This work is published by the French Ministry of War.

The bibliography concerning Tunis occupies pp. 145 to 237. of Vol. 1. Most of the works mentioned there are to be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Bibliothèque Coloniale in Paris.

With few exceptions the majority of the works written on Tunis, whether by French, Italian, British and Tunisian authors, are of the descriptive type; they deal with the history geography, social customs etc. from the earliest till modern times. They mainly record observations and personal impressions. Many of the works are mere repetitions of works that preceded them. Taken individually these works are superficial; they disclose little information; but as a whole they throw light on the situation in Tunis and on the views of French public opinion. Most of these works are written before the Great War, and aim at justifying the French action in 1881; and if they refer to any documents at all, they refer to documents published in the *Livre Jaune, Affaires de la Tunisie, 1881*.

Those given below are the most important works to be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Bibliothèque Coloniale in Paris. Some of them are to be found in the British Museum.

Charmes, Gabriel: *La Tunisie et la Tripolitaine*. Calmann Levy. Paris. 1883.

Deals with the expedition of 1881, but shares the views of his contemporaries that it was without plan and carried out without decision.

Desfeuilles, P.: *Les Colonies Françaises*. Roger. Paris. 1928.

Despois, J. E. Bonzon: *Le Domaine Colonial Français*. T. 2. Cygne. Paris. 1928.

Despois, Jean: *La Tunisie*. Larousse. Paris.

D'Esrounelles de Constant: *Les Congrégations Religieuses chez les Arabes et la Conquête de l'Afrique du Nord*. Maisonneuve Paris. 1887.

Abou-Diaf : Le Majba. Revue Tunisienne. Year 1895.

Un Diplomate : Tunis en France. Perrottel. Geneve. 1882.
A severe attack on Roustan and French imperialism.

Faucon, Narcisse : La Tunisie. 2 vols. Challamel, Paris. 1893. Anti-British in its tone ; many exaggerations ; deals with the expedition in detail.

Genet, Jean : Etude Comparative du Protectorat Tunisien et du Protectorat Marocain. Recueil Sirey. 1920. A very brief study.

Ficaya, Pierre : Le Peuplement Italien en Tunisie. Les Presses Modernes. Paris. 1931.

Fitoussi, Elie & Aristide Benazet : L'Etat Tunisien. 2 Vols. Rousseau Paris. 1931.

Gives a summary of Tunisian History since the Hafsids. It is mostly concerned with the legal side.

Foucher, Louis : De L'Evolution du Protectorat de la France sur la Tunisie. Paris 1897.

Gives the historical reasons of the expedition. As appears from the date of the book's publication, the author relied mainly on D'Estournelles and Charmes.

Fraser, J.F. : The Land of Veiled Women. Cassell. 1911.

Guest, Montague (M. P.) : The Tunisian Question and Bizerta Chifferiel. London. 1881.

An expression of an anti-French view on the Tunisian question.

Hug, Paul : L'Œuvre Politique et Economique du Protectorat Français en Tunisie. Imprimerie Regionale. Toulouse. 1924.

Deals briefly with the conditions in Tunis before the Protectorate.

Julien, Ch-André : Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord. Payot. Paris. 1931.

Very useful for the bibliographies it contains.

Legendre, Pierre : Notre Epopée Coloniale. Tallendier, Paris.

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Sigard, Jules : Le Monde Musulman. Librairie Coloniale et Orientale. Larose Paris 1928.

Contains a good description of the characteristics of both Arabs and Berbers in North Africa, though the author is biased towards the latter.

Tunisia, Tribes : Admiralty War Staff Intelligence Division. August 1916.

Gives good information.

Valet, René : L'Afrique du Nord devant le Parlement au XIX siècle. Le Typo Letho. Alger. 1924.

Wingfield, the Honourable Lewis : Under the Palms of Algeria and Tunis. 2 vols. Hurst and Blackett. London. 1868.

A good and interesting description of conditions in Tunis.

OTHER BOOKS, ARTICLES AND SPEECHES WHICH HAVE BEEN CONSULTED ON THE GENERAL SUBJECT.

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A careful study of the movement inaugurated by Gamal-din El Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh.

Angelino, de Kat : Colonial Policy. Trans. from the Dutch by G. J. Renier. The Hague, Martino Nijhoff. Vol. 1 contains a comprehensive and unbiased study of the relations between East and West.

Argyll Duke of : What the Turks are and how we have been helping them. Sep. 19, 1876. Glasgow. Maclehose. 1876.

Bindoff, S. T. : Malcolm Smith and C. K. Webster : British Diplomatic Representatives. London 1934.

A work based on minute research in the Public Record Office.

Borchard, E. M. : *The Diplomatic Protection of Citizens Abroad*. Banks Law. New York. 1916.

Brachet, Auguste : *L'Italie qu'on voit et l'Italie qu'on ne voit pas*. Marpon et Flammarion Paris. 1883. Stresses the hostile feeling of Italy towards France.

Bright (Right Honourable) : *Speech on the Eastern Question in Birmingham*. Hodder and Stoughton Dec. 4, 1876.

Bryce, James : *International Relations. Eight Lectures delivered in the United States*. Macmillan London. 1922.

Brinton, J. Y. : *The Mixed Courts of Egypt*. Yale University Press. London 1930.

Devotes a few pages to the Capitulations.

Carroll, E. M. : *French Public Opinion and Foreign Affairs 1870-1914*. Century. U.S.A. 1931.

Charmes. G. : *L'Avenir de la Turquie. Le Panislamisme*. Calmann Lévy 1883.

Charems. G. : *Politique Extérieure et Coloniale*. Calmann Lévy. 1885.

He studies the foreign policy of the Third Republic.

De Clerq. A. and de Vallat, C. : *Guide Pratique des Consulats*. 3 vols. Pedone. Paris. 1898.

Croce, B. : *A History of Italy 1871-1915*. Trans. by Cecilia M. Ady, Clarendon Press. Oxford 1929.

Darcy, Jean : *Cent Années de Rivalité Coloniale*. Paris. 1904. Very brief.

Daudet, Ernest : *La France et l'Allemagne après le Congrès de Berlin*. Troisième Edition. Plon. Paris. 1918.

Debidour, A. : *Histoire Diplomatique de l'Europe*. 4 vols. Paris.

Dubois, Marcel & Terrier, Auguste : *Un Siècle d'Expansion Coloniale*. Challamel. Paris. 1901.

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Published by the Eastern Question Association. London. Cassell. 1877.

A collection of articles condemning Turkey.

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Gaffarel, Paul : Notre Expansion Coloniale en Afrique de 1870 à Nos Jours. Alcan. Paris. 1918.

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Giolitti, Giovanni : Memoirs of My Life. Trans. by E. Storer. Chapman & Dodd. London. M C M. XXIII. Very brief but useful for the period 1878-1881.

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