

**W. T. Stead and the Eastern Question (1875–1911);
or, How to Rouse England and Why?
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In the funeral tribute to his personal friend who had died aboard the *Titanic*, Lord Milner portrayed Stead as ‘a ruthless fighter, who had always believed himself to be “on the side of angels”’.¹ What better tribute could have been paid, given that the young Stead had viewed his appointment as editor of the new Darlington daily, the *Northern Echo*, in 1871 as ‘a glorious opportunity of attacking the devil’?² Among the many career-long causes that allowed him to do that, one holds a special place: the suffering of Ottoman Christians, in particular Balkan Slavs and Armenians, at the hands of their tutelary authority, the Sultan. Stead did not recoil from calling him ‘the Eastern ogre’ at the time of two episodes of atrocities, first against Bulgarians in 1876 and then against Armenians twenty years later.³ Indeed, although Stead continues to be best remembered as ‘Crusader in Babylon’, his highly controversial revelation of child prostitution in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in July 1885 may not have happened at all without the Bulgarian agitation, which, in Stead’s own words, ‘made [him]’.⁴ The denunciation of these atrocities definitely put him on the journalistic map, eventually winning him the esteem of leading Liberal statesmen, including John Morley, who rewarded Stead with an assistant editor’s position at the political daily evening paper, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, in 1880.

The centenary of Stead’s death has recently generated increased interest in the ‘newspaper revolutionary’, to quote the subtitle from a recent collection of research on Stead.⁵ Yet although Stead’s early interest in the Ottoman Empire has received attention, his career-long commitment (1875–1911) to the Eastern Question, that is, to the fate of the Ottoman Empire and of its Christian subject populations, remains obscured, including the fact that he was cordially entertained in Constantinople in 1911 by Sultan Mehmed V, successor to the ‘Eastern ogre’ Abdul Hamid II.⁶ Arguing that Stead’s coverage of the ‘Bulgarian atrocities’ in 1876 proved a defining moment for him, this article contends that his understanding of the Eastern Question was largely dictated by the writings that proved of utmost help ‘in some of the critical moments of his life’, in particular the Bible, Carlyle’s edition of the letters and speeches of Cromwell (1845), and the work of the American poet and ambassador, James Russell Lowell.⁷ Delving into Stead’s mind will not only enable us to grasp how the Eastern Question appealed to Stead as a fervent

Puritan and freedom-loving Radical journalist, but it will also reveal that the ‘Bulgarian atrocities’ gave Stead an opportunity to test his theories of how to rouse his country to action, later developed into his allegedly justifiable sensationalist ‘government by journalism’.⁸

Besides primarily showing how and why Stead wanted to rouse England on the Eastern Question throughout his career, this article also seeks to assess the impact of Stead’s rhetoric on the Eastern Question. Stead, whose views on the Eastern Question and on British politics are undeniably closely connected, is portrayed as a ‘fugleman of atrocity-mongers’ in Richard T. Shannon’s *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation 1876* (1963). In *Reluctant Icon* (1991), Ann Pottinger Saab recalled that Stead viewed the editor’s chair as ‘the only true throne of England’ from which truth stemmed.⁹ But how central really was Stead to the ‘Bulgarian atrocities’ agitation and the ‘Armenian massacres’ agitation (1894–96)? And how successful were his attempts at influencing the Eastern policies of successive British Prime Ministers?

To try and answer these questions, I will explore four themes central to Stead’s fascination with the Eastern Question: pleading sympathy for the nationalist liberation struggle of Ottoman Slavs; crusading in the name of outraged humanity; rousing democratic Britain against Ottoman (and also British) political ‘devildom’; and the editor, self-styled diplomat without portfolio, trying to impose his own solution on the Eastern Question. This article also draws on Miloš Ković’s approach in *Disraeli and the Eastern Question* (2010), where he pleads for the combination of political biography, the history of ideas, and British domestic and diplomatic political history to assess Disraeli’s career-long engagement with the Eastern Question. I have also consulted a range of primary sources, from studies and articles published by Stead as editor of the *Northern Echo*, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and the *Review of Reviews*; biographies, autobiographies, and his private correspondence; to Parliamentary debates on the Eastern Question and other official documents (Cabinet papers and Foreign Office Papers), in order to reconstruct Stead’s ‘attitudes towards the East and the Eastern Question as a whole, from his early youth onwards’.¹⁰

I

Pleading the Sympathy of ‘the Mother of the Free’ for Eastern Slavs’ Nationalist Struggle

On reading about the Bulgarian atrocities in *The Times* and the *Liberal Daily News* in May 1876, Stead ‘felt the clear call of God’s voice, “Arouse the nation or be damned”’.¹¹ As the son of a Congregationalist preacher, Stead was convinced that ‘millions of fellow creatures [might] be saved if he [did] his duty’, a feeling he had already experienced a year earlier when he learnt of the harshly suppressed revolt of Herzegovinian and Bosnian Christian subjects of the Porte by the Sultan.¹²

In particular, Stead deplored the wait-and-see policy of the European Concert, as it seemed at odds with its professed sympathy for the improvement of the lot of Ottoman Christians in Article Nine of the 1856 Treaty of Paris.¹³ Stead accused the European Concert of apathy, which he thought a direct consequence of its dread of a new Crimean war. Stead was equally genuinely concerned with Russia’s apparent encouragement to Christian Slavs to liberate themselves from the Sultan’s rule. Although admitting that such an attitude on the part of Russia would constitute a breach of Article Seven of the 1856 treaty, by which signatories had sworn to preserve the independence and territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, Stead was positive that no war would be more ‘unjustifiable’ and ‘unnecessary’ than one ‘to defend the independence and integrity of a bankrupt Empire, which has disappointed all our hopes, violated all its promises, cheated all its bondholders and ruined all its subjects’.¹⁴

Without downplaying the risk to European peace, Stead invited his readers to learn about the allegedly uninteresting politics of Eastern Europe, which ‘dim, anarchic regions of the East’ and ‘semi-barbarous populations of the Turkish Empire’ rendered ‘strange, confused and unintelligible’.¹⁵ Stead surmised that the alleged backwardness of these populations could deter his compatriots from feeling sympathy for the nationalist aspirations of Eastern Slavs, all the more so as they were not Protestant for the most part, but belonged to various Catholic and Orthodox churches.¹⁶ Stead was not particularly moved by the failure of the attempt at an ecumenical union of Christian churches at Bonn in 1875, unlike Gladstone and many High Anglicans.¹⁷ Nevertheless, he would still play on the chord of Christian fellowship as he insisted that the rule of the Ottoman Empire, ‘a decaying nation’, degraded subject Christian populations, thereby possibly annihilating

their glorious pasts and civilizations.¹⁸ Such was the general argument Stead endeavoured to make in the first issue of his new collection, ‘Political Papers for the People’: *The Haunting Horrors of Armenia*, published in February 1896. Stead included a map of ‘the scenes of massacres of Armenians, with the places named as in the time of St. Paul’ (Fig. 1), to connect nineteenth-century Ottoman Armenia to its biblical past and to impress on his readers that the massacres had been committed by Kurdish Ottoman irregulars against a population descended directly from Noah whose Ark had supposedly landed at Mount Ararat.¹⁹



Fig. 1: ‘The Scenes of the Massacres of Armenians, with the places named as in the time of St. Paul’, *The Haunting Horrors of Armenia*, *Political Papers for the People*, 1 (London: ‘Review of Reviews’ Office, 1896), page unnumbered.

Having a map with ‘the places named as in the time of St. Paul’ enabled Stead to remind his readers of the commonplace, cherished association at the time between Roman Armenia and early Christianity. Stead’s choice of reviving the Roman history of Armenia through a reference to St Paul was rather unusual, however. Of course, St Paul’s first mission had taken him through Anatolia and he had been born in Tarsus, Cilicia, but St Paul the Apostle only very marginally pertained to the conversion of Armenia to the Christian faith, in comparison with St Jude, St Bartholomew, and St Gregory.²⁰ Far from

being anecdotal, Stead's map actually betrays his Puritan veneration of St Paul the sinner and of the Pauline principle of 'God as moral law'.²¹ Shannon convincingly argued that Nonconformists' outrage at the massacres displayed 'what might be called a martyrdom complex': accounts of the humiliating procedures Ottoman Christians often had to undergo to bury their dead 'chimed in appositely with the [Nonconformists'] contemporary struggle [with the High Church party] in England over the Burials Bill'. In other words, by making nineteenth-century Ottoman Armenians heirs of St Paul the convert, Stead sought to bring Eastern Christians within the pale of marginal, but respectable Nonconformity, whereas Low Churchmen simply rejected them as 'worshippers of the "wafer-God"' (Shannon, p. 161). That Eastern Christians and Armenians were a group that many (American) Congregational missions had sought, from the 1850s, to evangelize, made them all the more interesting to Stead the Congregationalist.²²



Fig. 2: 'Map of the Armenian Massacres', *Review of Reviews*, December 1896, p. 506. © Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Stead regularly reminded people of 'the duty of England as a civilizing power among the weaker, more degraded nations of the earth', asking his readers both in 1875 and in 1896 to go beyond prejudices against Eastern Christians; and encouraging them, as 'civilised men' standing for 'the Mother of the Free', to show compassion for those who sought to throw off the Turkish yoke.²³ The didactics of his message in the December

1896 issue of the *Review of Reviews*, although still present, seemed more subtly presented with the article simply being illustrated by a contemporary map of Ottoman Armenia, a choice possibly motivated by the fact that the readership of the *Review*, being more educated, needed to be less patronized (*Fig. 2*).

Stead also played another card to the same end as he attempted to awaken memories either of Britain's own struggles for liberation or of struggles for liberation that the British nation supported. He could not refrain from likening the 'gallant' struggle of Eastern Christians against their tutelary authority to that of Roundheads against absolutist King Charles I, with its heroes (Oliver Cromwell) and its martyrs (John Hampden).²⁴ From a very early age, Stead, like many other Radicals (Joseph Cowen, Henry Broadhurst, and George Howell, to name but a few), regarded Puritan revolutionaries as a source of inspiration. At fourteen, his 1863 essay on Cromwell had been selected for publication in the *Boy's Own Magazine*. Later, Stead became heavily influenced by Thomas Carlyle's *Cromwell* and revered 'the religious hero who was drawn into politics not because of worldly ambition, but because of his duty to God'.²⁵ Of particular appeal to Nonconformist Cromwellians was Cromwell's sense of patriotism, which they thought inseparable from his Puritanism. The help given by the 'uncrowned king' to persecuted Waldensian Protestants in the Piedmont in 1655 came to symbolize for Stead, as well as for many other Nonconformist Radicals, 'the highest impulses of the nation', which, he claimed, Britain should imitate to put a halt to the 'Bulgarian atrocities' of 1876 and the 'Armenian massacres' of the 1890s.²⁶ Speaking to the mid- and late nineteenth-century 'popular liberalism' Eugenio F. Biagini analysed in his *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform* (1992), Stead thought himself 'a modern Cromwell, sure that he was merely an instrument of God to defend the right and strike at the wrong'.²⁷ Taking up his Cromwellian heritage, Stead hoped to win his readers over to the Eastern Christians' cause by setting up a parallel with another campaign dear to the heart of Radicals and one which had generated much sympathy in Britain: the struggle of Italian republican revolutionaries for a united Italy in the 1860s.²⁸ Stead, who was a fervent admirer of Mazzini, sought to infuse in his readers the latter's sense of personal duty and responsibility to fight against despotism and corruption, two traits Stead identified with the Ottoman regime.²⁹ When rumours that atrocities had been committed by the Turkish irregulars against Bulgarian Christians were circulated in May 1876, Stead succeeded in arousing the North of England and convinced

many that the cause of Ottoman Christians precisely partook of that ‘of progress, of humanity and civilisation’.³⁰

Although titling, in 1901, his only (posthumously published) autobiography ‘the great pacifist’, Stead always believed in the concept of a ‘just war’, if undertaken for the liberation of an oppressed nation (after Garibaldi and Mazzini). He thus could not but rejoice at the unexpected victory of little-trained Herzegovinian rebels against the Sultan’s regular army in November 1875.³¹ Stead, for whom the later revelation of the ‘Bulgarian atrocities’ could only portend ‘the termination of Moslem tyranny in the East’, would continue giving resonance throughout his career to the commonplace ideas propagated by Montesquieu’s *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748) that the Ottoman Empire exhibited Oriental despotism and that Muslim government in Christian-populated provinces could only lead to ‘Turkish misrule’.³²

II

Pleading For a Crusade

A few months after the ‘Bulgarian atrocities’, Stead wrote in his journal: ‘I felt that I was called to preach a new crusade. Not [one] against Islam, which I revered, but against the Turks who disgraced Humanity.’³³ Certainly, Stead did not preach a Christian crusade against ‘Mahometans’ per se. However, his constant reference to Peter the Hermit, priest of Amiens and leader of the First Crusade (1096–99), led another champion of the Armenians, T. P. Connor, editor of the *Star* and then of the *Sun*, to present Stead as ‘a Peter the Hermit preaching the Crusades out of his time’.³⁴ Stead compared Aloysius MacGahan, the sensationalist *Daily News* correspondent who graphically reported on a wide-scale massacre of 7,000 Bulgarians at Batak in August 1876, to Havelock conducting the charge against Cawnpore in the context of the Indian Mutiny.³⁵ But neither this comparison nor his anonymous ‘political parable’ written in the vein of a penny tale for children and entitled *The Eastern Ogre; or, St. George to the Rescue!* (1876), dispelled the idea that Stead was viewing the ‘Bulgarian atrocities’ denunciation movement as a repeat of the medieval Crusades.³⁶ And yet, blurring the boundaries between the medieval Crusades and a nineteenth-century humanitarian crusade against the Turks was frowned upon by statesmen, including Gladstone, for it could actually provoke unrest among British Indian Muslims whose religious allegiance lay with the Sultan-Caliph, and thus

weaken the British Empire.³⁷ Only in *If Christ Came to Chicago!* (1894), published two years before a *Review of Reviews* article bearing again the title of ‘The Eastern Ogre; or, St. George to the Rescue!’, did Stead’s position become clearer: there, he portrayed himself as ‘a new Peter the Hermit who would preach a new crusade for the redemption not of the Holy Sepulchre but of the desecrated temple of humanity’.³⁸ Stead, as editor of the *Northern Echo*, based in Darlington, confessed that the setting forth of ‘Bulgarian atrocities’ in the North of England plunged him into a state of excitement, and Alan Thomas suggested that Stead’s ‘furore, fed by new reports from the Balkans, itself became news’.³⁹ How did it all come about?

It was the publication of the letter of the Constantinople correspondent of the *Daily News* on 23 June 1876 that really stoked Stead’s indignation. In this letter, Edwin Pears estimated from local testimonies that thirty-seven villages had been burnt down, that between 18,000 and 30,000 Bulgarian Christians had been savagely murdered by Ottoman irregular army soldiers, and that Turkish civil authorities had done nothing to prevent this.⁴⁰ The letter provoked similar horror with Liberals William E. Forster and the Duke of Argyll who, for the first time, questioned the Conservative Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, and his Foreign Secretary, the Earl of Derby, in Parliament about the veracity of the ‘Moslem atrocities in Bulgaria’: to no avail. The next day, appalled by the ‘extreme moderation’ of British politicians, Stead and other Liberal editors reproduced Pears’ alarming letter.⁴¹

Stead could not understand how anyone could remain unmoved by Pears’ graphic reports of plunders, murders, rapes, and abductions of women and girls. Consequently, Disraeli’s mocking of ‘Bulgarian atrocities’ as ‘coffee-house babble’ in Parliament in July 1876 convinced Stead that the Premier’s concern was merely ‘keeping open [British] communications with India’ and confirmed his intuition that Disraeli was no better than ‘a jester’, who ‘ignored’ the ‘deeds perpetrated by the Turks [...] without a fierce flush of honest hatred’.⁴²

The supremacy of journalistic truth over ‘Dizzy’s’ political flippancy and cynicism culminated with the reports of the newly appointed *Daily News* ‘special commissioner’, the American Januarius Aloysius MacGahan.⁴³ In Stead’s words, MacGahan’s letter, reproduced in the *Daily News* of 22 August, ‘was enough to make the blood run cold’, as it recounted, in a ghastly, heart-rending manner, a large-scale massacre of 7,000 people at Batak in April 1876, a village with a population of 9,000:

Since my letter of yesterday I have supped full of horrors. [...] As we approached Batak our attention was drawn to some dogs on a slope overlooking the town. [...] We rode toward this [hollow] with the intention of crossing it, but all suddenly drew reign with an exclamation of horror, for right before us, almost beneath our horses' feet, was a sight that made us shudder. It was a heap of skulls, intermingled with bones from all parts of the human body, skeletons nearly entire and rotting, clothing, human hair and putrid flesh lying there in one foul heap, around which the grass was growing luxuriantly. It emitted a sickening odour, like that of a dead horse, and it was here that the dogs had been seeking a hasty repast when our untimely approach interrupted them.⁴⁴

Not only did Stead reproduce MacGahan's letter *in extenso* in the *Northern Echo*, but he also integrated it into *The Eastern Ogre*.⁴⁵ That Stead was using MacGahan's letter to impress his readership with his own horror sensation is made manifest by the following passage, reprinted in his *M.P. for Russia* (1909), the biography of his Russian friend Olga Novikoff whom he met soon after the 'Bulgarian atrocities':

The Squire Turko had disappeared; the Eastern Ogre had reappeared, and was torturing, murdering, outraging his villagers, as horribly as in the worst days of old! And by the aid of a marvellous camera obscura there was displayed before the eyes of the tenants of St. George a faithful picture of the scene witnessed in one fertile parish on Mr. Turko's estate. Those who saw that picture were transfixed with horror. [...]

Over a bright and smiling landscape there seemed to have swept a blast from Hell. Everywhere there was desolation, devastation, and death. The lurid flames of burning villages shed a ghastly glare upon the heaps of dead. Little children, fair maidens, and infirm old men were being hewn limb from limb. Hundreds were being burned to death. Children were being snatched from the arms of their parents, to be sold into an infamous slavery. Outraged maidens were mercifully massacred, or mercilessly reserved for further outrage. *Wild dogs were battenning upon the bones of the dead.* Here a mother wept over the skull of her child; there, in frenzied despair, a widow wandered wildly over the fire-blackened ruins of what had been once a home. And in the midst of the awful scene was the perpetrator of all these horrors, laughing aloud with fiendish mirth, as he warmed his naked limbs in the blaze of burning homesteads, and wiped his bloody fingers on the tresses of murdered maidens. It was the Eastern Ogre!⁴⁶

Accounts of 'Bulgarian horrors' persuaded Stead, like many others, that the urge to reform imposed by the Concert of Europe on the Ottoman Empire was doomed to fail because of the intrinsic nature of 'the Turk' as despotic, cruel, and lustful — characteristics propagated by Enlightenment discourse and circulated by the popular erotic epistolary novel entitled *The Lustful Turk; or, Lascivious Scenes from a Harem* (1829).⁴⁷

Stead was already experimenting with the ‘justifiable sensationalism’ he would defend in his 1886 ‘Government by Journalism’ article: ‘Sensationalism in journalism is justifiable up to the point that it is necessary to arrest the eye of the public and compel them to admit the necessity of action’ (‘Government by Journalism’, p. 67). If Stead sought to titillate and shock his readers with harrowing horrors, it was as a journalist, in contrast to a crime or ghost fiction writer.⁴⁸ That is, it was with a view to exposing the truth (or at least what he understood to be the truth) and having people react. His *Northern Echo* articles on Eastern atrocities already displayed characteristics of his revolutionary journalism, with bold headlines and multiple cross-heads which gave readers a sample of the fiery rhetoric and ‘heart-rending details’ to come.⁴⁹ In his many articles on Eastern Question atrocities, just as in *The Eastern Ogre* or *The Haunting Horrors of Armenia*, Stead the ‘muckraker’ constantly sought to disclose embarrassing truths in ‘great capitals’.⁵⁰ He insisted on the endemic, inherent cruelty of the Ottoman regime by portraying Abdul Aziz and subsequent Sultans (Murad V and Abdul Hamid II) as Janus-faced, with ‘Squire Turko’, the allegedly respectable diplomatic partner in the Concert of Europe since 1856, being only a front. The cruelty of ‘the Eastern Ogre[s]’ was made all the more despicable as it was exercised against Eastern and Armenian Christians, whom Stead presented as fellow civilized Christians, and more particularly against the weakest among these groups: namely women, crippled old people, and children. The piling up of the various ‘outrages’ contributed to magnify the hellishness of ‘the Eastern Ogre[s]’, be they the subsequent Sultans or those Circassian, Bashi-Bazouk, or Kurd Ottoman irregulars who perpetrated massacres — possibly on their behalf, as Stead sometimes seems to suggest. Stead invited English people to force the British government to put a halt to these abominations, as the entry of his personal journal for 14 January 1877 makes clear: ‘The honour of Bulgarian virgins is in the custody of the English voter. And what is true of Bulgaria is true of larger things.’⁵¹

III

Rousing Democratic England from ‘soulless inertia’ against Political ‘devildom’

Stead certainly believed that Disraeli’s disregard of Eastern Christians’ pleas and suffering was linked to his Jewish origins, but it mostly confirmed his view that ‘Tories were

children of the Devil'.⁵² The Conservative Prime Minister fared little better than the Sultan in *Northern Echo* editorials, narrowly escaping being similarly categorized as a 'fiend'.⁵³

The *enfant terrible* of Victorian journalism, who had partly won his position as editor of the *Northern Echo* after the publication of an anonymous leader he wrote on Christian democracy in October 1870, was now anxious that the political feeling of the country should be expressed. It was with great delight, therefore, that he learnt of the success of a meeting convened by the Mayor of Manchester on 9 August 1876 to 'make known the opinion of the people of Manchester as to the duty of England with regard to the barbarities in Bulgaria'.⁵⁴ 'England is being roused at last', he jubilantly exclaimed two days later.⁵⁵ With more and more 'indignation meetings' being held throughout the country, especially in the North, and resolutions arriving in very large numbers at the Foreign Office, Stead was satisfied that the people of England, chivalrously emerging from their apathy in the face of 'Bulgarian horrors', dissociated themselves from the Conservative government's Turcophile line. This extra-parliamentary 'inarticulate condemnation which Democracy was pronouncing upon the Ottomans' was also a rejection of England's role as 'a partaker in the[ir] inequity'.⁵⁶

Stead decided to make the most of his proprietor's (Hyslop Bell) absence on holiday and actively worked towards 'arousing the nation', writing 'dozens of letters a day, appealing, exhorting, entreating'.⁵⁷ Yet his often tactless enthusiasm, extravagant style, and endless exhortations tended to alienate him from many fellow agitators, including High Anglicans such as the canon of St Paul's, Henry Parry Liddon, and the rector of St George, Botolph Lane, Malcolm MacColl, or even James Lewis Farley, former accountant-general of the Ottoman Bank and now chairman of the League in Aid of the Christians of Turkey, formed in 1875.⁵⁸ That Stead suggested that the agitation against 'Bulgarian atrocities' should be beyond domestic sectarian issues between Nonconformists and Ritualists certainly foreshadowed the idealism of the Eastern Question Association enterprise, but it also disturbed many clergymen, even driving some away from protest meetings.

This did not stop Stead. He was undeniably ambitious, but he was even more motivated by his feeling of having a divine duty as a journalist. His mentors, Thomas Carlyle and James Russell Lowell, had pleaded for a transfer of the priestly functions from the pulpit to the press, respectively in *Sartor Resartus* (1833–34) and in the sarcastic piece 'The Pious Editor's Creed'.⁵⁹ Stead became convinced that the press was 'at once the ear

and the eye and the tongue of the people' ('Government by Journalism', p. 656). Hence, following Canon Liddon's appeal at St Paul's Cathedral on 13 August 1876 to break the silence which was now 'incompatible with the law of Christ', Stead decided to convene the first indignation meeting at Darlington on 25 August, making him some enemies but increasing his newspaper sales.⁶⁰ It also won him the compliments of two of his heroes: Gladstone, who, in early 1876, had been isolated in recalling that the Concert of Europe's promise to preserve Turkey's territorial integrity was meant to be conditional on the implementation of long-promised reforms; and Carlyle, who celebrated 'that good man, Stead'.⁶¹ It also marked him as a key figure in the British journalistic landscape who was now invited to the London salons of the expatriate Russian propagandist Olga Novikoff, where he would first meet Gladstone, Carlyle, and Anthony Froude, among others.⁶² But, perhaps more importantly, Stead was one of the three Englishmen, alongside Gladstone and the editor of the *Daily News* (Peter Clayden), to receive a vote of thanks from the first Bulgarian National Assembly in 1878 for their role in the Bulgarian agitation movement in Britain (Shannon, p. 70).

Stead, who was adamant that 'indignation [was] froth unless it [led] to action', entreated attendants of the Darlington meeting on 25 August 1876 to do more than just testify against the 'Bulgarian atrocities'.⁶³ With this view in mind, the self-proclaimed prophet and 'leader of the people' published in advance what resolutions should be adopted at the meeting.⁶⁴ Stead felt urged by 'God's secretary conscience', a notion he borrowed from Milton's *The Reason of Church-Government* (1642), to suggest retributive sanctions for all those involved in the 'Bulgarian atrocities': a vote of censure on the government's inept and flippant management of the crisis; the dismissal of the British ambassador at Constantinople, Sir Henry Elliot, for his even greater ineptitude; and 'the removal of the Turks from Europe' for 'the commission of crimes which might have been wrought by fiends from hell'.⁶⁵

Stead had always been a Radical and was then 'a thorough-going Gladstonian' who believed that Disraeli had stolen power from the Liberals in 1874 because of the voters' 'soulless inertia'.⁶⁶ He consequently revelled in the idea that having 'blood on his ermine' would necessarily 'hurl [Disraeli] down from the pinnacle of power into the lowest abyss of degradation and contempt'.⁶⁷ More broadly, Stead extolled the Bulgarian agitation as the condemnation of the 'Old Corruption system', a central theme in Radical rhetoric, which was now embraced by the people, it seemed. A target of that

condemnation was also Disraeli's contemporaneous elevation to the peerage in August 1876 — a 'degradation' that Stead regarded as highly representative of corrupt aristocratic classes.⁶⁸ 'That good man Stead', who had always made the *Northern Echo* a platform for the Liberal party, now joined his voice to that of other Bulgarian agitators (including many Nonconformist Radicals) to call for the return of Gladstone onto the political scene.⁶⁹ This finally happened with the publication of Gladstone's pamphlet *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East* on 6 September 1876.

Despite the fact that Gladstone was identified as the long-awaited spokesperson for the Bulgarian agitation movement, previous agitators, including Stead, remained prominent.⁷⁰ The most controversial sentence of Gladstone's pamphlet — 'Let the Turks now carry away their abuses in the only possible manner, namely by carrying off themselves' — seems to echo Stead's admonition about the future of 'Turkey in Europe', passed at the Darlington meeting of the previous 25 August.⁷¹ Stead wrote:

These atrocities are but the habitual incidents of Turkish rule, writ large, so that all the world could see them. *Only by trundling the Turk out of Europe can their handless repetition be avoided.* We do not ask for a crusade against the Turk, but we have a right to insist, in the name of Humanity, Civilization, and Christianity, that the expulsion of the Turk from Europe should be recognized as one of the leading objects of the English policy at home.⁷²

The only difference was that Gladstone proposed the expulsion of the Turks 'from the province they have desolated and ravaged' (Bulgaria), rather than from Europe.⁷³ It could be argued that Gladstone borrowed his 'bag and baggage' policy from Stratford Canning, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe, a friend of forty years who had held the position of ambassador to Constantinople many times, including during the Crimean War (1853–56), and to whom Gladstone had dedicated his pamphlet. Like Stead, de Redcliffe had wished in a private letter to his cousin and future Prime Minister, George Canning, in September 1821 that the Turks be 'driven bag and baggage into the heart of Asia'.⁷⁴ Apart from the fact that there is no tangible proof that Gladstone knew about this private letter, the polite and diplomatic language which de Redcliffe used in his 'Letters to *The Times* Editor' to ask for 'the autonomy of the Christian provinces' contrasts sharply with the rhetoric of Gladstone's *Bulgarian Horrors*.⁷⁵ To contemporaries of the 'Bulgarian atrocities', Gladstone's 'bag and baggage' policy must have sounded much closer, in terms of style, to that of Stead than to that of Stratford Canning.

Stead's admiration for Gladstone reached its zenith when the former went down to London to listen to the speech of 'the keeper of the national conscience' at Blackheath on 9 September 1876. The former Liberal Prime Minister had been invited by the local branch of his party to give a speech on the 'Bulgarian atrocities' before ten thousand people gathered on Blackheath Common. As if under a religious spell, Stead thought 'he was hearing the outpourings of one of the prophets who brought the message of Jehovah to the House of Israel' and felt completely immersed in the history-making process as he listened to the voice of outraged moral democracy.⁷⁶ Similarly buttressed by the Tories' reduced electoral majority in Disraeli's former Buckinghamshire constituency later that month, which he flagged as a sanction of his mismanagement of British Eastern policy, Stead was now more than ever campaigning for a return of the Liberals to power.⁷⁷ His organization of a second denunciation meeting at Darlington on 9 October 1876 was part



Fig. 3: Map showing the 'Dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire since 1683', William Shepherd, *Historical Atlas* (New York: Holt, 1911), p. 164.

of this enterprise as he exerted himself to canvass for Gladstone, especially trying to gather the support of voters newly enfranchised under the 1867 Reform Act. Gladstone, however, tried to temper Stead's zeal, just as he had tried to do when the *Northern Echo* editor had pressed him to have a Bulgarian Sunday as 'a national memorial of our national repentance'.⁷⁸



Fig. 4: 'Map of the Balkans to Illustrate the Treaty of Berlin, 1878', H. G. Wells, *Outline of History* (London: Cassell, 1920), page unnumbered.

lacked a definitive settlement, which Stead could not but deplore. Thus, when fresh rumours of wide-scale atrocities, this time about Ottoman Armenians, first reached Britain in November 1894, Stead lambasted the political slackness of British Prime Ministers, be they Liberal (Rosebery, but also Gladstone) or Conservative (Salisbury).⁷⁹ All were blamed — although never to the extent of Disraeli — for not having done their utmost through the Concert of Europe to put an end to the repetition of such outrages (Stead, *Lest We Forget*, p. 53).

Now at the *Review of Reviews*, a monthly periodical he had created in 1890 after falling out with the *Pall Mall Gazette*'s proprietor (Henry Yates Thompson), Stead enjoyed incomparable freedom.⁸⁰ With three waves of 'Armenian massacres' between 1894 and 1896 killing between 100,000 and 300,000 according to non-revisionist historians, Stead could not refrain from taking up the title of his political parable, *The Eastern Ogre; or, St. George to the Rescue!* in the October 1896 issue of the *Review of Reviews*.⁸¹ But Stead's new editorial independence allowed him many other bold moves. Carlyle's 'good man' was not so much interested in disclosing the contested truth of the

Stead had profound esteem for 'the high priest of humanity', with whom he also identified in terms of florid, peremptory rhetoric, charisma, a sense of having a divine mission, and leadership. Yet, as time passed, he would never overlook Gladstone's failure to stop Disraeli taking steps to avert Russia's entry into war alongside the Ottoman Slavs against the Sultan in March 1877. Notwithstanding the resulting Treaty of Berlin of July 1878 (Figs. 3 and 4) — by which Armenians were promised reforms — and despite Gladstone being in power for over seven years between 1880 and 1894, the Eastern Question still

Armenian massacres (*Fig. 5*) — a task he confidently left to Emile Dillon, local correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph*, and to the anonymous photo-reporter for the *Graphic* — as in again ‘arous[ing] the nation’.⁸²

This time, Stead, who now presented himself as ‘independent of party’, did not call for extra-parliamentary denunciation meetings as loudly as before (‘To All English-Speaking Folk’, p. 15). He still acknowledged their constraining power as some sort of informal parliament, but the failure of the national conference on the Eastern Question at St James’s Hall on 8 December 1876 to avert the Russo-Turkish war remained a trauma for Stead, who had worked on its organization with members of the Eastern Question Association.⁸³ Also, Stead was now ready to trust the Conservative Prime Minister, Salisbury (in contrast to Disraeli), remembering the former’s sympathy for the 1876 Bulgarian agitation, as well as his support for the de facto reunion of Eastern Roumelia and Bulgaria into a new independent Bulgaria late in 1885 under Prince Alexander Battenberg. This, for Liberals, made Salisbury a more palatable Conservative leader than Disraeli.⁸⁴ It follows that if Stead did not relinquish the theme of Britain’s responsibility in the ‘Ottoman abominations’, he did not ask people to bring the Salisbury Government down either.⁸⁵ Rather, in the first issue of his new Political Papers for the People collection — which were meant as ‘penny Blue-Books’ in the same democratic spirit as his other recent, commercially successful publications (The Masterpiece Library in 1895 and Books for the Bairns in 1896) — Stead called for individual and collective actions that would ‘strengthen the Government’.⁸⁶ It is noticeable that the same line was taken by British Armenophile Liberal and largely Nonconformist pressure groups such as the Anglo-Armenian Committee or the Grosvenor Committee, of which Stead, however, remained independent, in contrast to his prior involvement in the Eastern Question Association venture. The Armenian agitation movement was then orchestrated by Malcolm MacColl, a founding member of the Eastern Question Association who was also a close friend of Gladstone and Salisbury, and who urged fellow agitators to show support for Salisbury after his return to the Premiership in August 1895, just as he had asked them to unleash their outrage on Rosebery when the latter downplayed the Armenian massacres in 1894.⁸⁷



Fig. 5: 'The Massacres in Constantinople: Attack on an Armenian House', Review of Reviews, October 1896, p. 290. © Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

But Stead went even further, extolling again Cromwell's active protection of the persecuted Protestant Vaudois in the Piedmont, and urging Salisbury to 'obtain redress for the persecuted' through diplomatic pressure if need be (on France and Russia) and not through isolated action.⁸⁸ Deeds on behalf of a united British nation, not words, were needed, even if they be Gladstone's. Hence Stead assigned his Political Papers readers the following 'duty': 'by bold, decided action, not merely wash our hands of the innocent blood of these poor victims of our former "statecraft", but place ourselves in friendly relations with the two World Powers with whom Providence has linked our destinies.'⁸⁹ Despite the limited success of the Political Papers for the People, which only ran to three issues, the collection at least reaffirmed Stead's certainty that the only viable solution to the Eastern Question lay in a hopefully nationally approved Anglo-American-Russian entente.

IV

**What Solution to the Eastern Question? From Anglo-American-Russian to
International Arbitration**

Stead's views on the Eastern Question are inseparable from his Russophilia, a stance he developed very early on when he worked as an apprentice clerk in the counting-house of a Newcastle merchant and Russian vice-consul.⁹⁰ His sympathies intensified when he saw that Russians volunteered to help Serbians liberate themselves from the Sultan's rule in July 1876, at a time when Britain had not yet been roused to embrace the Eastern Christians' cause (Stead, *United States of Europe*, p. 64). In his obituary tribute to Stead in 1912, Emile Dillon, the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent in Russia who claimed to tell the 'truth about Armenia' in 1895, but who also criticized Russia's treatment of minorities, concluded: 'Russia [...] always had an irresistible attraction for Stead; not so much for what he conceived it to be as for what he fancied it capable of becoming.'⁹¹ Certainly, Stead's befriending of the Slav propagandist Olga Novikoff at the time of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–78 made him a traitor in the eyes of many Russophobe jingoist contemporaries, including some Tories, but also Radicals.⁹² There had been a widespread tradition of Russophobia, often entailing Turcophilia, among Radicals since the 1840s. The U-turn of Joseph Cowen, the Radical Member of Parliament for Newcastle, who had originally taken part in the Liberal Bulgarian agitation in 1876 and became a Russophobe jingoist the following year, perfectly embodies the tensions the Eastern Question revived among Radicals.⁹³ And yet, 'the Tsar's lecturer general', as Stead would later be called for his role in propagating Nicholas II's peace crusade in 1898, at first remained critical of the Russian political regime, which he still perceived, like many other Radicals, as despotic.⁹⁴ Just like Gladstone, Stead placed hope in the Russian people rather than in Tsardom.

Stead and Gladstone were so close and yet so far apart when it came to imagining a solution to the Eastern Question. Gladstone, who had been a member of the Cabinet that signed Britain's entry into the Crimean War in 1854, remained faithful to the principles of the 1856 treaty — namely, the preservation of independence and territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire by the Concert of Europe on condition of reforms — at least until towards the end of his life, when the Armenian massacres persuaded him of the reverse, particularly of the suitability of British unilateral military action against the Ottomans. By contrast, Stead, who had always been convinced that the Ottoman Empire could not be

regenerated, thought the 1856 and 1878 treaties of no use and advocated alternative solutions instead. He first pleaded 'Home Rule' for 'Turkey in Europe', before realizing in 1876 that the best way to maintain the territorial integrity of that Empire would be Russo-British dual control in lieu of the Sultan's despotism.⁹⁵ Stead, who had already been disappointed with his erstwhile hero's role in the death of General Gordon at Khartoum in 1885, now openly discarded Gladstone's 1896 idea of British unilateral action, which, to him, would not only place their country at odds with existing treaties, but would also sharpen tensions with Russia (already enhanced by the Central Asian Great Game).⁹⁶ Rather, Stead continued to promote an Anglo-Russian entente on the Eastern Question, which, he was certain, would help settle tensions between the two countries. This was somewhat naive given that Salisbury, when inquiring of Tsar Nicholas II in September 1896 what he would do if the Ottoman Empire fell, was told that he would have no choice but to seize Constantinople, which represented the 'back door' to his Empire.⁹⁷

Stead, left despondent by Russia's reluctance to give assistance to Ottoman Armenians, now placed hope in the United States, which caused him to be blamed for encouraging 'the Americanization of the world' (both in politics and in journalism). Reading Lowell's poetry had nurtured Stead's 'ardent faith in American democracy', which underpinned his hopes of Anglo-American cooperation.⁹⁸ This step he thought all the more crucial for Britain as she would soon be surpassed by the United States as a leading world power, unless she decided to carry her 'civilizing mission' with her former colony. For Stead, who again had been disappointed with the torpor of the European Concert at the time of the 'Armenian massacres', the settlement of the Eastern Question was to provide an opportunity for such cooperation. The European Concert had indeed only provided *in extremis* succour to Greece as it was about to be smashed by the Sultan's troops with whom she had been at war since 1897 to bring help to outraged Ottoman Cretans. This was a clear sign for Stead that Europe was simply awaiting the inevitable fall of the Ottoman Empire and that as such, Europe 'would probably maintain an expectant attitude while the deathblow was struck [by America] at the crumbling relics of the Ottoman Power' (*Americanization of the World*, p. 196). Despite failed Anglo-American attempts at settling the Armenian question during 1895 and 1896, the 'modern Cromwell' remained assured that the United States would deal the Ottoman Empire its final blow, and then join Russia, 'the sword of Europe against the Infidel', and freedom-loving Britain, in its trusteeship of former Ottoman territories.⁹⁹ None of this materialized

however, but Stead kept in mind the European inability to solve the Eastern Question when he embarked on his successive peace crusades in the context of the Hague conferences of 1898–99 and 1907, which he had helped to set up.

It was in this mindset of promoting international arbitration that he visited Constantinople twice in 1911, three years after the overthrow of the Hamidian ‘Eastern Ogre’ and the creation of the Young Turk regime by the Committee of Union and Progress.¹⁰⁰ Now disillusioned with the revolutionary CUP, which seemed to take up Abdul Hamid’s policy of brutal Ottomanization, Stead relied solely on the new Sultan, Mehmed V, for the regeneration of Turkey, whose dismemberment had been held at bay thanks to the change in regimes.¹⁰¹ The Sultan now was no more than a figurehead given that the country was ruled by a triumvirate of three Young Turk Pashas, but Stead thought that precisely because of this change, Mehmed V should be approached as a trustworthy diplomatic partner. Acknowledging this new order, and upon learning that Italy had attacked Ottoman Tripoli, Stead left for Constantinople in October 1911 with a view to helping the Sultan seek international arbitration to preserve the territorial integrity of his country (*Fig. 6*). He was now agitating ‘for Turkey, not *against* her [...] in what proved to be his last campaign’ (Estelle Stead, p. 328).

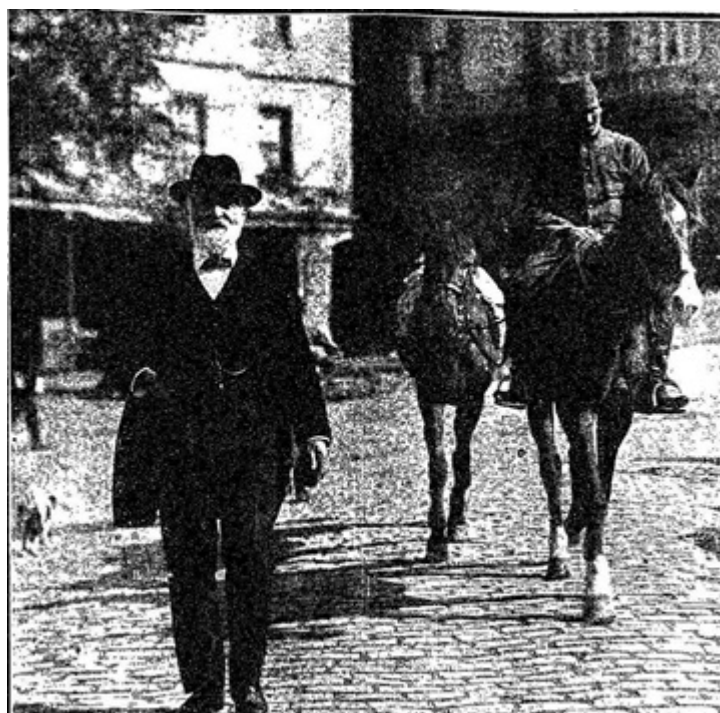


Fig. 6: ‘Mr Stead in Constantinople’, Manchester Guardian, 17 October 1911, p. 5

V

Conclusion

Stead's involvement with the Eastern Question no doubt exemplifies his motto, 'the union of all who love, in the service of all who suffer', as he sought to arouse the nation in favour of the suffering of fellow Christians in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰² It is, however, equally clear that Stead's denunciation of Ottoman abominations and praise of the struggle of Ottoman Christians went beyond mere humanitarianism. Inspired by Carlyle and Lowell, as well as by Victorian Radical demigods (especially Cromwell, Mazzini, and Gladstone), Stead's Ottoman atrocity campaigns tally with his criticism of an England still yoked under the Old Corruption system. Stead, the self-styled prophet and modern Cromwell, thus seized on the opportunity of using these atrocities to develop the democratic instinct of the British people, a role which he seemed to suggest leading politicians were failing to fulfil and which he was willing to take up. He did so by referring to his two model countries, the United States and Tsarist Russia, which, in the latter case, was not without ambiguities. It is necessary to understand that Stead's condemnation of the Sultan's regime (and his relative amenity towards the constitutional, post-1908 regime) was motivated by the love of humanity, of liberty, of democracy, of nation states, and of peace, rather than by a crusade against the Ottomans. Without this comprehension, one could question why Stead, after having branded Sultan Abdul Hamid 'Abdul the Damned' for his role in the Armenian massacres, then met his successor in 1911, gave him his support against 'Italian atrocities' at Tripoli (*Fig. 7*), and managed to convince the Sultan to 'proclaim a holy war against war in the Mosque St Sophia'.¹⁰³ Stead did not live long enough to see that this apparent reversal in his life-long commitment to the Eastern Question eventually proved a failure. The newly formed Balkan League (Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro) was encouraged by the Lausanne Treaty's decision to grant Tripoli to Italy (in October 1912) to increase its territory at Turkey's expense, thereby launching itself into two Balkan wars between October 1912 and July 1913. But perhaps that is not what really matters. As Emile Dillon, often Stead's antagonist, wrote in his obituary tribute: 'To admit that in his estimate of persons and his conceptions of things Russian [and we may add Ottoman] he went sometimes far astray is but another way of describing him as human, impulsive and optimistic' ('Dr. E. J. Dillon', p. 484).

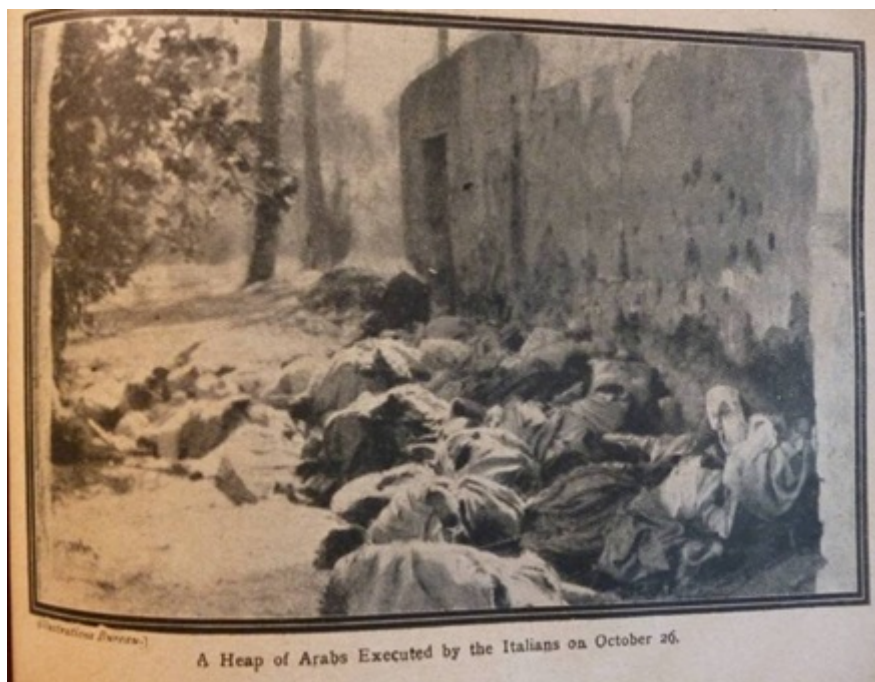


Fig. 7: ‘A Heap of Arabs Executed by the Italians on October 26’, *Review of Reviews*, December 1911, p. 569. © Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

¹ ‘Viscount Milner’, *Review of Reviews*, May 1912, pp. 477–78 (p. 478).

² William T. Stead to Rev. Henry Kendall (11 April 1871), *William T. Stead Resource Site* <<http://www.attackingthedevil.co.uk/letters/kendall.php>> [accessed 1 April 2012].

³ ‘The Eastern Ogre; or, St. George to the Rescue!’, *Review of Reviews*, October 1896, pp. 355–61.

⁴ Raymond L. Schults, *Crusader in Babylon: W. T. Stead and the Pall Mall Gazette* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972); Estelle T. Stead, *My Father: Personal and Spiritual Reminiscences* (London: Heinemann, 1913), p. 94.

⁵ *W. T. Stead: Newspaper Revolutionary*, ed. by Laurel Brake and others (London: British Library Publishing, 2012).

⁶ Schults, pp. 10–13; Owen Mulpetre, ‘W. T. Stead and the New Journalism’ (unpublished master’s thesis, University of Teesside, 2010), pp. 83–95; Simon Goldsworthy, ‘English Nonconformity and the Pioneering of the Modern Newspaper Campaign’, *Journalism Studies*, 7 (2001), 387–402.

⁷ ‘James Russell Lowell: His Message, and How It Helped Me’, *Review of Reviews*, October 1891, pp. 235–47.

⁸ ‘Government by Journalism’, *Contemporary Review*, May 1886, pp. 653–74.

⁹ Richard T. Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation 1876* (London: Nelson, 1963), p. 28; Ann P. Saab, *Reluctant Icon: Gladstone, Bulgaria and the Working Classes, 1856–1878* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 88.

- ¹⁰ Miloš Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), back matter.
- ¹¹ ‘The Panic at Constantinople’, *Daily News*, 18 May 1876, p. 6; ‘The Crisis in Turkey’, *The Times*, 26 May 1876, p. 8.
- ¹² Both quotations are from Stead’s journal entry for 14 January 1877, cited in John Robertson-Scott, *The Life and Death of a Newspaper* (London: Methuen, 1952), p. 104.
- ¹³ ‘The Insurrection in Herzegovina’, *Northern Echo*, 10 August 1875, p. 2. The main aim of the Concert of Europe was to restore European peace after the Napoleonic Wars. Created at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the Concert originally comprised the United Kingdom, the Russian Empire, the Austrian Empire, and Prussia, and admitted France in 1818. Under the Congress system, national boundaries could not be altered without the prior agreement of all the members of the Concert. This made the Eastern Question a matter of utmost interest for the preservation of European peace. However, vested national interests soon became apparent, for instance, at the time of the Crimean War (1853–56) and contributed to the final demise of the Concert in 1914. See Georges-Henri Soutou, ‘Was There a European Order in the Twentieth Century? From the Concert of Europe to the Cold War’, *Contemporary European History*, 9 (2000), 329–53 (pp. 329–34).
- ¹⁴ ‘Where Are We Drifting’, *Northern Echo*, 6 June 1876, p. 2.
- ¹⁵ ‘Slavonia’, *Northern Echo*, 25 August 1875, pp. 2–3.
- ¹⁶ ‘England and the Eastern Insurgents’, *Northern Echo*, 13 July 1876, p. 2.
- ¹⁷ But Stead would promote Anglo-American Christian Union and the advent of the Free Church National Council. See Christopher Oldstone-Moore, ‘The Forgotten Origins of the Ecumenical Movement in England: The Grindelwald Conferences, 1892–95’, *Church History*, 70 (2001), 73–97; H. C. G. Matthew, ‘Introduction’, in *The Gladstone Diaries with Cabinet Minutes and Prime-Ministerial Correspondence*, ed. by H. C. G. Matthew, 14 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968–94), IX: *January 1875–December 1880* (1986), p. xxxii.
- ¹⁸ W. T. Stead, *Lest We Forget: A Keepsake from the Nineteenth Century* (London: ‘Review of Reviews’ Office, 1900), p. 54. For Stead, the Ottoman Empire was not the sole ‘decaying nation’. Spain, successively invaded by the Moors, defeated by the British fleet, and deprived of most of her overseas possessions, was ‘the mere shadow of her former self’, according to Stead. See *The United States of Europe on the Eve of the Parliament of Peace* (London: Doubleday & McClure, 1899), p. 71.
- ¹⁹ Jo Laycock, *Imagining Armenia: Orientalism, Ambiguity and Intervention* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), p. 56.
- ²⁰ St Paul is almost absent from William St Tisdall’s *The Conversion of Armenia to the Christian Faith* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1897).
- ²¹ Matthew Arnold, *St. Paul and Protestantism* (London: Smith, Elder, 1870), p. 38.
- ²² Joseph L. Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810–1927* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971).
- ²³ Entry in Stead’s journal (5 July 1874), quoted in Robertson-Scott, p. 101.
- ²⁴ ‘England and the Eastern Insurgents’, *Northern Echo*, 13 July 1876, p. 2.

- ²⁵ Timothy Lang, *The Victorians and the Stuart Heritage: Interpretations of a Discordant Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 135–36.
- ²⁶ Blair Worden, ‘The Victorians and Oliver Cromwell’, in *History, Religion and Culture: British Intellectual History 1750–1950*, ed. by Stefan Collini, Richard Whatmore, and Brian Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 112–35 (p. 133).
- ²⁷ Eugenio F. Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform: Popular Liberalism in the Age of Gladstone* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 41–45; Stead’s autobiographical sketch, in Robertson-Scott, p. 91; Annie Besant’s portrayal of Stead, in ‘On the Watch-Tower’, *Theosophist*, 23 (1912), p. 328.
- ²⁸ Derek E. D. Beales and Eugenio F. Biagini, *The Risorgimento and the Unification of Italy*, 2nd edn (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2002), p. 34.
- ²⁹ [Mark Fooks], *The Life of W. T. Stead, Editor of ‘the Pall Mall Gazette’* (London: Kensit, [1886?]), p. 14.
- ³⁰ ‘The Great Pacifist’, *Review of Reviews*, June 1912, pp. 609–22; ‘England and the Eastern Insurgents’, *Northern Echo*, 13 July 1876, p. 2.
- ³¹ ‘Wars and Rumours of Wars’, *Northern Echo*, 18 November 1875, p. 2.
- ³² ‘The Doomed Empire’, *Northern Echo*, 17 April 1876, p. 2; and ‘The Insurrection in Herzegovina’, *Northern Echo*, 10 August 1875, p. 2.
- ³³ See Stead’s journal entry (14 January 1877), quoted in Robertson-Scott, p. 104.
- ³⁴ Daniel A. Butler, *Unsinkable: The Full Story of the RMS Titanic* ([n. p.]: Da Capo Press, 2002), p. 32.
- ³⁵ ‘The Intensity of the National Agitation’, *Northern Echo*, 4 September 1876, p. 2.
- ³⁶ *The Eastern Ogre; or, St. George to the Rescue!* (London: [n. pub.], 1876). It was quite common in Victorian mummer plays to stage a devilish Great Turk, who was defeated by the good Christian hero, St George. See *Historical Database of Folk-Play Scripts* (2000–2012), ed. by Peter Millington <<http://www.folkplay.info/Texts.htm>> [accessed 5 May, 2012].
- ³⁷ Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877–1924)* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), p. 43.
- ³⁸ *If Christ Came to Chicago!* (London: ‘Review of Reviews’ Office, 1894), p. 387.
- ³⁹ For Stead on his early career, see Robertson-Scott, p. 96; Alan Thomas, ‘Review of Raymond L. Schults, *Crusader in Babylon: W. T. Stead and the Pall Mall Gazette*’, *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, 6 (1973), 61–63 (p. 62).
- ⁴⁰ ‘The Assassinations at Constantinople’, *Daily News*, 23 June 1876, p. 5.
- ⁴¹ ‘Our Policy in the East’, *Northern Echo*, 24 June 1876, p. 2.
- ⁴² ‘The Duty of the Hour’, *Northern Echo*, 28 August 1876, p. 2.
- ⁴³ ‘London, Wed., Aug. 16’, *Daily News*, 16 August 1876, p. 4.
- ⁴⁴ ‘Turkish Atrocities in Bulgaria: Horrible Scenes at Batak’, *Daily News*, 22 August 1876, pp. 5–6.
- ⁴⁵ ‘The Atrocities in Bulgaria’, *Northern Echo*, 23 August 1876, p. 2.
- ⁴⁶ *The M.P. for Russia: Reminiscences and Correspondence of Madame Olga Novikoff*, 2 vols (London: Melrose, 1909), I, 249–51, emphasis in original.

⁴⁷ Brendan W. Larkin, ‘*The Times and Bulgarian Atrocities*’ (unpublished bachelor’s thesis, Wesleyan University of Middletown, Connecticut, 2009), pp. 24–32.

⁴⁸ See Michael Diamond, *Victorian Sensation: Or the Spectacular, the Shocking and the Scandalous in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Anthem Press, 2003).

⁴⁹ ‘The Atrocities in Bulgaria: More Heart-Rending Details’, *Northern Echo*, 17 August 1876, p. 3.

⁵⁰ William S. Robinson, *Muckraker: The Scandalous Life and Times of W. T. Stead, Britain’s First Investigative Journalist* (London: Robson Press, 2012); James Mussell, “‘Characters of Blood and Flame’: Stead and the Sensationalist Press”, in *W. T. Stead: Newspaper Revolutionary*, ed. by Brake and others, pp. 22–36 (p. 22).

⁵¹ Stead’s journal entry (14 January 1877), quoted in Robertson-Scott, p. 105. Note that Stead’s emphasis on the lot of Ottoman Christian women went beyond the mere reactivation of the paradigm of the ‘lustful Turk’ and actually connected with his campaign for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts. Josephine Butler, the leader of the repeal campaign, fought with Stead against the Bulgarian atrocities. See Mulpetre, pp. 74–82.

⁵² See Stead’s autobiographical sketch in Robertson-Scott, p. 95.

⁵³ ‘Mr. Disraeli and the Bulgarian Atrocities’, *Northern Echo*, 9 August 1876, p. 3. In late July 1876, as Disraeli was increasingly pressed by Liberals to give more detail about the ‘atrocities’ and felt the Foreign Office retained some information, he entrusted Walter Baring, attaché at the British Embassy at Constantinople, with an investigation. In his report published in full on 10 September 1876, Baring admitted that about twelve thousand had perished, that fifty-eight villages in the area of Philippopolis had been destroyed, and that many women had been raped and kidnapped, thereby confirming most of what Pears and MacGahan had written. Disraeli then started lamenting the suffering that had taken place. See Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815–1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 168–69.

⁵⁴ ‘The Bishop of Manchester on the Bulgarian Atrocities’, *Northern Echo*, 11 August 1876, p. 2.

⁵⁵ ‘England and the Bulgarian Atrocities’, *Northern Echo*, 11 August 1876, p. 2.

⁵⁶ Estelle Stead, p. 67; ‘The Intensity of the National Indignation’, *Northern Echo*, 4 September 1876, p. 2.

⁵⁷ Stead’s journal entry (14 January 1877), quoted in Robertson-Scott, p. 104.

⁵⁸ Shannon, pp. 75–76. For instance, even if Liddon accepted that most clergymen were Tory, he could not stomach Stead’s peremptory opinion that they all took their Eastern Question views after the position of the Tory *Standard*. See Liddon’s letter to Stead (15 November 1876), Stead Papers, Churchill Archives Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge, STED 1/47.

⁵⁹ For Carlyle and Russell’s influence on Stead’s conception of journalism see, respectively, ‘To All English-Speaking Folk’, *Review of Reviews*, January 1890, pp. 15–20 (pp. 19–20); and ‘James Russell Lowell: His Message, and How It Helped Me’, p. 236.

⁶⁰ ‘From our Own Correspondent’, *Manchester Guardian*, 14 August 1876, p. 7; Lucy Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. 39.

- ⁶¹ Gladstone to Stead (3 September 1876), Gladstone Papers, British Library, London, Add. MSS 44303, f. 232; Hansard, HC Debates, 8 February 1876, vol. 227, Gladstone, § 104; [Fooks], p. 1.
- ⁶² Joseph O. Baylen and Gerald Walton, 'The Froude–Stead Correspondence, 1877–1881', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 30 (1967), 167–83 (pp. 167–68).
- ⁶³ 'Darlington's Privilege and Duty', *Northern Echo*, 2 October 1876, p. 2.
- ⁶⁴ W. T. Stead, 'Future of Journalism', *Contemporary Review*, November 1886, pp. 663–79 (p. 663); 'The North Country and Turkish Atrocities', *Northern Echo*, 23 August 1876, pp. 2–3.
- ⁶⁵ 'Bulgaria and Piedmont: A Parallel and A Contrast', *Northern Echo*, 25 August 1876, p. 3.
- ⁶⁶ 'The Duty of the Hour', *Northern Echo*, 28 August 1876, p. 2.
- ⁶⁷ 'The North Country and Turkish Atrocities', *Northern Echo*, 23 August 1876, p. 3; 'Mr Disraeli and the Bulgarian Atrocities', *Northern Echo*, 9 August 1876, p. 2.
- ⁶⁸ 'The Effect of the Last Session on Ministerial Reputations', *Northern Echo*, 17 August 1876, p. 2; Schults, pp. 11–13.
- ⁶⁹ 'England's Duty in the East', *Northern Echo*, 3 August 1876, p. 2.
- ⁷⁰ Patrick Joyce, *Democratic Subjects: The Self and the Social in Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 209.
- ⁷¹ William E. Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East* (London: Murray, 1876), p. 61.
- ⁷² 'The North Country and Turkish Atrocities', *Northern Echo*, 23 August 1876, pp. 2–3, emphasis in original.
- ⁷³ Adolphus W. Ward and George P. Gooch, *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), p. 105.
- ⁷⁴ Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Life of the Right Honourable Stratford Canning: Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe*, 2 vols (London: Longmans, Green, 1888), I, 308.
- ⁷⁵ Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe, 'The Eastern Question', *The Times*, 9 September 1876, p. 8.
- ⁷⁶ Estelle Stead, p. 65. Such testimonies of 'Gladstonisation' account for sociologist Max Weber's making of Gladstone a prime example of charisma. See H. C. G. Matthew, *Gladstone, 1809–1898* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 303, 63.
- ⁷⁷ 'The Lesson of Bucks Election', *Northern Echo*, 23 September 1876, p. 2.
- ⁷⁸ Stead to Gladstone (6 September 1876), Gladstone Papers, Add. MSS. 44303, ff. 233–34; 'Mr Gladstone on the Eastern Question', *Northern Echo*, 25 September 1876, p. 3.
- ⁷⁹ 'Massacre of Armenians', *Daily News*, 12 November 1894, p. 5.
- ⁸⁰ Joseph O. Baylen, 'W. T. Stead as Publisher and Editor of the *Review of Reviews*', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 12 (1979), 70–84; Laurel Brake, 'Stead Alone: Journalist, Proprietor and Publisher, 1890–1903', in *W. T. Stead: Newspaper Revolutionary*, ed. by Brake and others, pp. 77–97.
- ⁸¹ Robert F. Zeidner, 'Britain and the Launching of the Armenian Question', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 7 (1976), 465–83 (p. 465).
- ⁸² Between 27 February and 23 May 1895, Dillon published nine articles about the 'Armenian massacres' in the *Daily Telegraph*, all entitled 'The Truth about Armenia'. In the context of their denial and of cries of

exaggeration, the *Graphic* editor decided to publish a three-page photographic report of the Erzurum massacre (autumn of 1895) with a view ‘to bear upon the results of the massacres, and by this witness, which cannot exaggerate, fully confirm the truth of [the correspondent’s] terrible statements’. See ‘The Massacre at Erzeroum’, *Graphic*, 7 December 1895, pp. 725–27.

⁸³ Stead, ‘Government by Journalism’, p. 658; Saab, p. 113.

⁸⁴ ‘The Press on the Reunion of Bulgaria’, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 21 September 1885, pp. 11–12.

⁸⁵ ‘Who Ought To Be Damned for This?’, *Review of Reviews*, January 1896, pp. 39–40 (p. 39); ‘Our Ally the Assassin’, *Review of Reviews*, November 1896, p. 427.

⁸⁶ Stead, *The Haunting Horrors of Armenia*, Political Papers for the People, 1 (London: ‘Review of Reviews’ Office, 1896), p. 60.

⁸⁷ Letter from MacColl to Gladstone (22 November 1894), quoted in *Malcolm MacColl: Memoirs and Correspondence*, ed. by George W. E. Russell (London: Smith, Elder, 1914), pp. 139–40. For a comparison between the 1876 and the 1894–96 agitation movements, see Stéphanie Prévost, ‘La Question d’Orient dans la culture politique britannique : réception et influences (1875–1898)’, 2 vols (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Tours, France, 2010), I, 301–31.

⁸⁸ ‘Bulgaria and Piedmont’, *Northern Echo*, 25 August 1876, p. 2; Stead, *Haunting Horrors*, p. 6; ‘Cromwell’s Ideals’, *Review of Reviews*, March 1901, p. 298.

⁸⁹ Stead, *Haunting Horrors*, ‘To the Reader’.

⁹⁰ Joseph O. Baylen, ‘Stead, William Thomas (1849–1912)’, *ODNB*

<<http://www.oxforddnb.com/catalogue.urls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/36258>> [accessed 10 March 2012].

⁹¹ ‘Dr. E. J. Dillon: W. T. Stead As He Appeared to One Who Was Often his Antagonist’, *Review of Reviews*, May 1912, pp. 483–86 (p. 484).

⁹² Joseph O. Baylen, ‘Madame Olga Novikov, Propagandist’, *American Slavic and East European Review*, 10 (1951), 255–71.

⁹³ John H. Gleason, *The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain: A Study of the Interaction of Policy and Opinion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950); Joan Allen, *Joseph Cowen and Popular Radicalism in Tyneside, 1829–1900* (Monmouth: Merlin Press, 2007), pp. 123–25.

⁹⁴ Joseph O. Baylen, ‘The Tsar’s “Lecturer General”: W. T. Stead and the Russian Revolution of 1905’, Research Paper 23 (Atlanta: Georgia State College, July 1969); ‘A Possible Solution of the Eastern Question’, *Northern Echo*, 26 August 1876, p. 2.

⁹⁵ ‘The Solution of the Bosnian Question’, *Northern Echo*, 30 August 1875, p. 2; ‘A Possible Solution of the Eastern Question’, *Northern Echo*, 26 August 1876, p. 2.

⁹⁶ ‘Character Sketch: Annus Domini 1896’, *Review of Reviews*, December 1896, pp. 494–508 (p. 498). After supporting the Bulgarian reunion in 1885, Stead, an ardent Russophile, then advised Bulgarians to ‘make friends with Russia’ instead of distancing themselves, so as to ‘develop their nationality in peace’. Stead made this observation after Prince Battenberg’s abdication, just after his kidnapers, most probably Russian authorities, had released him. See ‘To the Bulgarian Delegates and Others’, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 29 December 1886, p. 1.

⁹⁷ CAB Papers, National Archives, London, Kew, CAB 37/42/35.

⁹⁸ W. T. Stead, *The Americanization of the World; or, The Trend of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Markley, 1902), p. 5; Joseph O. Baylen and Robert B. Holland, 'Whitman, W. T. Stead and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, 1886–1887', *American Literature*, 33 (1961), 68–72 (p. 68).

⁹⁹ 'America and Armenia', *Review of Reviews*, January 1895, p. 51; Stead, *United States of Europe*, p. 64.

¹⁰⁰ W. T. Stead, *Always Arbitrate Before You Fight*, Political Papers for the People, 3 (London: 'Review of Reviews' Office, 1896).

¹⁰¹ 'Turkey Revisited: Three Years of Revolution, and After', *Review of Reviews*, August 1911, pp. 133–43 (pp. 134–36); 'The Sultan and his Policy: Why I Am Hopeful about the Future of Turkey', *Review of Reviews*, September 1911, pp. 234–36.

¹⁰² Edith K. Harper, *Stead, the Man: Personal Reminiscences* (London: Rider, 1914), dedication.

¹⁰³ 'Francis McCullagh, of Tripoli', *Review of Reviews*, December 1911, pp. 563–70 (p. 569).