

# Kossuth is Victoria

McCarthy, Desmond - Russell Agatha  
"Lady John Russell", N.Y. 1911,  
John Lane

116

## LADY JOHN RUSSELL 1847-52

She was not right, however, in her estimate of the dangers which threatened the Ministry ; they came from the Foreign Office and the Court, not from the Commons.

Kossuth, the leader of the Hungarian Revolution, had been received in England with great enthusiasm. He made a series of fiery speeches against the Austrian and Russian Governments, urging that in cases in which foreign Powers interfered with the internal politics of a country, as they had done in the case of the Revolution in Hungary, outside nations should combine to prevent it. This was thoroughly in harmony with Palmerston's foreign policy. He wished to receive Kossuth at his house, which would have been tantamount to admitting to a hostile attitude towards Austria and Russia, who were nominally our friends. Lord John dissuaded him from doing this ; but he did receive deputations at the Foreign Office, who spoke of the Emperors of Austria and Russia as "odious and detestable assassins." The Queen was extremely angry.

WINDSOR CASTLE, November 13, 1851

The Queen talked long with me about Lord Palmerston and about Kossuth.

After accusing Lord Palmerston of every kind of fault and folly, public and private, she said several times, "I have the very worst opinion of him." I secretly agreed with her in much that she said of him, but openly defended him when I thought her unjust. I told her of his steadiness in friendship and constant kindness in word and deed to those he had known in early life, however separated from him by time and station. She did not believe it, and said she knew him to be quite wanting in feeling. This turned out to mean that his political enmities outlasted the good fortune of his enemies. She said if he took the part of the revolutionists in some countries he ought in all, and that while he pretended great compassion for the oppressed Hungarians and Italians, he would not care if the Schleswig-Holsteiners were all drowned. I said this was too common a failing with us all, etc. I allowed that I wished his faults were not laid on John's shoulders, and John's merits given to him, as has often been the case—and that it was a pity he sometimes used unnecessarily provoking language, but I would not grant that England was despised and hated by all other European countries.