

Mr Harvey with the Authors Comp^{ts}

R U S S I A .

BY

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AUTHOR OF

“ ENGLAND, IRELAND, A

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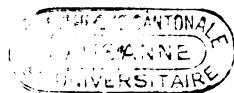
WILLIAM TAIT, EDINBURGH;

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO., AND JAMES RIDGWAY & SONS, LONDON;

GEORGE SIMMS, MANCHESTER; AND JOHN CUMMING, DUBLIN.

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A CURE FOR THE RUSSO-PHOBIA.

Thos. R. T.
CHAPTER I.

RUSSIA, TURKEY, AND ENGLAND.

CONTENTS.—Persevering Efforts of an Individual to rouse the People of Britain in favour of Turkey and against Russia.—Protest against any Wish to Palliate the Violence and Aggression of Russia.—Peace and Non-Intervention the Writer's sole Object.—Character of the Turkish Government—Contrasted with that of Russia.—Consequences to Humanity and Civilization of the Occupation of Constantinople by the Russians.—Absurd Apprehension of Injury to our Trade from the Greatness of Russia.—National Wealth the true Source of National Power; not Extent of Territory.—Immense Power of the Manufacturing Districts of England.—Lord Dudley Stuart's and Mr T. Attwood's Indiscreet Zeal for British Interference with Russia.—State of the Caucasian Tribes—The Georgians, Circassians, &c.—Condition of Wallachia and Moldavia—Persia—The Crimea—Finland.

It has been somewhere remarked, that, in former times, some false alarms usually preceded or accompanied a new war. Thus, in 1792, Mr Saunderson, then Lord Mayor, and soon afterwards made a Baronet, got up in his place in the House of Commons, and declared that he knew of a plot to surprise the Tower of London: all England was thrown into a fear of the Jacobins, and the anti-Jacobin war soon afterwards followed; but of the conspiracy to seize the Tower, not another word was heard. Again, at the close of the short peace, or, more properly speaking, the *truce* of Amiens, it was alleged, in all the public prints, and subsequently inserted in the declaration of war, that Bonaparte had armies ready to invade England; and, in proof, it was adduced that instructions had been given to the French diplomatic and commercial agents to take surveys and soundings of our coasts and harbours.* The people, thus deluded into an anti-Bonaparte war, forgot that many different surveys of every part of our coast, and of every harbour in the British dominions, might have been purchased for a few shillings at every hydrographer's or chart-seller's; and that no foreigner, by years of study, could have added an iota to the information contained in the various pilot books then used in the different channels. We live in other times; but still the constitution of our government, which gives to the Court the power of declaring war, and to the Commons the

privilege of providing for its expenses, remains the same; and, however we may be verging upon a more secure era, we confess we think there is sufficient ground in the predominant influence which an aristocracy, essentially warlike, exercises at this moment in the Ministry, to warn our readers and the public against the passion for a foolish war, with which the minds of the people have been latterly very industriously inflamed. We do not charge the noble Lords who form the great majority in the Cabinet with a design to stimulate the country to demand hostilities with Russia: the policy of the Ministry may probably have stopped far short of that, and aimed only at accomplishing an augmentation of the army or navy. Certain it is, however, that *one active mind* has, during the last two years, materially influenced the tone of several of the newspapers of this kingdom, in reference to the affairs of Russia and Turkey, and incessantly roused public opinion, through every accessible channel of the periodical press, against the former and in favour of the latter nation; certain it is, moreover, that this individual, if not previously an agent of the Government, has latterly become so, by being appointed to a diplomatic post in our embassy at Constantinople.* How far this indefatigable spirit has been successful in his design to diffuse a feeling of terror and a spirit of hatred towards Russia in the public mind, may be ascertained by any one who will take the trouble to sound the opinions of his next neighbour upon the subject, whom, it is ten to one, he will find an alarmist about the subtlety of Pozzo di Borgo, the cruelty of the Czar, and the barbarism of the Russians. He most likely will find him to possess but vague feelings of apprehension, and very little exactness of knowledge upon the subject; he will not know, perhaps, precisely, whether the province of Moldavia be on the right or the left bank of the Danube, or whether the Balkan and the ancient Hæmus

* "When once Persia fell under the yoke of Russia, one great obstacle to the acquirement of that which constituted our possessions in the east would be removed. He hoped that its success was impossible—it was at least problematical; but this, at all events, was in no degree doubtful, that the matter was very seriously entertained at St Petersburg. In the war-office there, maps and plans, drawn expressly for the purpose, were deposited, shewing not only the practicability of such a scheme of aggrandizement, but the various modes in which it might be best carried into effect, and the way the several military stations, necessary for the purpose, might be established."—Lord Dudley Stuart's Speech, House of Commons, Feb. 19, 1836.

* We state these facts from personal knowledge.

be an identical range of mountains; he will have but an indistinct acquaintance with the geography of Asia Minor, and probably confound the Bosphorus with the Dardanelles: but still he shall be profoundly alarmed at the encroachments of Russia in those quarters, and quite willing to go to war to prevent them. Such, we gravely assert, is the feeling and such are the opinions of the great majority of those who take their doctrines from some of the newspapers at this moment, upon the question of Russian aggrandizement. Believing that the fate of Turkey, and the designs of her great northern neighbour, are by no means matters that affect the interests of England so vitally as some writers imagine, we are yet more directly opposed to them, by entertaining a conviction that, even if the worst of their forebodings were to arrive—if even Russia were to subjugate Turkey—England would gain rather than suffer by the event. In order to state our views fairly upon this interesting and difficult question, it will be necessary for us to glance, hastily, at the past history and the present condition, as respects the government and resources, of the two empires; and then, having assumed that Turkey had fallen a prey to the ambition of Russia, we will weigh the probable consequences of, and meet the possible objections to, such an event.

But, before entering upon our task, we would disavow all intention of advocating the cause of Russian violence and aggression. It can only be necessary to say thus much at the outset of this pamphlet, in order to prevent the reader from anticipating our design with an undue prepossession respecting our motives; for the whole spirit and purpose of the following pages will shew that we are hostile to the government of St Petersburg, and to every principle of its foreign and domestic policy. Our sympathies flow, altogether, towards those free institutions which are favourable to the peace, wealth, education, and happiness of mankind.

In comparing the Turkish government with that of Russia, however, it will be found that the latter is immeasurably the superior in its laws and institutions; and if, in the remarks which we shall have occasion to make, we should appear to bestow commendations upon that northern people, we entreat that the reader will consider us to be only speaking in comparison with its more barbarous and despotic Mahometan neighbour, and not from any abstract predilection in favour of the Russian nation. Again, whilst we argue that we should, in all probability, benefit by the subjugation of Turkey by Russia, we do not attempt to justify, or even to palliate, the forcible spoliation of its territory: still less do we advocate the intervention of the English government, for the purpose of promoting such a conquest. Our sole object is to persuade the public that the wisest policy for England is, to take no part in those remote quarrels. To accomplish this end, we will endeavour to examine every distinct source of danger which the advocates for our interference in the affairs of states a thousand

miles distant, adduce as arguments in defence of their policy. We shall claim the right of putting the question entirely upon a footing of self-interest. We do not, for a moment, imagine that it is necessary for us to shew that we are not called upon to preserve the peace and good order of the entire world. Indeed, those writers and speakers who argue in favour of our intervention in the affairs of Russia and Turkey, invariably do so upon the pretence that our commerce, our colonies, or our national existence, are endangered by the encroachments of the former empire. We trust the futility of such fears will be shewn by the following appeal to reason, experience, and facts.

The Turks, a race of the Tartars of Asia, conquered Constantinople in 1453. In the succeeding century, this people struck terror into all Europe, by their conquests. They subdued Egypt, the Barbary States, and all the Arabian coasts on the Red Sea. In Europe, they conquered the Crimea and the countries along the Danube; they overran Hungary and Transylvania, and repeatedly laid siege to Vienna. At sea, notwithstanding the gallant resistance of the Venetians, they subdued Rhodes, Cyprus, and all the Greek islands. Down to our own time, the Turks governed a territory so vast and fertile that, in ancient ages, it comprised Egypt, Phœnicia, Syria, Greece, Carthage, Thrace, Pontus, Bithynia, Cappadocia, Epirus, and Armenia, besides other less renowned empires. From three of these states went forth, at various epochs, conquerors who vanquished and subjected the then entire known world. The present lamentable condition of this fine territory, so renowned in former times, arises from no change in the seasons, or defalcation of nature. It still stretches from 34 to 48 deg. north, within the temperate zone, and upon the same parallels of latitude as Spain, France, and all the best portion of the United States. "Mount Hæmus," says Malte Brun, "is still covered with verdant forests; the plains of Thrace, Macedonia, and Thessaly yield abundant and easy harvests to the husbandman; a thousand ports and a thousand gulfs are observed on the coasts, peninsulas, and islands. The calm billows of these tranquil seas still bathe the base of mountains covered with vines and olive trees. But the populous and numerous towns mentioned by ancient writers, have been changed into deserts beneath a despotic government." All the authorities upon this country assure us that the soil of many parts of Turkey is more fruitful than the richest plains of Sicily. When grazed by the rudest plough, it yields a more abundant harvest than the finest fields between the Eure and the Loire, and the granary of France. Mines of silver, copper, and iron are still existing, and salt abounds in the country. Cotton, tobacco, and silk might be made the staple exports of this region, and their culture admits of almost unlimited extension throughout the Turkish territory; whilst some of the native wines are equal to those of Burgundy. Almost every species of tree flourishes in European

Turkey. The heights on the Danube are clad with apple, pine, cherry, and apricot trees; whole forests of these may be seen in Wallachia; and they cover the hills of Thrace, Macedonia, and Epirus. The olive, orange, mastic, fig, and pomegranate—the laurel, myrtle, and nearly all the beautiful and aromatic shrubs and plants—are natural to this soil. Nor are the animal productions less valuable than those of vegetable life. The finest horses have been drawn from this quarter, to improve the breeds of Western Europe; and the rich pastures of European Turkey are, probably, the best adapted in the world for rearing the largest growths of cattle and sheep.

That, in a region so highly favoured, the population should have retrograded, whilst surrounded by abundance; that its wealth and industry should have been annihilated; and that commerce should be banished from those rivers and harbours that first called it into existence—must be accounted for by remembering that the finest soil, the most genial climate, or the brightest intellectual and physical gifts of human nature, are as nothing, when subjected to the benumbing influences of the government of Constantinople.

It is necessary to refer to the religion and the maxims of its professors, which constitute all that serves as a substitute for law with this Mahometan people, if we would know the causes why ignorance, barbarism, and poverty, now overspread the fairest lands of Asia and Europe. The Turks profess, as is well known, the most bigoted and intolerant branch of the Mahometan faith; they regard with equal detestation the Persian Shiite and the follower of Christ; nay, the more zealous amongst their doctors contend that it is as meritorious to slay one Shiite as twenty Christians. Their colleges, or madresses, teach nothing but the Mahometan theology; many years being spent in mastering such knotty points as, *whether the feet should be washed at rising, or only rubbed with the dry hand.* As the orthodox Turk, of whatever rank, is taught to despise all other fields of learning than the Koran, under the belief that Mahomet has, in that sacred book, recorded all that his faithful followers are required to know—it follows, of course, that he is religiously ignorant of all that forms the education of a Frenchman, German, or Italian; he knows nothing of the countries beyond the bounds of the Sultan's dominions. The Turks (unlike the liberal Persians, who have made some advances in science) are unacquainted with the uses of the commonest scientific instruments, which are exhibited to them by travellers just as we do to amuse children. Notwithstanding that this people have been for nearly four centuries in absolute possession of all the noblest remains of ancient art, they have evinced no taste for architecture or sculpture, whilst painting and music are equally unknown to them. Nor have they been less careless about the preservation of ancient, than the creation of modern works of labour and ingenuity. They found, at the conquest of the eastern empire,

splendid and substantial public and private edifices, which have been barbarously destroyed, or allowed to crumble beneath the hand of time; and huts of wood, compared by travellers to large boxes* standing in rows with their lids opening upon hinges, compose the streets of modern Constantinople, and other large cities. Bridges, aqueducts, and harbours, the precious and durable donations of remote yet more enlightened generations, have all suffered a like fate; and the roads, even in the vicinity of the capital, which in former ages maintained an unrivalled celebrity, are described, by the last tourist,† to be now in so broken and neglected a state as to present a barrier against the progress of artillery as complete as though it had been designed by an engineer for that purpose.

The cause of all this decay is ascribable to the genius of the Turkish government—a fierce, unmitigated, military despotism—alleged with the fanaticism of a brutalizing religion, which teaches its followers to rely solely on the sword, and to disdain all improvement and labour. The Sultan, who is the vicegerent of the prophet, holds both temporal and spiritual authority over his followers; and this enables him to sway the lives and destinies of the people, with an absoluteness greater than was ever enjoyed by any tyrant of ancient times; unchecked, too, by the growth of cities, the increase of knowledge, or the accumulation of wealth—all which are alike incompatible with the present government of the country. Every man who is invested with absolute power, is at liberty to delegate his power unimpaired to another: the Sultan is the vicegerent of the prophet; every Pasha is a representative of the Sultan; and every soldier who carries an order, the representative of the Pasha. The situations of Pasha and Cadi, or judge, are all given to the highest bidders, who are removable at will, and, of course, take care to indemnify themselves at the expense of the governed. “It is a fact of public notoriety,” says Thornton,‡ “that governments of every description are openly sold at the Porte; they are held for the term of one year only, and, at the ensuing *bairam*, the leases must be renewed or transferred to a less parsimonious competitor. In the public registers, the precise value of every important post under government is recorded; and the regular remittance of the taxes and tribute is the only acknowledged criterion of upright administration.” It is a fundamental principle that all the property conquered by the Turks belongs to the Sultan. Hence the Christians are accounted the slaves of the conqueror, and they are only allowed to live by paying a heavy tribute, the receipt for which bears that it is the ransom of their heads!

Probably, in nothing has this people been more unduly represented than in the praises which have been bestowed on their unrestricted princi-

* Willis—“Pencilings by the Way.”

† Quin—“Voyage down the Danube.”

‡ “Present State of Turkey.”

ples of trade. The Turk knows nothing, and cares as little, about freedom of commerce; he disdains trade himself, and despises it in others; and, if he has failed to imitate more civilized (though, certainly, in this point of view, not wiser) nations, by fortifying his coasts with custom-houses, it is certainly from no wise principle of taxation, but simply because such a circuitous method of fiscal exaction would be far too complicated and wearisome for the minds of Ottoman governors, who prefer the simpler mode of raising a revenue by the direct extortion of the Pasha or the Aga. Far from favouring the extension of commerce, one great cause of the present barbarism and the past unhappy condition of Turkey, is to be found in the aversion and contempt which its people bear for trade. "The Jews," says Hadji-Khalfa, the Turkish writer, in speaking of Salonica, "employ many workmen in their different manufactories—support a number of schools, in which there are not fewer than two hundred masters. The caravans that travel from Salonica to Semlin, Vienna, and Leipsig, are loaded with cotton, tobacco, carpets, and leather. It is a shame," continues the orthodox Hadji-Khalfa, "that so many Jews are allowed to remain in Salonica; the excitement thus given to trade is apt to blind true believers." The fate of those vast and rich tracts bordering upon the Black Sea and its tributary rivers, affords ample proof that the genius of Mahometanism is inimical to the interests of commerce and agriculture. The trade carried on by the ancients upon the shores of the Euxine, was very considerable, and gave life and wealth to several populous cities mentioned in history. In more modern times, the Genoese formed establishments upon the coasts of the Black Sea, and they took the lead in navigating those waters down to the fifteenth century. At the taking of Constantinople, the Turks closed the Black Sea against the ships of Europe; and from that time its navigation was lost to the commerce of the world for a period of more than three centuries.

By the treaty of Kanardgi, in 1774, the ships of Russia were allowed to pass the Bosphorus; other countries soon afterwards obtained similar privileges; some restrictions, which it was still attempted to keep up, were removed by the treaty between the Russians and Turks in 1829; and the Black Sea is now, for commercial purposes, as open as the Mediterranean. The importance of this vast extension of commercial navigation cannot, at present, be fully appreciated, owing to the unfortunate condition of the population which inhabits those regions. Some idea may, however, be formed of the extent and probable importance of those great rivers which fall into the Black Sea, by the following estimate, furnished by Malte Brun:—

If all the rivers in Europe be as	1,000
Those which flow into the Black Sea,	0.273
" " Mediterranean,	0.114

Of all the features belonging to the Turkish national character, there is none less favourable

than that which relates to the neglect and contempt with which that people has invariably treated affairs of trade. Whether it be owing to that dogma of their creed which forbids the receiving interest for money, or to that other familiar text of the Koran, which says, "There is but one law, and that forbids all communication with infidels;" certain it is that such an example as a Turkish merchant transacting matters of commerce with a foreign trader, was scarcely ever known in that country. This is an anomaly the more striking, when we refer to other countries, less advantageously situated, as, for instance, China, where trade has acquired an importance, and is conducted on a system the growth of ages of good government, and of a like period of patient industry in the people. Nothing but a tyrannical despotism, at once sanguinary and lawless, could have had the effect of repelling commerce from the superb harbour of Constantinople; but, alas! the thousand ships which might find secure anchorage there, would seek in vain for the rich freights of silk, cotton, and wool, which ought to await their coming: such is the character of its people and their rulers, that no native capitalists have ever been emboldened to accumulate a store of merchandise to tempt the rapacity of the Sultan; and vessels which trade to Constantinople have frequently occasion to go to Salonica, Smyrna, or some other port, for return cargoes.

Before we turn away from this hasty and assuredly not very pleasing glance at the Ottoman nation, it would be uncandid if we omitted to notice the imputed virtues of the Turks; foremost amongst which stands charity—a quality enjoined to all true believers by the words of Mahomet, and which includes within its operation the inferior animals. They are reputed to be honourable in their dealings, and faithful to their words—characteristics of the haughty masters, as lying and chicanery are natural to the slave. The Turks are forbidden the use of wine; but then they console themselves by substituting the eternal coffee, tobacco, and opium, and by other sensual indulgences.

"We turn," in the words of a great writer, "from the soil of barbarism and the crescent, to a country whose inhabitants participate in the blessings of Christianity and European civilization."

Russia comprises one half of Europe, one-third of Asia, and a portion of America; and includes within its bounds nearly sixty millions, or a sixteenth portion of the human race. Its territory stretches, in length, from the Black Sea to the confines of Upper Canada; and from the border of China to the Arctic Sea, in width. The stupendous size of the Russian empire has excited the wonder and alarm of timid writers, who forget, that "it is an identity of language, habits, and character, and not the soil or the name of a master, which constitutes a great and powerful nation." Ruling over eighty different nations or tribes, the autocrat of all the Russias claims the allegiance of a people of every variety

of race, tongue, and religion. Were it possible to transport to one common centre of his empire, the gay opera lounge of St Petersburg, habited in the Parisian mode; the fierce Bashkir of the Ural Mountain, clad in rude armour, and armed with bow and arrows; the Crimean, with his camel, from the southern steppes; and the Esquimaux, who traverses with his dogs the frozen regions of the north—these fellow-subjects of one potentate, would encounter each other with all the surprise and ignorance of individuals meeting from England, China, Peru, and New Holland; nor would the time or expense incurred in the journey be greater in the latter than the former interview. It must be obvious to every reflecting mind that vast deductions must be made from the written and statistical resources of a nation possessing no union of religious or political feeling, when put in competition with other empires, identified in faith, language, and national characteristics. The popular mind has been, however, greatly misled by many writers on the Russian empire, who have sought to impress their readers with the idea of the overwhelming size of its territory, and who have, at the same time, wilfully or ignorantly omitted to mention other facts, which, if taken in connection, serve to render that very magnitude of surface a source of weakness rather than power. We are furnished by Malte Brun with some tables of the relative densities of the population of the European empires, which will help to illustrate our views upon this subject, and from which we give an extract:—

	Inhabitants.
Russia, for each square league,	181
Prussia, — — — —	792
France, — — — —	1063
England, — — — —	1457

Now, the same law applies to communities as to physics—in proportion as you condense you strengthen, and as you draw out you weaken bodies; and, according to this rule, the above table, which makes Prussia more than four times as closely peopled as Russia, would, bearing in mind the advantages of her denser population, give to the former power an equality of might with her unwieldy neighbour, which, we have no doubt, is quite consistent with the truth; whilst the same tabular test, if applied to Russia, France, and England, would assign much the greater share of power to the two latter nations; which experience has demonstrated to be the fact. Here, then, we have the means of exemplifying, by a very simple appeal to figures, (ever the best reasoning weapons,) how the vastness of territory of the Russians is the cause of debility rather than of strength. It would be a trite illustration of a self-evident truism if we were to adduce, as a proof of our argument, the practice in military tactics. What general ever dreamed of scattering his troops, by way of increasing their power? Bonaparte gained his terrible battles by manœuvring great masses of

men in smaller limits than any preceding commanders.

But the same geographer supplies us with a graduated scale of the relative taxation of these countries, which affords a yet more convincing proof of the disadvantageous position of Russia.

Russia, each inhabitant contributes to	government,	£0 11 8
Prussia, — — — —	— — — —	0 17 6
France, — — — —	— — — —	1 8 4
England, — — — —	— — — —	3 13 4

Now, assuming, as we may safely do, that these governments draw the utmost possible revenue from their subjects, what a disproportion here is between the wealth of the closely-peopled Britain and the poverty of the scantily populated Russia! We find, too, that the gradation of wealth is in the direct proportion to the density of the inhabitants of the four countries. Here, then, we have a double source of weakness for Russia, which would operate in a duplicate ratio to her disadvantage, in case that nation were plunged into a war with either of those other states; for, whilst her armies must necessarily be mustered from greater distances, at proportionate cost, and with less ability on her part to bear those charges, her rivals would possess troops more compactly positioned, and, at the same time, the greater means of transporting them:—in a word, the one party would require the funds, and not possess them, whilst the other would, comparatively speaking, have the money, and not want it. A necessary evil attends the wide-spread character of the population of Russia, in the absence of those large towns which serve as centres of intelligence and nurses of civilization in other countries. Thus, in those vast regions, we have the cities of

Petersburgh, with a population of	305,000
Moscow,	190,000
Warsaw,	117,000
Kasan,	50,000
Kiow,	40,000

whilst we find the remainder of the large places on the map of Russia to be only, in size, upon a par with the third-rate towns of England. That in a country of such vast extent, and comprising sixty millions of people, and where so few populous cities exist, the great mass of the inhabitants are living in poverty, ignorance, and barbarism, scarcely rising above a state of nature, must be apparent. Tribes of Cossacks and of Tartars, wandering over the low countries of Caucasia, own a formal allegiance to Russia. Other hordes, dignified by the alarmist writers on the subject of Russian greatness, with the title of nations—such as the Circassians, the Georgians, the Mingrelians, with more than thirty other tribes, some Christian, others Mahometan, or of a mixed creed, occupying the mountainous regions of the Caucasus—are wholly or partially subdued to the dominion of the Czar. These fierce tribes are addicted to all the rude habits of savages; they live by the chase, or the cultivation of a little millet; they commit barbarous outrages, and buy and sell each other

for slaves—often disposing of their own children; brothers, and sisters, to the Turks. Against these refractory and half-subdued neighbours, the Russians are compelled to keep fortresses along the frontier.

If we pass to northern Russia, we find the Samoïedes, a people enduring nearly six months of perpetual night, and enjoying, in requital, a day of two months; with them, corn is sown, ripened, and reaped, in sixty days. In the governments of Wologda, Archangel, and Olonetz, (for even in this almost uninhabitable region man has established his ministerial arrangements and political divisions,) the climate is of such a nature that human industry can hardly contend against the elements, and the scanty produce of his labour enables the husbandman scarcely to protract a painful and sometimes precarious existence. Trees disappear on the sterile plains—the plants are stunted—corn withers—the marshy meadows are covered with rushes and mosses—and the whole of vegetable nature proclaims the vicinity of the pole.

Over these desolate wastes, a traveller might journey five hundred miles, and not encounter one solitary human habitation. The government or province of Orenburg, is larger than the entire kingdom of Prussia, and yet contains only a population of one million souls!

There are, however, vast districts—as, for example, the whole of Little Russia, and the Ukraine—of fertile territory, equal in richness to any part of Europe; and it has been estimated that Russia contains more than 750,000 square miles of land, of a quality not inferior to the best portions of Germany, and upon which a population of two hundred millions of people might find subsistence. Here, then, is the field upon which the energies of the government and the industry of its subjects should be, for the next century, exclusively devoted; and if the best interests of Russia were understood—or if its government would attain to that actual power which ignorant writers proclaim for it in the possession of boundless wastes and impenetrable forests—she should cease the wars of the sword, and begin the battle with the wilderness, by constructing railroads, building bridges, deepening rivers; by fostering the accumulation of capital, the growth of cities, and the increase of civilization and freedom. *These are the only sources of power and wealth in an age of improvement*; and until Russia, like America, draws from her plains, mountains, and rivers, those resources which can be developed only by patient labour—vain are her boasts of geographical extent. As well might the inhabitants of the United States vaunt of their unexplored possessions west of the Rocky Mountains, or England plume herself upon the desert tracts of New Holland.

If such be the true interests of Russia, it will be admitted, then, that the conquest of those extensive and almost depopulated regions now withering under the government of the Sultan, would only be a wider departure from this enlightened policy. Assuming that such a conquest

had taken place, it follows that the population of the Russian empire would become still more diversified in character and of a yet more heterogeneous nature; whilst it, at the same time, would diffuse itself over a far wider surface of territory; and, if the arguments which we have offered are founded in reason, then the first effects of all this must be, that Russia would, herself, be weakened by this still greater distension of her dominion. What, then, becomes of our apprehensions about the safety of India, or the possession of the Ionian Islands—the freedom of the Mediterranean—our maritime supremacy—or the thousand other dangers with which we are threatened as the immediate consequence of the possession of Constantinople by the Russians?

If we would form a fair estimate of the probable results of that event, we ought to glance, for a moment, at the conduct of the same people under somewhat similar circumstances in another quarter. The policy pursued by Russia on the Gulf of Finland, (where St Petersburg arose, like an exhalation from the marshes of the Neva,) when those districts were wrested, by its founder, from the maniac Charles XII., would, we have a right to assume, be imitated by the same nation on the shores of the Bosphorus. Let us here pause to do homage to that noblest example of history, far surpassing the exploits of Alexander or Napoleon—that sublime act of devotion at the shrine of commerce and civilization, offered by Peter the Great, who, to instruct his subjects in the science of navigation and the art of ship-building, voluntarily descended from a throne, where he was surrounded by the pomp and splendour of a great potentate, and became a menial workman in the dockyards of Saardam and Deptford! We vindicate not his crimes or his vices—the common attributes of the condition of society in which he lived; his cruelty was but the natural fruit of irresponsible power in savage life; and his acts of grossness and intemperance were regarded, by the nation, as honourable exploits: but the genius that enabled him to penetrate the thick clouds of prejudice and ignorance which enveloped his people, and to perceive, afar off, the power which civilization and commerce confer upon nations, was the offspring of his own unaided spirit, and will ever be worthy of peculiar honour at the hands of the historian. Everybody knows under what trying disadvantages this metropolis, planted in the midst of unhealthy and barren marshes, and in a latitude that, by the ancients, was placed beyond the limits of civilization, sprung from the hands of its founder, and stood forth the most wonderful phenomenon of the 18th century. At present, this capital, which contains upwards of 300,000 inhabitants, and is termed, from the splendour of its public buildings, a city of palaces, can boast of scientific bodies which are in correspondence with all the learned societies of Europe. The government has sent out circumnavigators, who have made discoveries in remote regions of the globe. St Petersburg contains

museums of art and literature; some of the first specimens of sculpture and painting are to be seen in its public halls; its public libraries contain twice as many volumes as those of London; and the best collection of Chinese, Japanese, and Mongol books are to be found on their shelves. All the decencies and even elegancies of life, observable in Paris or London, are found to prevail over this northern metropolis; and there is nothing in the streets (unless it be the costume of the people, necessary to meet the exigencies of the climate) to remind the eye of the traveller that he is not in one of the more western Christian capitals.

We may fairly assume that, were Russia to seize upon the capital of Turkey, the consequences would not at least be less favourable to humanity and civilization than those which succeeded to her conquests on the Gulf of Finland a century ago. The seraglio of the Sultan would be once more converted into the palace of a Christian monarch; the lasciviousness of the harem would disappear at the presence of his Christian empress; those walls which now resound only to the voice of the eunuch and the slave, and witness nothing but deeds of guilt and dishonour, would then echo the footsteps of travellers and the voices of men of learning, or behold the assemblage of high-souled and beautiful women, of exalted birth and rare accomplishments, the virtuous companions of ambassadors, tourists, and merchants, from all the capitals of Europe. We may fairly and reasonably assume that such consequences would follow the conquest of Constantinople: and can any one doubt that, if the government of St Petersburg were transferred to the shores of the Bosphorus, a splendid and substantial European city would, in less than twenty years, spring up, in the place of those huts which now constitute the capital of Turkey?—that noble public buildings would arise, learned societies flourish, and the arts prosper?—that, from its natural beauties and advantages, Constantinople would become an attractive resort for civilized Europeans?—that the Christian religion, operating instantly upon the laws and institutions of the country, would ameliorate the condition of its people?—that the slave market, which is now polluting the Ottoman capital centuries after the odious traffic has been banished from the soil of Christian Europe, would be abolished?—that the demoralizing and unnatural law of polygamy, under which the fairest portion of the creation becomes an object of brutal lust and an article of daily traffic, would be discountenanced?—and that the plague, no longer fostered by the filth and indolence of the people, would cease to ravage countries placed in the healthiest latitudes and blessed with the finest climate in the world? Can any rational mind doubt that these changes would follow from the occupation of Constantinople by Russia, every one of which, so far as the difference in the cases permitted, has already been realized more than a century in St Petersburg? But the interests of England, it is alleged, would be endangered by such

changes. We deny that the progress of improvement and the advance of civilization can be inimical to the welfare of Great Britain. To assert that *we*, a commercial and manufacturing people, have an interest in retaining the fairest regions in Europe in barbarism and ignorance—that *we* are benefited because poverty, slavery, polygamy, and the plague abound in Turkey—is a fallacy too gross even for refutation.

One of the greatest dangers apprehended (for we set out with promising to answer the popular objections to the aggrandizement of Russia in this quarter) is, from the injury which would be inflicted upon our trade; which trade, exclusively of that portion of our nominal exports to Turkey which really goes to Persia, does not much exceed half a million yearly, an amount so contemptible when we recollect the population, magnitude, and natural fertility of that empire, that it might safely be predicted, under no possible form of government could it be diminished. But Russia is said, by the panegyrist of Turkey, to be an anti-commercial country. We have already seen that, to Russian influence we are indebted for the liberation of the Black Sea from the thralldom in which it had been held, by Turkish jealousy, for three hundred years. If, however, we would judge of the probable conduct of that people after the conquest of Constantinople, we must appeal to the experience which they have given us of their commercial policy at St Petersburg. The first Dutch merchant vessel (whose captain was welcomed with honours and loaded with presents by Peter the Great) entered that harbour in 1703; and, at the present time, fifteen hundred vessels clear out annually from the capital of Russia for all parts of the world. The internal navigation of this vast empire has been improved, with a patience and perseverance, in the last century, which, bearing in mind the impediments of climate and soil, are deserving our astonishment and admiration, and which contrasts strangely with the supineness of that Mahometan people whose habits are, according to some writers, so favourable to trade, but in whose country not one furlong of canal or navigable stream, the labour of Turkish hands, has been produced in upwards of three hundred years! Three great lines of navigation, one of them 1400 miles long, extend through the interior of Russia, by which the waters of the Baltic, the Caspian, and the Black Sea are brought into connection; and by which channels the provinces of the Volga, the plains of the Ukraine, and the forests and mines of Siberia, transmit their products to the markets of Moscow and St Petersburg.* Much as may with truth be alleged against the lust for aggrandizement with which Russian counsels have been actuated, yet, if we examine, we shall find that it is by the love of improvement—the security given, by laws, to life and property—but, above all, owing to the encouragement afforded to commerce—that this empire has, more than by conquest, been brought forth from her frozen

* Boats may, we are told, go from St Petersburg to the Caspian Sea, without unloading.

regions, to hold a first rank among the nations of Europe.

The laws for the encouragement of trade are direct and important; and their tendency is to destroy the privileges of the nobles, by raising up a middle class precisely in the same way by which our own Plantagenets countervailed the powers of the barons. Every Russian, carrying on trade, must be a burgher, and a registered member of a guild or company; and of these guilds there are three ranks, according to the capitals of the members:—

10 to 50,000 roubles* entitles to foreign commerce, exempts from corporal punishment, and qualifies to drive about in a carriage and pair.

5 to 10,000 roubles, the members of this guild are confined to inland trade.

1 to 5,000 roubles includes petty shopkeepers.

Besides these guilds for merchants, the porters of the large towns associate together in bodies, called *artels*, resembling, in some respects, the company of wine coopers in London, for the purpose of guaranteeing persons employing one of them from any loss or damage to his goods. Now, in a country, however far removed from a state of freedom and civilization, (*and we maintain that, in these respects, the condition of Russia is in arrears of all other Christian states*), where laws such as these exist, for encouraging industry, conferring privileges upon traders, and doing honour to the accumulation of capital—in that country prodigious strides have been already taken on the only true path to enlightenment and liberty. *On this path the Turks have disdained to advance a single step.* Here we have at one glance the distinctive characters of the Turkish and Russian, the Slavonic and Mongolian races—the former unchanging and stationary, the latter progressing and imitative. The very stringent laws which Russia has passed against the importation of our fabrics, are indications of the same variety of character; evincing a desire to rival us in mechanical industry: whilst the apathy with which the Turk sees every article of our manufactures enter his ports, without being stimulated to study the construction of a loom or spinning frame, is but another manifestation of his inferior structure of intellect.

To return, then, to the oft agitated question, as to the danger of our commerce consequent upon the conquest of Constantinople by Russia—are we not justified in assuming that our exports to Turkey would exceed half a million per annum, if that fertile region were possessed by a nation governed under laws for the fostering of trade, such as we have just described? Some persons argue, indeed, that, although the productive industry of those countries would augment under such supposed circumstances, still, so great is the enmity of the Russians towards England, that we should be excluded from all participation in its increase. But how stands the case if we appeal to the policy of that people, as already experienced, and find that—notwith-

* A rouble is about 10½d.

standing that our own tariff at this time interposes a duty of 100 per cent. against the two staple articles of Russian produce, timber and corn—the amount of trade carried on between Great Britain and St Petersburg, is equal to that of the latter with all the rest of the world together; for, of the 1500 vessels clearing annually from that port, 750 are British? But it is contended that, if Russia were put in possession of the Turkish provinces, she would possess, within her own limits, such a command of all the natural products as might enable her to close the Hellespont against the world, and begin a Japanese system of commercial policy. To this we reply, that commerce cannot, in the present day, turn hermit. It will not answer for a people to try, in the words of Sheridan, to get “an atmosphere and a sun of its own.” Nay, better still—no country can carry on great financial transactions except through the medium of England. We are told by Mr Rothschild, in his evidence before the legislature, that London is the metropolis of the moneyed world; that no large commercial operations can possibly be carried on, but they must be, more or less, under the influence of this common centre of the financial system, round which the less affluent states, like the humbler orbs of the solar creation, revolve, and from whence they must be content to borrow lustre and nourishment. Supposing, indeed, that Russia were in possession of Turkey, and should commence a system of non-intercourse, (we are under the necessity of making these whimsical suppositions in order to reply to grounds of argument which are actually advanced every day by grave writers upon this question,) could she carry on those extensive manufactures which some people predict, without deriving a supply of raw ingredients from other countries? It will suffice on this head if we observe, that, to enable any one of our manufacturers to conduct the simplest branch of his mechanical and chemical industry, it is requisite that he be duly supplied with materials, the growth of every corner of the globe;—the commonest printed calico, worn by the poorest peasant's wife, is the united product of the four quarters of the earth; the cotton of America, the indigo of Asia, the gum of Africa, and the madder of Europe, must all be brought from those remote regions, and be made to combine with fifty other as apparently heterogeneous commodities, by ingenious arts and processes, the results of ten thousand philosophical experiments—and all to produce a rustic's gown-piece! Whilst such are the exigencies of manufacturing industry, binding us in abject dependence upon all the countries of the earth, may we not hope that freedom of commerce, and an exemption from warfare, will be the inevitable fruits of the future growth of that mechanical and chemical improvement, the germ of which has only been planted in our day? Need we add one word to prove that Russia could not—unless she were to discover another chemistry, which should wholly alter the properties of matter— at the same time seclude herself from the trade

of the rest of the world, and become a rich and great manufacturing or commercial nation? Wherever a country is found to favour foreign commerce, whether it be the United States, Russia, Holland, China, or Brazil, (we speak only of commercial nations, and, of course, do not include France,) it may infallibly be assumed, that England partakes more largely of the advantages of that traffic than any other state; and the same rule will continue to apply to the *increase* of the commerce of the world, in whatever quarter it may be, so long as the British people are distinguished by their industry, energy, and ingenuity; and provided that their rulers shall keep pace in wise reforms and severe economy with the governments of their rivals. It follows, then, that, with reference to trade, there can be no ground of apprehension from Russia. If that people were to attempt to exclude all foreign traffic, they would enter, at once, upon the high road to barbarism, from which career there is no danger threatened to rich and civilized nations; if, on the other hand, that state continued to pursue a system favourable to foreign trade, then England would be found at Constantinople, as she has already been at St Petersburg, reaping the greatest harvest of riches and power, from the augmentation of Russian imports.

By far the greater proportion of the writers and speakers upon the subject of the power of Russia, either do not understand, or lose sight of the all important question, What is the true source of national greatness? The path by which alone modern empires can hope to rise to supreme power and grandeur, (would that we could impress this sentiment upon the mind of every statesman in Europe!) is that of labour and improvement. They who, pointing to the chart of Russia, shudder at her expanse of impenetrable forests, her wastes of eternal snow, her howling wildernesses, frowning mountains, and solitary rivers; or they who stand aghast at her boundless extent of fertile but uncultivated steppes, her millions of serfs, and her towns the abodes of poverty and filth—know nothing of the true origin, in modern and future times, of national power and greatness. This question admits of an appropriate illustration, by putting the names of a couple of heroes of Russian aggression and violence, in contrast with two of their contemporaries, the champions of improvement in England. At the very period when Potemkin and Suwarrow were engaged in effecting their important Russian conquests in Poland and the Crimea, and whilst those monsters of carnage were filling the world with the lustre of their fame, and lighting up one-half of Europe with the conflagrations of war—two obscure individuals, the one an optician, and the other a barber, both equally disregarded by the chroniclers of the day, were quietly gaining victories in the realms of science, which have produced a more abundant harvest of wealth and power to their native country, than has been acquired by all the wars of Russia during the last two

centuries. Those illustrious commanders in the war of improvement, Watt and Arkwright, with a band of subalterns—the thousand ingenious and practical discoverers who have followed in their train—have, with their armies of artisans, conferred a power and consequence upon England, springing from successive triumphs in the physical sciences and the mechanical arts, and wholly independent of territorial increase—compared with which, all that she owes to the evanescent exploits of her warrior heroes, shrinks into insignificance and obscurity. If we look into futurity, and speculate upon the probable career of one of these inventions, may we not with safety predict that the steam engine—the perfecting of which belongs to our own age, and which even now is exerting an influence in the four quarters of the globe—will at no distant day produce moral and physical changes, all over the world, of a magnitude and permanency, surpassing the effects of all the wars and conquests which have convulsed mankind since the beginning of time! England owes to the peaceful exploits of Watt and Arkwright, and not to the deeds of Nelson and Wellington, her commerce, which now extends to every corner of the earth; and which casts into comparative obscurity, by the grandeur and extent of its operations, the peddling ventures of Tyre, Carthage, and Venice, confined within the limits of an inland sea.

If we were to trace, step by step, the opposite careers of aggrandizement, to which we can only thus hastily glance—of England, pursuing the march of improvement within the area of four of her counties, by exploring the recesses of her mines, by constructing canals, docks, and railroads, by her mechanical inventions, and by the patience and ingenuity of her manufacturers in adapting their fabrics to meet the varying wants and tastes of every habitable latitude of the earth's surface; and of Russia, adhering to her policy of territorial conquest, by despoiling of provinces the empires of Turkey, Persia, and Sweden, by subjugating in unwilling bondage the natives of Georgia and Circassia, and by seizing with robber hand the soil of Poland:—if we were to trace these opposite careers of aggrandizement, what should we find to be the relative consequences to these two empires? England, with her steam-engine and spinning frame, has erected the standard of improvement, around which every nation of the world has already prepared to rally; she has, by the magic of her machinery, united for ever two remote hemispheres in the bonds of peace, by placing Europe and America in absolute and inextricable dependence on each other; England's industrious classes, through the energy of their commercial enterprise, are, at this moment, influencing the civilization of the whole world, by stimulating the labour, exciting the curiosity, and promoting the taste for refinement of barbarous communities, and, above all, by acquiring and teaching to surrounding nations, the beneficent attachment to peace. Such are the

moral effects of improvement in Britain, against which Russia can oppose comparatively little, but the example of violence; to which humanity points as a beacon to warn society from evil. And if we refer to the physical effects—if, for the sake of convincing minds which do not recognise the far more potent moral influences—we descend to a comparison of mere brute forces, we find still greater superiority resulting from ingenuity and labour. The manufacturing districts alone—even the four counties of England, comprising Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, and Staffordshire—could, at any moment, by means of the wealth drawn, by the skill and industry of its population, from the natural resources of this comparative speck of territory, combat with success the whole Russian empire! Liverpool and Hull, with their navies, and Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham, with their capitals, could blockade, within the waters of Cronstadt, the entire Russian marine, and annihilate the commerce of St Petersburg. And, further, if we suppose that, during the next thirty years, Russia, adhering to her system of territorial aggrandizement, were to swallow up, successively, her neighbours, Persia and Turkey—whilst England, which we have imagined to comprise only the area of four counties, still persevered in her present career of mechanical ingenuity, the relative forces would, at the end of that time, be yet more greatly in favour of the peaceful and industrious empire. This mere speck on the ocean—without colonies, which are but the costly appendage* of an aristocratic government—without wars, which have ever been but another aristocratic mode of plundering and oppressing commerce—would, with only a few hundred square leagues of surface, by means of the wealth which, by her arts and industry, she had accumulated, be the arbitress of the destiny of Russia, with its millions of square miles of territory. Liverpool and Hull, with their thousands of vessels, would be in a condition to dictate laws to the possessor of one-fourth part of the surface of the globe: they would then be enabled to blockade Russia in the Sea of Marmora, as they could now do in the Gulf of Finland—to deny her the freedom of the seas—to deprive her proud nobles of every

* Some people contend that our colonies are profitable to us, because they consume our manufactures; although it is notorious that they do not buy a single commodity from us which they could procure cheaper elsewhere, whilst we take frequently articles from them of an inferior quality and at a dearer rate than we could purchase at from other countries. But what do the advocates of the present system say to the fact, that we are at this moment paying thirty per cent. more for the colonial productions consumed in our houses, than is paid for similar articles, *procured from our own colonies, too*, by the people of the Continent? A workman in London, an artisan in Manchester, or a farmer of Wales, buys his Jamaica sugar and coffee thirty per cent. dearer than the native of Switzerland or America, perhaps five hundred miles distant from a port, and whose governments never owned a colony! But, it will be said, this is necessary taxation to meet the interest of the debt. And what have we to shew for the national debt but our colonies?

foreign commodity and luxury, and degrade them, amidst their thousands of serfs, to the barbarous state of their ancestors of the ancient Rousniacs—and to confine her Czar in his splendid prison of Constantinople!*. If such are the miracles of the mind, such the superiority of improvement over the efforts of brute force and violence, is not the writer of these pages justified in calling the attention of his countrymen elsewhere,† to

* The amount of our exports of cotton goods, of which industry Manchester is the centre, is double that of the exports of every kind from all the Russian empire: the shipping entering Liverpool annually, exceeds the tonnage of St Petersburg eightfold! These facts, which we can only thus allude to with epigrammatic brevity, convey forcibly to the reflecting mind, an impression of the mighty influence which now slumbers in the possession of the commercial and manufacturing portions of the community: how little they understand the extent of their power, may be acknowledged, when we recollect that this great and independent order of society (for the manufacturing interest of England is, from the nature of its position with reference to foreign states, more independent of British agriculture than the latter is of it) is deprived of the just reward of its ingenious labour, by the tyranny of the corn-laws; that it possesses no representation, and consequently no direct influence, in one of the Houses of Parliament—the members of which, to a man, are interested in the manufacture and high price of food—and that it still lies under the stigma of feudal laws, that confer rights, privileges, and exemptions upon landed possessions, which are denied to personal property.

† Since the publication of "England, Ireland, and America," the author has had an opportunity of visiting the United States, and of taking a hasty glance of the American people; and his ocular experience of the country has confirmed him in the views he put forth in that pamphlet. Looking to the natural endowments of the North American continent—as superior to Europe as the latter is to Africa—with an almost immeasurable extent of river navigation—its boundless expanse of the most fertile soil in the world, and its inexhaustible mines of coal, iron, lead, &c. :—looking at these, and remembering the quality and position of a people universally instructed and perfectly free, and possessing, as a consequence of these, a new-born energy and vitality very far surpassing the character of any nation of the old world—the writer reiterates the moral of his former work, by declaring his conviction that it is from the west, rather than from the east, that danger to the supremacy of Great Britain is to be apprehended;—that it is from the silent and peaceful rivalry of American commerce, the growth of its manufactures, its rapid progress in internal improvements, the superior education of its people, and their economical and pacific government—that it is from these, and not from the barbarous policy or the impoverishing armaments of Russia, that the grandeur of our commercial and national prosperity is endangered. *And the writer stakes his reputation upon the prediction, that, in less than twenty years, this will be the sentiment of the people of England generally; and that the same conviction will be forced upon the government of the country.*

The writer has been surprised at the little knowledge that exists here with respect to the mineral resources of America. Few are aware that in nothing does that country surpass Europe so much as in its rich beds of coal. By a government survey of the State of Pennsylvania, it appears that it contains twenty thousand square miles of coal, with iron in proportion. This in one State only! whilst the whole of the Mississippi valley is more or less enriched with this invaluable combustible. Several of his neighbours have been astonished by the inspection of a specimen of bituminous coal, which the writer procured from a pit at Brownsville, on the Monongahela river, above Pittsburgh, and which is pronounced equal to the very best qualities produced from the

the progress of another people, whose rapid adoption of the discoveries of the age, whose mechanical skill and unrivalled industry in all the arts of life—as exemplified in their thousands of miles of railroads, their hundreds of steam-boats, their ship-building, manufacturing, and patent inventions—whose system of universal instruction, and, above all, whose inveterate attachment to peace—all proclaim America, by her competition in improvements, to be destined to affect more vitally than Russia by her aggrandizement of territory, the future interests of Great Britain?

If, then, England, by promoting the peaceful industry of her population, is pursuing a course which shall conduct her to a far higher point of moral and physical power than Russia can hope to reach by the opposite career of war and conquest, we must seek for some other motive than that of danger to ourselves, for the hostilities in which we are urged, by so many writers and speakers, to engage with that northern people.

The great grievance, indeed, with us, is one which, all things borne in remembrance, displays quite as much naïveté in the character of the British people as is consistent with a moderate share of self-knowledge. The Russians are accused by us of being an aggrandizing people! From the day of Pultowa down to the time of the passage of the Balkan—say theorators, journalists, reviewers, and authors—the government of St Petersburg has been incessantly addicted to picking and stealing. But, in the meantime, has England been idle? If, during the last century, Russia has plundered Sweden, Poland, Turkey, and Persia, until she has grown unwieldy with the extent of her spoils, Great Britain has, in the same period, robbed—no, that would be an unpollite phrase—“*has enlarged the bounds of his Majesty's dominions*” at the expense of France, Holland, and Spain. It would be false logic, and just as unsound morality, to allow the Muscovite to justify his derelictions of honesty by an appeal to our example; but surely we, who are staggering under the embarrassing weight of our colonies, with one foot upon the rock of Gibraltar and the other at the Cape of Good Hope—with Canada, Australia, and the peninsula of India, forming, Cerberus-like, the heads of our monstrous empire—and with the hundred minor acquisitions scattered so widely over the earth's surface as to present an unanswerable proof of our wholesome appetite for boundless

mines in Yorkshire. The mode of working the pits is, to drive an adit into the sloping banks of the navigable rivers; and, at a few yards distance, the coal stratum is usually found, six feet in thickness; and, as the miner is always enabled to work in an upright posture, one man will frequently produce as much as 100 loads a-day. The steam-boat in which the author went from Brownsville to Pittsburgh, stopped at one of those pits' mouths, and took in a supply of fuel, which was charged at the rate of about three farthings a bushel. These are facts which bear more directly upon the future destinies of this country, than the marriages of crowned heads in Portugal, the movements of savage forces in Russia, and similar proceedings, to which we attach so much importance.

dominion—surely we are not exactly the nation to preach homilies to other people in favour of the national observance of the eighth commandment!* If we find all these possessions to be burdensome, rather than profitable—if, in common with all marauders, we discover, by experience, that the acquisitions of fraud or violence confer nothing but disappointment and loss—we shall not improve our case by going to war to prevent Russia pursuing the same course, which will inevitably conduct her to a similar fate, where the same retribution, which will ever accompany an infringement of the moral laws, awaits her. England and Russia, in the act of scolding each other on the reciprocal accusation of unjust aggrandizement, present an appearance so ludicrous that it forcibly recalls to our recollection the quarrel between the two worthies of the Beggars' Opera, the termination of which scene we recommend to the imitation of the diplomatists of the two courts. Like Lockit and Peachum, the British lion and the Russian bear, instead of tearing one another, had better hug and be friends—“*Brother bruin, brother bruin, we are both in the wrong.*”

Lord Dudley Stuart, (whose zeal, we fear, without knowledge, upon the subject of Poland, and whose prejudice against Russia, have led him to occupy so much of the public time, uselessly, upon the question before us,) in the course of his long speech in the House of Commons, (February 19th,) upon introducing the subject of Russian encroachments, dwelt, at considerable length, upon the lust of aggrandizement by which he argued that the government of St Petersburg was so peculiarly distinguished; and he brought forward, at considerable cost of labour, details of its successive conquests of territory during the last century. Where the human mind is swayed by any passion of however amiable a nature, or where the feelings are allowed to predominate over the reason, in investigating a subject which appeals only to the understanding, it will generally happen that the judgment is defective. We attribute to the well known fervour of Lord Stuart's sentiments upon Russia and Poland, the circumstance that, during the fortnight which he must have employed in col-

* Extract from Mr T. Attwood's speech, House of Commons, July 9, 1833.—“The House will recollect that, for two centuries, Russia has been gradually encroaching upon the territories of all her neighbours; for the last 150 years, her progress has been general on all sides—east, west, north, and south. A few years ago, she attacked Sweden and seized upon Finland. Then she attacked Persia, and added some most important provinces to her empire in the south. Not content with this, she appropriated, in 1792, a great part of Poland; and it is but lately she has attacked Turkey. Thus, for years, she has gone on in her course of aggrandizement, in defiance of the laws of God and man!”—If for Sweden, Persia, and Poland, we substitute France, Spain, and Holland, and if, instead of Turkey, we put the Burmese empire, how admirably the above description would apply to another nation, of whose unprofitable aggrandizements in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, Mr Attwood may read a few particulars in Mr Montgomery Martin's “History of the British Colonies”—five volumes octavo!

lecting the dates of the several treaties by which the former empire has wrested its possessions from neighbouring states, the thought never once occurred to him—a reflection which would have entered the head of almost any other man of sense, who sat down coolly to consider the subject—that, during the last hundred years, England has, for every square league of territory annexed to Russia, *by force, violence, or fraud, appropriated to herself three*. Such would have been the reflection which flashed across the mind of a statesman who sat down, *dispassionately*, to investigate the subject of Russian policy; and it must have prevented him, by the consciousness of the egotism and arrogance—nay, the downright effrontery* of such a course—from bringing an accusation against another people which recoils with threefold† criminality upon ourselves. Nor, if we were to enter upon a comparison of the cases, should we find that the *means* whereby Great Britain has augmented her possessions, are a whit less reprehensible than those which have been resorted to by the northern power for a similar purpose. If the English writer calls down indignation upon the conquerors of the Ukraine, Finland, and the Crimea, may not Russian historians conjure up equally painful reminiscences upon the subjects of Gibraltar, the Cape, and Hindostan? Every one conversant with the history of the last century, will remember that England has, during almost all that period, maintained an ascendancy at sea; and colonies, which were in times past regarded as the chief source of our wealth and power, being pretty generally the fruits of every succeeding war, the nation fell into a passion for conquest, under the delusive impression that those distant dependencies were, in spite of the debt contracted in seizing them, profitable acquisitions to the mother country. Hence the British government was always eager for hostilities, the moment an excuse presented itself, with one of the maritime continental states, possessing colonies; and of the several conflicts in which we have been involved since the peace of Ryswick, at least three out of four have been consequent upon declarations of war made by England.‡ Russia,

* We allude to the nation—the epithet cannot be applied to his Lordship.

† We speak after due investigation and calculation, and not at random, when we allege that England has acquired three times as much territory as Russia during the last century. The Cape is computed at half a million of square miles, Canada at half as much more, India and New Holland will be found each with an area almost as large as that of the cultivable portion of Europe; not to mention other acquisitions too numerous to be described within the limits of a pamphlet!

Progressive augmentation of the Russian Empire:—

	Year	Sq. miles.	Population.
At the accession of Peter I.	1689	2,000,000	15,000,000
At his death,	1725	3,150,000	20,000,000
At the accession of Catherine II.	1763	3,700,000	25,000,000
At her death,	1796	3,850,000	36,000,000
At the death of Alexander,	1825	4,250,000	58,000,000

—*Malte Brun's Geography*, vol. vi. p. 622.

‡ The policy of England has been aggressive at all times; but we are far from exulting in the fact of having

on the contrary, has been nearly surrounded by the territory of barbarous nations, one of which*—*by the very nature of its institutions, warlike and aggressive*—was, up to the middle of the last century, prompted, by a consciousness of strength, and, since then, by a haughty ignorance of its degeneracy, to court hostilities with its neighbours; and the consequence of this and other causes is, that, in the majority of cases, where Russia has been engaged in conflicts with her neighbours, she will be found to have had a war of self-defence for her justification. If such are the facts—if England has, for the sake of the spoil which would accrue to her superiority of naval strength, provoked war, with all its horrors, from weak and unwilling enemies, whilst Russia, on the contrary, with ill-defined boundaries, has been called upon to repel the attacks of fierce and lawless nations—surely, we must admit, unless pitifully blinded by national vanity, that

always dealt the first blow, as Mr Thomas Attwood of Birmingham would wish us to do, when he tells us, exultingly, in the House of Commons, whilst speaking of Russia—(See *Mirror of Parliament*, 1833, p. 2874)—“We, the people of England, who have never known what fear is; who have been accustomed, for seven hundred years, to give a blow first and to receive an apology afterwards; we, who have borne the British lion triumphant through every quarter of the world, and are now forced to submit to insults from this base and brutal, and this in reality weak power—a power which, from its mere physical force, contrives, like a great bully, to intimidate the moral strength of Europe!” Now, putting aside the exquisitely ludicrous charge of bullying, alleged against Russia by one who boasts that, for seven hundred years, we have “struck the first blow,” and which reminds us of the scene between Sir Anthony Absolute and his “insolent, impudent, overbearing” son, Jack; we have here a specimen of that sort of sentiment which horses or buffaloes, if they could make speeches, might very properly indulge in, but which is derogatory to the rank of reasoning beings, who possess intellectual faculties in lieu of hoofs and horns.

Mr Attwood is an advocate for war and paper money—the curse and scourge of the working classes! What do the Birmingham mechanics say to the following picture of the effects of the last war upon the prosperity of their town? The same results would follow a like cause, should a war be entered into, to gratify their favourite representative.

Extract from Mr Grey's (now Lord Grey) speech on the state of the nation, March 25, 1801.—See *Hansard's Parliamentary History*, vol. 35, p. 1064.

“I come now to speak of the internal state of the country. Two hundred and seventy millions have been added to our national debt, exclusive of imperial and other loans, and of the reduction effected by the sinking fund; and yet we are told, by the ex-ministers, that they leave the country in a flourishing situation! I ask any man, whether, from diminished comforts or from positive distress, he does not feel this declaration an insult. Ask the ruined manufacturers of Yorkshire, Manchester, and Birmingham; ask the starving inhabitants of London and Westminster. In some parts of Yorkshire, formerly the most flourishing, it appears, from an authentic paper which I hold in my hand, that the poor-rates have increased from £522 to £6000 a-year; though the whole rack-rent of the parish does not exceed £5600. In Birmingham, I know, from undoubted authority, there are near 11,000 persons who receive parochial relief, though the whole number of the inhabitants cannot exceed 80,000—and this of a town reckoned one of the most prosperous in England.

* Turkey.

the gain (if such there be) resulting from these contentions, is not less unholy in the former than the latter case; and that the title by which the sovereign of St Petersburg holds his conquered possessions is just as good, at least, as that by which the government of St James's asserts the right to ours. In the case of Poland, to which we shall again have to recur by and by, there was, indeed, a better title than that of the sword, but which, amidst the clamour of fine sentiments, palmed by philanthropic authors and speakers upon the much abused public mind, about Russian aggressions in that quarter, has never, we believe, been mentioned by any orator, reviewer, or newspaper writer of the present day. "The republic of Poland" (we quote the words of Malte Brun) "had been chiefly composed of provinces wrested from Russia, or from the Great Dukes of Galitch, Vladimir, Volynski, Polotzk, and particularly Kiow, by Boleslas the Victorious, Casimir the Great, Kings of Poland, and by Gedimir, Great Duke of Lithuania. Thus, the nobles were the only persons interested in the defence of provinces, whose inhabitants were estranged from the Poles, although they had remained under their government from the time of the conquest. All the peasants of Podolia and Volhynia were Rousniacs, or Little Russians, ignorant of the language or customs of Poland; which may partly account for the success of the Russians in their invasions of the Polish republic. The Poles, who were persecuted by intolerant Catholic priests, who disregarded the constitutions of the Polish diet, abandoned their lords without reluctance, and received willingly their countrymen, the Russian soldiers, who spoke the same dialect as themselves. The division of Poland was, on the part of Russia, not so much a lawless invasion as an act of reprisal on former invaders. Had the leading historical facts been explained in the Russian manifesto which was published in 1772, so much obloquy might not have attached to the conduct of that people."

Leaving, however, the question of title—which, whatever may be the conflicting opinions of moralists and legists, is, in the case of national tenures, usually decided according to the *power* of the possessor to hold in fee—we shall be next reminded of the great benefits which British conquests have conferred upon remote and uncivilized nations, particularly in the example of India; and we shall be called upon to shew in what manner Russia has compensated for her violent seizures of independent territory, by any similar amelioration of the condition of its people. Before doing so, we shall premise that we do not offer it as a justification of the policy of Russia. If, by chance, the plunderer makes good use of his spoil, that is not a vindication of robbery; and because the serf of Poland, the savage of Georgia, and the ryot of Bengal, enjoy better laws under the sway of Russia and Great Britain, than they formerly possessed beneath their own governments—to argue that, therefore, these two powers stand morally justified in having subjugated, with fire and sword, those three less civilized states; would be to contend that

America, instead of contenting herself with imparting improvements to the unenlightened communities of Europe, by the peaceful but irresistible means of her high example, is warranted in invading Naples or Spain, for the purpose of rescuing their people from the thralldom of monarchy, or marching to Rome, and, in place of the Pope, installing a president in the palace of the Vatican!* It is, then, with no view to the justification of war and violence, but solely for the purpose of answering, by a few facts of unquestionable authenticity, those spurious appeals to our sympathies, based upon the false assumption of Russian aggrandizement being but another term for the spread of barbarism and the extinction of freedom and civilization, that we glance at the proofs which are afforded in every direction, of the vast moral, political, and commercial advantages that have been bestowed upon the countries annexed by conquest to that empire.

The writers who have attempted to lead public opinion upon the subject, have not scrupled to claim the interposition of our government with Russia, for the purpose of restoring to *freedom* and *independence* those Caucasian tribes to which we have before alluded, as having fallen under the partial dominion of Russia. Their previous state of freedom may be appreciated, when we recollect that, within our own time, a fierce war was waged between the most powerful of these nations† and the Turks, in consequence of their having refused to continue to supply the harems of the latter with a customary annual tribute of the handsomest of their daughters; offering, however, at the same time, in lieu, a yearly contribution in money. We have already alluded to the emancipating influence of Russian intervention over the commerce of the Black Sea, the only channel by which the civilizing intercourse with commercial nations can extend to these unenlightened regions; and we have been told, by the very highest authority,‡ that their trade, agriculture, and social improvement, already attest the beneficent effects of this improved policy. The following extract from a work§ of great and deserved reputation, gives the most recent information upon the countries under consideration; and it conveys, perhaps, all that could be said upon the effects of Russian aggrandizement in these quarters:—"The southern

* Yet there are perverse and purblind moralists, who can see proofs of God's interposition in every atrocious crime that happens, in its consequences, to carry some alloy of good; which merely proves that the great Ruler of the universe has, in spite of us, set his fiat against the predominancy of evil. A clergyman, we believe Dr Buchanan, of high attainments and strict evangelical doctrines, who passed many years in India, proposed a prize essay, on his return to England, as to the *probable designs of providence in placing the Indian empire in the hands of Great Britain!* This, from a contemporary of Warren Hastings, is little less blasphemous than the *Te Deum* sung by Catherine, for the victories of Ismail and Warsaw.

† The Georgians.

‡ M'Culloch—Commercial Dictionary, 7, p. 1108. †

§ Encyclopædia Britannica, new edition, now publishing, vol. 6, p. 250.—art. Caucasus.

declivity of these mountains is highly fertile, abounding in forests and fountains, orchards, vineyards, corn fields, and pastures, in rich variety. Grapes, chestnuts, figs, &c., grow spontaneously in these countries; as well as grain of every description—rice, cotton, hemp, &c. But the inhabitants are barbarous and indolent. They consist of mountain tribes, remarkably ferocious, whose delight is in war, and with whom robbery is a hereditary trade; and their practice is to descend from their fastnesses and to sweep everything away from the neighbouring plains—not only grain and cattle, but men, women, and children, who are carried into captivity. The names of the different tribes are, the Georgians, Abassians, Lesghians, Ossetes, Circassians, Tschakents, Khists, Ingooshes, Charabulaks, Tartars, Armenians, Jews, and in some parts wandering Arabs. They are mostly barbarous in their habits, and idolatrous in their religion, worshipping stars, mountains, rocks, and trees. There are among them Greek and Armenian Christians, Mahometans, and Jews. Several of the tribes, particularly the Circassians and Georgians, are accounted the handsomest people in the world; and the females are much sought after by the eastern monarchs to be immured in their harems. The inhabitants amount to about 900,000, who are partly ruled by petty sovereigns, and partly by their seniors. The most famous are the Lesghians, who inhabit the eastern regions, and, living by plunder, are the terror of the Armenians, Persians, Turks, and Georgians. Their sole occupation is war, and their services can at any time be purchased by every prince in the neighbourhood, for a supply of provisions and a few silver roubles. *Since the extension of the Russian empire in this quarter, many of these mountain tribes have been restrained in their predatory habits. Under the iron rule of that powerful state, they have been taught to tremble and obey; military posts have been dispersed over the country, fortresses have been erected, towns have arisen, and commerce and agriculture begin slowly to supplant the barbarous pursuits of war and plunder, in which these mountain tribes have been hitherto engaged.** But the work of civilization in these wild regions is still slow; it is difficult to reclaim the people from their long-settled habits of violence and disorder; and it would not be safe for any traveller to pass alone through these countries, where he would be exposed to robbery and murder."

Another ground of ceaseless jealousy, on the part of our philo-Turkish and Russo-maniac writers, has been discovered in the recent intervention of the Russian diplomatists in the affairs

* Yet the most active and persevering assailant of Russia, a writer to whom we alluded in the beginning of this pamphlet, does not scruple to invoke the aid of these hordes against their present rulers—"The Georgian provinces would instantly throw off the yoke; even the Wallachians, Moldavians, and Bessarabians, would join in the general impulse; the millions of brave and independent Circassians would pour across the Couban and spread over the Crimea—and where would Russia be?"—See pamphlet, "England, France, Russia, and Turkey."

of Wallachia and Moldavia. The condition of these two Christian provinces, situated on the right bank of the Danube, and so frequently the scenes of desolating wars between Turkey and her neighbours, has been perhaps more pitifully deplorable than the lot of any other portion of this misgoverned empire. The hospodars or governors of Moldavia and Wallachia were changed every year at the will of the Sultan, and each brought a fresh retinue of greedy dependants, armed with absolute power, to prey upon the defenceless inhabitants. These appointments, as is the case now with every pachalick, were openly sold at Constantinople to the highest bidder; and the hospodars were left to recover from their subjects the price of the purchase, to pay an annual tribute to the porte, which was usually levied in kind, giving scope for the most arbitrary exactions; and, besides, appease the favourites at court, who might otherwise intrigue against them. Need we be surprised that, under such a state of things, the population decreased, agriculture was neglected, and commerce and the arts of civilized existence were unknown in the finest countries of the world? Not more than one-sixthth part of the land of Wallachia is at present cultivated; and Mr Wilkinson, the late English consul, estimated that, without any extraordinary exertion, the existing population of Wallachia and Moldavia might, if property were secured, raise twice the quantity of corn and double the number of cattle now produced in those provinces. The treaty of 1829, between Russia and Turkey, stipulates that the hospodars shall be elected for life, and that no tribute in kind shall be levied; it also engages that a quarantine shall be placed on the Danube frontier, thus separating these provinces from the rest of Turkey. This case of intervention is appealed to as a proof of Russian ambition; and Lord Stuart, in the course of his speech before alluded to, complains that, by this policy, its power is increased in those quarters. Admitting that Russia interferes in behalf of those unhappy countries with no loftier aim than an augmentation of her influence, and that the result will be the separation of the Christian provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia from the rest of the Turkish territory—nay, admitting that this should prove inimical to the interests of England, (though the supposition is absurd enough, since whatever tends to advance the civilization and augment the wealth of any part of the world, must be beneficial in the end to us who are the greatest commercial and manufacturing people)—still the English nation would, we sincerely hope, feel a disinterested gratitude to the power which, by its merciful interposition, has rescued this suffering Christian community from the cruel, remorseless, and harassing grasp of its Mahometan oppressors.

Probably it will not be deemed necessary that we should trace the effects of Russian government over the territories torn at different epochs

* The clergy, from being exempt from taxation, have become possessed of a third of the soil.

from the Persian empire: if, however, we did not feel warranted in assuming that even those of our intelligent readers who may be the most inimical to the power of the Czar, will readily admit the superiority of the organized despotism of St Petersburg over the anarchic tyranny of Teheran, we should be prepared to afford proofs, from the works of travellers themselves hostile to Russian interests, of the rapid ameliorations that have succeeded to the extension of this colossal empire in those regions. Still less shall we be called upon to pause to point out the benefits that must ensue from the annexation of the Crimea to the dominions of the Autocrat. Those wandering tribes of Crim Tartars who exchanged, for the service of the Empress Catherine, the barbarous government of the descendants of Genghis Khan, and who received, as the first fruits of a Christian administration, the freedom of the commerce of the world, by the

opening of the navigation of the Black Sea, which immediately succeeded to the encroachments of Russia in that quarter, will gradually but certainly acquire the taste for trade; and, as population increases and towns arise, they will abandon, of necessity, their migratory habits, and become the denizens of civilized society.

We shall, for the sake of brevity, restrict ourselves to the following short passage, from the highest authority that can be consulted, upon the character of Russian policy towards her latest maritime acquisition on the side of the Baltic. "Finland," says Malte Brun, "was averse to the union with Sweden, and has lost none of its privileges by being incorporated with Russia: it is still governed by Swedish laws; schools have been established during the last twenty years, and the peasantry are in every respect as well protected as in Sweden."*

* Vol. vi. p. 499, Malte Brun's Geography.

CHAPTER II.

POLAND, RUSSIA, AND ENGLAND.

CONTENTS.—Protest against Russian Tyranny.—True Statement of the Question as to British Interference.—Distinction between the Polish Aristocracy and Polish People.—Tyranny of the Nobles and miserable Condition of the People before the Partition.—Improved Condition under the Russian Government.—True Cause of the Revolt of 1830.—The Incitements of Public Writers and Speakers to a War with Russia, considered.—Lord Dudley Stuart.—Military Weakness and Poverty of Russia.—Her Liability to Blockade by a small Marine Force.—Weakness the necessary Result of too Extended Dominion.—No Pretence, consistent with commonsense, for England going to War with Russia.

THE foregoing statements, with reference to portions of the Russian acquisitions, founded upon unquestionable authority, are calculated to awaken some doubts as to the genuineness of those writings and speeches, upon the faith of which we are called upon to subscribe to the orthodox belief in the *barbarizing* tendency of all the encroachments of that country; but these facts are unimportant, when we next have to refer to another of its conquests, and to bring before our readers Poland, upon which has been lavished more false sentiment, deluded sympathy, and amiable ignorance, than on any other subject of the present age. This is a topic, however, upon which it behoves us to enter with circumspection, since we shall have not only to encounter the prepossessions of the ardent and sincere devotee, but also to meet the uncandid weapons of bigotry and cant. Let us, therefore, as the only sure defence at all times against such antagonists, clothe our arguments from the armory of reason in the panoply of truth. We will, moreover, reiterate, *for we will not be misunderstood*, that it is no part of our purpose to attempt to justify the conduct of the partitioning powers towards the Poles. On the contrary, we will join in the verdict of murder, robbery, treason, perjury, and baseness, which every free nation and all honest men must award to Russia, Prussia, and Austria, for their undissembled and unmitigated wickedness on that occasion; nay, we will go further, and admit that all the infamy with which Burke, Sheridan, and Fox laboured, by the force of eloquent genius, to overwhelm

the emissaries of British violence in India, was justly earned, at the very same period, by the minions of Russian despotism in Poland. But our question is, not the conduct of the conquerors, but the present, as compared with the former condition of the conquered: the first is but an abstract and barren subject for the disquisition of the moralist; the latter appeals to our sympathies, because it is pregnant with the destinies of millions of our fellow-creatures. Of how trifling consequence it must be to the practical minded and humane people of Great Britain, or to the world at large, whether Poland be governed by a king of this dynasty or of that—whether he be lineally descended from Boleslas the Great, or of the line of the Jagellons—contrasted with the importance of the inquiries as to the social and political condition of its people—whether they be as well or worse governed, clothed, fed, and lodged, in the present day as compared with any former period—whether the mass of the people be elevated in the scale of moral and religious beings—whether the country enjoys a smaller or larger amount of the blessings of peace; or whether the laws for the protection of life and property are more or less justly administered! These are the all-important inquiries about which we busy ourselves; and it is to cheat us of our stores of philanthropy, by an appeal to the sympathy with which we regard those vital interests of a whole people, that the declaimers and writers upon the subject, invariably appeal to us in behalf of the oppressed and enslaved *Polish nation*; carefully obscuring,

amidst the cloud of epithets about "ancient freedom," "national independence," "glorious republic," and such like, the fact, that, previously to the dismemberment, the term *nation* implied only the nobles—that, down to the partition of their territory, about nineteen out of every twenty of the inhabitants were slaves, possessing no rights, civil or political—that about one in every twenty was a nobleman—and that this body of nobles formed the very worst aristocracy of ancient or modern times; putting up and pulling down their kings at pleasure; passing selfish laws, which gave them the power of life and death over their serfs, whom they sold and bought like dogs or horses; usurping, to each of themselves, the privileges of a petty sovereign, and denying to all besides the meanest rights of human beings; and, scorning all pursuits as degrading, except that of the sword, they engaged in incessant wars with neighbouring states, or they plunged their own country into all the horrors of anarchy, for the purpose of giving employment to themselves and their dependants.

In speaking of the Polish nation* previously to the dismemberment of that country by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, we must not think of the *great mass of the people*, such as is implied by the use of that term with reference to the English or French nation of this day: the mass of the people were serfs, who had no legal protection and no political rights—who enjoyed no power over property of any kind, and who possessed less security of life and limb than has been lately extended to the cattle of this island by the act of Parliament against cruelty to animals! The nobles, then, although they comprised but a mere fraction of the population, constituted the nation; the rest of the inhabitants, the millions of serfs who tilled the soil, worked the mines, or did the menial labour of the *grandees*, were actually, in the eye of the law, of no more rank—nay, as we have shewn, they were accounted less—than our horses, which, after the toil of the day, lie down in security under the protection of Mr Martin's benevolent act; whilst the slave of Poland possessed no such guarantee from the wanton cruelty of an arbitrary owner.

To form a correct estimate of the former condition of this country, it is not necessary to go back beyond the middle of the sixteenth century—previously to which the Poles, in common with the other northern states, were barbarians; and, if they attained to power, and exhibited some traits of rude splendour in their court and

capital, they were merely results of incessant wars, which, of course, plunged the great mass of the people in deeper misery and degradation. At this early period of their country, we find them the most restless and warlike of the northern nations; and the Poles, who are now viewed only as a suffering and injured people, were, during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, a most formidable and aggressive enemy to the neighbouring empires. They ravaged, successively, Russia, Prussia, Lithuania, Bohemia, and Hungary, and were, in turn, invaded by the Turks, Tartars, and Russians. They knew no other employment than that of the sword: war, devastation, and bloodshed were the only fashionable occupations for the nobility; whilst the peasants reaped the fruits of famine and slaughter. Yet the historian whose volumes, perhaps, adorn the shelves of our colleges, and are deposited in the hands of the rising generation, points to the spectacle of intellectual and moral creatures, grovelling in the abuse of a brute instinct shared equally by the shark and the tiger, and, pausing over the hideous annals of human slaughter, ejaculates—Glory!

At the death, in 1572, of Sigismund Augustus—the last of the Jagello race, in whose house the throne of Poland had been hereditary—a new constitution was framed by the nation, (*that is, the nobles*.) by which it was decreed that the monarchy should be elective; and the choice of the king was free and open to all the nation, (*i. e. the nobles*.) In this constitution—which was concocted for the exclusive benefit of the aristocracy, and did not even notice the existence of the great mass of the wretched people, the slaves—it was agreed, amongst other enactments, that the nobles should pay no taxes; that they should have the power of life and death over their vassals; that all offices, civil, military, and ecclesiastical, should belong to them; and that, in choosing whom they would for a king, they were privileged to lay him under what restrictions they pleased.

The mode of electing their kings, after the promulgation of this new constitution, was characteristic of the nation. About 150,000 to 200,000 nobles, being the electors, assembled together in a large plain: those who possessed horses and arms were mounted and ranged in battle array in the front; whilst such as were poor, and consequently came on foot, and without regular arms, placed themselves, with scythes or clubs in their hands, in the rear ranks. Our readers will readily believe that such an assembly as this, composed of warriors accustomed to violence, and with their arms at hand, would form a dangerous deliberative body; and, unless actuated by the loftiest feelings of patriotism and virtue, it would degenerate into two armies of sanguinary combatants. But what could we expect from these elections, when we know that, from the death of Sigismund, down to the time of the partition, Poland became one universal scene of corruption, faction, and confusion? The mem-

* "Never was this corruption of the state so fearful as here, where the nobility constituted the nation; and where morals alone had made the want of a constitution less perceptible. Everything, therefore, deteriorated. The time for awakening from this lethargy could not but come; but what a moment was it to be!"—*Heeren's Manual*, vol. i. p. 370. "By the constitution of 1791, which changed the government from an elective to a hereditary monarchy, all the privileges of the nobility were confirmed; some favours, though very small, were accorded to the peasants; these were slight, but more could not be granted, without irritating the former nation, the nobility."—*Heeren*, vol. ii. p. 231.

bers of the diet—the nobles who had usurped the power of electing their king—were ready to sell themselves to the best bidder at the courts of Vienna, France, Saxony, Sweden, or Brandenburg; nay, in the words of the learned and philosophical historian,* “A Polish royal election was, henceforth, nothing more than a double auction of the throne—partly in secret, for the benefit of the voters, partly in public, for the benefit of the state;” or, in the words of the same authority, when alluding elsewhere to the change in the constitution at the death of Sigismund—“A volcano, in a manner, burst forth in the midst of Europe, whose eruptions, at almost every change of government, threatened, in turn, every country far and near. Of the eleven kings of Poland, from Henry of Valois, 1572, to Stanislaus, 1764, hardly three were unanimously elected: foreign influence, and a wild spirit of faction, continued from first to last.”† In lamentable truth, almost every election became the signal for a civil war, which usually lasted during the greater portion of the next reign; and thus, for the whole period from 1572 down to 1772, when the first partition was perpetrated by the three neighbouring powers, Poland was the constant scene of anarchy, and its attendant miseries—fire, bloodshed, and famine. There is nothing in the history of the world comparable, for confusion, suffering, and wickedness, to the condition of this unhappy kingdom during these two centuries. “War, even in its mildest form, is a perpetual violation of every principle of religion and humanity.”‡ But foreign war is carried on with recognised laws for the mitigation of its evils; and under which the rights of person and property are, excepting in well understood cases, secured to the peaceable portions of communities. Should an invasion or a conquest take place, the army of the invader or conqueror is compelled, for self-defence, to preserve discipline, and to congregate, as much as possible, round one centre, by which the enemy’s country is preserved from the licentiousness of the victorious soldiers, and the more remote provinces almost entirely escape the miseries of war. Besides, it becomes immediately the policy and the interest of the victor, to restore the newly acquired territory to its former condition of quietness and prosperity; and, with this view, laws for the protection of the inhabitants are generally enforced. But civil war, or intestine war, as we prefer to call it, allows of none of these palliations. It spreads throughout the entire length and breadth of a country, and devastates alike every section of the community; leaving no spot where the olive of peace may flourish and afford shelter to the innocent; and sparing no city which shall serve for a refuge to the timid. It desolates villages and farms, as well as towns and capitals—carries the spirit of deadly animosity into every relation of life—setting neighbours against

neighbours, servants against masters, and converting friends into foes;—nay, it penetrates into the sacred precincts of domestic life, and often infuses a Cain-like hatred into the hearts of brethren of the same womb. Such is intestine war, which owns no law and permits no neutrality. And, in the midst of this description of warfare, Poland groaned and bled, with scarcely the slightest intermission, from 1572 down to 1772.

Many of those who will read this pamphlet, have not the means or the leisure to investigate, as they otherwise ought undoubtedly to do, the history of the government ignorantly or mischievously praised, by some of our writers and speakers, under the name of the *republic* of Poland. Instead of such a government as we now understand in speaking of the American republics, it was a despotism one hundred thousand times worse than that of Turkey at this time, because it gave to 100,000 tyrants absolute power over the lives of the rest of the community. The annals of republican Poland, previously to its dismemberment, are nothing but a history of anarchy; and such is the title actually given to a work* that is only a horrible catalogue of tragedies, in which the nobles are the actors, who crowd the scenes with murders, fires, torturings, and famines, until the heart sickens with horror at the frightful spectacle. For nearly the whole of the century immediately preceding the downfall of Poland, religious discord was added to the other incalculable miseries of this country, owing to the rise of sects of dissenters from the prevailing religion. Devastated by foreign and civil wars, and by famine and the plague, that followed in their train, the exhaustion of peace itself now served but to develop new miseries.† Fanaticism and bigotry armed themselves with the sword, as soon as abandoned by the worshippers of Mars; and they waged a warfare against the souls and bodies of their enemies with a fury that knew no bounds; dealing out anathemas over wretches expiring at the stake, pulling down churches, and even tearing up the graves of the dead! The historian who recounts the calamities that were showered upon the unhappy millions, the slaves, during this career of rapine and sacrilege, exclaims—“Oh, that some strong despot would come, and in mercy rescue these people from themselves!”

The intrigues of Russia did not at first promote the growth of this terrible disorder, as might be objected by some of our readers. That power was itself struggling against powerful enemies, and contending with the difficulties of internal reforms, down to within half a century of the period when the partition of Poland took place.

* “Histoire de l’Anarchie de Pologne et du Démembrement de cette République.” Par C. Rbuliere. Paris: 1807. 4 vols. 8vo.

The history of the anarchy in Poland, in *four volumes octavo!*

† “The flame of religious discord was now added, and the Jesuits took care that the fire should not be extinguished.”—Heeren, vol. i., 344.

* Manual of the State Policy of Modern Europe, by Professor Heeren, vol. i., p. 262.

† Heeren, vol. i., pp. 191 and 192. ‡ Gibbon.

Those wise reforms* that gave to Russia, from the hands of Peter the Great, the seeds of a power which has since grown to such greatness, and which, if adopted by Poland, would have, in all probability, conducted her to a similar state of prosperity, were absolutely rejected by the profligate nobles, because they must necessarily have involved some amelioration in the fate of the people.

The picture we have drawn of Polish wickedness and corruption is not too highly coloured—or, if so, it is not by us: we have given the names and works of the authors from whom we derive our information, and we appeal to them as the highest authorities in the literature of Europe. What have been the retributive consequences to empires, in all ages, of such a career of internal contention and profligacy as we have just described? What was the just fatq of Persia, Greece, and Rome, after they had filled up the measure of their degeneracy? When the oak is decayed at its heart, the tree yields to the wind, and falls prostrate on the earth; a ship that is rotten no longer resists the pressure of surrounding water, and she disappears from the face of the ocean; if, in constructing a bridge, the foundation of the piers be despised and neglected, the entire edifice, superstructure and all, is overwhelmed in the stream. And, knowing that the immutable laws of nature govern equally the destinies of animated existence, shall we marvel to find that an empire which had for two hundred years been decaying to its very centre, whilst its boundaries presented no bulwark against the influx of raging enemies; which had all that time exhibited the nobility wallowing in licentiousness, and the labouring population, that ought to be the foundation and support of a country, insolently despised and trampled under foot—ought we to wonder that such an empire at length reaped the sad harvest of its iniquities, and was prostrated or swallowed up by the force of surrounding nations? The fate of Poland was but a triumph of justice, without which its history would have conveyed no moral for the benefit of posterity. The annals of the world do not exhibit an example of a great nation—such, for instance, as Prussia, united, well governed, rising in intelligence, morals, and religion, and advancing in wealth and civilization—falling beneath the destroying hand of a conqueror. Such a catastrophe is reserved for the chastisement of the self-abandoned, depraved, disorganized, ignorant, and irreligious communities, and their anarchical governments—for Babylon and Persipolis—for Poland and Turkey! But, though the punishment was a righteous infliction, we need not vindicate the executioners. The murderer's sentence is just; but we are not therefore bound to tolerate the hangman.

But we have yet to shew, in the case of Poland, that the rod of affliction is administered by the great Ruler of the universe, in a spirit not of

vengeance, but of mercy. We are now to prove—and without claiming for the instruments of the ameliorations the merit of designing such happy results, or presuming to say that the same or better effects might not have followed from more righteous causes—that the dismemberment of that empire has been followed by an increase in the amount of peace, wealth, liberty, civilization, and happiness, enjoyed by the great mass of the people. We shall not touch upon the fate of those portions of the Polish territory which, at the partition, fell to the spoil of Austria and Prussia, further than to observe that the present condition of their inhabitants, particularly of those of the latter, is, when contrasted with that of any former era of their history, only to be compared to the state of the blessed in the Elysian regions, as opposed to the sufferings of Pandemonium.

Our business, however, lies with that portion of the (*miscalled*) Republic which fell to the share of Russia; and we shall, in the first place, allude to the present state of that section of the inhabitants which, from being by far the most numerous, ought, upon the soundest principle of justice, to attract the primary notice of the inquirer. Slavery no more exists in Poland: the peasant that tills the soil no longer ranks on a level with the oxen that draw his plough; he can neither be murdered nor maimed at the caprice of an insolent owner, but is as safe in life and limb, under the present laws of Poland, as are the labourers of Sussex or Kent. The modern husbandman is not restricted to mere personal freedom; he enjoys the right to possess property of all kinds—not even excepting land,* against which the nobles of ancient republican Poland opposed insuperable prohibitions. In a word, the peasantry of Poland now possess the control over their own persons and fortunes; and are at liberty to pursue happiness† according to their own free will and pleasure, which, after all that can be said for one government in preference to another, is nearly the amount of freedom that can be *felt* to be possessed by the great mass of any nation. Let it not be supposed that we wish to convey the impression that the labouring classes of the country under notice are elevated to an equality with the mechanics or husbandmen of England and America: from the very nature of circumstances, and from no one more than our iniquitous corn-laws—which have often starved our artisans in the midst of idle looms, and, at the same time, doomed the ploughman of Poland to nakedness or sheep-skins, whilst surrounded by granaries bursting with the best corn in the world—such an equality is, in our day, impossi-

* "The whole of the lands are now alienable, and may be purchased by the peasants, and all other classes, except the Jews."—*Jacob's Report to the Lords*, 1828, p. 66.—This is the shameful exception in England!

† "Some rare instances of perseverance, industry, and temperance, are to be found; and, unfavourable as their circumstances may be for the creation of such habits, they are here attended by the usual correspondent results. Some few peasants have been enabled to purchase estates for themselves."—*Jacob's Report*, p. 66.

* "The nation (*the nobles*) carefully guarded against any reform, such as was taking place in Russia."—*Heccren*, vol. i, p. 323.

ble. But to shew, in as few words as possible, what were the natural fruits, after fifteen years of peace and comparative good government, to a country that had, for two centuries, witnessed only the growth of discord, insecurity, and famine, let us quote from a volume* which bears intrinsic evidence of containing an authentic and candid compendium of the history of Poland:—

“The condition of the country had continued to improve beyond all precedent; at no former period of her history, was the public wealth so great or so generally diffused. Bridges and public roads, constructed at an enormous expense, frequently at the cost of the Czar’s treasury; the multitude of new habitations, remarkable for a neatness and a regard to domestic comfort never before observed; the embellishments introduced into the buildings, not merely of the rich, but of tradesmen and mechanics; the encouragement afforded, and eagerly afforded, by the government, to every-useful branch of industry; the progress made by agriculture in particular, the foundation of Polish prosperity; the accumulation, on all sides, of national and individual wealth; and, above all, the happy countenances of the inferior classes of society—exhibited a wonderful contrast to what had lately been. The most immense of markets, Russia—a market all but closed to the rest of Europe—afforded constant activity to the manufacturer. To prove this astonishing progress from deplorable, hopeless poverty to successful enterprise, let one fact suffice. In 1815, there were scarcely one hundred looms for coarse woollen cloths;—at the commencement of the insurrection of 1830, there were six thousand.”†

But it will very naturally and properly be inquired—“How did it happen that the nation revolted against Russia in 1830, if the people had enjoyed so much benefit from the connection with that empire?” We have thus far spoken only of the condition of the mass of the people; to answer this objection, it will be necessary to refer to another class, whose interests had always been opposed to the happiness and liberty of the population at large. From the moment when Poland was constituted a kingdom, at the treaty of Vienna, and made an appendage to the Russian crown, the nobles never ceased to sigh for their ancient liberty (*license*) of electing a king—*i. e.* of periodically selling themselves, by “a double auction,” as Heeren asserts, to the highest bidder. They sighed, also, for those times when there was no law to protect the weak from their out-

rages; and when a reign of violence and disorder gave them perpetual occasions of making war upon each other, and of ravaging the unprotected provinces. The laws which were passed for the defence of the lives and properties of the peasants, were regarded with jealousy* by the nobles, who viewed such enactments in the light of encroachments upon their privileges; and they looked back to the days when they alone constituted the *nation*, and all besides were but as the brutes of the field. It was not merely indirectly, however, that the privileges of the aristocracy were curtailed; one of the first acts of the Emperor Alexander being to restrict the use of titles to the possessors of property in that country where, *previously, the rank had descended to every son,† and continued to all their successors*, thus multiplying titles indefinitely, and adding, a thousandfold, to the mischiefs of conferring absolute power on a particular class, by suffering it to be frequently possessed by desperadoes or paupers. But the cause that, more than all others, had contributed to render the nobles discontented, was the long protracted peace, which deprived them of their accustomed occupation and revenue; and which, however much it contributed to the happiness of the industrious agriculturists and traders, brought nothing but ruin and discontent to a body that retained too much of the pride and turbulence of character inherited from their warlike ancestors, to dream of descending to pursuits of a commercial or peaceful character. To present a clear view of the state of this *order* of society in Poland, we will extract a few lines upon the subject from the work of Mr Jacob, before quoted. It will place his authority beyond question, if we remind our readers that he is the gentleman who was selected, by a Parliamentary committee, to make a journey through the northern portions of Europe, for the purpose of reporting to his employers an account of the corn trade of those regions. This individual—who was, of course, not only selected for his efficient powers of observation, but also for his character for honour and fidelity—in speaking, incidentally, of the state of society of Russian Poland, in his official report, makes this observation upon the Polish gentry:—“The Polish gentry are too proud to follow any course but the military career; and the government, by its large standing army, encourages the feeling; though the pay is scarcely sufficient to supply the officers with their expensive uniforms. Whatever difficulties may present themselves to the placing out young men of good family, none have had recourse to commerce; and, if they had, such would be treated by others as having lost their caste, and descended to a lower rank of society. The consequence is, that all the trade and manufactures of the country are in the hands of the Germans or the Jews.”—The former seek to return home with the fortunes they make—the latter do not possess the full rights of citizenship,

* Cabinet Cyclopædia—History of Poland, p. 269.

† “Wherever Russia extended her sovereignty, there prevailed overwhelming tyranny, grinding oppression, unblushing venality, odious corruption, treacherous espionage, spoliation, moral degradation, and slavery. (Hear, hear.) What good did Russia ever accomplish? It was said that she might civilize the barbarian Turks: he believed they would hear no more about that, after the conduct of Russia towards Poland. *The Poles did not, as the House well knew, rise until goaded into madness by a series of oppressions before unheard of; the country was watered by the tears of its inhabitants.*”—Lord Stuart’s Speech—House of Commons, Feb. 19, 1836.

* Heeren, vol. ii., p. 231.

† Jacob’s Report, p. 60.

and cannot be expected to take great interest in the prosperity of the country.

The above account of the tone of feeling, and of the condition of the aristocratic party of Poland, written in 1825, accounts for the insurrection breaking out in 1830, when every other class of its inhabitants was in the enjoyment of unprecedented happiness and prosperity. *And we hesitate not emphatically to assert, that it was wholly, and solely, and exclusively, at the instigation, and for the selfish benefit of this aristocratic fraction of the people, that the Polish nation suffered for twelve months the horrors of civil war, was thrown back in her career of improvement, and has since had to endure the rigours of a conqueror's vengeance.** The Russian government was aware of this, and its severity has since been chiefly directed towards the nobility.† In the ukase of the 9th (21st) November 1831, directing that five thousand Poles should be transported into the interior of the empire, it is expressly provided that they be selected from the disaffected of the *order of the gentry*. And, in the order issued to the Russian troops employed to quell the insurrection, they are required, under severe penalties, to respect the houses and property of the Polish peasants.

Now, we put it frankly to such of our readers as do not enjoy the leisure, or perhaps possess the taste for informing themselves of the subject in hand, excepting through the periodical press and the orations of public speakers, whether we were not justified in asserting that they have been cheated of their stores of compassion, by those who call forth public sympathy for the oppressed Polish people, by appealing to their former liberty,

* The peasants joined, to a considerable extent, the standard of revolt; but this was to be expected in consequence of the influence necessarily exercised over them by the superior classes. Besides, patriotism or nationality is an instinctive virtue, that sometimes burns the brightest in the rudest and least reasoning minds; and its manifestation bears no proportion to the value of the possessions defended or the object to be gained. The Russian serfs at Borodino, the Turkish slaves at Ismail, and the lazzaroni of Naples, fought for their masters and oppressors more obstinately than the free citizens of Paris or Washington did at a subsequent period in defence of those capitals.

† We cannot help alluding to the unfortunate natives of this country who are now seeking an asylum in England, and who belong entirely, we believe, to the class here referred to. Our allusion is to the system which sacrificed millions to hundreds of thousands, and not to persons, or even to generations of persons. Above all, we would except the unfortunate stranger that is now within our gates, imploring our help in a season of distress. In throwing himself upon our shores, the unhappy Pole evinced his generous belief that we would protect and succour him; and he will not discover that we want the power or the will to do either; nor will we wait to inquire whether he be peer or peasant. The bird that, to escape from the tyrant of the skies, flies trembling to the traveller's bosom is secure; base, indeed, would he be first to examine if his fluttering guest were a dove or a hawk. We cannot, however, approve of the lectures upon Polish history and literature, which have been delivered, in many parts of the kingdom, by some of these refugees. They convey erroneous pictures of the former condition of that country; glossing over the conduct of the nobles, and suppressing all mention of the miserable state of the serfs.

when the mass of the nation was in slavery; by deploring the tyranny of the Russian government, which has served to give security and protection to the great body of the poor, against the oppressions of the powerful nobles; by lauding the ancient prosperity, wealth, grandeur, and happiness of a country which, until the present age, was, at no period of its history, for fifteen successive years, exempt from civil or foreign war—from desolation, the plague, or famine;* and by imploring the powers to restore the Polish nation to its condition previously to the first partition in 1772, which would be to plunge nineteen-twentieths of the inhabitants from freedom into bondage, from comparative happiness into the profoundest state of misery? But worse effects than the waste of a little misdirected philanthropy follow from these misrepresentations. The British indignation and hatred towards Russia† have been awakened, and those fierce passions have taken possession of the public mind throughout the kingdom so strongly as to place us in that most dangerous of all predicaments, where the majority is sufficiently excited, by national prejudice, to be brought within view of the hostile precipice, and only requires a further stimulus to plunge the country into the horrible gulf of war. And who and what are the writers and speakers that have made the subject of Poland the vehicle for conducting public opinion to the verge of such a catastrophe? Are they cognizant, or are they unaware of the merits of the question which we have now been faithfully discussing? In either case, out upon such quackery! The empiric who, under pretence of healing their bodily disorders, fires the blood or deranges the bowels of his patients, suffers the penalty of homicide for the death of his victim, without inquiry whether the destructive nostrum was ignorantly or knowingly administered. And how long shall political quacks be permitted, without fear of punishment, and with no better justification than the plea of ignorance, to inflame the minds and disorder the understandings of a whole nation, by stimulating them to a frenzy of hatred towards a people more than a thousand miles distant, and preparing them for probably millions of murders, by administering, unchecked, their decoctions of lies, their compounds of invention and imposture, or their deadly doses of poisoned prejudice, gilded with spurious philanthropy?

* See Appendix for extracts from history of Poland.

† The terms of abuse showered upon Nicholas in the British legislature are new in taste; and we think, when applied to a potentate at peace with us, such epithets as monster, Herod, miscreant, &c., are not improvements upon the terms that we find in the earlier volumes of Hansard. In any case, would such language be honourable to the Parliament? Supposing a war should follow, is it dignified to precede hostilities with vituperative missiles? Spring and Langan set to with a better grace, by shaking hands at the scratch: the rules of the Fives-court had better be transcribed for the benefit of St Stephen's. We are told, indeed, that it is a just manifestation of public opinion. We have heard similar expressions of opinion at Billingsgate and Clare Market, and have observed that they sometimes lead to blows, but never to contentions.

We have thus (in answer to the objections of those who take exceptions to Russian aggrandizement upon the ground that the encroachments of that power are always accompanied by the infliction of barbarous oppressions upon the conquered nations) shewn that, in all cases where neighbouring states have been annexed to that empire, the inhabitants have thereby been advanced in civilization and happiness. We have, in the case of Poland, which has undoubtedly benefited more than any other country by its incorporation with Russia; dwelt at greater length upon this point, both because we believe that the impression above referred to is all but universal in reference to this people, and because we are convinced that from this erroneous idea originates nearly all the hostility which, in just and generous minds—and they are the great majority—is entertained towards the Russian government and people.

In examining the various grounds upon which those who discuss the subject take up their hostile attitudes towards the Russian nation, we have—with infinite surprise, and a deep conviction of the truth that a century of aristocratic government, and consequent foreign interference, have impregnated all classes with the haughty and arrogant spirit of their rulers—discovered that Great Britain has been argued into a war-like disposition against that remote empire, without one assignable motive or grievance which could have even engendered a tone of resentment from our public writers and speakers, had they been actuated only by the principles of common-sense, modest forbearance, and a regard for the benefit of the people. We have sought in vain for cases of insult to our flag; for an example of spoliation committed upon English merchants; for the appearance of hostile fleets in British waters, threatening our shores; for the denial of redress for injuries inflicted; for the refusal to liquidate some just debt: we have sought for such wrongs as these at the hands of the Russian government, to justify an appeal to menaces, and a call for armaments from our Russo-maniac orators and writers; but we find only charges of aggrandizement of Turkish territory, assaults upon Poland, intrigues with Persia, designs upon Sweden, and conquests in Georgia—affairs with which we have less interest in embroiling ourselves, than we have with the struggle now raging in the province of Texas, between the Americans and Mexicans!

If we refer to the speech of Lord Dudley Stuart, before alluded to, (which is a compendium of all the accusations, suppositions, fears, dangers, and suspicions of which the subject is susceptible,) we shall find an alarming picture given of the future growth of Russian dominion. Turkey, it seems, is to be only the germ of an empire, which shall extend not merely from "Indus to the Pole," but throw forth its arms over Europe and Asia, and embrace every people and nation between the Bay of Bengal and the English Channel! Turkey once possessed, and the devouring process begins. Austria and all Italy

are to be swallowed up at a meal; Greece and the Ionian Islands serving for side-dishes. Spain and Portugal follow as a dessert for this Dando of Constantinople; and Louis Philippe and his empire are washed down afterwards with Bordeaux and Champagne. Prussia and the smaller German States, having wisely formed themselves into a trades-union of some twenty or thirty millions, might be supposed by some persons to be secure from this tyrannical master. Nothing of the kind! His Lordship has discovered that this is a mere trick of Russia for making them a richer prey. The German goose is only penned in this Prussian league, that it may fatten and be worthier of the fate that awaits it: when Michaelmas arrives, it will be served up, in due state, to the Russian eagle. Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland are to be but as *entremets* for this national repast. And Persia, Egypt, Arabia, and India, in one large bouquet, will furnish the exotics to perfume and adorn this banquet of empires!* One trifling matter, however, Lord Stuart altogether forgets to take into account: he omits to say how all the viands shall be paid for; in other words, in what way the Russian Chancellor of the Exchequer will make good his budget, when called upon to clothe, feed, and pay armies, to conquer a dozen powerful nations, some of them richer than the conqueror—to meet the expenses of *materiel*, to furnish the commissariat, hire baggage waggons,

* "Russia, as honourable members must be well aware, was not at the least pains to disguise her dissatisfaction at the present state of affairs in the Peninsula; and with a frontier so far advanced as hers now was, could any man living doubt that she would very soon adopt plain modes of making that dissatisfaction felt? He repeated, that, with a frontier so far advanced, Italy was not safe from her grasp; and Russia once established there, the consequences to Austria must be tremendous. Russia was surrounding—was enveloping Austria. Turkey would soon fall a prey to her lust of extended dominion. Greece would be a mere province of Russia—indeed, already, Greece was subjected to her influence; and she scarcely hesitated to menace France."

He would again say that the whole of the Prussian league was at the instigation of Russia, the former being the mere creature of the latter. When the present designs of Russia were accomplished, they would soon see how she was becoming jealous of Prussia, and a pretext would not be long wanting for the destruction of that instrument which the great northern power had used in erecting and confirming its own ascendancy. Prussia was prepared to do everything which Russia might dictate, for the purpose of forwarding her designs; but she might fully anticipate this—that, as soon as the plans of the Autocrat were matured, he would in a day (!) dismember and pull down his present allies; and after that, Austria could not long resist. Then, in another quarter of her great empire, let them only look at the advantages possessed by Russia. She had military stations within thirty miles of the western coast of Norway.

That country could furnish sailors inferior to none in the world, and the whole district abounded with timber of the best quality. *Russia would then become a naval power of the first order, (!)* and might be joined by the Americans or the Dutch, to the manifest disadvantage of England." (!!)—*Times' report of Lord Dudley Stuart's speech, Feb. 19, 1836.*

These sentiments appear to have been delivered with gravity, and listened to by the House of Commons without a smile!

charter transports, and to cover the thousand other outgoings, including even the frauds and impositions incidental to a state of warfare. His Lordship forgets this; and in doing so, calls to our recollection a dream—our readers have probably experienced something of the kind—in which we found ourselves buoyed up in the air, and borne along, we could not tell how. It was not walking, flying, or swimming; yet on we glided through space, quite independent of all the laws of nature—hills disappearing, rivers drying up, seas changing into terra firma, trees, walls, and castles vanishing at our approach; despising all the usual impediments of sublunary travelling, caring no more for inns than if we had been a shooting star, and regardless, like Halley's comet, of a change of horses—on we went, with no luggage to look after, or hotel bills to settle, or postilions to pay, till, alas! we awoke, and discovered that we were only a mortal biped, trammelled by the law of gravitation, and enslaved by the rules of political economy; privileged but to travel along coarse dirty roads, and compelled, before starting, not only to calculate the cost of the journey, but to put the money in our purse for coaches, steamboats, turnpike gates, and inns, as well as their waiters, boots, porters, and chambermaids—besides a round sum to cover extortions, if we would keep our temper. Now, Lord Stuart's case was precisely similar to ours, with the exception that he did not awake from his vision of supernatural locomotion. But to be serious. To those who resort, as a crowning bugbear, to the threats of universal sovereignty as the ultimate aim of the Russian government, we have already, in some degree, replied, by showing the weakness of that empire, as exemplified in its uncultivated surface; in the scattered position of its uncivilized people—their poverty, ignorance, and diversified character; and in the circumstance of its being behind Great Britain and other countries in the march of improvement and discovery.

But we can appeal to other facts, and to experience, to disprove the exaggerated views that are put forth respecting the power of Russia; and in no instance were her weakness and inability to concentrate and support an army, more fully illustrated than at the invasion of her territory by Bonaparte. At the battle of Borodino—which was the first great affair that took place between the French and the forces of the Czar—we find, notwithstanding the alarm of invasion had been trumpeted through Europe eighteen months previously, that the number of combatants brought, on that bloody day, to the defence of their native soil, only amounted to 120,000 men, of whom a large portion were without uniforms or arms, excepting scythes or other similar weapons. Now, to illustrate the very superior strength of a nation whose inhabitants are at once concentrated and rich, let us suppose so absurd a circumstance as that Russia, after eighteen months of open preparation and threatening, were to march an army of nearly half a

million of soldiers into England—should we be found, after so ample a warning, opposing only 120,000 fighting men, and that number only half armed and clothed, in defence of our homes, our wives and daughters, in the first battle-field? London alone could furnish and equip such an army, in so great a cause, within six months! Nor did the deficiency of numbers arise from want of patriotism. On the contrary, the Russians fought with unequalled ardour and bravery; and the only reason that Napoleon's troops were not on that occasion overwhelmed by ten times their force, is, that the government had not money to pay for transporting its subjects from remote provinces to the scene of action, or funds to provide arms and support them when collected together.

It has been well observed, by a very sound authority,† that China affords the best answer to those who argue that Russia meditates hostile views towards our Indian possessions. China is separated from Russia by an imaginary boundary only; and that country is universally supposed to contain a vast deposit of riches, well worthy of the spoiler's notice. Besides, it has not enjoyed the "benefit" of being civilized by English or other Christian conquerors—an additional reason for expecting to find a wealthy pagan community, awaiting, like virgin mines, the labours of some Russian Warren Hastings. Why, then, does not the Czar invade the Chinese empire,‡ which is his next neighbour, and contains an unravaged soil, rather than contemplate, as the alarmist writers and speakers predict he does, marching three thousand miles over regions of burning deserts and ranges of snowy mountains, to Hindostan, where he would find that Clive and Wellesley had preceded him? The reason for such forbearance is, at the present day, as it was when that splendid and immortal genius, Catherine, proposed to undertake this very expedition—that there is not in Russia sufficient available wealth to transport across its own surface an army large enough to subjugate the Chinese. How, then, will they reach India through enemies' ter-

* Regiments of peasants, who till that day had never seen war, and who still had no other uniform than their grey jackets, formed with the steadiness of veterans, crossed their brows, and, having uttered their national exclamation, "*Gospodee pomiloui nas!*"—God have mercy upon us!—rushed into the thickest of the battle.—*Scott's Napoleon*, chap. 77.

† *Spectator* newspaper, No. 386.

‡ Unless his Muscovite Majesty should adopt this suggestion quickly, there appears some chance that England may be before him at Peking. We perceive that some of our writers are anxious that we should send some ships of war to compel the Chinese government to open other ports to our vessels, besides Canton, and to dictate certain other regulations for carrying on trade with us, which they are good enough to suggest to his Celestial Majesty. Could not our ships of war call in on the way, and compel the French people to transfer the trade of Marseilles to Havre, and thus save us the carriage of their wines and madders through the Straits of Gibraltar? Why should not they force the Americans to restrict the export of their cotton to New York, rather than to suffer the growth of Savannah and Mobile? Well may the Chinese proclaim us "*outside barbarians*," for, verily, this is outside barbarous morality!

ritories, and in spite of the power and influence of England? To warrant the attempt, the Czar ought to possess, at least, the command of one hundred millions sterling. Last year, he required but one million and a quarter,* for which he was compelled to solicit the aid of the capitalists of western Europe, and found great difficulty, even after pledges of peace and protestations of good behaviour, in obtaining the necessary loan!

"Russia once in possession of Constantinople, and farewell to the liberties of Europe!" is the cry of those who are "possessed" with the dread of Muscovite ambition; and the very repetition of this prophecy is calculated to produce believers in its truth. How it is that Russia is to conquer one hundred millions of people, superior to her own population in wealth, freedom, instruction, and morality, and armed with all the superiority of power which an ascendancy in those qualities ever has, and always will bestow upon civilized communities over barbarous nations—not one of those writers and speakers has condescended to explain; the ways and means are studiously avoided, or disregarded as of no consequence. Yet that Russia possesses no superhuman properties, which enable her to dispense with the ordinary impediments of nature, we have already shewn, in the example of her inability, when attacked, to resist the invader, owing to a want of the money, food, arms, and clothing, necessary for the transport and maintenance of large armies. With such an example of her weakness in defensive operations as we have just given, we need not be surprised that we have very abundant proofs of the feebleness of that empire when engaged in aggressive warfare. All the hostilities carried on between Russia and her barbarous neighbours, Turkey and Persia, have been full of evidences of the difficulty with which the first power achieved her successive conquests, and the precarious tenure on which she has held them. Indeed, the last war with Turkey was, from the combined causes of deficient means of transport, defective commissariat supplies, and want of hospitals—all arising from the poverty of the government—protracted so long, and attended with so great a loss of life to the invaders, that it left no doubt, with reflecting minds, of the incompetency of Russia to sustain a war of aggression with Prussia, Austria, or any other civilized state.

But Poland is the best and latest witness of the weakness and poverty of Russia. Notwithstanding that the insurrection in that country broke out at a moment when the preparations were not matured, (owing to the rashness of the military youths of Warsaw,) and although the natives possessed no strong places, as in Belgium, and their territory is destitute of mountain fastnesses, such as are found in Spain, Scotland, or Switzerland; yet a mere handful of insurgents

baffled the whole power of the Czar for twelve months—several times defeating his ill-equipped armies with great slaughter—and at last were subdued only through the perfidy of the Prussian authorities. Surely, with this experience of Russian weakness and poverty to appeal to, we need not refer to the dangers apprehended for France, Germany, and Spain, unless it be to ask whether a British Parliament, possessing so many unsatisfied claims upon its time and attention at home—from two millions of paupers in a neighbouring island, declared by authority to be without the means of subsistence; from the Dissenters of this kingdom, and the Catholics of Ireland; and from the discontented tax-payers at large—whether the British legislature might not, very properly, leave the care of those independent and powerful empires to their own governments, at least for the present, until the business of the united empire shall have been more satisfactorily dispatched.

We shall, however, be told that, in arguing for the weakness of this empire from past experience, we lose sight of the difference between Russia in the Baltic and Russia in the Mediterranean. "The government of St Petersburg once transferred to Constantinople, and Russia thenceforth becomes the first maritime power of Europe," is the universal cry of the alarmists. How? Oh, the oaks of Bosnia, which are the finest in the world for shipbuilding, would be then at her command! But where would the sailors be found by a power possessing no mercantile marine? Napoleon thought vainly to create a navy from those very forests; he ordered tools to be forged in the country, and roads to be cut, by which the French legions might penetrate into Illyria, and the oaks of Bosnia be thus transported to the harbours on the Adriatic. He, moreover, contrived to bring the forests of Switzerland to Antwerp, by constructing the famous shoot down the side of Mount Pilatus. The timber rotted in his harbours; for how could the navies arise, whilst England commanded the trade of the ocean? Napoleon Bonaparte was a madman in all that related to commercial science; and his disastrous fate was the inevitable consequence: but they who, with his example before them, can assume the existence of the largest navy in the world, *in the possession of a people whose carrying trade is in the hands of another nation*, without the previous growth of manufactures and commerce, are, in that particular, more hopelessly mad than the Corsican usurper. As well and as wisely might they assume the existence of the ripened harvest when no seed had been sown, or reckon on the growth of a city where neither builders nor inhabitants had ever existed! Until Russia becomes a great trading empire, she will not be in even the path for surpassing us in naval power. We have elsewhere shewn that she cannot enlarge her commerce without thereby enriching us, even more than any other people: how then can Russia hope to become equal to ourselves upon the ocean, unless England should,

* Double the amount might be raised without difficulty, upon sufficient security, in Manchester, in less than forty-eight hours, if the profit or other motive offered an adequate inducement.

for the purpose of enabling her to do so, resolve to stand still?*

But supposing that Russia were to seize the first moment of her occupancy of Turkey to begin to build ships of war, and, by aid of Greek sailors, to man a fleet at Constantinople; and presuming, moreover, that, having obtained violent possession of Norway, she were to employ similar means for erecting a naval power in the Baltic—let us then call the attention of our readers to the defenceless and dependant position in which her territory would be placed, owing to the peculiar geographical features of those quarters of the globe. The sole outlet for the waters of the Sea of Marmora and the Black Sea, is by the canal of the Dardanelles, called the Hellespont—a passage whose navigable width scarcely exceeds a thousand yards for a length of nearly thirty miles. To blockade the entrance of this Strait would require that a couple of ships of the line, a frigate, and a steamer, should be stationed at its mouth; and with no larger force than this might the egress of any vessel be prevented from the interior seas; and not only so, but, as these four men of war would constitute, in the eyes of all foreign powers, and according to the law of nations, a sufficient blockade, they would deprive Constantinople and the whole Turkish empire of all foreign trade, besides shutting out from the commerce of the Mediterranean Sea, and the rest of the world, the entire coast of the Euxine, and its thousands of miles of tributary rivers. If we now transfer our attention to the northern portions of the Russian empire, we shall find that the passage of the Sound, through which all the trade of the Baltic is compelled to pass, is scarcely less narrow than that of the Hellespont; and, provided Russia had gained possession of the interior of these Straits, according to the supposition of the alarmists, then half a dozen ships of war might hermetically seal the whole of northern Europe against the trade of the world. In short, Russia in possession of Turkey would contain but two outlets, each more contracted than the River Thames at Tilbury Fort; and, as these could be declared in a state of lawful blockade by less than a dozen vessels of war, it is clear that nature herself has doomed Russia to be in a condition of the most abject and prostrate subjection to the will of the maritime powers. This is a point of paramount importance in estimating the future growth of the country under consideration. It should never be lost sight of for a moment, in arguing upon the subject, that Russia, in pos-

* When the measures for conciliating the respective commercial interests of parties in the Irish union were arranging, the opinion of practical men was taken as to the period at which the cotton manufacture of Ireland might be able to go on, in competition with that of England, without the help of protecting duties; and Mr William Orr of Dublin, who had introduced the manufacture into that country, was asked if he thought it likely that, in ten years, the Irish manufacturers would overtake the English in skill? Mr Orr replied—"Yes; if the English can be persuaded during that time to stand still."

session of Turkey and all the coasts of the Black Sea, besides her present stupendous expanse of territory, would still be denied, by the hand of nature herself, a navigation of more than three miles in width, to connect her millions of square leagues of territory with the rest of the globe—a peculiarity the more striking since it could not be found, or even be contrived, to exist in any other quarter of the earth. It is deserving of notice, that these two narrow straits which guard the entrances to the Black Sea and the Baltic, are nearly six months sail distant from each other; and the track by which alone they can communicate lying through the Straits of Dover and of Gibraltar, it must be apparent that, were Russia the mistress of those channels, she could not pass from the one to the other, unless she were in amicable connection with Great Britain.*

There remains but one more point requiring our consideration in connection with the abstract question of Muscovite aggrandizement. They who predict the unbounded extension of Russia, forget the inevitable growth of weakness which attends the undue expansion of territorial dominion.† Not only can they foresee, without difficulty, the conquest of Germany, France, Spain, Persia, and India, but they are, at the same time, blind to the dangers which must attend the attempt to incorporate into one cumbrous empire, these remote and heterogenous nations. In all ages and climes nature has given the boundaries for different communities; and we find that not only are the several families of the earth generally enclosed by seas or mountains, to mark the limits of their respective territories, but the rivers separately flow through lands inhabited by people of one language—thus constituting a double natural line of demarcation. For example, the Alps and the Pyrenees afford the barriers beneath the opposite sides of which repose the French, Spanish, and Italian nations—within which arise the Rhone and Garonne of France, the Tagus and Guadalquivir of the Peninsula, and the Po and Adige of Italy; each of which may be said to water integral countries. And, seeing that these allotments of the earth's surface are sufficiently defined by the hand of nature, to have drawn together, in the earliest ages, the scattered seed of Adam into separate and distinct families, how infallibly shall the same natural limits suffice to *preserve*

* During the war between Russia and the Porte, in 1791, the government of St Petersburg, anxious to send a fleet to attack the Turkish power in the Archipelago, requested permission of the Dutch and English to be allowed to refit the vessels and take in stores at one of their ports; and, failing in this application, the expedition was abandoned.

† "In large bodies the circulation of power must be less at the extremities: Nature herself has said it. The Turk cannot govern Egypt as he governs Thrace, nor has he the same dominion in the Crimea and Algiers which he has at Brusa and Smyrna. Despotism itself is obliged to truck and huckster; the Sultan gets such obedience as he can; he governs with a loose rein that he may govern at all: it is the eternal law of extension and detached empire."—BURKE.

those distinctions, when aided by those potent safeguards of nationality, the diversified histories, religions, languages, and laws of ancient and powerful empires! These are reflections that do not seem to have occurred to those writers who assign the sovereignty of Europe and Asia over to Russia; and, even if they had crossed their minds, such trifling impediments could hardly have impeded them, after having surmounted so much greater obstacles. For assuredly they who can bestow upon Russia the supremacy of the seas, whilst her carrying trade is in the hands of England—or who can award her the victory over rich, united, and powerful nations, without the previous possession of money, *matériel*, or provisions for her armies—need not be daunted by such trifling natural difficulties as the Himalayas or the Alps present against the concentrations of a government over her conquests; or feel a moment's alarm about regulating with the same tariff the commerce of the Rhine, Danube, Neva, and Ganges.

We have now, we believe, noticed every argument with which it has been the custom to urge us to participate in the affairs of Russian and Turkish quarrels and intrigues; and we have endeavoured to shew, by a candid appeal to facts,

that the dangers with which we are threatened in our commerce, colonies, or national dominion, from the power of Russia, are chimerical. We have likewise shewn that the prejudices existing in the minds of the British people against that power, and which have been industriously fostered by the writers and speakers of the day, are founded in delusion and misrepresentation; that the spread of Russian empire has invariably increased, instead of diminishing the growth of civilization and commerce; that she owes her extension less to her own forces, which we have shewn to be weak, than to the disunion or barbarism of her neighbours; and that the very nature of her geographical position must always keep her in dependence upon the good will of other maritime powers. Where, then, are the motives—seeing that Russia has not inflicted the slightest wrong upon us, or even contemplated one substantial injury to our people—for the warlike spirit which now pervades the current writings and speeches upon the subject of that nation? *We do not know—for we have not been able in our researches upon this subject to discover—one solitary ground upon which to found a pretence, consistent with reason, commonsense, or justice, for going to war with Russia.*

CHAPTER III.

THE BALANCE OF POWER.

Mischievous Passion of the English for Intermeddling with Foreign States.—Supposed necessity of maintaining “an imposing attitude.”—The Balance of Power Defined.—Inconsistency of the Definitions.—Chimerical Nature of said Balance.—Lord Bacon's Policy of Nations.—Claims of the Turks to the Protection of the “Balance.”—Inconsistency of the Advocates of the Balance of Power.—The Americans and the Balancing System.—Sound Policy of the United States.

Our object has not only been to deprecate war as the greatest evil that can befall a people, but to shew that we have no interest in maintaining the *statu quo* of Turkey; and, consequently, that the armaments which, in a time of peace, are maintained, at an enormous cost, for the purpose of making demonstrations in favour of that country, and against Russia, might be reduced, and their expense spared to the tax payers of the British empire.

We shall here be encountered with a very general prepossession in favour of our maintaining what is termed a rank amongst the states of the Continent—which means, not that we should be free from debt, or that our nation should be an example to all others for the wealth, education, and virtues of its people, but that England shall be consulted before any other countries presume to quarrel or fight; and that she shall be ready, and shall be called upon, to take a part in every contention, either as mediator, second, or principal. So prevalent and so little questioned has this egotistical spirit become, that, when an honourable member rises in Parliament, to call upon a minister of the crown to account for some political changes in Spain, Portugal, or

Turkey—instead of the question encountering the laughter of the House, (as such an inquiry would probably do from the homely representatives who meet to attend to their constituents' affairs at Washington,) or the questioner being put down by the functionary, with something after Cain's answer, “Am I the Spaniard's keeper?”—the latter offers grave explanations and excuses, whilst the audience looks on with silent attention, as though every word of our foreign secretary were pregnant with the fate of nations bowing to his sway.

If we go back through the Parliamentary debates of the last few reigns, we shall find this singular feature in our national character—the passion for meddling with the affairs of foreigners—more strikingly prominent in every succeeding session; and, at the breaking out of the French Revolution, the reader is astonished to see that the characters of the leaders of the mobs of Paris, Marseilles, and Lyons, and the conduct of the government of France, became the constant subjects of discussion in the House of Commons, almost to the exclusion of matters of domestic interest—Pitt and Burke on one side, and Fox, Grey, and Sheridan on the other, attacking and

defending the champions of the Revolution, with the same ardour as if the British legislature were a responsible tribunal, erected over the whole of Christendom, and endowed with powers to decide, without appeal, the destinies of all the potentates and public men of Europe.* Unhappily, the same passion had impregnated the minds of the public generally, (as it continues to do down to our own day,) and the result was, as everybody knows, the Bourbon crusade. But England, in taking upon herself to make war with the spirit of the age, encountered the Fates; and, instead of destroying that infant freedom which, however monstrous and hideous at its birth, was destined to throw off its bloody swathes, and, in spite of the enmity of the world, to dispense the first taste of liberty to all Europe—*she was herself the nurse that, by her opposition, rocked the French Revolution into vigorous maturity.*

Our history during the last century may be called the tragedy of “British intervention in the politics of Europe;” in which princes, diplomatists, peers, and generals, have been the authors and actors—the people the victims; and the moral will be exhibited to the latest posterity in 800 millions of debt.

We have said that our proposal to reduce our armaments will be opposed, upon the plea of maintaining a proper attitude, as it is called, amongst the nations of Europe. British intervention in the state policy of the Continent has been usually excused under the two stock pretences of maintaining the balance of power in Europe, and of protecting our commerce; upon which two subjects, as they bear indirectly on the question in hand, we shall next offer a few observations.

The first instance in which we find the “balance of power” alluded to in a king’s speech, is on the occasion of the last address of William III. to his parliament, December 31, 1701, where he concludes by saying—“I will only add this—if you do in good earnest desire to see England hold the balance of Europe, it will appear by your

right improving the present opportunity.” From this period, down almost to our own time, (latterly, indeed, the phrase has become, like many other cant terms, nearly obsolete,) there will be found, in almost every successive king’s speech, a constant recurrence to the “balance of Europe;” by which, we may rest assured, was always meant, however it might be concealed under pretended alarm for the “equilibrium of power” or the “safety of the Continent,” the desire to see England “hold the balance.” The phrase was found to please the public ear; it implied something of equity; whilst England, holding the balance of Europe in her hand, sounded like filling the office of Justice herself to one-half of the globe. Of course, such a post of honour could not be maintained, or its dignity asserted, without a proper attendance of guards and officers; and we consequently find that, at about this period of our history, large standing armies began to be called for; and not only were the supplies solicited by the government, from time to time, under the plea of preserving the liberties of Europe, but, in the annual mutiny bill, (*the same in form as is now passed every year.*) the preamble stated, amongst other motives, that the annual army was voted for the purpose of *preserving the balance of power in Europe.* The “balance of power,” then, becomes an important practical subject for investigation; it appeals directly to the business and bosoms of our readers, since it is implicated with an expenditure of more than a dozen millions of money per annum, every farthing of which goes, in the shape of taxation, from the pockets of the public.

Such of our readers as have not investigated this subject, will not be a little astonished to find a great discrepancy in the several definitions of what is actually meant by the “balance of power.” The theory—for it has never yet been applied to practice—appears, after upwards of a century of acknowledged existence, to be less understood now than ever. Latterly, indeed, many intelligent and practical-minded politicians have thrown the question overboard, along with that of the balance of trade—of which number, without participating in their favoured attributes, we claim to be ranked as one. The balance of power—which has, for a hundred years, been the burden of kings’ speeches, the theme of statesmen, the ground of solemn treaties, and the cause of wars—which has served, down to the very year in which we write, and which will, no doubt, continue to serve, for years to come, as a pretence for maintaining enormous standing armaments, by land and sea, at a cost of many hundreds of millions of treasure—the balance of power is a chimera! It is not a fallacy, a mistake, an imposture—it is an undescribed, indescribable, incomprehensible nothing; mere words, conveying to the mind not ideas, but sounds like those equally barren syllables which our ancestors put together for the purpose of puzzling themselves about words, in the shape of *Prester John*, or the *philosopher’s stone*! We are

* That this spirit still survives in full vigour, may be shown by the motion recently made in the House of Commons, by Mr T. Duncombe, for interceding with the French Government in behalf of the state prisoners at Ham. Prince Polignac and his confederates attempted, by their *coup d’état*, to deprive France of law, place the whole country in the hands of despots, and reduce it to the monkish ignorance of the middle ages, by giving again to priests and bigots the absolute power over the printing press. In this attempt they failed; but freedom conquered at the cost of hundreds of victims. *In England, or any other country but France, those ministers would have suffered death.* Yet, after five years of confinement, behold us interfering with the course of justice, in an empire with whose internal concerns we are no more entitled to mix than with those of China!

Within a week of this display, a lad was transported from Macclesfield for fourteen years, for *stealing a pair of stockings!* We recommend this to our facetious Gallic neighbours, as a fit opportunity for intervention: the mother should be induced to write her case to M. Odillon Barrot, or some other popular member of the Chamber of Deputies.

bound, however, to see what are the best definitions of this theory.

"By this balance," says Vattel, "is to be understood such a disposition of things as that no one potentate or state shall be able, absolutely, to predominate and prescribe laws to the others."—*Law of Nations*, b. 3, c. 3, § 47.

"What is usually termed a balance of power," says Gentz, "is that constitution subsisting among neighbouring states, more or less connected with one another, by virtue of which no one among them can injure the independence or essential rights of another without meeting with effectual resistance on some side, and, consequently, exposing itself to danger."—*Fragments on the Political Balance*, c. 1.

"The grand and distinguishing feature of the balancing system," says Brougham, "is the perpetual attention to foreign affairs which it inculcates; the constant watchfulness over every nation which it prescribes; the subjection in which it places all national passions and antipathies to the fine and delicate view of remote expediency; the unceasing care which it dictates of nations most remotely situated, and apparently unconnected with ourselves; the general union which it has effected of all the European powers, obeying certain laws, and actuated in general by a common principle; in fine, the right of mutual inspection, universally recognised, among civilized states, in the rights of public envoys and residents."—*Brougham's Colonial Policy*, b. 3, § 1.

These are the best definitions we have been able to discover of the system denominated the balance of power. In the first place, it must be remarked that, taking any one of these descriptions separately, it is so vague as to impart no knowledge even of the writer's meaning; whilst, if taken together, one confuses and contradicts another—Gentz describing it to be "a constitution subsisting among neighbouring states more or less connected with each other;" whilst Brougham defines it as "dictating a care of nations most remotely situated, and apparently unconnected with ourselves." Then it would really appear, from the laudatory tone applied to the system by Vattel, who says that it is "such a disposition of things as that no one potentate or state shall be able absolutely to predominate and prescribe laws to the others;" as well as from the complacent manner in which Brougham states "the general union which it has effected of all the European powers, obeying certain laws, and actuated in general by a common principle"—it would seem, from such assurances as these, that there was no necessity for that "perpetual attention to foreign affairs," or that "constant watchfulness over every nation," which the latter authority tells us, the system "prescribes and inculcates." The only point on which these writers, in common with many other authors and speakers in favour of the balance of power, agree, is in the fundamental delusion that such a system was ever acceded to by the nations of Europe. To judge

from the assumption, by Brougham, of a "general union among all the European powers;" from the allusion made by Gentz to that "constitution subsisting among neighbouring states;" or from Vattel's reference to "a disposition of things," &c.—one might be justified in inferring that a kind of federal union had existed for the last century throughout Europe, in which the several kingdoms had found, like the States of America, uninterrupted peace and prosperity. But we should like to know at what period of history such a compact amongst the nations of the Continent was entered into? Was it previously to the peace of Utrecht? Was it antecedent to the Austrian war of succession? Was it prior to the seven years' war, or to the American war? Or did it exist during the French revolutionary wars? Nay, what period of the centuries during which Europe has (with only just sufficient intervals to enable the combatants to recruit their wasted energies) been one vast and continued battle-field, will Lord Brougham fix upon, to illustrate the salutary working of that "balancing system" which "places all national passions and antipathies in subjection to the fine and delicate view of remote expediency?"

Again, at what epoch did the nations of the Continent subscribe to that constitution, "by virtue of which," according to Gentz, "no one among them can injure the independence or essential rights of another?" Did this constitution exist whilst Britain was spoiling the Dutch at the Cape, or in the East?—or when she dispossessed France of Canada?—or (worse outrage by far) did it exist when England violated the "essential rights" of Spain, by taking forcible and felonious possession of a portion of her native soil? Had this constitution been subscribed by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, at the moment when they signed the partition of Poland?—or by France, when she amalgamated with a portion of Switzerland?—by Austria, at the acquisition of Lombardy?—by Russia, when dismembering Sweden, Turkey, and Persia?—or by Prussia, before incorporating Silesia?

So far from any such confederation having ever been, by written, verbal, or implied agreement, entered into by the "European powers, obeying certain laws, and actuated in general by a common principle;" the theory of the balance of

* The conquests of colonies have been regarded with some complacency, because they are merely, in most instances, reprisals for previous depredations by the parent state: but England for fifty years at Gibraltar, is a spectacle of brute violence, unmitigated by any such excuses. Upon no principle of morality can this unique outrage upon the integrity of an ancient, powerful, and renowned nation—placed at a remote distance from our shores—be justified: the example, if imitated, instead of being shunned, universally, would throw all the nations of the earth into barbarous anarchy, and deprive mankind of the blessings of law, justice, and religion. It is time not only to think, but to speak, of these things in a spirit of honest truth. The people of this country—the middling and working classes—have no interest, as we shall by and by have to shew, in these acts of unjust aggression and foreign violence.—Alas for the cause of morals, if they had!

power has, we believe, generally been interpreted, by those who, from age to age, have, parrot-like, used the phrase, to be a system invented for the very purpose of supplying the want of such a combination. Regarding it for a moment in this point of view, we should still expect to find that the "balancing system" had, at some period of modern history, been recognised and agreed to by all the Continental states; and that it had created a spirit of mutual concession and guarantee, by which the weaker and more powerful empires were placed upon a footing of equal security, and by which any one potentate or state was absolutely unable "to predominate over the others." But, instead of any such self-denial, we discover that the balance of Europe has merely meant (if it has had a meaning) that which our blunt Dutch king openly avowed as his aim to his parliament—a desire, on the part of the great powers, to "hold the balance of Europe." England has, for nearly a century, held the European scales—not with the blindness of the goddess of justice herself, or with a view to the equilibrium of opposite interests, but with a Cyclopean eye to her own aggrandizement. The same lust of conquest has actuated, up to the measure of their abilities, the other great powers; and, if we find the smaller states still, in the majority of instances, preserving their independent existence, it is owing, not to the watchful guardianship of the "balancing system," but to the limits which nature herself has set to the undue extension of territorial dominion—not only by the physical boundaries of different countries, but in those still more formidable moral impediments to the invader—the unity of language, laws, customs, and traditions; the instinct of patriotism and freedom; the hereditary rights of rulers; and, though last not least, that homage to the restraints of justice which nations and public bodies* have in all ages avowed, however they may have found excuses for evading it.

So far, then, as we can understand the subject, the theory of a balance of power is a mere chimera—a creation of the politician's brain—a phantasm, without definite form or tangible existence—a mere conjunction of syllables, forming words which convey sound without meaning. Yet these words have been echoed by the greatest orators and statesmen of England: they ginged successively from the lips of Bolingbroke, Chatham, Pitt, Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Grey, and Brougham;—ay, even whilst we were in the act of stripping the maritime nations of the Continent of their colonies, then regarded as the sole source of commercial greatness; whilst we stood sword in hand upon the neck of Spain, or planted our standard on the rock of Malta; and even when England usurped the dominion of the ocean, and attempted to extend the sphere of human despotism over another element, by insolently putting barriers upon that highway of nations—even then, the tongues of our orators

* "Mankind, although reprobates in detail, are always moralists in the gross."—Montesquieu.

resounded most loudly with the praises of the "balance of power!"* There would be something peculiarly humiliating in connection with this subject, in beholding the greatest minds of successive ages, instead of exercising the faculty of thought, become the mere automata of authority, and retail, with less examination than the haberdasher bestows upon the length, breadth, and quality of his wares, the sentiments bequeathed from former generations of writers and speakers—but that, unhappily, the annals of philosophy and of past religions, afford too many examples of the triumph of mere imitativeness over the higher faculties of the human intellect.

We must not, however, pass over the "balance of power," without at least endeavouring to discover the meaning of a phrase which still enters into the preamble of an annual act of Parliament, for raising and maintaining a standing army of ninety thousand men. The theory, according to the historian Robertson, was first invented by the Machiavellian statesmen of Italy during the prosperous era of the Florentine (miscalled) republic; and it was imported into Western Europe in the early part of the sixteenth century, and became "fashionable," to use the very word of the historian of Charles V., along with many other modes borrowed, about the same time, from that commercial and civilized people. This explanation of its origin does not meet with the concurrence of some other writers; for it is singular, but still consistent with the ignifatuus character of the "balance of power," that scarcely two authors agree, either as to the nature or the precise period of invention of the system. Lord Brougham claims for the theory an origin as remote as the time of the Athenians; and Hume describes Demosthenes to have been the first advocate of the "balancing system"—very recommendatory, remembering that ancient history is little else than a calendar of savage wars! There can be little doubt, however, that the idea, by whomsoever or at whatever epoch conceived, sprang from that first instinct of our nature, fear, and originally meant at least some scheme for preventing the dangerous growth of the power of any particular state; *that power being always regarded, be it well remembered, as solely the offspring of conquest and aggrandizement: notwithstanding, as we have had occasion to shew in a former page of this pamphlet, in the case of England and the United States, that labour, improvements, and discoveries, confer the greatest strength upon a people; and that, by these*

* The phrase was actually adopted by Napoleon! who told O'Meara, at St Helena, that he refused to permit the Emperor Alexander to occupy the Dardanelles, because, if Russia were in possession of Turkey, the "balance of power" in Europe would be destroyed! Lord Dudley Stuart sees much to admire in this regard for the balance of power, by one who had himself been in military occupation of all the principal states of Europe:—"But the profound views of that great man, Napoleon, told him not to accede to either the demands or entreaties of Alexander; and, on that occasion, though he had invaded the Turkish empire himself, he saved it by refusing the passage of the Dardanelles to Russia; nay, he saved Europe itself."—Lord Stuart's Speech, February 19.

alone, and not by the sword of the conqueror, can nations, in modern and all future times, hope to rise to supreme power and grandeur. And it must be obvious that a system professing to observe a "balance of power"—by which, says Vattel, "no one potentate or state shall be able absolutely to predominate;" or, according to Gentz, "to injure the independence or essential rights of another;" by which, says Brougham, "a perpetual attention to foreign affairs is inculcated, and a constant watchfulness over every nation is prescribed:"—it must be obvious that such a "balancing system"—if it disregards those swiftest strides towards power which are making by nations excelling in mechanical and chemical science, industry, education, morality, and freedom—must be altogether chimerical.

Lord Bacon, indeed, took a broader and more comprehensive view of this question when he wrote, in his essay on empire—"First, for their neighbours, there can no general rule be given (the occasions are so variable) save one, which ever holdeth; which is, that princes do keep due sentinel, that none of their neighbours do overgrow so, (by increase of territory, by embracing of trade, by approaches, or the like,) as they become more able to annoy them than they were: and this is generally the work of standing councils, to see and to hinder it." This appears to us to be the only sound and correct view of such a principle as is generally understood by the phrase, "the balance of power." It involves, however, such a dereliction of justice, and utter absence of conscientiousness, that subsequent writers upon the subject have not dared to follow out the principle of hindering the growth of trade, and the like, (which includes all advance in civilization;) although, to treat it in any other manner than that in which it is handled by this "wisest, greatest, meanest of mankind," is to abandon the whole system to contempt, as unsound, insufficient, and illusory.* As for the rule of Lord Bacon; were the great Enemy of mankind himself to summon a council, to devise a law of nations which should convert this fair earth, with all its capacity for life, enjoyment, and goodness, into one vast theatre of death and misery, more dismal than his own dark Pandemonium, the very words of the philosopher would compose that law! It would reduce us even below the level of the brute animals. They do not make war against their own instincts; but this "rule" would, if acted upon universally, plunge us into a war of annihilation with that instinct of progression which is the distinguish-

* Lord Bacon's political maxims are full of morai turpitude. "Nobody can," says he, in speaking of kingdoms and estates, "be healthful without exercise—neither natural body nor politic; and certainly to a kingdom or estate, a just and honourable war is the true exercise." Accordingly, just wars are necessary; and, as there must be an opposite party to a just war, ergo, unjust wars are necessary! In speaking of kings, he calls them "mortal gods on earth." And, in his chapter on seditions and troubles, he gives many rules for governing and restraining, but not one for instructing the people. We speak of the moral sentiments of this great man, distinctly, from his intellectual powers.

ing nature of intellectual man. It would forbid all increase in knowledge, which, by the great writer's own authority, is power. It would interdict the growth of morality and freedom, which are power. Were Lord Bacon's "rule" enforced, not only would the uninstructed Russians commence a crusade against our steam-engines and our skilful artisans; the still more barbarous Turk would be called upon to destroy the civilization and commerce of Petersburg; the savage African would be warranted, nay, compelled to reduce the turbaned Osmanli to his own nakedness and a wigwam; nor would the levelling strife cease until either the "rule" were abrogated, or mankind had been reduced to the only pristine possessions—teeth and nails!*

The balance of power, then, might, in the first place, be very well dismissed as a *chimera*, because no state of things, such as the "disposition," "constitution," or "union," of European powers, referred to as the basis of their system, by Vattel, Gentz, and Brougham, ever did exist;—and, secondly, the theory could, on other grounds, be discarded as *fallacious*, since it gives no definition—whether by breadth of territory, number of inhabitants, or extent of wealth—according to which, in balancing the respective powers, each state shall be estimated;—whilst, lastly, it would be altogether incomplete and inoperative, from neglecting, or refusing to provide against, the silent and peaceful aggrandizements which spring from improvement and

* There appears to be one honourable member of the British legislature, and only one, who is an advocate of this policy. Sir Harry Verney, in speaking after Mr T. Attwood, upon the subject of Russia, (see *Mirror of Parliament*, 1833, p. 2878,) said—"The honourable gentleman has represented Russia as a state sunk in barbarism and ignorance, and hostile to every species of liberty. I would to God that such a description of Russia were correct. (!!!) I believe the reverse to be the fact. I believe there is no power on earth which resorts to such effectual means of propagating her power, civilizing her country, promoting commerce, manufactures, the acquirement of useful information, and the propagation of every useful institution, as Russia. Does the honourable gentleman know that at this moment steam-boats navigate the Volga; and that you may travel in all parts of Russia in the same way as you may through the United States? Does the honourable gentleman know that the Emperor of Russia sends abroad agents in whom he can confide, to obtain information relative to improvements and inventions which may be useful to himself? * * * I am quite sure that, if this country would maintain the balance of power, we must oppose the encroachments of Russia."

A Yankee punster would exclaim—"Sir Harry goes the whole hog with Bacon upon the 'balance of power!'"

Yet, Sir Harry is right. He and the noble author of the *Novum Organum*, are the only two philosophers who have taken a true and consistent view of the question. We are far, however, from including them both under one rule of inculcation. The honourable member for Buckinghamshire errs, perhaps, intellectually, and not morally. His chief fault, or rather misfortune, is, that he lives in Buckingham. Let him and the Marquis of Chandos go through a course of Adam Smith and the economists, beginning with Harriet Martineau; and they will then be convinced that we cannot profit by the barbarism of another people, or be injured by their progress in civilization, any more than the British nation can gain by the corn-laws.

labour. Upon these triple grounds, the question of the balance of power might be dismissed from further consideration. We shall, however, assume, merely for the sake of argument, that such an equilibrium existed in complete efficiency; and the first inquiry that suggests itself is—Upon what principle is Turkey made a member of this European system? The Turks, at least, will be admitted, by everybody, to form no party to this “union;” nor do they give that “perpetual attention to foreign affairs which it inculcates;” or that “constant watchfulness over every nation which it prescribes.” They never read of the balance of power in the Koran; and they live in pious and orthodox ignorance of the authorities for this “fine and delicate” theory; for the names of Bacon, Vattel, and Brougham, are nowhere recorded by the prophet! Turkey cannot enter into the political system of Europe; for the Turks are not Europeans. During the nearly four centuries that that people have been encamped upon the finest soil of the Continent, so far from becoming one of the families of Christendom, they have not adopted one European custom. Their habits are still oriental, as when they first crossed the Bosphorus. They scrupulously exclude their females from the society of the other sex; they wear the Asiatic dress; sit cross-legged, or loll upon couches, using neither chair nor bed; they shave their heads, retaining their beards; and they use their fingers still, in the place of those civilized substitutes, knives and forks. Equally uninfluenced, after nearly four hundred years’ contact with Europeans, is the Osmanli’s condition by the discoveries and improvements of modern times. A printing press may be said to be unknown in Turkey; or, if one be found at Constantinople, it is in the hands of foreigners. The steam engine, gas, the mariner’s compass, paper money, vaccination, canals, the spinning-jenny, and railroads, are mysteries not yet dreamed about by Ottoman philosophers. Literature and science are so far from finding disciples amongst the Turks, that that people have been renowned as *twice* the destroyers of learning: in the splendid though corrupt remains of Greek literature, at Constantinople; and by extinguishing the dawn of experimental philosophy, at the subversion of the Caliphate.

Down to within a few years of the present time, the Turks were viewed only as the scourge of Christian Europe. When, about a century and a half ago, Louis XIV. entered into an alliance with the Sublime Porte, the whole civilized world rung with indignation at the infamous and unnatural combination. And when, more than a century later, on the occasion of the capture of Oczakow by the Russians, our most powerful minister (Pitt) proposed to forward succours to the aid of Turkey, such was the spirit of opposition manifested by the country, that the armaments already prepared by the government, under the sanction of a servile majority in the Parliament, were reluctantly countermanded. On that occasion, both Burke and Grey, although

advocates of the balancing system, refused to acknowledge that the Turks formed parties to it. “He had never before heard it set forth,”* said the former, “that the Turkish empire was considered as a part of the balance of power in Europe. They had nothing to do with European power; they considered themselves as wholly Asiatic. Where was the Turkish resident at our court, the court of Prussia, or of Holland? They despised and contemned all Christian princes as infidels, and only wished to subdue and exterminate them and their people. What had these worse than savages to do with the powers of Europe, but to spread war, destruction, and pestilence amongst them? All that was holy in religion, all that was moral and humane, demanded an abhorrence of everything that tended to extend the power of that cruel and wasteful empire. Any Christian power was to be preferred to these destructive savages. He had heard, with horror, that the Emperor had been obliged to give up to this abominable power, those charming countries which border upon the Danube, to devastation and pestilence.” And, at a subsequent debate upon the same question,† Mr Grey, (now Earl Grey,) who has been a still more zealous champion of the balance of power, (having once declared that every peasant in England was deeply interested in its preservation,) said, “that England had pursued this object too far, would not be denied, when it was considered that, in her progress after it, she had travelled as far as the banks of the Black Sea.”

And are the Turks of our own day less *cruel* or *savage*, that we should not only admit them within the pale of civilized nations, but impose on our people, for their defence, the burden of enormous armaments? We appeal to Doctor Walsh’s late account of the atrocities perpetrated at Constantinople upon the unarmed Greeks, at the revolt of that people; we refer to the horrible massacre of the peaceful and civilized population of Scio! Is this empire less *wasteful* now than when, forty-five years ago, Burke mourned over those fine provinces which were consigned to devastation and the crescent? We again recur to the description given to us by Walsh, and every other recent traveller, of the desolation that reigns throughout the Turkish dominions; we adduce those ruined cities, those deserted, though still fertile plains, and that population, wasting away in regions where ten times its numbers once found abundance; we point to the deplorable condition of agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and all the arts of life, in a country which comprised the ancient civilized world—to prove the waste of human life, happiness, wealth, and civilization, that is suffered every year at the hands of this Mahometan government. Has the pestilence ceased

* Burke’s Speech, House of Commons, March 29, 1791. — See *Hansard’s Parliamentary History*, vol. xxix., pp. 76-77.

† See *Hansard’s Parliamentary History*, vol. xxix., p. 929.

to ravage the Turkish territory? The quarantine now blockades, in a manner, from Christian Europe, Constantinople—standing upon the same latitude as Naples, Oporto, and New York, and chosen by Constantine as the most salubrious spot on earth—a city now the impure nurse and victim of the plague! Does Christianity or public virtue call upon us, in 1836, more than they did in 1791, to arm ourselves in behalf of Turkey? We point to the Koran and those orthodox vices which it inculcates—we refer to the slave trade and to polygamy, abominations which still flourish in that country, under the precept of the impostor of Mecca—to prove that neither religion nor morality can sanction the government of Great Britain in shedding a drop of the blood, or lavishing the treasure of Englishmen, for the support of this “cruel,” “savage,” “wasteful,” “devastating,” “pestilential,” and “infidel” nation, in a conflict with Russia or any other Christian people.

There remains one, and but one, other point from which to view the question of the balance of power; and we may then bid adieu to this monument of the credulity and facility of the human intellect for ever; or, at least, until we happen, perchance, to meet with it in the next year's mutiny bill, supplying the “whereas” of an act of parliament, with a pretence for maintaining a standing army of upwards of 90,000 men!

Russia, in possession of Constantinople, say the alarmists, would possess a port open at all seasons; the materials for constructing ships; vast tracts of fertile land, capable of producing cotton, silk, wool, &c.; and she would be placed in a situation of easy access to our shores—all of which would tend to destroy the balance of power, and put in danger the interests of the British commerce, in particular. But New York, a port far more commodious than Constantinople, is open at all seasons; the United States possess materials without end for ship-building; their boundless territory of fertile land is adapted for the growth of cotton, silk, wool, &c.; and New York is next door to Liverpool; for—thanks to Providence!—there is no land intervening between the American continent and the shores of this United Kingdom. Yet, we have never heard that the North American continent forms any part of the balance of power! Twenty-four sovereign, free, and independent states, altogether forgotten in a “balancing system, which dictates an increasing care even of nations most remotely situated, and apparently unconnected with ourselves!” We doubt the equilibrium can hardly be maintained. This is not all. There is the entire southern continent, from the Isthmus of Panama to the point of Cape Horn, likewise entirely omitted. Mercy on us, one scale will certainly kick the beam! Twelve separate empires of South America, bounded on one extremity by Mexico, and on the other by Patagonia; and the vast expanse of territory, settled and unsettled, under the dominion of the government of Washington,

and, altogether, comprising one-third of the habitable globe—have been quite forgotten in a balance of power!

Not having been supplied by the authors of the theory with any rule by which to judge of their mode of estimating or weighing the powers of the respective parties to the balancing system; and being equally uninformed as to the qualifications required from those states which aspired to the union, it would be presumptuous to guess upon what principle Turkey is admitted to a connection with England, from which Brazil is excluded; or why, in forming a balance of the civilized powers, the United States are rejected, in order to give room to admit Russia into one of the scales. It cannot be from proximity that Turkey is preferred to the Brazils. A voyage from Rio Janeiro to Liverpool will average about forty days; whilst the time taken in going from England to Constantinople usually reaches double that period. Nor can it arise from a comparison of our commerce with the two countries, which is four times as valuable with the American as the European state. Then a wise and provident regard to the future cannot be the guiding motive, since the prospect is altogether in favour of the transatlantic empire, which embraces within its bounds a territory equalling in extent the whole of Russia in Europe, and forming the finest, and destined in all probability to be, both as respects vegetable and mineral riches, the most productive amongst all the countries of the world. Religion, language, national character, and the plague, all oppose the claim of the Turk to this preference over the Christian rival; and we can only suspend our conjectures, and entreat that some advocate of the “balancing system” will inform the world upon what principle, commercial, social, or political—in short, upon what ground, consistent with commonsense—does the foreign secretary involve Great Britain in the barbarian politics of the Ottoman government, to the manifest risk of future wars, and the present pecuniary sacrifice attending standing armaments; whilst, with another state, with which we are more deeply interested as traders, more identified as men, and from which we are, navally speaking, less distant, no political intercourse is found necessary? The same argument applies, with more or less force, to the other eleven South American States, with each of which our commerce averages probably more in amount than with Turkey; yet, although they are Christian communities, all but universally at peace,* and notwithstanding the future influence

* We add an extract from a letter, dated January 26, 1836, addressed to the author by a friend—a gallant officer, and an enlightened and amiable man, who, himself, holds an official rank at the British Court from one of the States of South America.

“You who are so strong an advocate for peace and freedom will be glad to hear of the tranquillity of America, and that our systems of government are at last working well. Of the thirteen transatlantic republics, ten are now in a perfect state of order and prosperity. The capture of Puerto Cabello from a banditti, who are in possession of it will restore that of Venezuela;

which they are inevitably destined to exercise over the interests of the entire world—these countries have not been thought worthy of admission into that system of civilized nations which is now agitated from one extremity to the other with the fate of Mahometan Turkey! However impossible it may be to speculate successfully upon the intended operation of a system which, in reality, never existed except in the precincts of the politician's brain, still it must be remembered that, at the time the theory was first invented, it proposed to give to the European powers owning American colonies, a weight proportioned to the extent of those possessions; and the question then arises—which we shall merely propound, and leave in despair, for the solution of such of our readers as may wish to pursue this chimerical inquiry still farther—By what ingenious process was the balance of power preserved, when England, Spain, and Portugal were deprived of their transatlantic territories? Canning, indeed, once talked of “calling into existence a new world, to adjust the balance of the old;” but, as in many other oratorical flourishes of our state-rhetorician, he meant quite a different practical object: in other and more homely language, that statesman proposed to acknowledge the independence of South America—ten years after every private individual of judgment had predicted the freedom of that Continent. To this day those states which once formed so important a part of the balancing system, as appendages to the mother countries, are wanting in the scales of Europe; and by what arts, *whether by false weights or the legerdemain of the nation still holding the balance*, the equilibrium can be preserved without them, constituting as they do nearly one-third of the terrestrial globe, is a mystery beyond the reach of our powers of divination.

We glanced at the comparative claims of Russia and the United States, to be included in this imaginary States-union: a very few words, upon this point, are all that we shall add to our probably already too extended notice of the “balance of power.”

Upon whatever principle the theory under consideration may have been at first devised—whether, according to Gentz, for the purpose of uniting neighbouring states, or, as Brougham asserts, with a view to the union of all the Euro-

and the next news from Peru will give us that of the peaceable settlement of its government. Mexico, therefore, will alone remain an exception to this peaceful state; and I am afraid she will long remain so: yet, in spite of the troubles of Mexico, she last year raised from her mines (according to the official report of the minister of finance, and without including what was smuggled) thirty millions of dollars, in gold and silver, being three millions more than was ever produced under the most flourishing year of the old Spanish government. As to the national debts of America, the bonds of the United States were used to be sold by baskets, in the first years of their independence, yet they have now paid off the whole.

“You have about fourteen principal nations in Europe, and you know two or three of them have inter-
nal dissensions.”

pean powers—it is certain that it would have been held fatal to the success of the balancing system for any one power, and that one amongst the most civilized, wealthy, and commercial, to have refused to subscribe to its constitution. Yet the United States, (for the number of its inhabitants,) the richest, the most commercial, and, for either attack or defence, the most powerful of modern empires; a country which possesses a wider surface of fertile land than Russia could boast even with the accession of Turkey; and, instead of being imprisoned, like Russia, by the Dardanelles and the Sound, owning five thousand miles of coast, washed by two oceans, and open to the whole world:—*the United States are not parties to the balance of power!* Ignorant as we are of the rule of admission to and exclusion from this balancing system, it would be vain to conjecture why Russia should be entitled, not only to be a member of this union, but to engross its exclusive attention, whilst North America is unknown, or not recognised as of any weight in the balance of power. It cannot be, on our part, from closer neighbourhood; for Russia, even at Constantinople, would—commercially and navally speaking—be three times as distant* as New York, from Great Britain. Nor on account of the greater amount of the European commerce transacted by Russia. The commerce of the United States with the countries of Europe, is nearly as great in amount as that of the British empire with the Continent; twice as large as the trade of France with the same quarters; and three times that of Russia. It cannot be because of the more important nature of the trade which we carry on with Russia as compared with that with America; since the cotton of the latter gives employment and subsistence to more than a million of our people, and is actually indispensable to our commercial and political existence. Here are cogent reasons why the transatlantic power should form a party to the union of states—why, at least, it should, in place of an empire situated upon the Baltic or Black Sea, be united in political bands with Great Britain. And wherefore is this rich, commercial, and this contiguous country—with a population more entirely enlightened than any besides, and whose improvements and institutions, England and all Europe are eager to emulate—an alien to the “balancing system,” of which Turkey, Spain, and Persia, are members? It would be difficult to find any other satisfactory answer than that which we are able to give as the reason of this exclusion:—*America, with infinite wisdom, refuses to be a party to the “balance of power.”*

Washington (who could remember when the national debt of England was under fifty-five millions; who saw it augmented, by the Austrian war of succession, to seventy-eight millions; and again increased, by the seven years' war, to one hundred and forty-six millions; and who lived

* The average time of the passage from New York to Liverpool, by the line of packet ships, is twenty-five days.

to behold the first fruits of the French revolutionary wars, with probably a presentiment of the harvest of debt and oppression that was to follow—whose paternal eye looked abroad only with the patriotic hope of finding, in the conduct of other nations, example or warning for the instruction of his countrymen) seeing the chimerical objects for which England, *although an island*, plunged into the contentions of the Continent, with no other result to her suffering people but an enduring and increasing debt—bequeathed, as a legacy to his fellow-citizens, the injunction, that they should never be tempted, by any inducements or provocations, to become parties to the States' system of Europe. And faithfully, zealously, and happily has that testament been obeyed! Down even to our day, the feeling and conviction of the people, and consequently of the government and the authors* of the United States,

* Washington Irving has good humouredly satirized this national propensity for foreign politics, in the well-known sketch of "John Bull." "He is," says that exquisite writer, "a busy-minded personage, who thinks, not merely for himself and family, but for all the country round, and is most generously disposed to be everybody's champion. He is continually volunteering his services to settle his neighbours' affairs, and takes it in great dudgeon if they engage in any matter of consequence without asking his advice; though he seldom engages in any friendly office of the kind without finishing by getting into a squabble with all parties, and then railing bitterly at their ingratitude. He unluckily took lessons in his youth in the noble science of defence; and having accomplished himself in the use of his limbs and weapons, [i. e. *standing armies and navies*,] and become a perfect master at boxing and cudgel play, he has had a troublesome life of it ever since. He cannot hear of a quarrel between the most distant of his neighbours, but he begins incontinently to fumble with the head of his cudgel, and consider whether interest or honour does not require that he should meddle in their broils. Indeed he has extended his relations of pride and policy so completely over the whole country, [i. e. *by quadripartite treaties and quintuple alliances*,] that no event can take place without infringing some of his finely-spun rights and dignities. Couched in his little domain, with those

have constantly increased in favour of a policy from which so much wealth, prosperity, and moral greatness have sprung. America, for fifty years at peace, with the exception of two years of defensive war, is a spectacle of the beneficent effects of that policy which may be comprised in the maxim—As little intercourse as possible betwixt the governments, as much connection as possible between the nations, of the world. And when England (*without being a republic*) shall be governed upon the same principles of regard for the interests of the people, and a like commonsense view of the advantages of its position, we shall adopt a similar motto for our policy; and than we shall hear no more mention of that costly chimera, the balance of power.

filaments stretching forth in every direction, he is like some choleric, bottle-bellied old spider, who has woven his web over a whole chamber, so that a fly cannot buzz, nor a breeze blow, without startling his repose and causing him to sally forth wrathfully from his den. Though really a good-tempered, good-hearted old fellow at bottom, yet he is singularly fond of being in the midst of contention. It is one of his peculiarities, however, that he only relishes the beginning of an affray; he always goes into a fight with alacrity, but comes out of it grumbling even when victorious; and, though no one fights with more obstinacy to carry a contested point, yet, when the battle is over, and he comes to a reconciliation, he is so much taken up with the mere shaking of hands, [Lord Castlereagh at the treaty of Vienna,] that he is apt to let his antagonists pocket all they have been grumbling about. It is not, therefore, fighting that he ought to be so much on his guard against as making friends. . . . All that I wish is, that John's present troubles may teach him more prudence in future; [nothing of the kind: look at him now, fifteen years after this was written, playing the fool again, ten times worse than ever, in Spain;] that he may cease to distress his mind about other people's affairs; that he may give up the fruitless attempt to promote the good of his neighbours, and the peace and happiness of the world, by dint of the cudgel; that he may remain quietly at home; gradually get his house into repair; cultivate his rich estate according to his fancy; husband his income—if he thinks proper; bring his unruly children into order—if he can."—*Sketch Book*.

CHAPTER IV.

PROTECTION OF COMMERCE.

CONTENTS.—Protection of our Commerce no just Pretext for maintaining enormous Armaments.—Our Manufactures the true Source of our Commercial Greatness.—Curious Illustration of the Uselessness of Military and Naval Power, for the Protection of our Commerce against the Rivalry of better and cheaper Articles than ours.—Mutual Dependence of Britain and the United States on each other.—Prodigious Traffic between these two Countries.—Instance of our being driven out of our own fortified Market of Gibraltar, by the Competition of an unarmed Rival.—Former Monopoly of the Sea possessed by Britain.—Its Consequences, the National Debt, and the Instigation of other Nations to commence Manufacturing.—The American and French Manufactures avowedly called into competition with ours, by recollections of British tyranny at Sea.—Progress of the American Cotton Manufacture.—Absurdity of all Apprehensions of Foreign Invasion.—Cost of the Armaments for the Protection of our Commerce.—in the Mediterranean.—on the West India Station.—Causes and Consequences of British Wars.—No Class of Society really benefited by War.—Non-Intervention in Foreign Wars the true Policy of Britain.—Superiority of the Influence of British Example, while cultivating the Arts of Peace, to British Violence or Intimidation.—A Word at parting to the Reader.

WE began the preceding remarks upon a question which, however universally recognised in former times, has now almost fallen into neglect,

by quoting a passage from the last speech of King William III. to his Parliament; and—before proceeding to discuss that other, but still

more popular, pretence for wars and standing armaments, *the protection of our commerce*—we shall give an extract or two from the latest (though we sincerely hope not the last) address of William IV. to his Reformed Parliament, delivered on the 4th February 1836 :—

“ I continue to receive from my allies, and, generally, from all foreign powers, assurances of their unaltered desire to cultivate with me those friendly relations which it is equally my wish to maintain with them; and the intimate union which happily subsists between this country and France, is a pledge to Europe for the continuation of general peace.”

After the above passage, which contains, one would suppose, ample guarantees against war—since it not only conveys assurances of the peaceful disposition of *all* foreign powers towards this country, but adds, by way of making those assurances doubly sure, that the union which happily subsists between England and France is a pledge for the *continuance* of a general peace—comes the following :—

“ The necessity of maintaining the maritime strength of the country, and of giving adequate protection to the extended commerce of my subjects, has occasioned some increase in the estimates for the naval branch of the public service.”

Now, if we felt some difficulty in apprehending the question of the “balancing principle,” we confess ourselves to be much more at a loss to understand what is here meant by the protection of commerce through an increase in the navy estimates. Our commerce is, in other words, our manufactures; and the first inquiry which occurs necessarily is, Do we need an augmentation of the naval force, in order to guard our ingenious artisans and industrious labourers, or to protect those precious results of their mechanical genius, the manufactories of our capitalists? This apprehension vanishes, if we refer to the assurances held out, in the above double guarantee for the continuance of peace, that our shores are safe from foreign aggression. The next idea that suggests itself is, Does piracy increase the demand for vessels of war? We, who write in the centre of the largest export trade in the world, have not heard of even one complaint of violence done to British interests upon the ocean; and probably there are not to be found a dozen professed freebooters upon the face of the aquatic globe. South America demands no addition to the force upon its coasts at the present moment, when those several governments are more firmly organized, and foreign interests consequently more secure, than at any previous period. China presents no excuse; for her policy is, fortunately for her territorial integrity, invulnerable to foreign attempts at “intervention.” The rest of Asia is our own. Where, then, shall we seek for a solution of the difficulty, or how account for the necessity which called for the increase of our naval strength?

The commerce of this country, we repeat, is, in other words, its manufactures. Our exports

do not consist, as in Mexico or Brazil, of the produce of our soil and our mines; or, as in France and the United States, of a mixture of articles of agricultural and manufacturing origin: but they may be said to be wholly produced by the skill and industry of the manufacturing population of the United Kingdom.* Upon the prosperity, then, of this interest, hangs our foreign commerce; on which depends our external rank as a maritime state; our customs-duties, which are necessary to the payment of the national debt; and the supply of every foreign article of our domestic consumption—every pound of tea, sugar, coffee, or rice, and all the other commodities consumed by the entire population of these realms. In a word, our national existence is involved in the well-doing of our manufacturers. If our readers—many of whom will be of the agricultural class, but every one of them nevertheless equally interested in the question—should ask, as all intelligent and reasoning minds ought to do, To what are we indebted for this commerce?—we answer, in the name of every manufacturer and merchant of the kingdom—The *cheapness* alone of our manufactures. Are we asked, How is this trade protected, and by what means can it be enlarged? The reply still is, By the *cheapness* of our manufactures. Is it inquired how this mighty industry, upon which depends the comfort and existence of the whole empire, can be torn from us?—we rejoin, Only by the *greater cheapness* of the manufactures of another country. These truths are, we presume, very well known to the government of Great Britain; at least, one member of the present cabinet is vigilantly alive to their momentous character, as we are going to shew, by referring to a fact coming within our personal experience, and which bears pointedly upon the question in hand.

The Directors of the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester (of which board the author has the honour of being a member) were favoured, a short time since, with a communication from the Right Hon. C. P. Thomson, accompanied by an assortment of samples of various fabrics, which, in the diligent fulfilment of his official duties, he had caused to be procured from the several manufacturing districts of the Continent; and requesting a report as to the comparative relation which, after due examination, they might be found to bear towards the manufactures of England. Among these, were patterns of Swiss Turkey-red chintz prints, and of mixed cotton and linen Saxony drills—both of which commodities have been, for some time, sold in these quarters—superior, both in cheapness and quality, to similar articles produced in this country; and, consequently, in reporting to the Board of Trade, the Directors of the Chamber of Commerce had the disagreeable duty of stating that, in those particular products of the loom and printing machine, we were beaten by our foreign rivals,

* We stated this familiar fact in a former pamphlet; but it is one that cannot be too frequently placed broadly before the public eye.

and superseded in third or neutral markets. The causes of the advantages thus possessed over us by our competitors on the Continent, and which were pointed out to the attention of the Right Hon. President, are the heavy imposts still fettering our manufacturing energies, and the greater cost of the food of our workmen: the remedy is, obviously, a reduction of the duties on corn, oil, soap, &c. But, if, instead of naming such causes and remedies as these, the Manchester Chamber of Commerce had stated, in its report, that the prints of Switzerland and the drills of Saxony (*the governments of which two countries do not together own a ship of war, as we believe*) were cheaper than the like articles fabricated here, *because the British navy was not sufficiently strong*, and had advised, for relief, that half a million a-year should be added to the navy estimates—would not a writ *de lunatico inquirendo* have justly been issued against those intelligent Directors, the writer's colleagues, without further evidence of their insanity! Yet, having seen that the only way in which we can protect our commerce is by the cheapness of our manufactures, what other object can be meant, when the government calls for an augmentation of the navy, with a view to the protection of our commerce, but some plan, however inappreciable to common minds, for reducing the expenditure of the country, and thereby relieving us from some of the burdensome imposts with which our race of competition is impeded?

But there is, in the second passage which we have just quoted from his Majesty's speech, a part which tends to throw more light upon the whole—where it refers to the necessity of giving adequate protection to the "*extended*" commerce of the country. By which we are to infer, that it is the principle of the government, that the extension of our trade with foreign countries demands, for its protection, a corresponding augmentation of the royal navy. This, we are aware, was the policy of the last century, during the greater part of which, the motto, "*Ships, Colonies, and Commerce*,"* was borne upon the national escutcheon, became the watchword of statesmen, and was the favourite sentiment of public writers; but this, which meant, in other words, "*Men of war to conquer colonies, to yield us a monopoly of their trade*," must now be dismissed, like many other equally glittering but false adages of our forefathers, and in its place we must substitute the more homely but enduring maxim—*Cheapness*, which will command commerce; and whatever else is needful will follow in its train.

At a time when all beyond the precincts of Europe was colonial territory, and when the trade of the world was, with the exception of China, almost wholly forced into false channels, by the hand of violence, which was no sooner withdrawn than, by its own inherent law—the

law of nature—it again sought its proper level course, the increase of the navy necessarily preceded and accompanied an extension of our commerce. The policy of nations, *then*, if judged by the standard which we apply to the conduct of individuals *now*—and there can be no exculpation in multitudinous immorality—was, to waylay their customers, whom they first knocked down and disabled, and afterwards dragged into their stores and compelled to purchase whatever articles they chose to offer, at such prices as they chose to ask! The independence of the New World has for ever put an end to the colonial policy of the Old, and, with it, that system of fraud and violence which, for centuries, characterised the commercial intercourse of the two hemispheres. And in that portentous truth, *the Americas are free*, teeming as it does with future change, there is nothing that more nearly affects our destiny than the total revolution which it dictates to the statesmen of Great Britain, in the commercial, colonial,* and foreign policy of our government. America is once more the theatre upon which nations are contending for mastery: it is not, however, a struggle for conquest, in which the victor will acquire territorial dominion—the fight is for commercial supremacy, and the battle will be won by the cheapest!

Whilst our trade rested upon our foreign dependencies, as was the case at the middle of the last century—whilst, in other words, force and violence were necessary to command customers for our manufactures—it was natural and consistent that almost every king's speech should allude to the importance of protecting the commerce of the country, by means of a powerful navy; but whilst, under the present more honest principles of trade, *cheapness* alone is necessary to command free and independent purchasers, and to protect our commerce, it must be evident that such armaments as impose the smallest possible tax upon the cost of our commodities must be the best adapted for the protection of our trade. But, besides dictating the disuse of war-like establishments, free trade (for of that beneficent doctrine we are speaking) arms its votaries by its own pacific nature, in that eternal truth—*the more any nation traffics abroad upon free and honest principles, the less it will be in danger of wars*,

If, by way of example, we refer to the present commercial intercourse between the United

* We shall not enter upon the subject of the profit and loss of our colonies, which would require a volume. An acute writer of the day estimates the annual loss by our dependencies at something like four millions; but he loses sight altogether of the interest of the money spent in conquering them, which is twenty or thirty millions a-year more! Leaving these unprofitable speculations as to the past, let us beg our readers to look at a chart of the world, and, after comparing the continent of free America with the specks of islands forming our colonial possessions, to ask himself whether, in choosing our *future* commercial course, the statesman who presides at the helm of affairs ought to take that policy for his guide which shall conduct us to the market of the entire hemisphere, or that which prefers the minute fraction of it.

* This is still a favourite toast at the annual meetings of the Pitt clubs, drunk by those consistent politicians who will not yield even to the inexorable reforms of trade.

States and this empire, how completely does it illustrate the force of the above maxim! At no period of history were two people, aliens to each other by birth, government, laws, and institutions, united indissolubly by one common interest and mutual dependence, like these distant nations. One-third* of our whole exports consists of cotton manufactures, the raw material of which is produced from the soil of the United States. More than a million of our population depend upon the due supply of this cotton wool, for the labour of every succeeding day, and for the regular payment of their weekly wages. We sometimes hear objections against the free importation of corn, made on the ground that we should become dependent upon foreigners for bread; but here we have a million of people, whose power of purchasing not only bread, but meat, ay, or even potatoes, as well as clothing, is supplied from the annual growth of lands possessed by an independent nation, more than three thousand miles off. The equilibrium† of this stupendous industry is preserved by the punctual arrival, from the United States, of a quantity of raw cotton, averaging 15,000‡ bales weekly, or more than 2000 bales a-day; and it depends also upon the equally constant weekly departure of more than a quarter of a million, sterling, worth of cotton goods, exported to foreign parts. Now, what precaution is taken by the government of this country to guard and regulate this precious flood of traffic? How many of those costly vessels of war, which are maintained at an expense to the nation of many millions of pounds annually, do our readers suppose, are stationed at the mouths of the Mersey and Clyde, to welcome and convoy into Liverpool and Glasgow, the merchant ships from New York, Charleston, or New Orleans, all bearing the inestimable freight of cotton wool, upon which our commercial and social existence depends? Not one! What portion of our standing army, costing seven millions a-year, is occupied in defending this more than Pactolus—this golden stream of trade, on which floats not only the wealth, but the hopes and existence of a great community? Four invalids, at the Perch Rock battery, hold the sinecure office of defending the port of Liverpool! But our exports to the United States will reach, this year, perhaps, in real or declared value, more than ten millions sterling, and nearly one half of this amount goes to New York:—what portion of the royal navy is stationed off that port, to protect our merchants' ships and cargoes? The appearance of a king's ship at

New York is an occurrence of such rarity as to attract the especial notice of the public journals; whilst, along the entire Atlantic coast of the United States—extending, as it does, more than 3000 miles, to which we send a quarter of our whole yearly exports—there are stationed two* British ships of war only, and these two have also their station at the West Indies. No! this commerce, unparalleled in magnitude, between two remote nations, demands no armament as its guide or safeguard: nature herself is both. And will one rational mind recognise the possibility of these two communities putting a sudden stop to such a friendly traffic, and, contrary to every motive of self-interest, encountering each other as enemies? Such a rupture would be more calamitous to England than the sudden drying up of the river Thames; and more intolerable to America than the cessation of sunshine and rain over the entire surface of one of her maritime states!

And if such is the character of free trade, (or, in other words, all trade between independent nations,) that it unites, by the strongest motives of which our nature is susceptible, two remote communities, rendering the interest of the one the only true policy of the other, and making each equally anxious for the prosperity and happiness of both; and if, moreover, every addition to the amount of traffic between two independent states, forges fresh fetters, which rivet more securely these amicable bonds—how can the extension of our commerce call for an increase in our armaments, or how will a government stand excused from the accusation of imposture, unless by the plea of ignorance, when it calls for an augmentation of the navy estimates under the pretence of protecting our extended commerce?

But, to put this matter in another point of view, let us suppose that this mighty traffic between England and the United States, which is wholly governed by the talismanic law of "cheapness," were suddenly interrupted, in the only way in which it can be disturbed—by some other people producing cheaper hardware, woollens, pottery, &c., to whom the Americans, guided solely by that self-interest which controls alike the commerce of every nation, could sell their cotton for a greater amount of those manufactures in return—could our royal navy, were it even augmented to tenfold its present monstrous force, protect us from the loss of our commerce? To answer this question, we need only appeal to the experience of facts, to be found at this time operating in another quarter.

At the moment when we write, the British naval force stationed in the Mediterranean amounts to thirty-six vessels of war,† mounting altogether, 1320 guns, being rather more than

* About one-half of our exports is of cotton origin; but we take one-third as the portion worked up from North American material.

† We wish those rhetorical statesmen, who talk so eloquently in favour of going to war to preserve the equilibrium of Europe, or the balance of power in Turkey, would condescend to give a thought as to its effects upon the equilibrium of our cotton manufacture.

‡ We confine our illustrative remarks to that part which we assume to be the growth of the United States; the total of our imports and exports of cotton is, of course, more than stated here.

* See the *United Service Journal* for June 1836, for a list of the ships of war and their stations, June 1st:—North America and West India stations, one 74 and one 52 guns.

† See the *United Service Journal*, June 1, 1836, for a list of the stations of the British navy.

a third of the death-dealing metal afloat in our king's ships. Our entire trade to all the nations bordering on this sea, and including the whole of that with Spain and France, amounts to very nearly the same as our exports to the United States—in value or importance, however, it is not equal to the latter. Now, leaving for the present the question of the profitableness of carrying on a traffic with such heavy protecting expenses annexed, let us proceed to ascertain whether or not this prodigious and costly navy affords an *efficient* protection to our commerce in those quarters. The reader will bear in mind our statement, that the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester had the unpleasant task of reporting to the Board of Trade, that the drill manufacturers of Saxony and the calico printers of Switzerland had superseded goods of the same descriptions, made in England, in third or neutral markets:—*those markets were in the Mediterranean!* This is not all. One of those markets, from which our manufactures were reported to have been expelled, by a decree of far more potency than was penned by the hand of violence at Berlin and Milan, and prohibited by an interdict ten times more powerful than ever sprang from the Prussian league—the interdict of *dearness*:—one of those markets was *Gibraltar!* (We promised, a few pages back, to prove that the industrious middling and working classes of this empire, have no interest in the violent and unjust seizure and retention of an integral portion of the Spanish territory; and we have, in this simple fact, redeemed our pledge.) We give it to the reflecting portion of our readers, as a truth authenticated by the very best authority, and worthy of deep attention from the economist, the statesman, and the advocate of peace and of a moral ascendancy over physical force—that the artisans of Switzerland and Saxony have achieved a victory over the manufacturers of England, upon her own fortress—the free port of Gibraltar! We kiss the rod—we dote upon this fact, which teaches, through us, a lesson to mankind, of the inefficacy of brute violence in the trading concerns of the world. Let us pause, then, to recapitulate our facts. On the one hand, behold a commerce with America, amounting to the quarter of the whole trade of the kingdom—upon which depends, from week to week, the subsistence of a million of people, and whereon rests our very existence as a commercial empire—conducted regularly, day by day, without the aid or intervention of ships of war, to guide or coerce it; on the other, an armament, avowedly to protect our commerce, of 1320 cannon, unable to guard our manufactures against the successful cheapness of the poorest, the weakest, and humblest community of the Continent—a community destitute of fleets, and without a standing army. The inference is plain—we have succeeded in establishing our premises; for, having proved that the (physically speaking) impregnable fortress of Gibraltar, with its triple lines of batteries, aided by thirty-six vessels of war, and altogether

combining a greater quantity of artillery than was put in requisition to gain the victory of Waterloo, Trafalgar, or the Nile, surrenders our commerce into the hands of the Swiss and Saxons, unable to protect us against the cheaper commodities of those countries—we need not go further to shew, since these two countries without navies are our witnesses of the facts, that armed fleets, armies, and fortresses are not essential to the extension of commerce, and that they do not possess the power of protecting it against the *cheapness* of rivals. These may appear trite and familiar truths to our intelligent readers; our justification may be found, if needed, in the fact, that the government has demanded and obtained an addition to our navy estimates, this session of Parliament, amounting to nearly half a million sterling per annum, under the pretence of *protecting* our commerce; and we do not recollect that one of our representatives rose from his seat to tell the minister, as we now tell him, that *his* is that kind of *protection* which the eagle affords to the lamb—*covering it to devour it*.

It will be seen that all which has been stated bears indirectly, but conclusively, upon the question of Russia and Turkey, and affords an unanswerable argument against going to war to defend our commerce by means of naval armaments; since it is plain, from the example of Gibraltar, that, even were Constantinople in our own power, its commerce could be retained only by our selling cheaper than other nations; whilst, supposing it to be in the possession of Russia or any other people, the cheapness of our commodities will eventually command that market, in the same manner as the cheap drills and prints of Saxony and Switzerland supplant our goods, in spite of the batteries and fleets which defend our Spanish fortress.

Having thus shewn that cheapness, and not the cannon or the sword, is the weapon through which alone we possess and can hope to defend or extend our commerce—having proved, also, that an increase of trade, so far from demanding an augmentation of warlike armaments, furnishes an increased safeguard against the chances of war—is it not clear that, to diminish the taxes and duties which tend to enhance the cost of our manufactures, by a reduction of our navy* and army, is the obvious policy of a ministry which understands and desires to promote the true interests of this commercial nation? Were our army and navy reduced to one half of their present forces, and the amount saved applied to the abolition of the duties upon cotton, wool, glass, paper, oil, soap, drugs, and the thousand other ingredients of our manufactures, such a

* The public papers have announced that, owing to the demand for sailors for the royal navy, the merchants have been compelled to advance the wages of their hands. We have read the following notice upon the quay at Liverpool—"Wanted, for his Majesty's navy, a number of petty officers and able-bodied seamen." It would seem that there is no want of commissioned officers; which accounts for the increase of the navy estimates, we suspect.

step would do more towards protecting and extending the commerce of Great Britain, than an augmentation of the naval armaments to fifty times their present strength, even supposing such an increase could be effected with no addition to the national burdens.

Experience has shewn that an overwhelming power at sea, whilst it cannot dictate a favourable commercial treaty with the smallest independent state, (for such a spectacle of violence was never seen, as a victorious admiral, sword in hand, prescribing the terms of a tariff to his prostrate foe,) has had the effect of rousing national fear, hatred, and envy, in the breasts of foreigners; and these vile feelings of human nature, awakened and cultivated by our own appeal to the mere instinct of brute force, have been naturally directed, in every possible way, to thwart and injure our trade. During the latter half of the French revolutionary wars, England, owing to successive victories, became the mistress of the ocean; her flag floated triumphantly over every navigable parallel of latitude, and her merchants and manufacturers commanded a monopoly of the markets of the globe. For a period of more than ten years, an enemy's ship was scarcely to be seen, unless as a fugitive from the thunder of our vessels of war; no neutrals were allowed to pass along that thoroughfare of nations, the ocean, without submitting to pay the homage to British power, of undergoing the humiliation of a search by our cruisers. There was something inconceivably flattering to the vulgar mind in this exhibition of successful violence. Our naval supremacy, consequently, became the theme and watchword of all those orators, statesmen, and writers, who had an interest in perpetuating the war. Poets, too, were put in requisition; and a thousand songs, all breathing such sentiments as "Rule Britannia," were heard in the theatres, taverns, and streets. Cupidity, as well as pride, was appealed to. Our merchants were continually reminded, by the minister and his minions, that they alone possessed the markets of the world; and, even whilst our yearly national expenditure reached nearly double the amount of the whole of our exports, such was the intoxication, such the infatuation of the moment, owing to the gross appeals made to national vanity, that the multitude were not only impressed with the belief that our commerce was profitable, but convinced that England was destined to remain permanently the same trading monopolist. Peace cured us of this maddening fever; but, in exchange, it brought the lumbago of debt, which still oppresses and torments our body politic. Not only this: the moral is yet to follow. The brute force which we had exercised towards foreign nations, at sea, during the war, had naturally excited the animal feelings of hatred, fear, and revenge, in return. Every country began to establish manufactures, in order to become independent of and secure against Great Britain. Russia, Austria, and France now commenced the war of interdicts; and Ferdinand of

Spain* had no sooner succeeded in re-establishing the inquisition, than he—for whom, the everlasting infamy of that epoch of our history, the blood and treasure of England were squandered—repaid us with a prohibition of our cottons.

We cannot give proofs of the motives which actuate the councils of despotic princes, for they furnish none to the world; but the discussions on the tariff laws, in France and the United States, which were necessarily public, fully disclosed that the reason which led their governments to seek to become themselves manufacturers, was to render those countries independent of the power of Great Britain at sea. The French nation—which, in 1786, had concluded a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, upon terms very favourable to the latter, and which would, had it not been interrupted by war, have consolidated the two countries, by a complete identification of interests, long before the period we are now speaking of—proceeded, immediately on the close of hostilities, to prohibit the introduction of every article of our manufacture. The spirit which operated then is still alive, and with the avowal of the self-same motives; for, during the late discussions in the Chamber of Deputies,†

* Our former intervention in the concerns of Spain, was characterised by wisdom itself, when compared with the unadulterated folly of the part we are at present taking in Peninsular affairs. Here is a family quarrel, between two equally worthless personages, who dispute the right of reigning over ten millions of free people; and England sends a brigade of four or five thousand men, (by what right?) to decide this purely domestic question! We have been informed, by a friend long resident in Spain, upon whose authority we can rely, that there is not an honest public functionary in the country; that, from the Minister, down to the lowest tidewater, all are as corrupt now as when Wellington endured the treachery of this people. Villiers and Evans are experiencing that treatment, at the hands of Isturiez and Cordova, which Frere and Sir John Moore encountered, thirty years ago, from the agents of the government. That the people are not improved by our last sacrifices for the dynasty of Ferdinand, may be proved by their atrocities and female massacres—unheard of out of Turkey. When the affairs of the British empire are conducted with as much wisdom as goes to the successful management of a private business, the honest interests of our own people will become the study of the British ministry; and then, and not till then, instead of being at the mercy of a chaos of expedients, our foreign Secretary will be guided by the principles of non-intervention in the politics of other nations. "A people," says Channing, "which wants a savior, which does not possess an earnest and pledge of freedom in its own heart, is not yet ready to be free." In the meantime, it cannot be too widely known, that our interference in the private quarrels of these semi-barbarians, will cost us this year, half a million sterling; whilst with difficulty we have obtained £10,000 for establishing Normal Schools!

† The ignorance manifested in the French Chamber of Deputies upon commercial affairs, during the recent discussions, and the folly and egotism of the majority of the speakers, leave little hope of an increased intercourse between the two countries. M. Thiers openly avowed that we were to be manufacturing rivals, but political friends: we disclaim both these relationships. The French, whilst they are obliged to prohibit our fabrics from their own market, because their manufacturers cannot, they say, sustain a competition with us, even with a heavy protecting duty, never will become our rivals in third markets, where both will pay alike. This boast of

upon the revival of the tariff, a discriminating duty was laid upon the coal coming from this country, (by the unprecedented scheme of dividing France into three zones for that very purpose,) and it was defended, upon the plea of protection against inconvenience during war!

America, however, presents us with the severest lesson, as the moral of that policy which relies upon violence and war for the support or acquisition of commerce. In the report of the committee on manufactures of cotton, presented to the Congress of the United States, February 13, 1816—a paper drawn up with great moderation and delicacy, so far as relates to the allusions to British violence during the war just concluded—it is stated that, “Prior to the years 1806 and 1807, establishments for manufacturing cotton wool, had not been attempted, but in a few instances, and on a limited scale. Their rise and progress are attributable to embarrassments to which commerce was subjected; which embarrassments originated in causes not within the control of human prudence.” The causes here alluded to are the British orders in council and Bonaparte’s decrees. Then follows a statement of the quantity of cotton wool manufactured, at successive periods, in the United States:—

1800,	.	.	500 bales.
1805,	.	.	1000
1810,	.	.	10,000
1815,	.	.	90,000

And, afterwards, it goes on to say, in speaking of Great Britain—“No improper motives are intended to be imputed to that government. But does not experience teach a lesson that should never be forgotten, that governments, like individuals, are apt ‘to feel power and forget right!’ It is not inconsistent with national decorum, to become circumspect and prudent. May not the government of Great Britain be inclined, in analyzing the basis of her political power, to consider and regard the United States as her rival, and to indulge an improper jealousy, the enemy of peace and repose?” And, in proposing, on February 12, 1816, a new tariff to the *Senate*, in which cotton goods are subjected to 33½ per cent. duty, the Secretary of the Treasury, in the course of his report, has this passage:—“But it was emphatically during the period of the restrictive system and of the war, that the importance of domestic manufactures became conspicuous to the nations, and made a lasting impression upon the mind of every statesman and every patriot.” It is not, however, by state papers that we can fully estimate the sentiments of the nation at large. Immediately on the cessa-

the Prime Minister of France, is like the swagger of one who, having barricaded himself securely in his own house, blusters about giving battle in a neighbouring county. For the English ministry to form a mere political connection with the present unstable government and dynasty of France, to the exclusion of trading objects, would be to put us in partnership with a party in a desperate state of fortune, who resolved not to mend it. There can be no real alliance, unless by a union of interests. Schoolboys have sufficient knowledge of human nature to feel this, when they throw their marbles into a common bag, and become friends.

tion of war, a strong feeling was manifested in all parts of the Union, in favour of protecting the manufactures of the country. This feeling prevailed with the democratic party, which was then in the ascendant, quite as much as with the federalists; although the former had, previously, been opposed to protecting duties. We cannot better illustrate this than by giving the following extract from a letter, written at this time by the great leader and champion of that party, Jefferson, who, in his “Notes on Virginia,” written in 1785, had given his opinion, “that the workshops of Europe are the most proper to furnish the supplies of manufactures to the United States;” but, after the experience of the war, changed his opinion to the following:—“The British interdicted to our vessels all harbours of the globe, without they had first proceeded to some one of hers, there paid tribute, proportioned to their cargo, and obtained a license to proceed to the port of destination. Compare this state of things with that of 1785, and say, whether an opinion, founded in the circumstances of that day, can be fairly applied to those of the present. We have experienced what we did not then believe, that there does exist both profligacy and power enough to exclude the United States from the field of intercourse with foreign nations. We, therefore, have a right to conclude, that, to be independent for the comforts of life, we must fabricate them for ourselves. We must now place the manufacturer by the side of the agriculturist. The question of 1785 is suppressed, or rather assumes a new form. The question is, Shall we manufacture our own comforts, or go without them at the will of a foreign nation? He, therefore, who is now against domestic manufactures, must be for reducing us to a dependence upon foreign nations. *I am not one of these.*”

We have illustrated this matter with reference to the United States, more clearly than in relation to France, because, as we have elsewhere stated, it is our conviction, after giving considerable attention to the subject, that future danger to our manufacturing and commercial supremacy impends from America rather than from any European nation. It will be seen from the preceding quotations, that, from the first independence of that country, the democratic party was inimical to the establishing of protective duties; that party, under Jefferson, then was, and down to this day it continues to be, triumphant; and we therefore possess unquestionable evidence that, by the hand of violence of England herself in 1806 and subsequently, the cotton manufacture was planted in the United States; and it may be seen, in the foregoing table, how, watered by the blood of our succeeding ten years’ French war, it flourished an hundred and eighty fold! That manufacture is not destined to perish; it now equals the fifth of our own staple industry. We do not predict such a retributive visitation; we are proof against despair, when the energies of our countrymen are the grounds of hope; but if, in consequence of past wastefulness, or future extravagance and misgovernment

here, a people beyond the Atlantic, free of debt, resolute in peacefulness, and of severe economy, should wrest, by the victory of "*cheapness*," that main prop of our national prosperity, the cotton manufacture, from our hands—how greatly will it aggravate a nation's suffering, to remember the bitter historical truth, that that people was goaded to the occupations of the spinning-jenny and the loom, by the violence of Great Britain herself!

We mention these facts for the purpose of appealing, on a fresh ground, against the policy of maintaining enormous standing armaments. It has been seen that armies and ships cannot protect or extend commerce; whilst, as is too well known, the expenses of maintaining them oppress and impede our manufacturing industry—two sufficient grounds for reducing both. There is another motive in the above facts. That feeling which was awakened by our overwhelming power at sea, at the conclusion of the war—the feeling of fear and mistrust lest we should be, in the words of the American state paper, just quoted, "apt to feel power and forget right"—is kept alive by the operation of the same cause, which tends still, as we have seen by the last debates in the French Chamber of Deputies, to afford excuses for perpetuating the restrictive duties upon our fabrics. The standing armies and navies, therefore, whilst they cannot possibly protect our commerce—whilst they add, by the increase of taxation, to the cost of our manufactures, and thus augment the difficulty of achieving the victory of "*cheapness*"—tend to deter rather than attract customers. The feeling is natural; it is understood in the individual concerns of life. Does the shopkeeper, when he invites buyers to his counter, place there, as a guard to protect his stock or defend his salesmen from violence, a gang of stout fellows, armed with pistols and cutlasses? *Yes, the fact is.*

There is a vague apprehension of danger to our shores experienced by some writers, who would not feel safe unless with the assurance that the ports of England contained ships of war ready at all times to repel an attempt at invasion. This feeling arises from a narrow and imperfect knowledge of human nature, in supposing that another people shall be found sufficiently void of perception and reflection—in short, sufficiently mad—to assail a stronger and richer empire, merely because the retributive injury, thereby inevitably entailed upon themselves, would be delayed a few months by the necessary preparation of the instruments of chastisement. Such are the writers by whom we have been told that Russia was preparing an army of 50,000 men, to make a descent upon Great Britain, to subjugate a population of twenty-five millions! Those people do not, in their calculations, award to mankind even the instinct of self-preservation which is given for the protection of the brute creation. The elephant is not for ever brandishing his trunk, the lion closes his mouth and conceals his claws, and the deadly dart of the reptile is only protruded when the animal is enraged; yet we do not find

that the weaker tribes—the goats, the deer, or the foxes—are given to assaulting those masters of the forest in their peaceful moods.

If that which constitutes cowardice in individuals, viz. the taking of undue and excessive precautions against danger, merits the same designation when practised by communities—then England certainly must rank as the greatest poltroon among nations. With twenty-five millions of the most robust, the freest, the richest, and most united population of Europe—enclosed within a smaller area than ever before contained so vast a number of inhabitants—placed upon two islands, which, for security, would have been chosen before any spot on earth, by the commander seeking for a *Torres Vedras* to contain his host—and with the experience of seven hundred years of safety, during which period no enemy has set foot upon their shores;—yet behold the government of Great Britain maintaining mighty armaments, by sea and land, ready to repel the assaults of imaginary enemies! There is no greater obstacle to cheap and good government than this feeling of danger, which has been created and fostered for the very purposes of misgovernment.*

Instead of pandering to this unworthy passion, every journalist and public writer ought to impress upon the people of these realms, that, neither from the side of Russia, nor from any other quarter, is this industrious, orderly, moral, and religious community threatened; that it is only from decay and corruption within, and not from external foes, that a nation of twenty-five millions of free people—speaking one language, identified by habits, traditions, and institutions, governed by like laws, owning the same monarch, and placed upon an insular territory of less than 100,000 square miles—can ever be endangered. History, as we have before remarked, affords no example of a great empire—such, for instance, as Prussia—consolidated, enlightened, and moral, falling a prey to barbarous invaders. But the British empire, with more than double the population and twenty times the wealth, possesses, in the sea-girt nature of its situation, a thousand times the security of Prussia. To attempt to augment such a measure of safety by oppressive armaments, by land and sea—is it the part of wisdom and prudence, or of improvidence and folly?

* "Nothing is worthy of more attention, in tracing the causes of political evil, than the facility with which mankind are governed by their fears, and the degree of constancy with which, under the influence of that passion, they are governed wrong. The fear of Englishmen to see an enemy in their country, has made them do an infinite number of things which had much greater tendency to bring enemies into their country than to keep them away.

"In nothing, perhaps, have the fears of communities done them so much mischief as in the taking of securities against enemies. When sufficiently frightened, bad governments found little difficulty in persuading them that they never could have securities enough. Hence come large standing armies, enormous military establishments, and all the evils which follow in their train. Such are the effects of taking too much security against enemies."—*Encyc. Brit.* New edition. Vol. vii., p. 122.

But to return to that course of inquiry from which our argument has slightly swerved. We recur to the subject of protecting our commerce by armed ships; and it becomes necessary next to examine, whether, even supposing our naval force could defend our trade against the attacks of rivals, (which we have conclusively proved it cannot,) the cost of its protection does not, in some cases, more than absorb the gain of such traffic. The real or declared value of all the British manufactures and other produce exported to the Mediterranean, including the coast of Africa and the Black Sea, will, this year, amount to about £9,500,000. Under the groundless plea of protecting this commerce, we find, from the *United Service Journal* of June 1st, that a naval armament, mounting more than 1300 guns, being upwards of a third of the national force, is stationed within the Straits of Gibraltar. Taking the annual cost of the entire British navy at five millions, if we apportion a third part of this amount, and add the whole cost of the fortifications and garrisons of the Mediterranean, with their contingents at the war office, ordnance, &c., we shall be quite safe and within the mark, in estimating that our yearly expenditure in guarding the commerce of this sea, amounts to upwards of three millions sterling, or one-third of our exports to those quarters. Now, what kind of a business would a wholesale dealer or merchant pronounce it, were his traveller's expenses, for escort alone, to come to 6s. 8d.* in the pound on the amount of his sales! Yet this is precisely the unprofitable character of our yearly trade to the Mediterranean. Most people approach the investigation of a nation's affairs with the impression that they do not come under the same laws of commonsense and homely wisdom by which private concerns are governed—than which nothing can

* We shall offer no excuses for so frequently resolving questions of State policy into matters of pecuniary calculation. Nearly all the revolutions and great changes in the modern world have had a financial origin. The exaction of the tenth penny operated far more powerfully than the erection of the Council of Blood, to stir the Netherlands into rebellion in 1569 against the tyranny of Charles V. Charles I. of England lost his head, in consequence of enforcing the arbitrary tax called ship-money. The independence of America, and indirectly through that event, all the subsequent political revolutions of the entire world, turned upon a duty of three-pence a pound, levied by England upon tea imported into that colony. Louis XVI. of France, when he summoned the first assembly of the Estates-General, did so with the declared object of consulting with them upon the financial embarrassments under which his government was labouring: that was the first of a series of definite changes which eventually cost the king his life, and Europe twenty years of sanguinary wars. The second French Revolution, in 1830, was begun by the printers, who were deprived of the means of subsistence by the Ordinances of Charles X. against the press. How much of our own Reform Bill was the fruits of a season of distress?

Remembering that to nineteen-twentieths of the people (who never encounter a higher functionary than the tax-gatherer, and who meet their rulers only in duties upon beer, soap, tobacco, &c.) politics are but an affair of pounds, shillings, and pence, we need not feel astonished at such facts as the preceding.

be more erroneous. America, which carries on a traffic one-half as extensive as Great Britain, with only a sixth* of our navy expenses, and with no charge for maintaining colonies or garrisons, is, every year, realizing a profit to her people beyond that of her extravagant rival, in proportion to her more economical establishments; just exactly in the same way that the merchant or shopkeeper who conducts his business at a less cost for rent, clerks, &c. will, at each stock-taking, find his balance-sheet more favourable than that of his less frugal competitor. And the result will be in the one case as the other—that the cheaper management will produce cheaper commodities; which, in the event, will give a victory, in every market, to the more prudent trader.

But if, instead of the Mediterranean generally, we apply this test to an individual nation situated on that sea, we shall be able to illustrate the matter more plainly. In the same work from which we have before quoted, we find it stated that there are (June 1st) thirteen British ships of war lying at Lisbon, carrying 372 guns; a force about equal to the whole American navy employed in protecting the interests of that commercial people all over the world! That part of our annual navy estimates which goes to support this amount of guns, with contingent expenses fairly proportioned, will reach about £700,000. Turning to M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary, (article, Oporto,) we find that the declared value of exports of British manufactures and produce to the entire kingdom of Portugal, reached, in 1831,

* The following is the American navy in commission, February 27, 1836:—One ship of the line, four frigates, eleven sloops, six small vessels; and this after a threatened rupture with France, when every arrival from Europe might have brought a declaration of war! Compare this statement with the fact, that the British government, with a force, at the same time, more than sixfold that of the United States, demanded an increase of more than the entire strength of the American navy, and with the same breath avowed the assurance of permanent peace; and let it be remembered, too, that the House of Commons voted this augmentation, under the pretence of protecting our commerce!

A few plain maxims may be serviceable to those who may in future have occasion to allude to the subject of commerce, in kings' speeches, or other state papers.

To make laws for the regulation of trade, is as wise as it would be to legislate about water finding a level, or matter exercising its centripetal force.

So far from large armaments being necessary to secure a regularity of supply and demand, the most obscure province on the west coast of America, and the smallest island in the South Pacific, are, in proportion to their wants, as duly visited by buyers and sellers as the metropolis of England itself.

The only naval force required in a time of peace for the protection of commerce, is just such a number of frigates and small vessels as shall form an efficient sea police.

If government desires to serve the interests of our commerce, it has but one way. War, conquest, and standing armaments cannot aid, but only oppress trade; diplomacy will never assist it—commercial treaties can only embarrass it. *The only mode by which the government can protect and extend our commerce, is by retrenchment, and a reduction of the duties and taxes upon the ingredients of our manufactures and the food of our artisans.*

(the latest year we have at this moment access to,) £975,991. Here then we find, even allowing for increase, the escort costing nearly as much as the amount sold. In a word, Portugal is, at this moment, *paying* us at the rate of £500,000 a-year clear and dead loss! Our commerce with that country, on this 1st June, was precisely of the same ruinous character to the British nation as it would be in the case of an individual trader who turned over twenty thousand a-year, and whose expenses in clerks, watchmen, rents, &c. were £15,000. If anything could add to the folly of such conduct—conduct which, if proved against an individual brought before an insolvent debtors' tribunal, would be enough to consign him to prison—it is, to recollect that no part of such a nautical force can possibly be of the slightest service to our trade with Portugal, which is wholly independent of such coercion. Even our foreign secretary—a functionary who, during the last hundred and fifty years, has travelled abroad for this commercial empire with no other result to the national ledger but eight hundred millions of bad debts—has, we are happy to see, discovered this truth; for, on being questioned by Mr Robinson, in the House,* as to a recent *grateful* augmentation of duties, upon British goods, amounting to 14 per cent., by the government of Lisbon, our present foreign secretary, Lord Palmerston, avowed that the Portuguese were free to put whatever restraints they chose upon our trade with their country; and he merely threatened, if the tariff was not satisfactory, that he would attack them—how do our readers suppose?—with the thunder of our ships in the Tagus?—with soldiers and sailors?—with grape, musketry, shot, shell, and rocket?—all of which we provide for the protection of our commerce? No—with *retaliatory duties!*

To proceed to a worse case. On the 1st June, our naval force, on the West India station, (see *United Service Journal*,) amounted to 29 vessels, carrying 474 guns, to protect a commerce just exceeding two millions per annum. This is not all. A considerable military force is kept up in those islands, which, with its contingent of home expenses at the War Office, Ordnance Office, &c., must also be put to the debit of the same account. Add to which, our civil expenditure, and the charges at the Colonial Office on behalf of the West Indies; and we find, after due computation, that our whole expenditure, in governing and protecting the trade of those islands, exceeds, considerably, the total amount of their imports of our produce and manufactures. Our case here is no better than that of Jenkins & Sons, or Jobson & Co., or any other firm, whose yearly returns are less than the amount of their expenses for travellers, clerks, &c.; and, if the British empire escapes the ruin which, at the close of the year, must inevitably befall those improvident traders, it is only because we have other markets and resources—the Americas, and Asia, and the productive industry of

these islands—to draw upon, to cover the annual loss sustained by our West India *possessions.* (?)

Or, for another parallel case, let our readers suppose that a Yarmouth house, engaged in the herring trade, were to maintain, besides the fishermen who, with their boats and nets, were employed in catching the fish, as many yachts, full of well-dressed lookers on, as should cost a sum equal to the value of all the herrings caught: that house would, at the end of the year, have sacrificed the whole of the money paid for the labour of the fishermen, besides the interest and wear and tear of the capital in boats, nets, &c. This is precisely the situation of our commerce with the West Indies at this moment. The British nation—the productive classes—pay, in taxation, as much to support well-dressed lookers on, in ships of war, garrisons, and civil offices, as their goods sell for to the West Indians: and, consequently, the whole amount expended for wages and material, together with the wear and tear of machinery, and loss of capital incurred in making cottons, woollens, &c., besides the hire of merchants' ships and seamen, to convey the merchandise to market—is irredeemably lost to the tax-payers of this country.* Here is a plain statement of the case; and in America, where everything is subjected to the test of commonsense, the question would be at once determined by such an appeal to the homely wisdom of every-day life. If, in that country, it could be shewn that a traffic between New York and Cuba, to the yearly amount of ten millions of dollars, was conducted at a cost to the community of the same amount of taxation, it would be put down by one unanimous cry of outraged prudence, from Maine to Louisiana. And how long will it be, before the policy of the government of this manufacturing and commercial nation shall be determined by at least as much calculation and regard for self-interest as are necessary to the prosperity of a private business? Not until such time as Englishmen apply the same rules of commonsense to the affairs of state, that they do to their individual undertakings. We will not stop to inquire of what use are those naval armaments to protect a traffic with our own territory? It is customary, however, to hear our standing army and navy defended, as necessary for the protection of our colonies, as though some other nation might otherwise seize them. Where is the *enemy* (?) that would be so good as to steal such *property*? We should consider it to be quite as necessary to arm in defence of our national debt!

* We invite the attention of public spirited members of Parliament to these facts; they are submitted for the investigation of the conductors of the newspaper press. Every Chamber of Commerce in the kingdom is interested in the subject; this is not a question of party politics, but of public business. Every prudent trader must feel outraged at such a display of reckless extravagance by a commercial people; nay, every economical labourer and frugal housewife must be scandalised by this wasteful misdirection of the industry of the state.

Enough has been said to prove that, even if armaments for the protection of commerce could effect the object for which they are maintained, (although we have shewn the false pretensions of the plea of defending our trade,) still the cost of supporting these safeguards may often be greater than the amount of profit gained. This argument applies more immediately to Turkey and the east; upon which countries a share of public attention has lately been bestowed, far beyond the importance of their commerce.* It would be difficult to apportion the precise quota of our ships of war, which may be said to be, at this moment, maintained with a view to support our influence, or carry into effect the views of our foreign Secretary in the affairs of Constantinople. The late augmentation of the navy—the most exceptionable vote which has passed a Reformed House of Commons—although accomplished by the Ministry without explanation of its designs, further than the century-old pretence of protecting our commerce,† was generally believed to have been aimed at Russia in the Black Sea. Our naval force in the east was considerable previously; but, taking only the increase into calculation, it will cost more than three times the amount of the current profits of our trade with Turkey, whilst it can bestow no prospective benefits; since, even if we possessed Constantinople ourselves, we should only be able to command its trade by selling, as at Gibraltar, cheaper than other people.

* Pitt—whose views of commercial policy were, at the commencement of his career, before he was drawn into the vortex of war by a selfish oligarchy, far more enlightened and liberal than those of his great political opponents, (as witness the opposition by Burke and Fox to his French treaty, on the vulgar ground that the two nations were natural enemies,) entertained a just opinion of the comparative unimportance of the trade of the east of the Mediterranean, after the growth of our cotton manufactures and the rise of the United States had given a new direction to the great flood of traffic.

"Of the importance of the Levant trade," said Mr Pitt, (see *Hansard's Par. Hist.* vol. xxxvi. p. 53,) "much had formerly been said; volumes had been written upon it, and even nations had gone to war to obtain it. The value of that trade, even in the periods to which he had alluded, had been much exaggerated; but even supposing those statements to have been correct, they applied to times when the other great branches of our trade, to which we owe our present greatness and our naval superiority, did not exist: he alluded to the great increase of our manufactures—to our great internal trade—to our commerce with Ireland—with the United States of America; it was these which formed the sinews of our strength, and, compared with which, the Levant trade was trifling." This was spoken in 1801; since which time, our trade with the United States has increased threefold; and, by the emancipation of the South American colonies, another continent, of still greater magnitude, offers us a market which throws, by its superior advantages, those of the Levant and Turkey into comparative insignificance, and adds proportionably to the force of the argument in the above quotation. Yet we have statesmen of our day, who seem to have scarcely recognised the existence of America!

† Two letters have since been published in the *Manchester Guardian*, May 28, which are written by Lord Durham, and addressed to Mr Gisborne, the British consul at Petersburg, giving the most positive assurances that no interruption will take place in our friendly commercial relations with Russia. Will the navy be re-

Our nautical establishments devoted to the (*pretended*) guardianship of British commercial interests (for we can have no other description of interests a thousand miles off) in Turkey, are, the present year, costing the tax-payers of this country, upon the lowest computation, more than three times the amount of the annual profit of our trade with that country. Not content with this state of things, which leaves very little chance of future gain, some writers and speakers would plunge us into a war with Russia, in defence of Turkey, for the purpose of protecting this commerce; the result of which would inevitably be, as in former examples of wars undertaken to defend Spain or Portugal, that such an accumulation of expenses would ensue, as to prevent the possibility of the future profit upon our exports to the Ottoman empire even amounting to so much as should discharge the yearly interest of the debt contracted in its behalf.

We had intended and were prepared to give a summary of the wars—their causes and commercial consequences—in which Great Britain has been, during the last century and a half, from time to time, engaged; but we are admonished that our limited space will not allow us to follow out this design. It must suffice to offer, as the moral of the subject, that, although the conflicts in which this country has, during the last 150 years, involved itself, have, as Sir Henry Parnell² has justly remarked, in almost every instance, been undertaken in behalf of our commerce—yet, we hesitate not to declare that there is no instance recorded in which a favourable tariff, or a beneficial commercial treaty, has been extorted from an unwilling enemy at the point of the sword. On the contrary, every restriction that embarrasses the trade of the whole world, all existing commercial jealousies between nations, the debts that oppress the countries of Europe, the incalculable waste owing to the misdirected labour and capital of communities—these, and a thousand other evils, that are now actively thwarting and oppressing commerce, are all the consequences of wars! How shall a profession which withdraws from productive industry the ablest of the human race, and teaches them, systematically, the best modes of destroying mankind—which awards honours only in proportion to the number of victims offered at its sanguinary altar—which overturns cities, ravages farms and vineyards,

duced? We may apply the lines of Gay, written upon standing armies, a century ago, to sailors:—

"Soldiers are perfect devils in their way—
When once they're raised, they're deuced hard to lay."

Apropos of soldiers. In 1831, during the progress of the Reform Bill, and when the country was upon the eve of a new election, in which, owing to the excitement of the people, tumults were justly to be dreaded, an augmentation of the army, to the extent of 7680 men, was voted by the Parliament. Mr Wynn, the then War Secretary, declared that this increase had no reference to Continental affairs. He should be rejoiced, he said, if the causes which led to this augmentation should cease, and enable the government to reduce the estimates, before the end of three months. *No reduction yet—1836!* Where is Mr Hume?

* "Financial Reform."

uproots forests, burns the ripened harvest—which, in a word, exists but in the absence of law, order, and security:—how can such a profession be favourable to commerce, which increases only with the increase of human life—whose parent is agriculture, and which perishes or flies at the approach of lawless rapine? Besides, they who propose to influence, by force, the traffic of the world, forget that affairs of trade, like matters of conscience, change their very nature, if touched by the hand of violence: for as faith, if forced, would no longer be religion, but hypocrisy; so commerce becomes robbery, if coerced by war-like armaments.* If, then, war has, in past times, in no instance served the just interests of commerce, whilst it has been the sole cause of all its embarrassments; if, for the future, when trade and manufactures are brought under the empire of “cheapness,” it can still less protect, whilst its cost will yet more heavily oppress it; and having seen that, if war could confer a golden harvest of gain upon us, instead of this unmixed catalogue of evils, it would still be not profit but plunder;—having demonstrated these truths, surely we may hope to be spared a repetition of the mockery offered to this commercial empire, at the hands of its government and legislature, in the proposal to protect our commerce, *by an increase of the royal navy!* On behalf of the trading world, an indissoluble alliance is proclaimed with the cause of peace; and, if the unnatural union be again attempted, of that daughter of Peace, Commerce, whose path has ever been strewn with the choicest gifts of religion, civilization, and the arts, with the demon of carnage, War, loaded with the maledictions of widows and orphans, reeking with the blood of thousands of millions† of victims, with feet fresh from the smoking ruins of cities, whose ears delight in the groans of the dying, and whose eyes love to gloat upon the dead:—if such an unholy union be hereafter proposed, as the humblest of the votaries of that commerce which is destined to regenerate and unite the whole world—we will forbid the bans!

It was our intention, had space permitted it, to have proved, from facts which we had prepared for the purpose, that no class or calling, of whatever rank in society, has ever derived substantial or permanent advantage from war.

* “To me it seems that neither the obtaining nor the retaining of any trade, however valuable, is an object for which men may justly spill each other’s blood; that the true and sure means of extending and securing commerce, is the goodness and cheapness of commodities; and that the profit of no trade can ever be equal to the expense of compelling it, and of holding it by fleets and armies.”—*Franklin’s letter to Lord Howe, quoted in Hughes’ History of England, vol. xv. p. 254.*

† Burke, in his first production—*A Vindication of Natural Society*—sums up his estimate of the loss of human life, by all the wars of past ages, at seventy times the population of the globe. It is not a little lamentable to reflect, that this great genius, among other *inconsequential* acts of his life, afterwards contributed, more than any other individual, to fan the flame of the French revolutionary wars, in which several millions more were added to his dismal summary of the victims of “glory.” (?)

The agriculturist, indeed, might be supposed to be interested in that state of things which yielded an augmentation of price for his produce; and so he might, if hostilities were constant and eternal. But war is, at best, but a kind of intermittent fever; and the cure or death of the patient must at some time follow. This simile may be justly applied to the condition of the farmer during the French wars, and subsequently; at which former period, exposed to the effects of the bank restriction, of enormous loans, and of paper issues, the pulsation of prices sometimes alternated biennially, with dreadful consequences to the *febrile* sufferer, the agriculturist. What management or calculation, on the part of the farmer, could be proof against such fluctuations in the markets—arising from continental battles, or the violence or wickedness of a powerful and corrupt government—as we find when wheat, which, in 1798, averaged £2 : 10 : 3 a-quarter, had, in 1800, reached £5 : 13 : 7, and again sold, in 1802, at £3 : 7 : 5; a state of things which exposed the capitalist and the adventurer, the prudent man and the gambler, to one common fate of suffering and ruin? The dull and, to many, fatal peace, brought a state of convalescence more intolerable than the excitement of war. After more than twenty years of this latter species of suffering, the invalid is even now scarcely cured;—will he permit his wounds to be reopened, merely that he may again undergo the self-same healing process? But the great majority of agriculturists, the labourers, so far from deriving any advantages from it, suffered grievously from the effects of that war which is sometimes excused or palliated on account of the pretended benefits it conferred upon the “landed interest.”

Whilst the prices of every commodity of food and clothing were rising, in consequence of the depreciation of the currency, and other causes incidental to the state of war, the labourers’ earnings continued pretty much the same. The consequence was, that bread sometimes became a luxury, as is now the case in Ireland, too dear for the English husbandman’s resources; that the cruel salt-tax interposed a barrier between him and that necessary of life, which frequently compelled him, when providing his winter’s stock of provisions, to exchange one-half of his pig for the means of curing the other; that good beer rose to a price nearly as prohibitory to the peasant’s palate, as port wine; and that, owing to the high cost of clothing, he possessed little more change of habiliments than the Russian serf of the present day. What greater proof can be required that war prices conferred no blessings upon the husbandmen, than is afforded in the fact, that the poor rates were the heaviest in the agricultural districts, at a time when wheat was at its highest market price? In a word, at no period were the peasantry of this country enjoying so great an amount of comforts as they possess at this time; and the primary cause of which is, the twenty years’ duration of peace.

Had we space to enter upon the statistics of our trade and manufactures, it would be easily shewn, by an appeal to a comparison of the bankruptcies in times of peace and war; by reference to the past and present condition of our manufacturing districts, as exemplified in the relative amounts of poor-rate, crime, and turbulence among the working classes; and in the comparative prosperity of the capitalists and employers—that these vital interests have no solid prosperity excepting in a time of peace. We feel that there is little necessity for enlarging upon this point: the manufacturing population do not require to be informed that they can derive no benefit from wars. So firmly are they convinced of the advantages of peace, that we venture to affirm, in the behalf of every thinking man of this the most important body in the kingdom, (in reference to our external and commercial policy,) that they will not consent to a declaration of war, in defence of the trade of Turkey,* or for any other object, except to repel an act of aggression upon ourselves.

A very small number of the shipowners—men who are sufficiently old to be able to look back to the time when the British navy swept the seas of their rivals—entertain an indistinct kind of hope that hostilities would, by putting down competition, again restore to them a monopoly of the ocean. This impression can only exist in minds ignorant altogether of the changes which have taken place in the world since the time when the celebrated Orders in Council were issued, thirty years ago. The United States, containing twice the population of that period, and the richest inhabitants in the world, with a mercantile marine second in magnitude only to our own, and with a government not only disburthened of debt, but inconveniently loaded with surplus riches—the United States will never again submit, even for a day, to tyrannical mandates levelled against their commerce at the hands of a British cabinet. The first effects, then, of another European war, in which England shall become unwisely a party, must be, that America will profit at our expense, by grasping the carrying trade of Europe; and the consequences which would, in all probability, ultimately follow, are, that the manufacturing and trading prosperity of this empire will pass into the hands of another people—the due reward of the peaceful wisdom of their government, and the just chastisement of the warlike policy of our own.

We are, then, justified in the assertion that no

* At a meeting of a literary society of which the author is a member, the subject of discussion lately was—"Would, or would not, the interests of the civilized world, and those of England in particular, be promoted by the conquest of Turkey by Russia?" Which, after an interesting debate, on the part of a body of as intelligent individuals as can be found in a town more deeply interested in the question than any in the kingdom, was decided *affirmatively*. The assumed possession was alone considered as affecting the interests of society. The morality of the aggression was not the question entertained, and, therefore, did not receive the sanction of the society.

class or calling of society can derive permanent benefit from war. Even the aristocracy, which, from holding all the offices of the State, profited exclusively by the honours and emoluments arising from past hostilities, would derive no advantages from future conflicts. The governing power is now wholly transferred to the hands of the middling class; and, although time may be necessary to develop all the effects of this complete subversion of the former dominant influence, can any one for a moment doubt, that one of its consequences will be to dissipate among that more numerous but now authoritative class, those substantial fruits of power, the civil and military patronage, which, under the self-same circumstances, were previously enjoyed exclusively by the aristocracy? The electors of the British empire are much too numerous a body to possess interests distinct from those of the rest of their countrymen; and, as the nation at large can never derive advantages from war, we regard the Reform Bill, which has virtually bestowed upon the ten-pounders of this country the guardianship of the temple of Janus, to be our guarantee, for all future time, of the continuance of peace.

Before concluding, let us, in a very few words, recur to the subject more immediately under consideration. It has been customary to regard the question of the preservation of Turkey, not as an affair admitting of controversy, but as one determined by the wisdom of our ancestors; and the answer given by Chatham, that "with those who contended we had no interest in preserving Turkey he would not argue," may probably be quoted to us. The last fifty years have, however, developed secrets for the guidance of our statesmen, which, had that great man lived to behold them, he would have profited by; he, at least, would not view this matter through the spectacles of his grandfather, were he now presiding at the helm of state, and surrounded by the glare of light which our past unprofitable wars, the present state of the trade of the colonies, and the preponderating value of our commerce with free America,* throw around the question of going to war in defence of a nook of territory more than a thousand miles distant, and over which we neither possess nor pretend to have any control. That question must now be decided solely by reference to the interests of the people of this country at this present day, which we have proved are altogether on the side of peace and neutrality. Our inquiry is not as to the morality or injustice of the case—that is not an affair between Russia and ourselves, but betwixt that people and the Great Ruler of all nations; and we are no more called upon, by any such considerations, to wrest the attribute of vengeance from the Deity, and deal it forth upon

* It will be apparent to any inquiring mind, which takes the trouble to investigate the subject, that our commerce with America is, at this time, alone sustaining the wealth and trade of these realms. Our colonies do not pay for the expenses of protecting and governing them; leaving out of the question the interest of the debt contracted in conquering them. Europe has been a still more unprofitable customer.

the northern aggressor, than we are to preserve the peace and good behaviour of Mexico, or to chastise the wickedness of the Ashantees.

It has been no part of our object to advocate the *right* of Russia to invade Turkey or any other state; nor have we sought to impart too favourable a colouring to our portraiture of the government or people of the former empire; but what nation can fail to stand out in a contrast of loveliness, when relieved by the dark and loathsome picture which the Ottoman territory presents to the eye of the observer? It ought not to be forgotten that Russian civilization (such as it is at this day) is a gain from the empire of barbarism; that the population of that country, however low its condition may now be, was, at no former period, so prosperous, enlightened, or happy, as now; and that its rapid increase in numbers is one of the surest proofs of a salutary government: whilst, on the other side, it must be remembered that Mahometanism has sat, for nearly four centuries, as an incubus upon the fairest and most renowned regions of the earth; and has, during all that period, paralyzed the intellectual and moral energies of the noblest portions of the human species; under whose benumbing sway those countries which, in former ages, produced Solomon, Homer, Longinus, and Plato, have not given one poetic genius or man of learning to the world—beneath which the arts have remained unstudied by the descendants of Phidias and Praxiteles; whilst labour has ceased where Alexandria, Tyre, and Colchis, formerly flourished, and the accumulation of wealth is unknown in the land where Cræsus himself once eclipsed even the capitalists of the modern world.* If we refer to the criterion afforded by the comparison of numbers, we shall find, in the place of the overflowing population which, in former ages, poured out from these regions to colonize the rest of the world, nothing but deserted wastes and abandoned cities; and the spectacle of the inhabitants of modern Turkey melting away, whilst history and the yet existing ruins of empires attest the richness and fertility of its soil, affords incontestable proof of the destructive and impoverishing character of the government of Constantinople.

Our object, however, in vindicating Russia from the attacks of prejudice and ignorance, has not been to transfer the national hatred to Turkey, but to neutralise public feeling, by shewing that our only wise policy—nay, the only course consistent with the instinct of self-preservation—is to hold ourselves altogether independent of and aloof from the political relations of both

* It is a saying of Montesquieu, that "God Almighty must have intended Spain and Turkey as examples to shew to the world what the finest countries may become when inhabited by slaves." Yet these two nations are now the objects of British protection, and the source of considerable annual expenditure to the people of these realms; whilst the *statu quo* of Turkey seems to be the aim of our politicians. In speaking of the cost of our interference in Spain, we assume (safely enough) that the loan of arms by the British Government will not be repaid.

these remote and comparatively barbarous nations. England, with her insular territory, her consolidated and free institutions, and her civilized and artificial condition of society, ought not to be, and cannot be, dependent for safety or prosperity upon the conduct of Russia or Turkey; and she will not, provided wisdom governs her counsels, enter into any engagements so obviously to the disadvantage of her people, as to place the peace and happiness of this empire at the mercy of the violence or wickedness of two despotic rulers over savage tribes more than a thousand miles distant from our shores.

"While the Government of England takes 'peace' for its motto, it is idle to think of supporting Turkey,"* says one of the most influential and active agitators in favour of the policy of going to war with Russia. In the name of every artisan in the kingdom, to whom war would bring the tidings, once more, of suffering and despair; in the behalf of the peasantry of these islands, to whom the first cannon would sound the knell of privation and death; on the part of the capitalists, merchants, manufacturers, and traders, who can reap no other fruits from hostilities but bankruptcy and ruin; in a word, for the sake of the vital interests of these and all other classes of the community, we solemnly protest against Great Britain being plunged into war with Russia, or any other country, in defence of Turkey—a war which, whilst it would inflict disasters upon every portion of the community, could not bestow a permanent benefit upon any class of it; and one upon our success in which, no part of the civilized world would have cause to rejoice. Having the *interests* of all orders of society to support our argument in favour of peace, we need not dread war. *These*, and not the piques of diplomatists, the whims of crowned heads, the intrigues of ambassadors, or schoolboy rhetoric upon the balance of power, will henceforth determine the foreign policy of our government. That policy will be based upon the *bona fide* principle (not Lord Palmerston's principle) of *non-intervention in the political affairs of other nations*; and from the moment this maxim becomes the load-star by which our government shall steer the vessel of the state—from that moment the good old ship Britannia will float triumphantly in smooth and deep water, and the rocks, shoals, and hurricanes of foreign war are escaped for ever.

If it be objected, that this selfish policy disregards the welfare and improvement of other countries—which is, we cordially admit, the primary object of many of those who advocate a war with Russia, in defence of Turkey, and for the restoration of Poland—we answer, that, so far as the objects we have in view are concerned, we join hands with nearly every one of our opponents. Our desire is to see Poland happy, Turkey civilized, and Russia conscientious and free; it is still more our wish that these ameliorations should be bestowed by the hands of

* "England, France, Russia, and Turkey," 5th edition, p. 149. Digitized by Google

Britain upon her less instructed neighbours: so far the great majority of our opponents and ourselves are agreed;—*how* to accomplish this beneficent purpose, is the question whereon we differ. They would resort to the old method of trying, as Washington Irving says, “to promote the good of their neighbours, and the peace and happiness of the world, by dint of the cudgel.” Now, there is an unanswerable objection to this method: experience is against it; it has been tried for some thousands of years, and has always been found to fail. But, within our own time, a new light has appeared, which has penetrated our schools and families, and illuminated our prisons and lunatic asylums, and which promises soon to pervade all the institutions and relations of social life. We allude to that principle which, renouncing all appeals, through brute violence, to the mere instinct of fear, addresses itself to the nobler and far more powerful qualities of our intellectual and moral nature. This principle—which, from its very nature as a standard, tends to the exaltation of our species, has abolished the use of the rod, the fetters, the lash, and the strait waistcoat, and which, in a modified degree, has been extended even to the brute creation, by substituting gentleness for severity in the management of horses* and the treatment of dogs—this principle we would substitute for the use of cannon and musketry, in attempting to improve or instruct other communities. In a word, our opponents would “promote the good of their neighbours by dint of the cudgel:” we propose to arrive at the same end by means of our own national example. *Their* method, at least, cannot be right; since it assumes that they are at all times competent to judge of what is good for others—which they are not: whilst, even if they were, it would be still equally wrong; for they have not the jurisdiction over other states which authorizes them to do them even good by force of arms. If so, the United States and Switzerland might have been justified, during the prodigal reign of George IV., in making an economical crusade against England, for the purpose of “cudgelling” us out of our extravagance and into *their* frugality, which, no doubt, would have been doing good to a nation of debtors and spendthrifts; instead of which, those countries persevered in their peaceful example. And we have seen the result: Swiss economy has enabled its people to outvie us in cheapness, and to teach us a lesson of frugal industry on our own fortress of Gibraltar. It is thus that the virtues of nations operate both by example and precept; and such is the power and rank they confer, that vicious communities, like the depraved individual, are compelled to reform, or to lose their station in the scale of society. States will all turn moralists, in the end, in self-defence.

Apply this principle to Russia, which, we will

suppose, had conquered Turkey. Ten years, at least, of turbulence and bloodshed would elapse before its fierce Mahometan inhabitants submitted to their Christian invaders; which period must be one of continued exhaustion to the nation. Suppose that, at the end of that time, those plundered possessions became tranquillized; and the government, which had been impoverished by internal troubles, began to reflect and to look abroad for information as to the course of policy it should pursue. England, which had wisely remained at peace, pursuing its reforms and improvements, would, we have a right to assume, present a spectacle of prosperity, wealth, and power, which invariably reward a period of peace. Can there be a doubt that this *example* of the advantages to be derived from labour and improvement, over those accruing from bloodshed and rapine—presented in the happiness of the peaceful, and the misery of the warlike nation—would determine the future career of Russia in favour of industry and commerce? The mere instinct of self-love and self-preservation must so decide. Had England, and all Europe, been plunged in war to prevent Russia from effecting her conquest, there would have been no such *example* of the fruits and blessings of peace at the close of hostilities, as we have here supposed her to present.

The influence which *example* has exerted over the conduct of nations—more potent and permanent than that of the “cudgel”—might form in itself the subject of a distinct and interesting inquiry. It should not be confined to the electric effects of state convulsions, which shock simultaneously the frames of neighbouring empires. The tranquil and unostentatious educational reforms in Switzerland, the temperance societies of America, and the railroads of England, exercise a sway as certain, however gradual, over the imitativeness of the whole world, as the “glorious” three days of France, or the triumph of the Reform Bill. But, however interesting the topic, our space does not allow us to pursue it further. Yet, even whilst we write, a motion is making in the House of Commons for a committee to inquire into the mode in which the American government disposes of its waste lands; a Swiss journal informed us, the other day, that, at a recent meeting of the *Vorort* of that country, a member called for a municipal reform measure, similar to the English Corporation Act; and, in a Madrid journal, which is now before us, the writer recommends to the ministers of police a plan for numbering and lettering the watchmen of that metropolis, in imitation of the new police of London. Such is *example*, in a time of peace!

One word, at parting, between the author and the reader. This pamphlet, advocating peace, economy, and a moral ascendancy over brute violence, as well as deprecating national antipathies, has, as our excellent and public-spirited publisher will avouch, been written without the slightest view to notoriety or gain; (what fame or emolument can accrue from the anonymous

* See the volume on *The Horse*, published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, for the stress laid upon the superiority of mild treatment in the breaking of that animal.

publication of an eightpenny work?) and we therefore run no risk of invidious misconception, if, in taking leave of our readers, we do so, not with the usual bow of ceremony, but after a fashion of our own. In a word, as trade and not authorship is our proper calling, they will, we hope, excuse our attempting to make a bargain with them before we part. And, first, for that very small portion of our friends who will only step out of their way to do an acceptable act, provided good and sufficient claims be established against them: they will compel us, then, to remind them that this petty production (which we frankly admit reveals nothing new) contains as much matter as might have been printed in a volume, and sold at above ten times its charge; and, therefore, if those aforesaid customers approve the quality of the article, indifferent as it is, our terms of sale are, that they lend this pamphlet to, at least, six of their acquaintances for perusal. This is the amount of our demand; and, as we are dealing with "good" men, we shall book the debt, with the certainty that it will be duly paid.

But by far the larger portion of our readers will be of that class who, in the words of Sterne, do good "they know not why, and care not wherefore:" to them we say—"If, in the preceding pages you discover a sincere, however feeble attempt to preserve peace, and put down a gigantic national prejudice; an honest though humble resistance to the false tenets of glory; an ardent but inadequate effort, by proving that war and violence have no unison with the true interests of mankind, to emancipate our moral and intellectual nature from the domination of the mere animal propensity of combativeness; if, in a word, you see sound views of commerce, just principles of government, freedom, improvement, morality, justice, and truth, anxiously, and yet all ineffectively advocated—then, and not otherwise, recommend this trifle to your friends, place it in the hands of the nearest newspaper editors, and bring it in every possible way before the eye of the public; and do this, not for the sake of the author or the merit of his poor production, but that other and more competent writers may be encouraged to take up, with equal zeal and far greater ability, the same cause—which, we religiously believe, is the cause of the best interests of humanity."

NOTE.—The circumstance of each of the preceding chapters having been stereotyped as soon as written, precludes the insertion of the few following words as a note in another and more appropriate part of the pamphlet.

The predominant feeling entertained with reference to Russia, and the one which has given birth to the other passions nourished towards her, is that of fear—*fear* of the danger of an irruption of its people into western Europe, and the possibility of another destruction of civilization at the hands of those semi-barbarous tribes, similar to that of ancient Rome by their ancestors. But the Goths and Huns did not extinguish the power and greatness of the Romans: the latter sunk a prey, not to the force of external foes, but to their own internal vices and corruptions. Those northern nations which invaded that empire, and whom we stigmatise as barbarians, were superior in the many qualities of courage, fortitude, discipline, and temperance, to the Roman people of their day. The Attilas and Alarics were equally superior to their contemporaries, the descendants of the Cæsars; and they did not sweep with the besom of destruction that devoted land, until long after the "dark, unrelenting Tiberius, the furious Caligula, the stupid Claudius, the profligate and cruel Nero, the beastly Vitellius, and the timid inhuman Domitian" had, by exterminating every ancient family of the republic, and extirpating every virtue and every talent from the minds of the people, prepared the way for the terrible punishment inflicted upon them.

Modern Europe bears no resemblance, in its moral condition, to that of ancient Rome, at the time we are alluding to. On the contrary, instead of a tendency towards degeneracy, there is a recuperative principle observable in the progress of reforms and improvements of the modern world, which, in its power of regeneration, gives ground for hope that the present and future ages of refinement will escape those evils which grew up alongside the wealth and luxury of ancient states, and ultimately destroyed them.

But the application of the powers of chemistry to the purposes of war furnishes the best safeguard against the future triumph of savage hordes over civilised communities. Gunpowder has for ever set a barrier against the irruption of barbarians into western Europe. War, without artillery and musketry, is no longer possible; and these cannot be procured by such people as form the great mass of the inhabitants of Russia. Such is the power which modern inventions in warfare confer upon armies of men, that it is no exaggeration to say, that fifty thousand Prussian soldiers, with their complement of field pieces, rockets, and musketry, are more than a match for all the savage warriors, who, with their rude weapons, at different epochs, ravaged the world, from the time of Xerxes, down to that of Tamarlane; whilst those countless myriads, without the aid of gunpowder, would be powerless against the smallest of the hundreds of fortified places that are now scattered over Europe. Henceforth, therefore, war is not merely an affair of men, but of men, material, and money.

For some remarks upon the possibility of another irruption of barbarians, see Gibbon's *Rome*, ch. 8.

APPENDIX.

EXTRACTS FROM VARIOUS WRITERS, ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE CONDITION OF TURKEY.

INDEED, it was impossible to conceive a more dismal scene of horror and desolation than the Turkish capital now presented. Every day some new atrocities were committed, and the bodies of the victims were either hanging against the doors and walls, or lying without their heads, weltering and trampled on, in the middle of the streets. At this season, flights of kites, vultures, and other unclean birds of prey, return after their winter's migration; and, as if attracted by the scent of carcases, were seen all day wheeling and hovering about, so as to cover the city like a canopy, wherever a body was exposed. By night, the equally numerous and ravenous dogs were heard about some headless body, with the most diabolical howlings, or snarling and fighting over some skull which they were gnawing and peeling. In fact, all that Byron has feigned of Corinth, or Bruce has described of Abyssinia, or you have elsewhere read that is barbarous, disgusting, and terrible in Eastern usages, was here realized.—*A Residence in Constantinople during the Greek and Turkish Revolutions. By the Rev. R. Walsh, L.L.D.*

TURKISH DESOLATION.

My way lay along the shores of the Hellespont; the weather had now become moderate, and the storm was succeeded by a balmy sunshine. I cannot describe to you the exquisite beauty of the undulating downs which extend along the Asiatic side of this famous sea; the greensward sloping down to the water's edge, intersected every mile by some sweet wooded valley, running up into the country at one extremity, and terminating in the other by a romantic cove, over whose strand the lucid waves rippled. Here it was that the first picture of Turkish desolation presented itself to me. While those smiling prospects which a good Providence seems to have formed for the delight of man, invite him to fix his dwelling among them, all is desert and desolate as the prairies of the Missouri. In a journey of nearly fifteen miles along the coast, and for half the length of the Hellespont, I did not meet a single human habitation; and this in the finest climate, the most fertile soil, and once the most populous country in the world.—*Walsh.*

A victory obtained at Patras was certified to the sultan by the very intelligible gazette of a waggon loaded with the ears and noses of the slain, which were exposed in a heap, to gratify the feelings of pious Mussulmans. Dr Walsh went to see this ghastly exhibition, which he thus describes in his *Residence in Constantinople*:—"Here I found, indeed, that the Turks did actually take human features as the Indians take scalps, and the trophies of ears, lips, and noses, were no fiction. At each side of the gate were two piles, like small hay-cocks, formed of every portion of the countenance. The ears were generally perforated and hanging on strings. The noses had one lip and a part of the forehead attached to them; the chins had the other, with generally a long beard; sometimes the face was cut off whole, and all the features remained together; sometimes it was divided into scraps, in all forms of mutilation.—It was through these goodly monuments of human glory the sultan and all his train passed every day, and, no doubt, were highly gratified by the ghastly aspects they presented; for here they were to remain till they were trampled into the mire of the street. Wherever the heaps were partly trodden down, the Turks passed over them with perfect indifference. The features, growing soft by putridity, continually attached themselves to their feet, and frequently a man went off with a lip or a chin sticking to his slippers, which were fringed with human beard, as if they were lined with fur. This display I again saw by accident on another occasion; and

when you hear of sacks of ears sent to Constantinople, you may be assured it is a reality, and not a figure of speech. But you are not to suppose they are always cut from the heads of enemies, and on the particular occasion they are sent to commemorate. The number of Greeks killed at Patras did not exceed perhaps one hundred; but noses, ears, and lips, were cut indiscriminately from every skull they could find, to swell the amount."

GEOGRAPHY AND THE USE OF THE GLOBES.

Lord Strangford sent the Porte a valuable present.—He had brought with him a pair of very large globes from England; and, as the Turks had latterly shewn some disposition to learn languages, he thought it would be a good opportunity to teach them something else; and he determined to send them over to the Porte, and asked me to go with them and explain their object. . . . This important present was brought over with becoming respect. A Choresash went first with his baton of office; then followed two Janissaries, like Atlases, bearing worlds upon their shoulders; then myself, attended by our principal dragoman in full costume; and, finally, a train of Janissaries and attendants.—When arrived at the Porte, we were introduced to the *Reis Effendi*, or Minister for Foreign Affairs, who, with other ministers, were waiting for us. When I had the globes put together on their frames, they came round us with great interest; and the *Reis Effendi*, who thought, *ex officio*, he ought to know something of geography, put on his spectacles and began to examine them. The first thing that struck them was the compass in the stand. When they observed the needle always kept the same position, they expressed great surprise, and thought it was done by some interior mechanism. It was mid-day, and the shadow of the frame of the window was on the floor. I endeavoured to explain to them that the needle was always found nearly in that direction, pointing to the north: I could only make them understand that it always turned towards the sun! The *Reis Effendi* then asked me to shew him England. When I pointed out the small comparative spot on the great globe, he turned to the rest, and said, "Keetchuk," little; and they repeated all round, "Keetchuk," in various tones of contempt. But when I shewed them the dependencies of the empire, and particularly the respectable size of India, they said, "Beeyuk," with some marks of respect. I also took occasion to shew them the only mode of coming from thence to Constantinople by sea, and that a ship could not sail with a cargo of coffee from Mocha across the isthmus of Suez. The newly appointed dragoman of the Porte, who had been a Jew, and was imbued with a slighter tincture of information, was present; so, after explaining to him as much as I could make him comprehend, I left to him the task of further instructing the ministers in this new science. Indeed it appeared to me as if none of them had ever seen an artificial globe before, or even a mariner's compass.—*Walsh's Constantinople.*

It has been often remarked, that the Turks are rather encamped than settled in Europe. Far from improving the countries they govern, they scathe everything that comes within their reach; they destroy monuments, but build none; and when, at length, they are driven out by the chances of war or revolution, the only traces they leave of their sway are to be found in the desolation with which they everywhere encompass themselves. They may be compared to a flight of locusts, eating up and destroying whatever they alight upon; conferring no benefits in return; and, at last, when swept from the face of the earth by some kindly blast, only remembered from the havoc they had committed.—*Encyclopædia Britannica, new edition, vol. iv., p. 129.—Art. ATHENS.*

The barbarous anarchic despotism of Turkey, where the finest countries in the most genial climates in the world are wasted by peace more than any countries have been worried by war; where arts are unknown, where manufactures languish, where science is extinguished, where agriculture decays, where the human race itself melts away and perishes under the eye of the observer.—*Burke*.

The following is extracted from a work published in America, under the title of *Letters from Constantinople and its environs, by an American*; and attributed to the pen of Commodore Porter, the United States' *Chargé d'Affaires* at the Sublime Porte:—At length we discovered, about two miles to the left of our road, a Turkish village, which may always be known by the cypress trees and the burying ground; and, soon after this, an Armenian village, which may be known by the neat cultivation, the fine shady trees, the mill-race, and an air of primitive patriarchal sort of comfort which seems to be thrown over it. You can, once in a while, see, at a distance, something like a petticoat moving about; and here are herds of cattle, flocks of sheep, goats, &c. But none of these are visible on your approach to a Turkish town, where all is still and gloomy. Shopkeepers you will find sitting cross-legged, waiting for their customers, too lazy and indolent to rise, for the purpose of taking down an article for inspection. It is a truth that I have never seen a Turk buy anything since I have been in the country. They are absolutely too indolent to buy. Neither have I ever seen a Turk work, if there was a possibility of his being idle. I have never seen one stand, if there was a possibility of his being seated. A blacksmith sits cross-legged at his anvil, and seats himself when he shoes a horse. A carpenter seats himself when he saws, bores holes, or drives a nail, planes, dubs with his small adze, or chops with his hatchet, (I believe I have named all his tools,) if it be possible to do so without standing.

Nothing can be more gloomy than the appearance of things on entering a Turkish village. It is as quiet as the grave; the streets are narrow; the doors all shut and locked; the windows all latticed; not a human being to be seen in the filthy streets. A growling half-starved dog, or a bitch with her hopeful progeny, which depend for their subsistence on some depository of filth—is all you meet with of animated nature. You proceed through the inhospitable outskirts, despairing of meeting wherewith to satisfy the calls of nature, or a place of shelter, when you at length arrive at perhaps half a dozen filthy little shops of six feet square, in each of which you discover a solitary, squatting, silent, smoking Turk. He may glance his eyes at you, but will not turn his head: that would be too much trouble. Now, investigate the contents of these shops, and you will find as follows:—five, or, perhaps, six girths, for pack-horses, made of goats' hair; half a dozen halters for horses; fifteen or twenty pounds of rancid Russian butter; a small box, containing from one to two pounds of salt, and half a pound of ground pepper. A few bars of curd cheese, looking very like Marseilles soap; not much better in taste, and not so good for digestion. One quart

of black salt olives; half a pound of sewing twine, cut into needlefuls; one clothes line; half a dozen loaves of brown bread; and two bunches of onions, with a string of garlic. Nine times out of ten, you will find this to be the stock in trade of a Turkish village shopkeeper: and, over this, in his pitiful box, will he sit and smoke, day after day, without seeking a purchaser, or apparently caring whether one comes or not. If one calls and asks if he has any particular article, his answer is, simply, without raising his eyes, "Yoke" (No.) "Can you inform me where I may procure the article?" "Yoke." It is of no use to try to get anything more out of him. He is as silent as the grave. If he has the article asked for, he hands it to you, and names the price. When the money is laid on the counter, he merely brushes it with his hand through the hole in the till, and then relapses into his former apathy. No compliments, no "thanks for favours received, no call again if you please." Not the slightest emotion can be discovered. He never raises his eyes to see who his customer is or was; he sees nothing but the article sold, and the money; and he would disdain to spend a breath, or perform an action that was not indispensable to the conclusion of the bargain. . . . Give a Turk a mat to sleep on, a pipe, and a cup of coffee, and you give him the sum total of all earthly enjoyments. . . .

The magnificent plain of Nice burst on our view. I have often dwelt with pleasure on the recollection of my agreeable surprise, when, descending the mountains at a place (I think) called the Vent of Cordova, the lovely view of the valley of Mexico first presented itself to my astonished sight. No one, I will venture to say, who has travelled from Vera Cruz to Mexico, but recollects the spot I have reference to, and felt as I have felt. Let him recall to his mind the splendour of that scene, and he may then imagine the plain of Nice, in all its fertility and beauty; not, indeed, so extensive, but more studded with trees, and equally so with villages, and presenting a picture to the eye and the imagination not to be surpassed. But, after a painful descent from our lofty eminence, by a very steep road, we found that, like the plain of Mexico, it was distance that gave to the scenery its principal enchantment. . . . Like Mexico, everything is beautiful in the distance: but nothing will bear examination. View the scene closely, and the charm vanishes. The large and fertile fields are miles from any human habitation; and, if a solitary being or two happen to be labouring near, you find them covered with rags and vermin. The shepherd, with his numerous flocks and herds, is a half-starved miserable wretch, covered with filthy sheep-skins, and disgusting to look at. His food, a dry crust, with perhaps an onion. Enter the villages, the streets are almost impassable from filth, and you meet only a ragged, dirty, squalid population of beggars. The noble fields and vineyards are the property of some hungry and rapacious lord, whose interests are confided to a cruel, hard-hearted, and rapacious aga. The few in power, revelling in affluence and splendour, have reduced the mass of the people to a degree of misery which appears insupportable. This is Turkey.

EXTRACTS FROM LARDNER'S CABINET CYCLOPÆDIA. HISTORY OF POLAND.

LEWIS. 1370—1382.

By yielding to the exorbitant demands of the turbulent and interested nobles—by increasing their privileges, and exempting them from the necessary contributions—he threw a disproportionate burden on the other orders of the state, and promoted that aristocratic ascendancy before which monarch and throne were soon to bow.—P. 101.

HEDWIG. 1382—1386.

The death of Lewis was speedily followed by troubles, raised chiefly by the turbulent nobles. Notwithstanding their oaths in favour of Mary and her husband Sigismund—oaths in return for which they had extorted such great concessions—they excluded both, with the design of extorting still greater from a new candidate. Sigis-

mund advanced to claim his rights. A civil war desolated several provinces.—P. 102.

CASIMIR IV. 1445—1492.

Under this monarch aristocracy made rapid progress in Poland. When, on the conclusion of the war, he assembled a diet for the purpose of devising means of paying the troops their arrears, it was resolved to resist the demand in a way which should compel him to relinquish it. Hitherto the diets had consisted of isolated nobles, whom the king's summons or their own will had assembled: as their votes were irresponsible and given generally from motives of personal interest or prejudice, the advantage to the order at large had been purely accidental. Now, that order resolved to exercise a new and irresistible influence over the executive. As

every noble could not attend the diet, yet as every one wished to have a voice in its deliberations, *deputies* were elected to bear the representations of those who could not attend. What in England was the

foundation of rational freedom, was in Poland subversive of all order, all good government : in the former country, representation was devised as a check to feudal aristocracy, which shackled both king and nation ; in the latter it was devised by the aristocracy themselves, both to destroy the already too limited prerogatives of the crown, and to rivet the chain of slavery on a whole nation. —Pp. 121—122. This very diet annulled

the humane decree of Casimir the Great, which permitted a peasant to leave his master for ill usage ; and enacted that in all cases such peasant might be demanded by his lord ; nay, that whoever harboured the fugitive should be visited with a heavy fine. This, and the assumption of judicial authority over their serfs, for peasants they can no longer be called, was a restoration of the worst evils of feudality.—P. 123.

JOHN ALBERT I. 1492—1506.

Evils of a nature still more to be dreaded menaced the murmuring kingdom. Aided by the Turks and Tartars, the Voivode of Wallachia, penetrated into Podolia and Polish Russia, the flourishing towns of which he laid in ashes, and returned with immense booty and 100,000 captives.—P. 125. Under his reign, not only was

the national independence in great peril, but internal freedom, the freedom of the agricultural class, was annihilated. At the diet of Petrikau, (held in 1496,) the selfish aristocracy decreed that henceforth no citizen or peasant should aspire to the ecclesiastical dignities, which they reserved for themselves alone. The peasantry, too, were prohibited from other tribunals than those of their tyrannical masters : they were reduced to the most deplorable slavery.—P. 127.

ALEXANDER. 1501—1506.

Thus ended a reign more deplorable, if possible, than that of John Albert.—P. 129.

SIGISMUND I. 1506—1548.

He had, however, many obstacles to encounter : neither the patriotism of his views nor the influence of his character could always restrain the restless tumults of his nobles, who, proud of their privileges and secure of impunity, thwarted his wisest views whenever caprice impelled them. Then the opposition of the high and petty nobility ; the eagerness of the former to distinguish themselves from the rest of their order, by titles as well as riches ; the hostility of both towards the citizens and burghers, whom they wished to enslave as effectually as they had done the peasantry ; and, lastly, the fierceness of contention between the adherents of the reformed and old religion, filled his court with factions and his cities with discontent.—P. 136.

INTERREGNUM. HENRY DE VALOIS. 1572—1574.

The death of Sigismund Augustus, the last of the Jagellos, gave the Polish nobles what they had long wanted—the privilege of electing their monarchs, and of augmenting their already enormous powers, by every new *pacta conventa*. At first, it was expected that the election would be made by deputies only ; but, on the motion of a leading palatine, that, as all nobles were equal in the eye of the law, so all ought to concur in the choice of a ruler, it was carried by acclamation that the assembly should consist of the whole body of the equestrian order—of all at least who were disposed to attend. This was another fatal innovation ; a diet of two or three hundred members, exclusive of the senators, might possibly be managed ; but what authority could control 100,000 ?—Pp. 148—149.

This feeble prince soon sighed for the banks of the Seine : amidst the ferocious people whose authority he was constrained to recognise, and who despised him for his imbecility, he had no hope of enjoyment.

The truth is, no criminal ever longed to flee from his fetters so heartily as Henry from his imperious subjects. His flight was soon made known.

. A pursuit was ordered ; but Henry was already on the lands of the Empire, before he was overtaken by the grand chamberlain : to whom he presented a ring and continued his journey.—P. 157.

STEPHEN. 1575—1586.

After the deposition of Henry, no less than five foreign and two native princes were proposed as candidates for the crown.

During the struggle of Stephen with his rebellious subjects, the Muscovites had laid waste Livonia. To punish their audacity, and wrest from their grasp the conquests they had made during the reign of his immediate predecessor, was now his object. War, however, was more easily declared than made ; the treasury was empty, and the nobles refused to replenish it. Of them it might truly be said, that, while they eagerly concurred in any burdens laid on the other orders of the state—on the clergy and the burghers—those burdens they would not so much as touch with one of their fingers.

The Polish nobles were less alive to the glory of their country, than to the preservation of their monstrous privileges, which they apprehended might be endangered under so vigilant and able a ruler. However signal the services which this great prince rendered to the republic, he could not escape the common lot of his predecessors—the jealousy, the opposition, and the hatred of a licentious nobility ; nor could he easily quell the tumults which arose among them.—Pp. 158, 160, 161, 165, SIGISMUND III. 1586—1632.

As usual, the interregnum afforded ample opportunity for the gratification of individual revenge, and of the worst passions of our nature. The feud between Zborowskis and Zamoyskis, was more deadly than ever. Both factions appeared in the field of election, with numerous bodies of armed adherents. The former amounted to 10,000 ; the latter were less strong in number, but more select.—P. 167. His reign was, as might be expected from his character, disastrous. The loss of Moldavia and Wallachia, of a portion of Livonia, and perhaps, still more, of the Swedish crown for himself, and the Muscovite for his son, embittered his declining years. Even the victories which shed so bright a lustre over his kingdom, were but too dearly purchased by the blood and treasure expended. The internal state of Poland, during this period, is still worse. It exhibits little more than his contentions with his nobles, or with his Protestant subjects ; and the oppression of the peasants, by their avaricious, tyrannical, and insulting masters—an oppression which he had the humanity to pity, but not the vigour to alleviate.—P. 178.

ULADISLAS VII. (Vasa). 1632—1648.

But all the glories of this reign, all the advantages it procured to the republic, were fatally counterbalanced by the haughty and inhuman policy of the nobles towards the Cossacks. In the central provinces of the republic, their unbounded power was considerably restrained in its exercise, by their habitual residence among their serfs ; but the distant possessions of the Ukraine, never saw the face of their rapacious landlords, but were abandoned to Jews, the most unpopular and hateful of stewards.

Obtaining no redress from the diet—the members of which, however jealous of their own liberties, would allow none to the people—they had laid their complaints before the throne of the late monarch, Sigismund III. With every disposition, that monarch was utterly powerless to relieve them : Uladislas was equally well-intentioned, and equally unable to satisfy them. On one occasion, the latter prince is said to have replied to the deputies from these sons of the wilderness—“Have you no sabres ?” Whether such a reply was given them or not, both sabres and lances were speedily in requisition. Their first efforts were unsuccessful. This failure rather enraged than discouraged them ; and their exasperation was increased by the annihilation of their religious hierarchy, of their civil privileges, of their territorial revenues, and by their degradation to the rank of serfs—all which iniquities were done by the diet of nobles 1638. Nay, a resolution was taken, at the same time, to extirpate both their faith and themselves, if they shewed any disposition to escape the bondage doomed them. Again they armed,

* *Pacta conventa* meant a fresh bargain which was made by the nobles at every succeeding election of a king, and by which their own powers and privileges were constantly augmented.

and, by their combination, so imposed on the troops sent to subdue them, that a promise was made them of restoring the privileges which had been so wickedly and so impolitically wrested from them. Such a promise, however, was not intended to be fulfilled; the Cossacks, in revenge, made frequent irruptions into the palatinate of the grand duchy, and no longer prevented the Tartars from similar outrages. Some idea may be formed of the extent of these depredations, when it is known that, from the princely domains of one noble alone, 30,000 peasants were carried away, and sold as slaves to the Turks and Tartars. Things were in this state, when a new instance of outrageous cruelty, inflicted upon the family of a veteran Cossack, Bogdan Chmielnicki by name—whose valour under the ensigns of the republic, was known far beyond the bounds of his nation—spread the flames of insurrection from one end of the Ukraine to the other, and lent fearful force to their intensity.

The bolt of vengeance, so long suspended, at length fell. At the head of 40,000 Tartars, and of many times that number of Cossacks, who had wrongs to be redressed as well as he, and whom the tale of his had summoned around him with electric rapidity, he began his fearful march. Two successive armies of the republic, which endeavoured to stem the tide of inundation, were utterly swept away by the torrent; their generals and superior officers led away captives, and 70,000 peasants consigned to hopeless bondage.

At this critical moment, expired Uladislus—a misfortune scarcely inferior to the insurrection of the Cossacks; for never did a state more urgently demand the authority of such a monarch. Under him, the republic was prosperous, notwithstanding her wars with the Muscovites and Turks; and, had his advice been taken, the Cossacks would have remained faithful to her, and opposed an effectual barrier to the incursions of the Tartars. But eternal justice had doomed the chastisement of a haughty, tyrannical, and unprincipled aristocracy, on whom reasoning, entreaty, or remonstrance, could have no effect, and whose understandings were blinded by hardness of heart. In their conduct during these reigns, there appears something like fatality, which may be explained by a maxim confirmed by all human experience—*Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.*—Pp. 182-3-4-5.

INTERREGNUM—JOHN CASIMIR. 1698.

Never was *interregnum* more fatal than that which followed the death of Uladislus. The terrible Bogdan, breathing vengeance against the republic, seized on the whole of the Ukraine, and advanced towards Red Russia. He was joined by vast hordes of Tartars from Bessarabia and the Crimea, who longed to assist in the contemplated annihilation of the republic. This confederacy of Mussulmans, Socinians, and Greeks, all actuated by feelings of the most vindictive character, committed excesses at which the soul revolts—the churches and monasteries were levelled with the ground—the nuns were violated—priests were forced, under the raised poniard, not merely to contract but to consummate marriage with the trembling inmates of the cloisters, and, in general, both were subsequently sacrificed; the rest of the clergy were dispatched without mercy. But the chief weight of vengeance fell on the nobles, who were doomed to a lingering death; whose wives and daughters were stripped naked before their eyes; and, after violation, were whipped to death in sight of the ruthless invaders.—P. 186.

Scarcely an evil can be mentioned which did not afflict the kingdom during the eventful reign of this monarch. To the horrors of invasion by so many enemies, must now be added those of domestic strife.—P. 196. . . . In this beautiful picture of disasters abroad and anarchy at home—of carnage and misery on every side, the disbanded military now took a prominent part.—P. 197. . . .

In short, the reign of this monarch, while it exhibits a continued succession of the worst evils which have afflicted nations, is unredeemed by a single advantage to the republic; its only distinction is the fearfully accelerated impulse which it gave to the decline of Poland. The fact speaks little either for monarch or diet; but he must

• Those whom God would destroy, he first deprives of reason.

not be blamed with undue severity; his heart was better than his head; and both were superior to those of the turbulent, fierce, and ungovernable men who composed a body at once legislative and executive.

MICHAEL. 1668—1673.

The first act of the diet of nobles was to declare that no Polish king should hereafter abdicate; the fetters he might assume were thus rendered everlasting.—P. 199.

At this time, no less than five armed confederacies were opposed to each other—of the great against the king—of the loyal in his favour—of the army in defence of their chief, whom Michael and his party had resolved to try, as implicated in the French party; of the Lithuanians against the Poles; and, finally, of the servants against their masters—the peasants against their lords.—P. 203.

JOHN III. (Sobieski.) 1674—1696.

Though he convoked diet after diet, in the hope of obtaining the necessary supplies, diet after diet was dissolved by the fatal veto; for the same reason, he could not procure the adoption of the many salutary courses he recommended, to banish anarchy, to put the kingdom on a permanent footing of defence, and to amend the laws.—P. 209.

FREDERIC AUGUSTUS. 1696—1733.

Frederic Augustus died early in 1733. His reign was one continued scene of disasters; many of which may be imputed to himself, but more, perhaps, to the influence of circumstances.—P. 225.

FREDERIC AUGUSTUS II. 1733—1763.

Though, under Frederic Augustus, Poland entered on no foreign war, his reign was the most disastrous in her annals. While the Muscovite and Prussian armies traversed her plains at pleasure, and extorted whatever they pleased; while one faction openly opposed another, not merely in the diet but on the field; while every national assembly was immediately dissolved by the veto, the laws could not be expected to exercise much authority. They were, in fact, utterly disregarded; the tribunals were divided, or forcibly overturned, and brute force prevailed on every side. The miserable peasants vainly sought the protection of their lords, who were either powerless or indifferent to their complaints. While thousands expired of hunger, a far greater number sought to relieve their necessities by open depredations. Bands of robbers, less formidable only than the kindred masses congregated under the name of soldiers, infested the country in every direction. Famine aided the devastations of both; the population, no less than the wealth of the kingdom, decreased with frightful rapidity.—P. 232.

STANISLAS AUGUSTUS. 1763—1795.

During the few following years, Poland presented the spectacle of a country exhausted alike by its own dissensions and the arms of its enemies. The calm was unusual, and would have been a blessing could any salutary laws have been adopted by the diets. Many such, indeed, were proposed, the most signal of which was the emancipation of the serfs; but the very proposition was received with such indignation by the selfish nobles, that Russian gold was not wanted to defeat the other measures with which it was accompanied—the suppression of the veto, and the establishment of an hereditary monarchy.—P. 242. . . .

The republic was thus erased from the list of nations after an existence of near ten centuries. That a country without government, (for Poland had none, properly so called, after the extinction of the Jagellos, 1572,) without finances, without army, and depending for its existence, year after year, on tumultuous levies, ill-disciplined, ill-armed, and worse paid, should have so long preserved its independence, in defiance, too, of the powerful nations around, and with a great portion of its own inhabitants, whom ages of tyranny had exasperated, hostile to its success—is the most astonishing fact in all history. What valour must that have been, which could enable one hundred thousand men to trample on a whole nation naturally prone to revolt, and bid defiance to Europe and Asia—to Christian and Mussulman, both ever ready to invade the republic!—P. 256.