THE

PROGRESS AND PRESENT POSITION

OF

RUSSIA IN THE EAST:

AN HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

THIRD EDITION,

CONTINUED DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME.

With a Map by John Arrowsmith.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1854.

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PREFACE

TO THE THIRD EDITION.

This attempt to show that the history of Russia unequivocally indicates the character and objects of her policy was first published in 1836, and a second edition was called for in 1838. The progress and position of Russia in the East is now, as it was then, the most anxious subject of consideration to every cabinet in Europe, and the course she has pursued in the interval is so closely in accordance with the views attributed to her seventeen years ago, that the justice of the inferences then drawn from her past proceedings may now perhaps be admitted. The future prospects of Europe appear at present to depend, in a great measure, upon a just appreciation of the position and policy of Russia; and it is therefore thought proper to reproduce this contribution to the elucidation of the truth, and to carry down to the present time the historical summary of the proceedings that verify the anticipations announced in 1836.

For one hundred and sixty years Russia has steadily kept in view the objects of ambition in the East first contemplated by Peter I., and bequeathed by him to his successors. These were, to raise Russia upon the ruins of Turkey—to obtain exclusive possession of the

Caspian and the Black Sea, with the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles—to extend her dominions beyond the Caucasus—to domineer in Persia with a view to open the road to India; and history perhaps furnishes no other example of equal pertinacity in prosecuting, *per fas et nefas*, a predetermined course of aggrandizement. Her crown has frequently been transferred, by open violence or by secret crime, from one head or one family to another, but each successive sovereign, with hardly an exception, has made some progress towards the attainment of those objects, and she continues to prosecute them with unabated avidity.

Her caution has hitherto been equal to her pertinacity. She has never pushed her successes in the East so far as to involve her in a contest with any of the great powers of Europe; but as soon as that danger appeared to be imminent she has suspended her progress, always claiming, and often receiving, credit for her magnanimity and moderation while she was abiding a more favourable opportunity again to advance.

Not less remarkable than her pertinacity and caution has been the uniformity of the means by which her acquisitions have been obtained. The process has almost been reduced to a regular formula.—It invariably commences with disorganization, by means of corruption and secret agency, pushed to the extent of disorder and civil contention. Next in order comes military occupation to restore tranquillity; and in every instance the result has been PROTECTION, followed by INCORPORATION. Such have been the means by which Poland—the two Kabardas—the Krimea—

Georgia — Imeretia — and Mingrelia have been added to the Russian dominions.

The policy bequeathed by Peter I. has so long been pursued with success and impunity, that Russia now begins to assume a sort of prescriptive right to carry it out; and affects to regard as unreasonable and presumptuous the resolution of other powers not to permit her to violate justice, the public law of Europe, and the treaties that protect the weaker nations—nor to trample upon their own acknowledged interests—in her lawless attempts at aggrandizement. Civilized nations can afford to smile at the barbarian arrogance of her tone when she tells England and France to mind their own business, and not to interfere with her projects in Turkey; or when, with more refined derision, she proposes, in deference to their wishes, to conclude an amicable arrangement, on conditions that would secure to her all the advantages she could hope to derive from a successful war. But when she puts forth, in justification of her outrageous policy, manifestoes, every statement in which is contradicted by ascertained facts known to all the world, and closes them with appeals to Heaven, we are forced to consider the possibility of again confiding in the moral rectitude or the good faith, however solemnly pledged, of a government that, with pretensions so lofty, can descend to actions so mean. That these documents cannot deceive any one out of Russia is no palliation of the offence; but there surely must have been some very urgent necessity for misrepresenting the circumstances in Russia, or such a man as the Emperor Nicholas could never have been induced to give the

sanction of his name to such a document. And if there be such a necessity it implies a condition of things in the interior of the empire not the most favourable to the maintenance of exorbitant pretensions. But many of Russia's negotiations show that to raise her pretensions, when she is least in a condition to enforce them, is the approved mode of cloaking her deficiencies and extricating herself from difficulties. This game has been successfully played on many occasions, and especially at Adrianople.

It is plain, however, that, be the internal condition of Russia what it may, the time has arrived when Europe must either submit to her dictation, or must arrest her in a course, the tendency and objects of which are proved, by the history of the past and by the experience of the present, to be incompatible with the principles or the laws which have been adopted and established for the maintenance of peace and justice. Either she must recede or we must give way before her; for she has rejected every admissible form of pacific arrangement that has been proposed. How far her present perseverance in wrong ought to be regarded as ultimately disadvantageous to the rest of Europe may be questioned; for her history inculcates no lesson more clearly than this,—that to return now to the state of things as they stood before her last unprovoked invasion of the Turkish territories would be only to postpone the contest until she should find a more favourable opportunity for renewing it. Europe must not be left exposed to the continual danger of being disturbed by her projects, or of being demoralized by her example and influence. The example

of a sovereign making an unprovoked aggression upon a weaker neighbour, and setting both the public law and the unanimous public opinion of Europe at defiance with impunity, would be one of the most demoralizing and dangerous that could be held up to the imitation of the world. But good may come out of evil. If the other nations of Europe are now convinced of the danger to which this contemptuous disregard of principle exposes them, they must combine to vindicate the supremacy of public law and justice, and to enforce upon the delinquent a due respect for both. Russia, by producing the necessity and furnishing the occasion for such a combination, may have conferred a benefit when she contemplated inflicting an injury, and may be the means of ultimately consolidating the peace she has disturbed. The feeling that they have embarked in the same just cause — that they have interests common to them all to defend against the same inveterate disturber of the public peace—may do more than even the peaceful intercourse of quieter times could do to clear away the prejudices, and to confirm the mutual confidence and esteem of nations.

It is true that we may have to fight for peace, and that the evils of war are great and manifold; but there are evils worse than war, and, if it must be encountered, it is better far to face it at once than to patch up a hollow, and perhaps not very creditable, truce, with the prospect of having war forced upon us a year or two hence, in circumstances, probably, less advantageous to us, and more advantageous to Russia. Turkey is still erect and stout of heart, with a better army—a better administration—a more energetic and

yet calmer, wiser, and more liberal and comprehensive spirit of nationality than those who have not seen—or seeing, have seen and have not understood her—could be induced to believe. But the drain upon her resources is great; and to force her to accept an arrangement which gave no sufficient security against renewed aggression would compel her to maintain for an indefinite time an attitude of preparation that would injure her finances, and thus cripple her means of defence when the real struggle came.

France—at whom the stroke was first aimed by Russia through the side of Turkey, and who sees combinations prepared with a view to disturb her internal tranquillity, and to use her crown as a make-weight in the adjustment of the balance in Turkey—is hearty in the good cause, and eager to throw her sword instead of her crown into the scale.

Austria, with shattered finances, and relying upon the compressive power of Russia, rather than upon a more generous system, for the means of holding together the heterogeneous nationalities that compose her empire, has not yet had the courage to forbid the encroachments that threaten to extinguish what remains of her independence. Believing that peace is necessary to her, she has not yet dared to take the only course that could have secured it. Seeking shelter in neutrality, she seems to lean towards the side that she thinks would be the least scrupulous in respecting it. But she cannot desire to increase the power of the giant who is already stifling her with his embraces; and when she can do so with safety, she will act upon the instinct of self-preservation.

Prussia, connected by family ties with the Czar, and touched, like Austria, with the taint of that original political sin which Russia tempted them both to commit with her in Poland, hesitates to declare herself. Russia already presses upon her with a weight which is more than she can well sustain. On the other hand, her Rhenish provinces would be endangered by a rupture with France, and, balancing between opposite difficulties, she, too, takes shelter in neutrality.

Has it never occurred to these two great powers that the neutrality in which they now hope for safety could afford them no protection if the principles on which Russia is acting were allowed to prevail? Neutrality is respected, because the public law of Europe recognises its claims. But if Russia can violate that law with impunity, neutrality can afford no security. It is only because other powers are prepared to defend the recognised international laws against the attempt which Russia has made to set them aside that these powers can find in neutrality the refuge they seek. Is it manly—nay, more, is it prudent—in them to stand by and see those principles put at peril in a contest which they could certainly prevent by ranging themselves on the side of those who are prepared to defend the laws on which they rely?

Belgium, Hanover, Saxony, and the other minor states must see in the aggression of Russia upon Turkey a precedent for assailing their own integrity and independence. Are we to understand that Austria and Prussia acquiesce in such aggressions? or only that they are not independent enough to express their real sentiments? Or is it the remembrance of 1848

and the fear of revolution that, in their eyes, overshadows all other apprehensions? If it be so, then, assuredly, the position they have taken, and especially every indication of an intention to identify themselves with Russia, must increase their danger. They permit a war which they could prevent between France and England on the one side and Russia on the other, and they rely upon the aid of Russia, who will have none to spare, for protection against the revolution which their reliance upon her is certain to provoke if the war should be protracted.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER V.

CHAPTER VI.

CHAPTER VII.

SUPPLEMENTAL.—CHAPTER I.

CHAPTER II.

PROGRESS AND PRESENT POSITION

OF

RUSSIA IN THE EAST.

CHAPTER I.

Extension of the Russian Frontier since the Reign of Peter the Great—First Naval efforts of Russia—War with Sweden and Turkey—Endeavours to establish an Oriental Commerce—Embassies to Khiva and Persia—Weakness and Invasion of Persia—Alarm of Turkey—Treaty of Ismael Beg—Death of Peter I.—Partition of Persia by Russia and Turkey—Russia concludes a Treaty with the Affghans—Rise of Nadir Shah—Treaty of Belgrade—Failure of Russian Schemes—Maritime inferiority in the Caspian.

Peter the Great, eleven years after the battle of Pultava, established a line of posts from the Volga to the Don, to protect his country from the incursions of the unsubdued tribes to the south. The Russian frontier posts are now on the banks of the Araxes and beyond it, seven hundred miles in advance of the position they then occupied.

As a question of general history, it might be interesting to inquire by what means Russia has been enabled, besides her acquisitions in Europe,—including Finland, Ingria, Estonia, Livonia, Courland, Lithuania, and the most important part of the remainder of Poland, the southern Ukraine, the Crimea, Bessarabia, &c. &c. —to acquire at the same time an extension of her southern frontier, including a territory equal to France or Spain. But the inquiry becomes infinitely more interesting, when it is regarded with reference to the political consequences of her aggrandizement in Asia, and to the light which may be thrown on her views and the

principles of her policy by an examination of the course she has pursued where her proceedings were least exposed to the scrutiny or controlled by the influence of European nations. It is there that the genius of her policy assumes the fewest disguises; that the veil which has concealed the deformity of its features from the eyes of Europe is most transparent, and adjusted with least care.

When Peter mounted the throne of Russia, in 1689, she had no commercial sea-port excepting Archangel. His own genius, aided by an intercourse with Europeans, led him early to appreciate the vast importance of commerce; and as the trade with India had ever been regarded as a certain source of wealth to the nations which in different ages had enjoyed it, his first military enterprise was an attempt, in 1695, to possess himself of a port on the sea of Asoph, for the avowed purpose of drawing back into one of its ancient channels* what, in the deficiency of more precise knowledge, was in general terms designated the commerce of the East. Taganrog was destined to become the emporium of a traffic which was to enrich his empire; and two small vessels built at Voronege, and floated down the Don to the sea, constituted the first naval effort of the Czar.

His journey into Europe opened to him other views; and teaching him the value of European as well as Oriental commerce, led him to desire an establishment on the Baltic. Even at this period he seems to have contemplated the acquisition of Livonia, to which Russia pretended to have some antiquated claim. His successes against the Swedes put him in possession of a

* The Greeks, while their empire flourished—the Kings of Pontus, before —and the Genoese, after that era, made the Crimea an emporium for the commerce of India, which was partly carried by the Persian Gulf through Persia to Georgia and Imeretia, and partly through Herat to the Caspian, and up the river Kur to Georgia, whence it was in like manner transported to the Phasis and the Crimea.

port on that northern sea; and when the victory of Pultava had relieved him from all apprehension of the military power of Charles the Twelfth, and established the reputation of his own army, he turned towards Turkey, whose power was even then supposed to be tottering, whose Christian subjects were believed to be ripe for revolt, and on whose ruins it was not doubted that the conqueror of Charles could exalt his own power.

Referring to a treaty which Peter had concluded with the Chinese, M. de Voltaire observes, "Il ne fut pas si aisé d'avoir la paix avec les Turcs: *le tems même paraissait venu de s'élever sur leurs ruines*..... Pierre profita de ces circonstances pour aguerrir ses troupes, et pour se donner s'il pouvait l'empire de la Mer Noir."

The disastrous campaign of 1711 dispelled for a time the delusion as to the weakness and speedy dissolution of the Ottoman empire, as well as the belief in the discontent of her Christian subjects; and the treaty of *Falksen*,* which stipulated the surrender of Taganrog and Asoph, annihilated the commercial projects of Peter on that sea. But stability of purpose was one of the elements of his power, and the intention to establish an Oriental commerce never deserted him. Neither his successes in the north, nor his defeat in Turkey, diverted or deterred him from pursuing the scheme. Having failed to turn one extremity of the Caucasus, he directed his attention to the other, and abandoned the sea of Asoph to occupy himself more intently on the Caspian. Such was his avidity to accomplish this favourite object, that all regard to faith and honour seemed to abandon him when a respect for either appeared to impede its execution. The man, who,

* A village on the Pruth, where the treaty was signed in July, 1711, that saved the Emperor, the Empress, and the Russian army, which was surrounded, enfeebled, and starving.

when he was in a most perilous position, declared he would rather surrender to the Turks a large portion of his dominions than tarnish his honour by delivering up the rebel Cantemir to his master, was not induced to fulfil the stipulations of the treaty which saved him from destruction, till a threat of war and the intervention of foreign powers forced him at length, after nearly two years of evasion, to put the Porte in possession of Asoph and Taganrog.

In 1717 he sent Prince Alexander Bekevitch on an embassy to the Khan of Khiva; and providing his representative, who professed to be advancing on a friendly mission, with an escort of several thousand men, directed him to seize, in the country of the prince to whose court he was accredited, the gold-mines which it was erroneously supposed to contain. A baser act of treachery, or one more sordid, could not have been contemplated; and the deceit by which so atrocious a violation of faith and honour was rendered abortive can scarcely—if we suppose the design to have been ascertained—be considered a crime. The Khivans, too weak to offer open resistance, dissembled their feelings, and professing their inability to furnish subsistence to so large a body in one place, prevailed on the diplomatic invader to divide his army into small parties, which were quartered for the winter in detached villages. The inhabitants, on a preconcerted signal, fell upon them and cut them off, except a few who remained slaves for life.

The following year he sent an embassy to Persia, the ostensible object of which was the improvement of his commercial relations with that country, and the establishment of a trade with India. An arrangement was entered into, by which the whole of the silk exported from Persia was to be sent to Russia; but the attempt to open a communication with India was

unsuccessful, though, forty years before this time, a Russian agent had penetrated to the court of Aurungzebe : and in the early part of the reign of Peter, Russian traders were settled in India.

Meer Weis, the governor of Kandahar—who afterwards led the Affghans to the conquest of Persia—encountered this embassy at Ispahan; and probably finding him disgusted with the abuses and follies of Shah Sultan Hoossein's government, the Russian ambassador established an intercourse with him. The impressions the Meer received from his communications with that functionary, were such as led him to express, without reserve, his alarm at the ambitious scheme of Eastern conquest which this people even then entertained. He was himself, in the sequel, the cause of furnishing them with a pretext for passing the great natural barrier which appeared to cut them off from the countries to the south.

The last sovereigns of the Sophy dynasty, which ruled Persia for about three centuries, were weak and degenerate princes, to whom the nation submitted from habits of attachment and religious regard to the race, but who had permitted all its institutions to fall into decay, and whose authority was not sufficient to protect the productive classes from the oppression of the petty tyrants, whose extortions are at all times restrained only by the vigorous exercise of superior power.

In Mahommedan countries, generally, the crown and the people have for the most part been allied to a certain extent against the local governors and the executive officers of the state. The sovereign trusts to the mass of the people for the means to check the ambition of the nobles; and the people look to the throne for protection against their oppressions. An immediate effect of weakness and inefficiency in the

prince, and one of the greatest evils attendant on his reign, is the impunity it confers on the arbitrary exactors of the people's substance, by destroying the value of the peasant's right of appeal. Left without any protection but the physical means of resistance, to which he is slow to have recourse, he rarely takes up arms in his own defence till he has nothing left to defend. The bolder then addict themselves to plunder; the more timid submit, and pray for better times.

Such was the state of Shah Sultan Hoossein's empire, which extended from Derbend to Kandahar. Turkey, taking advantage of the weakness of Persia, had seized all her western provinces from the base of the Caucasus to the banks of the Passitigris, and occupied the country as far as Hamadan and Ardebil. As early as 1712 twenty thousand Lesguis had descended from the eastern extremity of the Caucasian mountains to ravage the plains of Sheerwan, and exact from its peaceful inhabitants an indemnification for the yearly donations with which the Shah had been in the habit of purchasing their forbearance, but of which the indigence of the sovereign or the corruption of his servants had for some time deprived them. These savage mountaineers laid waste the country with fire and sword, slaughtering indiscriminately all who opposed them. The inhabitants of Shamakhi, amongst whom were three hundred Russian subjects, were massacred; and Russian property, amounting, it is pretended,* to four millions of silver roubles, became the booty of their murderers. The Afghans, a few years after these events, rose in the south-eastern extremity of the empire, and, led by Meer Weis, marched from Kandahar to besiege the Shah in Ispahan.

* Four millions of silver roubles are equal to 640,000*l.*, a sum far exceeding the annual amount of the whole Russian trade with Persia at that time.

Peter vainly demanded redress for the injury he had suffered from the Lesguis. The unfortunate Shah was not in a condition to afford it, and was protracting an almost hopeless resistance to the rebels, while he implored the assistance of the Czar. That monarch had his own views to serve, and his own objects to accomplish. The conjuncture was favourable, and he determined to profit by it. On the pretext of punishing the Lesguis (after a lapse of ten years), and of carrying succours to the Shah, he prepared to seize as large a portion as possible of that prince's territories.

"Pierre," says his historian and eulogist, "résolut de se faire justice lui-même, et de *profiter des désordres de la Perse*."

"Nous verrons," says the same author, "comment le Sha, ou Empereur Persan, Hussein, persécuté par des rebelles, implora l'assistance de Pierre, et comment Pierre, après avoir soutenu des guerres si difficiles contre les Turcs et contre les Suédois, alla *conquérir* trois provinces de Perse."

The thirst for eastern commerce and conquest was ever too strong for his sense of justice or good faith. Having signally failed in the attempt to raise himself on the ruins of Turkey, he bequeathed that enterprise to his successors, and availed himself of the more dilapidated condition of the Persian empire, which held out a promise of speedier and more certain success.

"Pierre méditait depuis long-tems le projet de dominer sur la mer Caspienne par une puissante marine, et de faire passer par ses états le commerce de la Perse et d'une partie de l'Inde. Il avait fait sonder les profondeurs de cette mer, examiner les côtes et dresser des cartes exactes."

Having prepared a great armament at Astrachan, he published, on the 15th of June, 1722, a manifesto,

the terms of which are strangely contrasted with his real design. It is altogether a remarkable document —full of professions of attachment to the Shah whose territories he was about to seize, and whose inability to afford him redress against the Lesguis he acknowledges. He calls him his "old good friend, the Shah" —his "great friend and neighbour," —his "dear friend:" promises to the subjects of Persia and Turkey security and protection if they afford no assistance to the Lesguis, and remain in their houses—but threatens them with plunder and death, fire and sword, if they desert their habitations; and profanely adds, "You, and you alone, will be to blame for this, and will have to answer for it at the second coming of the Lord our God." So early did this nation begin to cloak its most questionable acts with appeals to Heaven.

In the course of the next month he set out on his expedition to Persia, accompanied by the Empress and an army of above fifty thousand men. Twenty-two thousand infantry, and three thousand sailors, trained to act on shore, crossed the Caspian in four hundred and forty-two vessels; the cavalry proceeded by land. The enterprise was not without some appearance of danger; the passes were narrow and easily defensible, "mais dans l'anarchie où était la Perse on pouvait tout tenter." * An attack from a detached tribe of the Lesguis was easily repulsed, and the echoes of the Caucasian straits resounded for the first time the thunder of Russian cannon and the victorious shouts of her armies. Derbend was occupied without opposition, and the silver keys † of the town and citadel delivered to

* Voltaire.

† These keys, like those of Tabreez, sent by General Paskevitch to the Emperor, were most probably made for the occasion, for the locks used on Asiatic fortresses could not be unscrewed with a key of silver. The keys of Tabreez, it is ascertained, were not only made for the purpose of being sent to Russia, but were put into strong acid to corrode the surface and give them an appearance of antiquity.

the Czar, who returned to Astrachan in October, having first established the siege of Bakoo. On his arrival in the Volga he sent a force to occupy the province of Ghilan, which produces the chief part of the silk of Persia: there his troops entrenched themselves, and successfully resisted all the attempts of the Persians to expel them. "Pierre ne put alors," says his historian, "pousser plus loin ses conquêtes." * In January, 1723, he entered Moscow in triumph, and gave, as was his wont, to the Vice-Czar an account of his expedition, and of the provinces he had conquered from his "dear friend the Shah."

The Porte, alarmed at the conquests of Russia beyond the Caucasus, began to prepare for war, and was only deterred from taking up arms to oppose them by the intervention of Austria and France. The Emperor declared, that if the Sultan should decide on attacking Russia, he would feel himself bound to defend her; and the French ambassador at Constantinople, deceived into the belief that the Czar had marched into Persia for the sole purpose of assisting the Shah, urged upon the Porte the propriety of concurring in the generous endeavours of Russia to support, against his rebel subjects, the legitimate sovereign of a neighbouring kingdom. Thus, from the earliest times in which Russia has had a share in the politics of Europe, have her views in the East been promoted by the ignorance which made other powers her dupes and the instruments of her aggrandizement.

The Shah had in the mean time sent a man named Ismael Beg on an embassy to the Court of Russia, for the purpose of again imploring the Emperor to march

* In examining the views and objects of Peter I., the authority of M. de Voltaire has been preferred to any other, for two reasons:—1st, because his history was avowedly prepared from documents furnished by the court of St. Petersburgh; and 2ndly, because he cannot be accused of any unfavourable bias.

to his aid. He arrived at Astrachan while the siege of Bakoo was in progress; and under the conviction that the military operations of the Russians in this quarter were directed to the re-establishment of his master's power, or more probably influenced by some less creditable consideration, wrote a letter to the inhabitants of Bakoo, in which he urged them in the name of the Shah to surrender the place to the Emperor. This document was delivered to General Matushkin, whom the Persian ambassador found in the Volga, about to proceed with a reinforcement to assume command of the army before Bakoo, the fall of which it contributed to hasten.

But the Affghans were already in Ispahan, and Shah Sultan Hoossein was a prisoner in their hands. His son, Prince Tamasb, who had for some time been employed in raising troops in the northern provinces, proclaimed himself Shah, and renewed the war with the rebels and the solicitations to the Court of Russia for aid. Ismael Beg, who had set out as the ambassador of the father, became the representative of the son, and in that capacity concluded a treaty with Peter, by which he engaged his master to cede to Russia not only the provinces of Daghistan and Ghilan, which she had already occupied, but also Mazanderan and Asterabad, which her armies had not yet approached, and Shamakhi, which was in possession of the Turks, but which the Russians were to capture for themselves. In return for these extensive cessions, Peter engaged to march an army into Persia, to aid the Shah against the rebels who had dethroned his father.

It is obvious that Russia could establish no claim to the territory ceded on these conditions, unless she fulfilled them. Peter afforded no assistance to the Shah, and, by withholding that assistance, forfeited all right to the territory of which, according to the treaty,

it was to be the price. But there are other circumstances which give to this whole transaction a character equally discreditable to the Persian ambassador and to the emperor.

By the treaty of Ismael Beg, Russia was not only to acquire every foot of coast that Persia possessed on the Caspian, where Peter had long desired to dominate, and all the provinces that produced the silk he had been desirous to monopolize, but also the only provinces on which Shah Tamasb could at that moment rely for support against the Affghans. The Turks were in possession of all Georgia, Erivan, Azerbijan, Khamsa, Kullumrow, and Kermanshah. The Affghans occupied Arak, Fars, Yezd, Kerman, and the whole of their native country; Malik Mahmood, an adventurer from Siestan, was master of the greater part of Khorassan, where Nadir Kooly alone ventured to oppose him. Russia had established herself in Daghistan and Ghilan, and there remained to Shah Tamasb nothing but Mazanderan and Asterabad, where Futteh Ally Khan Kajar, great-grandfather of the late Futteh Ally Shah, had espoused his cause.

That the Shah should have instructed his ambassador to cede to Russia the only portion of his kingdom that remained to him, is altogether incredible; and the question is put beyond all doubt by the fact, that he not only disavowed the treaty of Ismael Beg, but then, for the first time, perceiving the designs of his dangerous ally, sent troops to oppose the Russians, at a time when all his force was hardly sufficient to maintain the struggle with the Affghans. That Ismael Beg was induced to betray the trust reposed in him, there can, therefore, be no doubt; and that the treaty was void by the Shah's disavowal of the act of his ambassador, is unquestionable; yet Peter ever after continued to act as if it had been in full force. He not only main-

tained his position in Daghistan and Ghilan, but sent troops to occupy Sallian, the Delta of the Kur; and the first detachment having been cut off by the inhabitants of the island, a second was despatched with orders to fortify itself. Negotiations were opened with the Porte for the purpose of dividing the spoils of Persia; and Peter, founding his claims on the disavowed treaty of Ismael Beg, demanded that the frontiers of Turkey and Russia in Persia should be defined.

In the following year, (12/23 June, 1724,) the treaty with the Porte was concluded, by which, without reference to the rights of Persia—without the knowledge of her rulers*—without her being in anywise a party to the transaction, the frontiers of the three kingdoms were accurately defined, in such a manner as to leave to Russia all the provinces to which she would have had a claim, had the treaty of Ismael Beg been ratified, and had she fulfilled the engagements she therein contracted. Peter died in January, 1725, but in December, 1727, Brigadier Alexander Roumansoff, Lieut.-Colonel de Luke, and Major Garber, on the part of Russia, and Mer Alum Dervish Mahommed Aga, on the part of the Porte, were named Commissioners to mark out the frontiers in terms of the treaty, and actually performed the duty entrusted to them.

Tamasb remonstrated against this partition of his empire, and complained of the injustice of his allies. The consequence was remarkable: Russia opened a

* M. de Voltaire, concluding no doubt from the circumstances of the case that Persia must have been a party to a treaty which fixed her limits, has assumed the fact that she was a party, but this is a mistake. The Persian government had no share in the transaction; and, as soon as he was informed of it, the Shah not only remonstrated against, but successfully opposed the execution of the treaty, the terms of which are altogether inconsistent with the idea that Tamasb could have assented to it. In the Treaty he is mentioned as a "person named Tamasb, alleging that he is the son of Shah Houssein."

negotiation with the rebel Affghans. Having failed in every attempt to obtain a footing in Mazanderan or Astrabad, she abandoned her claim to these provinces, and endeavoured in so doing to strengthen her position in Ghilan, which was the most valuable, and which she had succeeded in occupying, though even there her authority was confined to the towns of Resht and Anzelee. She therefore concluded a convention with Ashref, the chief of the Affghan rebels, whom the treaty of Ismael Beg, the only ground on which she could pretend a right to the Persian provinces, bound her to assist in expelling from the kingdom; and relinquishing her pretensions to Mazanderan and Astrabad, established such a right as he could confer to the possession of the other countries.

But all this crooked policy and perversion of justice and truth was of no avail: another actor had appeared upon the stage, and speedily changed the scene.

Nadir Kooly, afterwards Nadir Shah, was a soldier of fortune and a freebooter of Khorassan, without education except the experience and rude collisions of his turbulent life, but endowed with a genius for war, which led him by intuition to anticipate the conclusions of military science, and taught him to wield with the skill of a practised leader the first army he ever commanded. Daring, but prudent; fierce, but full of wiles; with an iron frame capable of enduring all labour, and a mind equal to every emergency; the most formidable soldier in his camp, and though ignorant of figures, the ablest calculator in the kingdom; with a ruthless heart, a gigantic intellect, and unbounded ambition, he fell on the troubled times that are fitted for such a man, and he used them as his own.

Having collected about him a body of military adventurers, and possessed himself of several strongholds, he was already master of a great part of Khorassan,

when the fugitive Shah Tamasb was induced to accept his assistance and join his camp. After a short struggle for supremacy in the councils of the weak monarch, the influence of Nadir prevailed; and having put to death the Kajar chief, who was his only formidable rival, he found himself at liberty to pursue his own schemes without restraint or control. The presence of the Shah, in whose name he acted, gave an air of legitimate authority to his proceedings, and secured to him the support of a great body of the people. Having subdued his native province, he advanced against the rebels and the foreign invaders of the kingdom, to retrieve the military character of his country and recover her lost territory. With troops inferior in discipline, he defeated the Affghans in five well-contested battles; and following up every blow with an energy and perseverance almost unexampled in Asiatic warfare, drove them in one long campaign, protracted through a winter of intense severity, from one extremity of the kingdom to the other, a distance of above a thousand miles, and forced them to make a precipitate and disastrous retreat across the deserts to their own country. Then turning his arms against the Turks, by a succession of victories, interrupted by only one defeat, he expelled them from all their conquests in Persia.

While engaged in these arduous struggles he maintained a friendly intercourse with Russia, and in 1734 sent an embassy to that court to announce that he had deposed Shah Tamasb, and raised the infant Prince Abbas to the throne. In 1735 he concluded an offensive alliance with Russia against the Porte, and in the following year announced to the Empress that he had succeeded the Shah Abbas, and had assumed the title of Nadir Shah. In 1738 he concluded a treaty with the Porte, which restored to Persia all the acquisitions

of Turkey, and established the line of frontier that still forms the common boundary of these empires. Turkey, therefore, relinquished all claim to the sovereignty of Georgia, as well as to the other adjoining provinces, which were by this treaty restored to Persia.

The evacuation of the Persian territories occupied by the Russian troops was effected without the necessity of resorting to force, and was probably the result of a previous negotiation. The right of the sovereign of Persia to the whole of her ancient possessions was acknowledged, and Russia abandoned all claim to any portion of territory south of the Caucasus. Nadir was not only recognised as the rightful sovereign of Persia, including Georgia, Daghistan, and Shamakhi, but his mediation in this capacity was accepted by Russia in her negotiations with the Porte, and contributed to the conclusion of the treaty of Belgrade in 1739. By this treaty the two Kabardas were declared independent, and Russia engaged not to maintain any ships of war on the sea of Asoph.

Russia had thus failed in accomplishing any one of the objects for which she had sacrificed every pretension to honour and good faith. The defeat of her attempt on Khiva had shut her out from the countries to the east of the Caspian. The war which was waged in the intervening nations had rendered impracticable the intercourse with India, which had been the primary object of her ambition ; and the licentiousness of her soldiers, the oppressions and corrupt conduct of her officers, their total disregard of the feelings and religious sentiments of the Persian people, and more than all, perhaps, the brutality of their personal manners and habits, had stirred up the inhabitants of Ghilan and Sallian to a resistance, which effectually deprived the nation of that commerce which it had hoped to render doubly advantageous by the appropriation of the coun-

tries that produced the article on which it chiefly depended. Silk ceased to be cultivated in the very districts which had hitherto supplied the Russian market, or the quantity was so small as to be quite inadequate to the ordinary demand. It had become a monopoly in the hands of the Russian officers, and the peasant no longer laboured to produce what he was forced to part with at an arbitrary price fixed by the purchaser. Accustomed to regard peasants as slaves, the Russians seem incapable of learning to govern free men.

The troops were wasted by sickness; and drawing their stores and principal supplies from the Volga, were maintained at a great expense, for which there was no return. There was, therefore, no inducement to attempt the defence of a position, which the whole resources of Russia might have been found inadequate to maintain against the power of Nadir.

Even the maritime force of Russia on the Caspian was inferior to that of the Persian. Mr. Elton* and Mr. Woodrow separating themselves, in a manner not creditable to their own characters, from the commercial company to which they had belonged, entered the service of Nadir, built and armed on the Persian coast vessels which domineered on that sea, and forced the Russians to lower their flag to the pendant of Persia.

The projects of Russia on the side of Persia were thus for a time abandoned, to be renewed at a future period with greater success.

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* Mr. Elton, a man of great genius and enterprise, but of a fickle character and lax principles, was one of the persons employed by the English Company formed for the purpose of carrying on an Oriental commerce through Russia. The Empress Elizabeth granted to this Company especial privileges, which were withdrawn, partly because of the jealousy of the Russians and partly in consequence of the conduct of Elton. A full account of its proceedings was published by Mr. Jonas Hanway, its principal agent in Persia, and one of the most intelligent travellers who has visited that country.

CHAPTER II.

Tribes of the Caucasus — Russian intercourse with Georgia and other Persian dependencies — Intrigues in Poland — War with Turkey — Treaty of Kuchuk Kainardgi — Critical position of Russia — Extended alliances — Abortive attempt to extend her dominion on the Western shores of the Caspian — Aga-Mahmed.

The necessity of attending almost exclusively to the internal affairs of the nation, and the regulation of its government, which was imposed on the successors of Peter I. by the insecurity of the tenure by which they held the crown—a desire to preserve the influence in Europe and the connexion with its leading nations which his ability had established, and the revolutions which in a few years placed on the throne of Russia several successive sovereigns of different families, checked for a time the ardour for eastern conquest which the nation had imbibed from the founder of its greatness, and arrested the impulse it had received in that direction. The reign of Elizabeth, remarkable for the reputation which her arms acquired in the contest with Prussia, is distinguished by a neglect of Oriental affairs.

Between the settled population of southern Russia and the range of the Caucasus, the steppes, or great plains, were inhabited by various Nomade tribes, which, acknowledging no real subjection to any established government, had been forced to accept the nominal *protection* of Russia or Turkey, as the power of either predominated. Of these the Circassians were the most distinguished; and though probably a Caucasian people, appear to have extended themselves in

earlier times to the Ukraine and Krimea. There is reason to suspect that the Cossacks of the former province, and a large proportion of those of the Don, derive their origin and their habits from the Circassians. The peculiar character of the Saporogian community on the banks of the Dnieper was identical with what is known to have characterized a large division of the Circassians of the Caucasus, and is perhaps too peculiar to be regarded as an accidental coincidence.

A considerable number of the first families in Turkey and Persia acknowledged their Circassian blood not without pride; and a portion of the Mameluke rulers of Egypt, and of the influential servants of the Mahommedan governments in their vicinity, were Circassians.*

When Russia came in contact with this people, however, they had been compressed into a narrow compass, and were confined to the lower ranges of the western Caucasus, and the countries extending from these mountains to the rivers Terik and Kuban. They were virtually independent, as they still continue to be, but nominally owed allegiance to the Khans of the Krimea.

Partially interspersed with the Circassians, but for the most part forming distinct communities, were the Nogais and Kalmuks of Mongolian origin and features, who had migrated from the east, while the banks of the southern Volga were not yet subject to Russia, and the Mongolian principalities of Kazan and Astrachan were still in existence.

Community of manners, of religion, and perhaps of

* It has been a common error to suppose that the Mamelukes and other Christian slaves employed in Turkey and Egypt were all Circassians: that tribe having the highest reputation, all the slaves from Georgia and the Caucasus were sold as Circassians.

origin, had connected the Nogais with the princes of Krim Tartary, through whom, as well as by the direct religious and political influence of the Sultan, they were naturally in communication with Turkey.

The Kalmuks, on the other hand, originally subjects of China, and followers of the Delai Lama, preserved their intercourse with Tibet, from whence they received, from time to time, their religious instructors.

Placed in the vicinity of a nation so powerful as Russia had become, and inhabiting a country which presented no natural barrier—no frontier but an imaginary line—where the flow of the rivers facilitated the stream of conquest, and no mountains arose to arrest its progress, that they should feel her influence was inevitable. The court of St. Petersburgh, by the share it took in the internal and family dissensions, to which pastoral people are so prone, and by supporting the weak against the strong, the unpopular against the more acceptable candidate for superiority in the tribe, gradually established an authority, sanctioned by the engagements which the rivals had successively incurred as the price of her assistance, too strong to be resisted, and from which they could escape only by an emigration into distant countries. This is a resource which, even to a Nomade people, is generally ruinous. The weaker divisions of the tribe submitted to the protection of Russia, and by her aid became the stronger; but they found, too late, that they had been twining bonds for themselves; and though all of them, on various occasions, made gallant and even heroic attempts to emancipate themselves from the yoke to which they had unconsciously submitted, the power with which they had to contend was too strong, too vigilant, wily, and pertinacious to let them elude her grasp. The Circassians alone, finding security in the mountains, which overlooked or

intersected their territories, successfully resisted the frequent efforts that were made to enslave them, and sometimes swearing allegiance to Russia, sometimes uniting with Turkey against her, preserved a wild independence.

The Nogais dividing, a part remained and submitted; a smaller number united themselves with the Circassians, and a considerable body, abandoning their usual haunts, sought refuge in the territories of the Krimean Khans. The yoke of Russia had become intolerable to all, and the Kabardan Circassians, who had hitherto been Christians, abandoned their religion to escape her control, and became Mahommedans in the hope of securing more effectual support from Turkey.

The Kalmuks at a later period (1771), unable any longer to endure the oppressions and insults to which they were subjected, adopted the wonderful resolution of returning to the Chinese territories, from which they had originally emigrated; and exhibited the extraordinary spectacle of half a million of human beings fleeing from the tyranny of a European Government, and fighting their way through hostile tribes, from the heart of Russia, to seek freedom and safety under the milder and more paternal rule of the "celestial empire." *

In 1742 some devout ecclesiastics made to the Russian Government a proposition to convert the pagan Ossetians or Ossetinians, a tribe of Caucasian mountaineers, to Christianity; and, as if the piety of the court required an additional stimulus, it was informed that they were "a people abounding in gold and

* The Chinese refused to surrender the fugitives, and treated with derision the demand of Catharine. The feeling of the Chinese government to Russia was marked in the answer returned to the envoy of Catharine, who requested a renewal of the commercial treaty between the countries—"Let your mistress learn to keep old treaties, and then it will be time enough to apply for new ones."

silver," and "subject to no master." Missionaries were accordingly sent (1745) amongst them, who, however slow may have been their progress in converting them to Christianity, were at least successful in inducing a large division of the tribe to declare themselves subjects of Russia. This connexion with the Ossetians facilitated the intercourse with Georgia, which had hitherto been irregular and uncertain, and paved the way to the ultimate subjugation of that portion of the Persian empire.

Georgia had for several generations been dependent on the crown of Persia—a Persian garrison had occupied the citadel of Tiflis for more than a century—the Wally or viceroy received his investiture from Ispahan; and as it had been the policy of Persia to preserve the viceregal office in the ancient family which had long possessed it, the heir to this hereditary dignity had uniformly been brought up at the court of the Shah, where, though treated with distinction, and sometimes employed in offices of trust, he served as a hostage for the fidelity of his father, while at the same time he acquired a predilection for Persian manners, a taste for the pleasures of the court, and a respect for the favour of the sovereign.

The Wally of Georgia, who submitted to the Porte when Persia was too weak to defend him, had returned to his allegiance as soon as the successes of Nadir enabled him to renew, in safety, his connexion with the Shah; and Heraclius, the heir of Tamaras, who was then viceroy, accompanied Nadir on his expedition to India, where he had rendered important military services. Desirous to reward so distinguished a soldier, and not perhaps unwilling to divide the power of his vassals, he formed in Georgia two viceregal governments, one of which was bestowed on Heraclius, while the other remained with his father.

After the death of Nadir, Persia continued for many years to be torn by contending factions; and the Wallies of Georgia, harassed by frequent attacks from the Lesguis and other mountaineers, whom they were unable to control, made a simultaneous application (1752) to Russia for assistance, which, if not afforded, was at least promised. This may be considered the first step towards the separation of Georgia from Persia; for Russia, from this time forward, pressed with persevering activity her intercourse with these Persian dependencies.

About eight years after this occurrence Heraclius drove his father Tamaras from his kingdom (1760), and united it to his own. He was subsequently called upon by Russia to co-operate with General Todleben, who crossing the Caucasus, invaded Turkey on the side of Imeretia, and whom the Wally joined with a considerable force. But he had not yet openly cast off his allegiance to Persia, nor had any formal engagements been contracted between him and the Russian government. Russia had, however, manifested her readiness to connect herself with Georgia; and the prince of that country, encouraged by her, took advantage of the troubles which engaged Kerreem Khan in the heart of his kingdom, to prepare the way for a safe renunciation of his dependence on Persia, by a more intimate intercourse with the court of St. Petersburgh.

The Empress Catharine had actively interfered in the internal affairs of Poland, and placed a minion of her own upon the throne. Her army in that kingdom had been successively augmented, while the dissensions between the factious nobles were inflamed by the intrigues of her agents, who, supported by the troops, committed the most unjustifiable acts with impunity. The ambition by which she was actuated

could no longer be concealed; and the Porte, alarmed by the ascendency which Russia had established by intrigues and by force of arms in that distracted country, and seeing in the subjugation of Poland a source of infinite danger to itself, as well as a violation of existing engagements, demanded its evacuation by the Russian troops, and reparation for some aggressions on the frontier, which the Empress, however, disavowed. The former demand, after many promises and much evasion, was peremptorily refused, and the Sultan determined to appeal to arms (1769).

In the war which ensued, Russia put forth an energy and power for which even those who had witnessed her former efforts, and justly estimated the character of the Empress, were not sufficiently prepared. Her navy, collected from the White Sea and the Baltic, scoured the Mediterranean—aided by British officers, destroyed the Turkish fleet, lighted the flames of civil war in Greece, fanned them in Egypt and Syria, and rehearsed almost every scene of the drama which she has acted with such tragic effect within the last few years.

This war, disastrous to the Turks, was terminated by the treaty of Kuchuk Kainardgi (1774), by which Russia secured the free navigation of the Euxine, and all the Ottoman seas, with the passage of the Dardanelles, on condition that she should not have more than one ship of war in the seas of Constantinople,—acquired the long-coveted Asoph and Taganrog, with Kerch and Kinburn,—advanced her frontier to the Bogue,—prepared the way for the subjugation of the Krimea by establishing its independence, and obtained the sovereignty of the two Kabardas, the independence of which had been stipulated in 1739.

These advantages, however great, were nevertheless not such as she had proposed to herself, or her

successes might apparently have enabled her to exact; but many circumstances combined to render a termination of the war necessary to Russia. Her finances began to fail—pestilence was depopulating her provinces, her camps, and her fleet—the migration of the Kalmuks had left an unoccupied waste where the country had formerly been flourishing, a famine prevailed in some of the provinces; and, more than all, a spirit of revolt had manifested itself, which put in peril the existence of the empire. Kazan, Astrachan, and Orenbourg were in rebellion; and the ecclesiastics and fanatics of Russia, favouring the movement, had produced a general feeling of discontent amongst the lower classes, which the frequent forcible levies of recruits for the army in Turkey had aggravated, and the successes of the rebel impostor Pugacheff* for some time threatened to direct against the government with formidable effect.

It was not moderation that limited the demands of Russia, but the necessities of her own position; and she had no sooner overcome the internal embarrassments which impeded for a time the gratification of her ambition, than she proceeded, without even assigning a pretext, to appropriate, at the hazard of another war, all and more than all the advantages that she had appeared to relinquish.

The shock which Turkey had received, the destruction of the power of the Krimean Khans, and the general ascendency of Russia on that frontier, stifled the hopes of successful resistance which the tribes of the Terik, Kuban, Kabarda, and the Caucasus, had hitherto entertained. Russia, ever on the watch to

* The Cossack Pugacheff, instigated by the priesthood, and taking advantage of his resemblance to Peter III., personated that monarch, excited a rebellion, and being a man of courage and enterprise, defeated the imperial troops in several actions, threatened Moscow, and caused the greatest uneasiness to the Empress.

extend her limits and her power, seized the moment of their depression to strengthen herself amongst them; and two years after (1776) the conclusion of the war, had erected lines, including nearly thirty fortresses, from the Black Sea to the Caspian. These lines, and the increased number of the troops that occupied them, kept the hostile Caucasians in check; and the frequent revolts of every tribe without exception that had submitted to the sovereignty or acknowledged the protection of Russia, while they attested the evils of her system, afforded pretexts for enforcing it with greater rigour.

A peaceful expedition was sent into the Caucasus (1781), to communicate with the mountaineers, to explore the roads, construct maps, and prepare the way for further advances to the south. A treaty of alliance and protection with that portion of the Ossetians which had not yet connected itself with Russia, opened more effectually the passes into Georgia; and the consequences of this improved intercourse were speedily apparent. The Christian Princes of Georgia, Imeretia, and Mingrelia, seduced by the flatteries, and corrupted by the presents and the promises of Russia, were urged to renounce their ancient allegiance to Persia and Turkey, and to seek security and repose under the sovereign protection of the Christian Empress. The chiefs of smaller principalities, which had long acknowledged the supremacy of the Sultan, were in like manner tempted or forced to submit. The Shah of Persia was informed, that he would not be firmly seated on his throne until he should have formed an alliance with Russia; and an expedition was fitted out on the Caspian, for the purpose of seizing by force or stratagem a position on the southern or western shores of that sea.

"The fleet maintained in the Caspian by Catharine,"

says a writer who had excellent sources of information, "was constructed of oaks from Kazan; and consisted of three frigates, five corvettes, and a bomb-boat. These vessels were continually cruising along the coasts of Persia, and burnt all the ships, and even all the floats of timber* which they happened to meet. Their commanders had, besides, positive orders to sow discord between the several khans, and always to support the weaker against the more strong: a method which the Empress had found too successful, both in Poland and in the Krimea, to admit of her neglecting it in behalf of the Persians.

"In 1780 that princess adopted the resolution of executing the project formed by Peter I. against Persia, by extending her dominion on the western shores of the Caspian. The dissensions which continued to lay waste those fertile regions seemed to favour her ambitious views. But she met with some obstacles which she had not expected.

"The most powerful of the tyrants of Persia was at that time the Khan Aga-Mahmed. * * * * After the death of Thamas Kouli-khan, the mother of Aga-Mahmed married again, and had several other children, who became the determined enemies of their brother. One of them, Murtuza Kouli-khan, thinking to procure powerful succours from Russia, appeared to be with the utmost servility devoted to that cabinet.† But in spite of Murtuza, in spite of Abulfat, son of Kerim-khan, the last ruler; in short, in spite of all his rivals, Aga-Mahmed had the skill to render himself master of

* So jealous was Russia lest the Persians should have ships on the Caspian that when the Governor of Ghilan in 1774 built three vessels at Anzelee, the Russian government immediately prohibited the export to Persia of materials for ship-building.

† Russia, after having vainly endeavoured to support her protégé, Murtuza Kouli-khan, in Persia, sent orders to the naval commander in the Caspian to facilitate his escape to Russia, and he was accordingly conveyed to Astrachan to be employed on a future occasion.

the Ghilan, the Mazanderan, the Schirvan, and several other provinces.

"The Empress gave orders to Count Voinovitch, commander of her squadron on the Caspian, to employ all possible means for forming some establishments on the Persian coasts.

"In July, 1781, Voinovitch sailed with four frigates and two armed sloops from Astrachan, having on board the necessary troops and ammunition; and after stopping to examine the islands of Shiloy and Ogutzein, which he found to be barren sands and rocks, repaired to Asterabat, the best port of the Mazanderan, which is the ancient country of the Mardi. Aga-Mahmed then resided at Ferabat, where Voinovitch presented him his request for permission to establish a *counting-house* on the coast. The Khan, considering, perhaps, that he was not able to drive away the Russians by force of arms, or rather choosing to employ artifice against them, pretended to accede to the desires of Voinovitch.

"The Russians immediately set about constructing a *fortress* to defend the harbour, at the distance of about fifty miles from the city of Asterabat, which they furnished with *eighteen guns;* whereof Aga-Mahmed being informed, continued his dissimulation, but was resolved to give them a check. He came to look at the fortress, admired the building, praised the activity of the Russians, and invited himself to dine, with his attendants, on board the frigate of Voinovitch.

"After having merrily spent the day, and testified great friendship for the Russians, the Khan engaged them in return to come and take a dinner at one of his country seats among the mountains. Thither they repaired the succeeding day; but they had no sooner entered his house, than Aga-Mahmed caused them to be put in irons, at the same time threatening Voino-

vitch to have his head cut off, and to serve all his officers in the same manner, unless the fortress was immediately razed to the ground.

"Voinovitch, who plainly saw that all resistance would be fruitless, signed an order, which was carried to the commandant of the fort. The cannons were re-shipped, and the wall broken down. This done, Aga-Mahmed ordered the Russian officers into his presence; and not satisfied with loading them with scornful and injurious language, he delivered several of them over to his slaves, who, after inflicting on them every sort of indignity, were commanded to drive them and their companions with scourges to their ships.

"The court of Petersburgh revenged itself no otherwise for these affronts than by continuing to foment the dissensions that were raging in Persia. Its agents there raised up against Aga-Mahmed a rival, who speedily became the most formidable of his enemies, and took from him the province of Ghilan. This conqueror, who was called Ghedahed-khan,* profiting by the arms and ammunition secretly conveyed to him by the Russians, seemed ready to despoil Aga-Mahmed of all his power; but the latter, finding means to corrupt the Russian agent Tomanofsky, and the consul Shilitch, both residing at Sinsili,† they betrayed Ghedahed-khan, and delivered him to Aga-Mahmed, who caused him to be beheaded,‡ and became once more the quiet possessor of Ghilan.

"In the meantime, the Russians affected publicly to take no part in these quarrels. Some time after the

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* Hadayut. † Anzelee.

‡ This is a mistake, originating with the writer's Russian informant. Hadayut Khan having shipped his wealth, including a great quantity of jewels (of which he had more than even the then reigning Shah), on board a Russian ship of war, with the design of retiring to Russia, had put off in a boat and reached the side of the ship, when he was said to have been killed by a shot from the shore. That he did not arrive in Russia is certain—but his treasures did.

death of Ghedahed-khan, Prince Potemkin commissioned one of his officers to go and compliment Aga-Mahmed, who was then at Riatsch,* the capital of the Ghilan: recommending him at the same time to study the character of the Khan, and to sound his intentions with regard to Russia. The officer repaired to Riatsch, and easily obtained an audience of Aga-Mahmed; but, on conversing with him, he perceived him to look gloomy and thoughtful, which caused him to suspect some sinister design. Upon this, he artfully observed, that although he was in the service of Russia, he was born an Englishman, and that his nation was strongly attached to the Persians, with whom it carried on an extensive commerce in the Gulph of Bassora. Suddenly the Khan assumed a smiling air, spoke to the envoy in a gentle tone, and dismissed him with presents.†

"These reciprocal testimonies of false good will were followed by a prompt aggression. Murtuza-khan, supported by the Russians, attempted, in 1788, to make a new incursion into the Ghilan; but he was repulsed by Khan Solyman, who commanded there in the absence of Aga-Mahmed; and this latter lost no time in bending every effort to the subjugation of Persia and Georgia."

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* Resht.

† "These particulars are related from the mouth of the officer himself."

CHAPTER III.

Catharine declares the Sovereignty of the Krimea elective — Russia and the Emperor prepare for war — Revolution in the Krimea — Seizure of the peninsula by the Russians — Annexation of the Krimea to the Russian Empire — Successful negotiations with Georgia, Imeretia, and Mingrelia — Convention with the Porte — Immense acquisition of territory — Turkey declares war — Treaty of Yassy — Project for disturbing the British Empire in India — Second partition of Poland — Relations between Russia and Turkey since the reign of Catharine.

RUSSIA having entangled Austria and Prussia in her own projects in Poland, and having succeeded in exciting the Emperor's hopes of further aggrandizement at the expense of Turkey, could calculate with confidence on his support against the only power that seemed to appreciate the consequences of dismembering the Sarmatian kingdom. The peace of Frederiksham, and a specific engagement on the part of the King of Sweden to remain neuter, in the event of a war between Russia and the Porte, relieved Catharine from all anxiety in the north. The lapse of three years had restored tranquillity and health and abundance to her empire. She prepared to take ample advantage of the commanding position she occupied, and to indemnify herself for the reluctant forbearance which circumstances had forced her to practise at the close of the last war.

The Krimea had been declared independent, but Russia had assumed the protection of the sovereignty she had created or renewed; and surrounding the Khan with her creatures, exercised a real authority over the nation. The minor chiefs and the people clung to the connexion with Turkey more eagerly as their acquaintance with the Russians increased. But the Empress, not content with the indirect control she had acquired, was determined to possess the

country. Pursuing the same course which had been found so successful in Poland, she fomented internal dissensions; and, profiting by the experience of that unhappy kingdom, declared the sovereignty of the Krimea to be elective.*

It could not be presumed that Turkey would tamely submit to a usurpation which threatened her with so many evils, and Russia made preparations for the struggle she believed to be impending, on a scale proportioned to the extent of the advantages at which she aimed. The preparations of the Emperor of Germany were equally formidable, and the eagerness with which he engaged in the schemes of Russia, the openness with which Catharine had avowed her ambition to possess Constantinople, and the care that had been taken in all the manifestos published on the occasion of the preceding war to describe Turkey as the common enemy of Christendom, afford strong reasons to believe that even at this time the total subversion of the Ottoman empire in Europe, and the division of its spoils, was the object contemplated.

Potemkin covered the line of the Caucasus with troops—Suvaroff conducted an army to the Kuban, and overran that country—the whole south-western frontier of Russia was teeming with her soldiers—the banks of the Danube swarmed with the armies of the Emperor, and its stream was covered with his convoys. But the Empress seemed still to desire some pretext for the occupation of the Krimea; a revolution was accomplished; and the Khan, who was expelled, fled to Russia for protection. Still there was no contest in the peninsula, and a new expedient was resorted to. The Tartars were called upon to elect a monarch. The

* The sovereignty of these Tartars had at an early period of their history been elective, but for many generations it had ceased to be so, and the Khan had been selected from the Geray family by the Porte. The institution was therefore as new to the actual population as if it had never existed.

usurper resigned his pretensions, and the assembled nation unanimously chose Schaghin Geray in the room of their former chief. But it was the possession, not the tranquillity of the Krimea, that Russia desired; and fearing the resistance of the people, she sought and found a pretext for marching an army into the country without opposition. A Turkish Pasha had occupied the Island of Taman, on the opposite side of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, and the Russians succeeded in persuading Schaghin Geray to demand its evacuation. The fierce Turk put the messenger to death, and Russia called loudly for vengeance. The Khan, irritated by this barbarous insult, acceded to the proposal of his friends to entrust to them the punishment of the Pasha; and a Russian army entered the Krimea, for the purpose of driving the Ottomans from the opposite island; but when it had penetrated to the coast it suddenly fell back, occupied the whole peninsula, seized by stratagem or force all the strong-holds, and at the point of the bayonet forced the Imams and the people to take the oath of allegiance to the Empress. Specious promises of advantage were held out to all, but the Tartars, nevertheless, prepared to resist; and Field-Marshal Potemkin, informed of their intentions, ordered the principal persons concerned to be put to death. The officer, Prince Proboroffski, to whom his command was first addressed, indignantly refused to execute it; but General Paul Potemkin, a relation of the field-marshal, and General Suvaroff, were more obsequious instruments; and "thirty thousand Tartars, of either sex and every age, were slaughtered in cold blood." Thus, in the midst of peace, did Russia win the Krimea. The Khan * received in return for his

* The fate of Schaghin Geray was tragical. Wearied and disgusted with his residence in Russia, and despising himself, the Empress occasionally made a show of treating him with consideration, and at one time sent him the

kingdom a pension and a property in Russia, and retired to Kaluga.

While this tragedy was being acted in the Krimea, Russia was negotiating a commercial treaty with Turkey at Constantinople, and, by means of her fleet and her troops, had effectually intercepted all communication between the Krimea and that city. The treaty was concluded in June, 1783, and shortly thereafter a manifesto of the Empress, dated in April of that year, by which she annexed the Krimea to her empire, was communicated to the Porte. Its existence had been carefully concealed till after the conclusion of the commercial treaty, or perhaps the date affixed to it was fictitious.

Meanwhile the negotiations with Georgia, Imeretia, and Mingrelia had been hastened to a successful issue. Heraclius was induced to send an embassy to Russia; and a treaty was concluded * at Georgiefsk, in the line of the Caucasus, by which he recognised the paramount sovereignty of the crown of Russia for himself and his heirs, while she engaged to protect not only his present possessions, but *any he might thereafter acquire*, and to guarantee † the kingdom to him and his heirs for ever. A crown, made for the occasion, was formally surrendered into the hands of the Empress's representative, and bestowed, in her name, on him whom she at once made a king and a vassal of her empire.

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decoration of a Russian order of knighthood. He could not, he said, being a Mahommedan, wear the cross. It was converted into a crescent. He declined wearing what was no longer an order, but a trinket tied to a ribbon. At length he received permission to leave Russia, where he had latterly lingered in obscurity and poverty, and went into Turkey. After residing for some time in Moldavia, dejected and unhappy, he proceeded to Constantinople, and was ordered to retire to Rhodes. He was there strangled in the house of the French consul, where he had sought an asylum, but whether by the spontaneous act of a fanatical rabble, or by order of the Porte, has not been ascertained.

* 24th July, 1783.

† We shall have occasion to observe how that pledge was redeemed.

Solomon, Prince of Imeretia, was more intractable, and at first declared that he wanted no protection but that of his sabre. Costly presents, a crown made at St. Petersburgh, and princely promises, seduced him from his allegiance, and he transferred it to the Empress.

The Porte, incensed and alarmed by the usurpations of Russia, and the accumulation of troops on her whole European frontier, was in no condition to resent the infraction of the treaty of Kainardgi. It prepared for war, but determined to negotiate; and, by the mediation of France, a compromise was effected, and a convention signed (1784) at Constantinople, by which the dominion of Russia over the Krimea, the Isle of Taman, and a great part of the Kuban, was recognised. All these territories had already been subdued and occupied by the troops of the Empress, who had entered them without provocation. Even in the manifesto * which she published on annexing the Krimea to the Russian empire, the principal pretexts assigned are, her desire to preserve its tranquillity, and to improve the condition of the people; her right to avail herself of the power which she possessed, but had not used at the close of the last war, to retain it as a conquest; and the justice of her claim to retain it as an indemnity for the expenses she had incurred in subduing it.

These differences with the Porte were no sooner amicably adjusted, than the Empress again turned her attention to Georgia. Fully appreciating the importance of having secured, by negotiation, a passage through a barrier which she might in vain have attempted to force, she lost no time in opening a passage for her troops to the dependencies beyond the Caucasus, which she had recently acquired. General Paul Po-

* Dated at St. Petersburgh, 8th April, 1783.

temkin carried to Tiflis (1785) the ratification of the treaty with Heraclius, and was directed to construct a causeway across the mountains, which was speedily completed. A pension of sixty thousand silver roubles (about 10,000*l.*) was bestowed on the King of Khartli, as he was styled, to maintain an army, and to defray such expenses as he might be called upon to make *under the directions of the Russian commandant.*

Georgia had therefore become a dependency of Russia, and had been received by that power, without any regard to the allegiance due by the Wallies to the sovereigns of Persia.

The policy of Russia is sufficiently exposed in the engagement to protect all the future acquisitions of the Wally, and in the instructions given to Field-Marshal Prince Potemkin and to General Goodovitch, in which the former receives unlimited authority to accept the submission of any nations that may desire to become subject to Russia; and the latter is informed, that the Khans of Badkoo and Derbend may be admitted to the honour of becoming vassals of the Empress. Yet both these places, as well as Georgia, were dependencies of Persia, and their chiefs or governors had no more right to transfer their allegiance than has the Hetman of the Don Cossacks, or the governor of Astrachan.

It is impossible to regard without astonishment the extent of the views Russia had developed with her growing strength, and the unbounded ambition they displayed. While engaged in partitioning Poland, with her allies, she was dismembering Turkey for her own individual aggrandizement, and even then avowed her design to have a third capital on the Bosphorus. While subjugating the tribes of the Caucasus, she was acquiring kingdoms beyond them, and seeking conquests on the furthest shores of the Caspian. She had added to her dominions an immense extent of territory,

and a million and a half of subjects in Poland—the whole of Little Tartary and the Krimea—the Isle of Taman and country of Kuban, containing a population equally numerous—the principalities of Georgia, Imeretia, Mingrelia, and the passes of the Caucasus, which were now included in her territories; and she had obtained the undisputed dominion of the Euxine Sea and the passage of the Dardanelles. The utmost cravings of ambition might have been satiated, if ambition had been capable of satiety. But Poland had still some provinces to be divided; Courland was not yet a Russian government; Sweden retained Finland; Turkey had territory to cede, and a spirit of independence to be humbled; and Persia had not yet contributed her full share to the triumphs and the conquests of Russia.

After a lapse of three years (1787) she was again in arms. On this occasion, however, Turkey was the first to declare war. The triumphal journey of the Empress to the Krimea—the movements of troops which accompanied it—the conferences with the King of Poland—and, more than all, the secret communications with the Emperor of Germany, which were understood to have for their object the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, the appropriation of their territories, and the establishment of a Greek empire under the Grand Duke Constantine, who had avowedly been educated expressly with this view, though no treaty was actually infringed by these proceedings, and it might not then have been possible to substantiate the truth of the presumed intention, still appeared to the Porte, in conjunction with the previous policy of Russia, to threaten its very existence. The consuls and agents of the Empress had tampered with the subjects of the Porte in all its dependencies—they had connected themselves with the disaffected in Wallachia and Moldavia, and had even

procured the escape of a contumacious Vaivode of the former province—they had prepared the Greeks for revolt, and proposed to the Mamelukes of Egypt to guarantee to each his possessions under the protection of Russia. Joseph the Second had hastened from Vienna to meet the Empress at Kherson, and appeared disposed to accede to all her views.

The Porte appealed to the whole Mahomedan world for support in its present danger, and the Mussulmans flew to arms; war had not yet been declared, when a correspondence was discovered between the rebellious Bey of Cairo and the Russian minister, and after some further negotiation the Turks published a manifesto and commenced hostilities.

The use which Catharine made of her first successes was to offer Egypt to France if she would join in dismembering the Ottoman Empire, which the Emperor Joseph had already, as was afterwards discovered, agreed to assist in accomplishing.

The extent of the preparations that Russia had made in impatient anticipation of the hostilities which had at length spread joy and exultation at St. Petersburgh —the supposed success of her endeavours to represent the contest in which she was engaged as a crusade against the enemies of the Christian faith—the indifference with which Europe had submitted to the partition of Poland—the readiness with which the Emperor was disposed to forward her objects, and the effective assistance which eighty thousand Austrians were capable of rendering—the disturbances which the agents of Russia had excited in the dependencies of Turkey on every side, and the ardour and confidence with which her armies engaged in the war, seemed almost to justify the exalted hopes of Catharine.

But the jealousy of the other powers of Europe had been roused; Sweden concluded a treaty with Turkey,

and attacked Russia; Great Britain threw various obstacles in the way of the Russian naval arrangements, and favoured the Porte; France regarded the alliance of Austria and Russia with apprehension, and trembled for her commerce in the Levant; Prussia maintained a sullen silence for a time, and then marched an army into Poland, where her influence had greatly increased; and a great naval armament was fitted out in England, and destined for the Baltic.* The Turks, though frequently defeated, had not lost courage. At length Prussia concluded a treaty with the Porte, and the convention of Reichenbach with the Emperor. Austria withdrew from the contest, and the Polish provinces of Russia were in danger. Peace became necessary to Catharine, and, too proud to sue for it herself, the preliminaries were arranged with the courts of London, Berlin, and the Hague, by Bernsdorf, the Danish minister. A definitive treaty was concluded at Yassy (1792), by which Russia advanced her frontier to the Dniester, and thus opened the Black Sea to her Polish provinces. The Porte guaranteed to her the kingdoms of Georgia and the adjacent countries, promised that it would strive to do the same in the Caucasus, confirmed the ancient rights and privileges of the principal towns of Wallachia and Moldavia, and declared the stipulations of previous treaties to be in force. Thus had the firm attitude assumed by England and Prussia, and their preparations for war, not only obliged Austria to desist from prosecuting her views on Turkey, but forced the Empress of Russia to abandon the fruits of a contest that had cost her two hundred thousand men, and her ally half that number. A just appreciation of their own position, and an ac-

* It was on hearing of these preparations that Catharine haughtily said to the British Ambassador, "As your Court seems determined to drive me from St. Petersburgh, I hope it will permit me to retire to Constantinople."

curate knowledge of the affairs with which they had to deal, would have led them to exact more rigorous terms from Russia, who could not have resisted a determination on their part to adhere to their original proposition, which was a return to the state established by the treaty of Kainardgi.* Sweden alone had taken up arms in behalf of Turkey; but her power was neutralized, after a few efforts, by the discontents which divided her population, and connected a large part of her most influential nobles with Russia. Gustavus had found it necessary to abandon Turkey, and to conclude a separate peace with the Empress, nearly two years before the termination of the war in which the Porte was engaged. The opposition of France had yielded to the address of Potemkin. Spain had recovered from her alarm lest Russia should seize an island in the Mediterranean, and seemed to regard with indifference her establishment on the Bosphorus, if indifference may be presumed from her taking no steps to prevent it. The preservation of Turkey was ultimately due to her own courage in adversity, and to the final determination of England and Prussia to interfere in her behalf. Their intentions were no sooner known than the contest was decided.

It was on this occasion that the idea of disturbing the British empire in India was first suggested to the cabinet of St. Petersburgh, as a check on the aggressive power which the maritime superiority of England enabled her to exert against Russia. The Prince Nassau Siegen presented to Catharine a project for marching an army through Bokhara and Cashmere to Bengal, to drive the English out of India. The plan had been drawn up by a Frenchman, and the first step

* This would have established the independence of the Krimea and the Kuban, and deprived Russia of her valuable ports on the Euxine.

was to be a manifesto, declaring the intention of the Empress to re-establish the Great Mogul on the throne of India. This it was supposed would secure the concurrence of intermediate states, and attract to the standard of Russia all the discontented spirits in Hindostan. The scheme, though derided by Potemkin, was favourably received by the Empress, and has never been forgotten in Russia.

Catharine withdrew her armies from Turkey to employ them in Poland, and perpetrate the second partition of that kingdom. It is foreign to the object of these observations to enter into any detail of the events which led to that catastrophe, and which are sufficiently known even to the least curious readers of history. An account of the intrigues which led to the annexation of Courland to Russia would equally be out of place; and her subsequent proceedings in Turkey—the acquisition of Bessarabia in 1812—the convention of Akerman—the share she has had in the rebellions and the final separation of Greece—in the revolutions of Servia, Egypt, and Syria—her position in Moldavia and Wallachia, and on the mouths of the Danube—the occupation of Silistria—the treaties of Adrianople, Unkiar Skellessi, and St. Petersburgh—the circumstances attending the *last* war and the *first* occupation—have been so fully and ably illustrated, that not only would it be hopeless to attempt adding to the light which has already been cast on this interesting and momentous portion of modern history, but, fortunately, it is no longer necessary to bespeak attention to a subject on which more public consideration has been justly and wisely bestowed than on any other question of foreign policy. Still, to complete the historical sketch which it is the object of these observations to present in a connected form, it is necessary briefly to point out the most prominent features of the relations

between Russia and Turkey since the reign of Catharine.

The object Russia has aimed at by her repeated aggressions on Turkey, and by the more dangerous means to which she has lately resorted, have from time to time been avowed to Europe ever since the battle of Pultava. Peter proposed to raise himself on the ruins of Turkey—Catharine persuaded Austria, and called upon France, to participate in the proposed dismemberment of Turkey, and the establishment of a Greek empire at Constantinople, under her grandson, who had been educated and even named with a view to this result—Nicholas, more moderate, only demands the *exclusive protectorate* of Turkey. Mankind will not forget that Russia was the protector of Poland—the protector of the Krimea—the protector of Courland—the protector of Georgia, Imeretia, Mingrelia, the Circassian and Caucasian tribes,—and will wonder what new cause of offence Turkey can have given the Emperor, that he should threaten her with the fatal doom of Russian protection.

CHAPTER IV.

Ultimate policy of Russia in seeking to extend her frontier on the side of Persia — Affairs of Persia — Accession of Paul — Annexation of Georgia — Accession of Alexander — War with Persia — Connexion of Persia with Great Britain and with France — Her influence in European politics — Treaty of peace concluded at Goolistan between Persia and Russia.

IT is difficult to imagine a stronger or better marked boundary than that which formed the frontier between Russia and Persia. The Black Sea on the one hand, and the Caspian on the other, connected by the stupendous chain of the Caucasus, seems to have been designed by nature for the limit of some powerful nation, for a barrier against some great power. The views which induced the Russian government to seek with unwearied perseverance a position beyond it, in pursuance of which Peter I. incurred the cost and hazard of his formidable expedition from Astrachan, and braved the obloquy of all the perfidy that marked his proceedings there and in Khiva; which induced Catharine to purchase the sovereignty of Georgia and Imeretia, at the price of large donations to many chieftains, a considerable pension to Heraclius, and the maintenance of troops to protect him; and which led her to attempt by the most questionable means to secure a military footing on the southern shores of the Caspian—the views which have made it an integral part of the system of Russia to maintain and improve, even at an immense sacrifice of blood and treasure, the position she had obtained in the Caucasus and beyond it, must have been directed to some ultimate object far more important than the possession of provinces

which have hitherto been only costly appendages to the empire. These acquisitions can be valued or valuable only inasmuch as they afford facilities for arriving at some great end which would, in her estimation, remunerate her for all that might have been expended in attaining it. On no other grounds would her policy be intelligible. She has not been committed by the unauthorised acts of deputed authorities, nor betrayed into a position from which she could not recede. Every step in advance has been the deliberate act of her government—the mature result of long preparation. For a hundred years have her successive sovereigns *per fas et nefas* steadily pursued the same object, varying the means, but never relinquishing the purpose.

After the death of Kerreem Khan, King of Persia, a protracted contest was carried on by the numerous competitors for the vacant throne; and it was not until Aga-Mahommed Khan had triumphed over all his antagonists, and cut off the last hopes of the royal family of the Zunds, by the defeat and capture of the chivalrous Lootf Allee Khan, that he found leisure to turn his attention to Georgia, and to punish the revolt of his vassal.

In 1795 he assembled a considerable army at Tehran, and, moving rapidly into Georgia, defeated Heraclius near Teflis, and entered that city before General Goodovitch, who commanded the Russian troops in the line of the Caucasus, could arrive to oppose him.*

His desire to intimidate the Georgians, by making a fearful example of their capital, induced him to abandon

* The Government of Georgia had intimation of the advance of the Persians early enough to have enabled it to bring the Russians, but so much did the Prince and the people now dread the presence of their protectors, that they preferred incurring all the hazards of the war, without their aid, to encountering the certain evil of their presence.

it to the rapine of his soldiers; while the religious enthusiasm he had excited in his army, and the natural ferocity of his troops, prepared them to take ample advantage of the licence he had given.

The Empress Catharine II., shocked and irritated by the vengeance which had fallen on Georgia, in consequence of its having transferred its allegiance to Russia, immediately declared war against Persia; and, in the following year, Count Valerian Zuboff, with a large force, marched upon Derbend early in the summer, took that fortress by assault, and received the submission of Badkoo, Koobba, and Sheerwan, whose governors he changed. In the autumn he renewed his operations, wintered in Moghan, and had taken Anzelee (the port of Ghilan), Lankeran, Ganja, and the island of Saree, when Paul ascended the throne of Russia, and recalled the army.

Aga-Mahommed Khan was at this time employed in Khorassan, and, on hearing of Zuboff's successes, hastily returned to oppose him; but before he could reach the scene of action, the Russians had already abandoned almost all their conquests.*

Ibrahim Khulleel Khan, the chief of Karabaugh, had hitherto succeeded in holding the fort of Sheesha against Aga-Mahommed Khan; but the inhabitants, wearied by the continued systematic plunder of their country from year to year, at length rose against their chief, and, compelling him to fly to Daghestan, delivered up Sheesha into the hands of the Shah, who was advancing with a powerful army to invade Georgia.

He had only been at Sheesha a few days when he

* The recall of the army under Zuboff, which was effected by separate instructions to the commander of each corps, without the transmission of any orders on the subject to the Count, was one of those acts, dictated by personal spleen, in which Paul indulged on his accession to the throne, and cannot be considered an abandonment of the policy which had hitherto led Russia to seek the extension of her limits on the side of Persia.

was murdered by some of his menial domestics whom he had threatened to put to death; and the late Shah, who succeeded him, was too much occupied in consolidating his power and establishing his authority, to be able to pursue the bold policy of his predecessor.

In the year 1798 Heraclius died, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, and fifty-second of his reign, and left his crown to his son Goorgeen Khan.

The short reign of Goorgeen was disturbed by the rebellion of his brother Alexander, who, with an army of Lesguis, endeavoured to possess himself of the kingdom. With the aid of the Russians he was, however, defeated and forced to fly; but the mountaineers continued their depredations from time to time, and Alexander repeated his attempts, till at length, after having wandered long a fugitive in the Caucasus, and encountered a series of romantic adventures, he effected his escape through Turkey into Persia.

With a view, as was said, to compose the differences which had arisen in the kingdom, the Emperor Paul (1800) published an ukase, incorporating* Georgia with the Russian empire. Catharine had guaranteed the crown of Georgia to Heraclius and his heirs for ever; but that was an act of the Empress which an ukase of the Emperor sufficed to annul. In the following year Goorgeen, who, unhappily for himself, had been born with the proud spirit of a Georgian prince, degraded in the sight of his countrymen by the indignity with which he was treated, became an object of contempt or pity to every Georgian; and having vainly sought to escape in dissipation from the sorrows which he had not strength of mind enough

* It is strange that every kingdom, principality, or tribe to which Russia has extended her protection, should have furnished the same pretext for appropriating it. Like cause and effect, the sequence is constant and invariable.

to endure, despairing, and broken-hearted, died at Teflis;* and about the same time Paul was put to death at St. Petersburgh.

The Emperor Alexander, on his accession to the throne, confirmed the ukase of his father, which annexed Georgia to the Russian empire, and sent General Zizianoff, a Georgian by birth or extraction, as Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief into the provinces beyond the Caucasus. The nature of Zizianoff's instructions may be inferred from the course he pursued. He had no sooner arrived at Teflis than he marched a force to Mingrelia, which submitted without resistance, and was immediately occupied by Russian troops. The following year he undertook an expedition against Ganja, and captured that fortress by assault.

Mahommed Khan Kajar, then (1804) Governor of Erivan, having rebelled against his sovereign, and finding that the Shah was advancing with a considerable force to reduce him to obedience, invited the Russian general to advance to his relief, promising to deliver up the fortress, or to receive into it a Russian garrison. At this time there was no war between Russia and Persia. Seven years had elapsed since Futteh Allee Shah had succeeded his uncle, and during the whole of that time he had not even made any attempt to defend the provinces which Russia had successively wrested from him. His attention had been so exclusively directed to other objects, that he had hitherto totally neglected the Persian territories beyond the Araxes; and his first movement in that

* The widow of Goorgeen, a haughty woman, of a fierce and masculine spirit, having made her presence at Tiflis disagreeable to the Russian government, was ordered to be sent to St. Petersburgh. She refused to comply; and General Lasaraf having been sent to enforce obedience, and having, it is said, seized her for the purpose of dragging her from her house, she drew a dagger and stabbed him.

direction was for the purpose of reducing a contumacious servant, a man of his own tribe, who had long been in the service of his family. Yet on the invitation of this rebel against his sovereign and feudal lord, tempted by the hope of profiting by his treachery, did the Russian army, while there was yet no war between the Governments, advance for the purpose of seizing Erivan. Zizianoff had proceeded as far as the Armenian convent of Etzmiadzin, within a few miles of the fortress, when he encountered the Persian army advancing to oppose him; and an action was there fought, in which the Persians were defeated and forced to retire. He then invested Erivan, which Mahommed Khan now refused to surrender; but in consequence of the deficiency of supplies, the continual annoyance to which he was subjected from the desultory, but harassing, attacks of the Persians, and the increasing sickness of his troops, Zizianoff found it necessary to raise the siege, and make a hurried retreat, in which his army suffered extreme hardships.

This was the first general action in which the Russian and Persian armies had come in contact, and it commenced the war between those countries for the possession of Georgia and the adjoining provinces.

After the retreat of the Russians, Mahommed Khan surrendered on terms to the Shah, who removed him from his government, and bestowed upon him a pension, which some years ago he still continued to enjoy.

In the spring of 1805 the indefatigable Zizianoff reduced the province of Shekee. In July he marched into Karabaugh, where he encountered little opposition; and having placed a garrison in Sheesha, the chief place of the province, proceeded in November with a corps of three thousand men to reduce Badkoo, which had thrown off the protection of Russia. At the gate of this place he was basely assassinated

while attending a conference to which he had been invited.

The war which had thus been commenced was continued with variable success till the year 1814; but except the capture of Lankeran, in the province of Talish, Russia was too deeply engaged in the affairs of Europe to add much to her territorial acquisitions on the side of Georgia, after the death of her first Governor-General.

The modern connexion of Great Britain with Persia may be said to have commenced with the mission of the late Sir John Malcolm to Tehran (1800), and the first fruits of the alliance were the commercial and political treaties concluded by him the following year, in which Persia engaged to attack the Affghans, should they invade our possessions in India, which they then threatened, and to exclude the French, with whom we were at war, from the Gulf of Persia. But this was a special mission; no British minister was left at the Court, and no attempt was made to preserve the influence that had been acquired. England was known to the Persian government only as the possessor of India, and the power and influence she exercised in Europe remained unappreciated.

The Shah, finding himself unable to cope with Russia, addressed a letter to Napoleon, then (1805) in the zenith of his glory, desiring to form an alliance with France. So little at that time was Persia known in Europe, that the Court of Paris was even ignorant whether the person who had addressed these letters was entitled to the rank he assumed, and M. Jaubert was sent to Tehran to ascertain the condition of the country and the quality of the individual. On his return, a person named Mirza Reza, a man of no note, but the only individual of education and intelligence who could be induced to undertake the journey, was

deputed by the Persian government on a mission to Napoleon, whom he accompanied to Tilsit, and with whom he concluded a treaty which was ratified at Fenkenstein in May, 1807.

At the same time Mahommed Nebbee Khan was sent as envoy to the British Government in India, to claim its assistance against Russia; but his mission was unsuccessful, and Persia, losing all hope of support from her old ally, had no alternative but to throw herself into the arms of France.

The possessions of Great Britain in India had become so important, that it was believed her power in Europe might be affected by an attack on her eastern dominions; and Napoleon therefore, turning his attention to Asia, gladly seized the opportunity afforded him to establish a connexion with Persia, which he justly considered a necessary preliminary to any designs he might entertain against India. Of such consequence did this object appear to him, and to those with whom he consulted, that the embassy to the East was at one time destined for the ablest of his brothers;* but ultimately General Gardanne was entrusted with the embassy to the Court of the Shah, and it is but justice to him and to the gentlemen who accompanied him, to say, that in circumstances of great embarrassment and difficulty they extorted the respect even of those who then were their enemies.

The failure of the application which had been made to India for assistance, the fame of Napoleon, the readiness with which he had entered on the alliance, and the promises he made, combined to secure to the General a distinguished reception. Officers who had accompanied the embassy for that purpose were employed to introduce, for the first time, European dis-

* Lucien Bonaparte.

cipline into the Persian army. French engineers built the first regular fortifications that had ever been raised in Persia, and there, as everywhere else, displayed the military genius, and the personal intelligence and zeal, for which the French nation has in all times been distinguished.

A brilliant embassy was sent from Tehran to Paris, charged with costly and appropriate gifts. The Persian ambassador presented to the Emperor two sabres which had been worn, the one by Timour (Tamerlane), the other by Nadir Shah, declaring, on the part of his master, that he resigned them into the hands of him who was most worthy to possess them.

The success which attended General Gardanne's mission forced the British Government in Europe and in Asia to take measures for counteracting the views of Napoleon; and from the commencement of this competition between France and England for ascendancy in the councils of the Shah, may be dated the political connexion of Persia with Europe.

From this time Persia became inseparably connected with European policy, and, though the circumstances which first caused her to be involved in it have ceased to exist, others have arisen which must continue to operate as powerfully, and much more steadily, to draw her more and more within the range of the calculations of European cabinets. It is vain to attempt to confine her influence to Asia. The line has been passed that separated her from Europe, and as long as Britain retains India, and Russia her present military force, so long must the integrity and independence of Persia be an object of vital importance to the one, and a formidable impediment to the full exercise of the aggressive power of the other.

Sir John Malcolm, whose reputation had been established by his previous mission, was selected by the

Government of India to retrieve the position which had been lost at the Court of Tehran; but such was the influence which the French embassy had acquired, that, with all the high talents and profuse liberality which distinguished the personal character of Sir John Malcolm, and all the regard which he had previously conciliated from the Shah and the nation, he was unable to procure access to the Court; and after exhausting every diplomatic means of success, he returned to India for the purpose of collecting an army to enforce the views of his Government.

Meanwhile Sir Harford Jones had been entrusted with a mission from the court of London to that of Tehran; and the superior weight of a mission from the Crown, his own talents and address, and the influence of the personal friends he had made when on a former occasion he had visited the country on commercial business—the apprehensions entertained by the Shah of the threatened hostilities from India—and, more than all, the inability of the French ambassador to perform the promises his master had made, secured to this mission a favourable reception, and ultimately forced the French embassy to retire.*

The expulsion of the French from Persia, while she was still engaged in a war with Russia, put an end for a time to all competition for the friendship of the Shah; and the success of the British mission laid the foundation of an alliance between the crowns of Great Britain and Persia, confirmed by a preliminary treaty, the ratification of which was conveyed to England by

* General Gardanne was reproached by Napoleon for having left Persia while it was still possible for him to have remained, though not at the Court of the Shah; but the influence which procured his removal from that Court was daily gaining ground, and would have driven him out of the country, whatever measures he might have resorted to.

a Persian ambassador, the first who had been seen in London for nearly two centuries.*

On the return of Sir Harford Jones (1811), Sir Gore Ouseley proceeded to Persia with the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary from the King of England. A definitive treaty was concluded on the basis of the preliminary engagements, but on terms more advantageous to Persia. British officers had replaced the French in the armies of the Shah, and taught them to combat, on several occasions with success, the battalions of the Czar. In the mean time the memorable war between France and Russia, which terminated in the signal discomfiture of Napoleon, had commenced; and the amicable relations, which had been established between Great Britain and Russia in consequence of these two countries finding themselves engaged as allies in the deliverance of Europe, led the British ambassador in Persia to promote an arrangement of the differences between the Courts of Tehran and St. Petersburgh. The formal mediation of England was rejected by Russia; but the good offices of the ambassador were employed, and a treaty of peace was at length (1814) concluded at Goolistan in Karabaugh, by which Persia ceded to Russia all her acquisitions south of the Caucasus, and engaged not to maintain ships of war on the Caspian.

The basis on which this treaty was negotiated was that each party should retain the territory of which it was in possession when hostilities ceased; and Russia, by this arrangement, from her having a garrison in Lankeran, would have become entitled to a considerable portion of the khanat or lordship of Talish. But

* In the reign of Shah Abbas a mission was sent to England at the instigation of the Shirleys, enterprising English gentlemen of family, who entered the service of that monarch and enjoyed much of his confidence.

as this district bordered on Ghilan, which the Russians had three times attacked, twice occupied, and always evinced an extreme anxiety to possess, the Persian Plenipotentiary declined to accept the basis unless Talish should be excluded. General Ritescheff, then Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in Georgia, and Plenipotentiary, objected, that his instructions made the adoption of that basis a *sine quâ non*, but solemnly pledged himself, if the Persian ambassador would accept it, to procure from his Court the restitution of Talish as an act of grace from the Emperor; and deliberately held out the hope that other provinces also would be restored. The British ambassador, cognizant of these transactions, and satisfied of the sincerity of Ritescheff, felt himself justified in confirming the confidence of the Persians, and undertaking that the good offices of his Government should be exerted at the Court of St. Petersburgh to procure an adjustment of the stipulation respecting the boundary, which might fulfil not only the positive promises of General Ritescheff, but the larger hopes he had held out.

The Persian government, accustomed to place the most implicit reliance on the honour of Europeans, and not ignorant of the liberal assistance which England had extended to Russia in the hour of her humiliation and distress, never for a moment doubted either the faith of Ritescheff or the gratitude of Alexander.

The ambassador who was sent to St. Petersburgh with the ratified treaty was instructed to arrange with the Russian Government the evacuation of Talish, and to avail himself of the good offices of the British ambassador at that court in his negotiations for the retrocession of the other portions of territory ceded by the treaty, for which the Russian Plenipotentiary had induced the Shah and his ministers to hope. Lord Cathcart, then at the court of Russia, was authorised

by his government to aid the negotiation; but all his good offices, urged with the whole weight of his public and personal influence, and all the solicitations of the Persian embassy, *were unable to procure from the Emperor the relinquishment of one foot of ground;* and the final answer was, that General Yermoloff, then appointed ambassador to Persia, and Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in Georgia, would discuss the matter with the Persian ministers on his arrival at Tehran. When General Yermoloff arrived in Persia, he would restore nothing; and thus all the acquisitions of Russia remained in her possession.

CHAPTER V

Acquisitions from Persia — Submission of Northern Khans to Russia — Oppressive government of her dependencies — State of Southern Caucasian provinces — War in the mountains — Question of boundary between Russia and Persia — Seizure of Gokcheh — Accession of Nicholas — Recommencement of war.

The restoration of peace between Russia and Persia had been effected at an enormous sacrifice to the latter. The establishment of Russian dominion south of the Caucasus was an evil to the governments of Turkey and Persia, for which no present advantages could have compensated; and it was accompanied not by immediate benefits, but by a dismemberment of the Persian empire. By the treaty of Goolistan Persia had ceded, and Russia had acquired, Georgia, Imeretia, Mingrelia, Derbend, Badkoo, and all Persian Daghistan, Sheerwan, Shekkee, Ganja, Karabaugh, and parts of Moghan and Talish. Of these, the first three were inhabited chiefly by Christians of the Georgian and Armenian churches. Karabaugh was partly Christian and partly Mahommedan; but the population of the others was chiefly, and of some almost exclusively, Mahommedan. Each of these latter divisions had been held by a chief, whose dignity was hereditary in his family, and whose relations to the superior government and to the population subjected to his authority resembled, in many respects, that of a feudal baron in Europe. He possessed a jurisdiction nearly absolute in his own khanat or barony, maintained a certain number of troops for the defence of his country, paid a fixed revenue to the crown, fur-

nished a stated number of horse or foot, or both, to serve the sovereign in his wars, and himself attended when he was summoned. On the demise of a chief, his heir, if he happened to be absent from the court where he usually resided, repaired to the capital, and received his investiture from the monarch. The direct line of succession was sometimes disturbed by family dissensions, local usurpations, intrigues at court, or by foreign conquest, as when the Turks invaded Persia, but the family was rarely altogether displaced; and in cases of rebellion or less determined resistance to authority, by which the chief became obnoxious to the government, some member of the same house replaced him. Under this system, acts of insubordination on the part of the more powerful or more distant chiefs were frequent; and when the Persian government was weak, or the country divided by contending factions, these Khans rarely neglected the opportunity afforded them to assert a temporary independence, which they never had the power to maintain. This longing after independence, which an overweening idea of their own importance, fostered by the exercise of unlimited authority at home, tended to encourage, and which every inconvenience attending obedience to the government was calculated to strengthen, led them to regard the weakness of the Shah as their own strength, and to find in the aggressions, or even in the vicinity, of hostile foreign powers, means of diminishing their dependence, and of forcing the Shah to conciliate by forbearance and liberality the men on whose fidelity he chiefly depended for the protection of his dominions.

Russia largely profited by this state of things. In the confusion which followed the death of Nadir Shah, the Khans of the northern provinces had been left undisturbed, and enjoyed an actual independence. When Aga Mahommed Khan had established his authority

in the other portions of the kingdom, he turned his attention to Georgia and the adjoining country, and systematically proceeded to reduce them to obedience. The interference of Russia in the affairs of Georgia had raised up a formidable opponent to the Shah, and many of the chiefs, hoping to secure their independence by inviting her to support them against the power they then most feared, vainly imagined that they could rid themselves of the Russians when they should have succeeded by their means in emancipating themselves from the control of Persia. Like all Asiatics, they readily incurred every hazard of a distant evil, to rid themselves of a present annoyance, and they shared the fate of almost all people who seek foreign aid against a domestic enemy. They saw too late the error they had committed; and deprived, by the very independence they had coveted, of every bond of union or mutual confidence, instead of presenting a combined resistance, and a compact mass of opposition, they fell one by one an easy and almost unresisting prey to the power whose views and means of coercion they had so inaccurately estimated, and from whose bonds they could never again hope to escape.

These chiefs, having submitted, were for some time treated with consideration by their new superiors. They retained as much of their hereditary influence and authority as was likely to prove beneficial to the government, or even perhaps to their followers; they enjoyed a revenue sufficient to maintain them respectably, if not splendidly, and Russian military rank, and decorations of Christian orders, were liberally bestowed upon them. But after the new government was firmly established the system gradually changed —they were now subjected to the mortification of finding their power undermined by the Russian officers,

who offended their dignity, and not unfrequently insulted their persons—intrigues were resorted to, and plots concerted, perhaps without the knowledge of the government, to drive some to rebellion, and induce others to fly from the punishments denounced against them for imaginary crimes,* till at length *all* the Mahommedan chiefs were driven from their possessions to seek shelter in Persia.

Still the peasantry had, perhaps, lost little by the change; and, under a more just and judicious government, the absence of the chiefs might have been made productive of benefit to the lower classes: even the difference of religious belief, prejudice, and observance, might have been overlooked in the enjoyment of superior worldly advantages. But Russia, with all her boasted religious toleration, is a bigoted superior, and with all her pretensions to moderation in her government, is a most harsh mistress. Her civil servants, of the lower grades at least, are generally corrupt and ignorant, because they are drawn from classes of society in which they are not likely to acquire enlightened views or elevated principles—their authorised emoluments are slender, their power to do evil is often great, and the temptations too often irresistible.

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* The history of one of these transactions will serve as a specimen. "Mehdee Koolee Khan, hereditary chief of Karabaugh, retained the possessions of his father; and as the only means of securing to himself the quiet enjoyment of them during his life, he adopted General Madatoff (the Russian commander of the province), and declared him to be his heir, to the prejudice of his brother and other relations; but the Khan continued to live longer than, from his irregular habits and bad constitution, had been anticipated, and a plot was accordingly devised for getting rid of him. A feud had for some time existed between Mehdee Koolee Khan and Jaffer Koolee Khan, another noble of Karabaugh. The latter, while travelling at night, was fired upon by some men concealed in a thicket by the roadside, and wounded in the hand. Mehdee Koolee Khan was charged with an attempt to make away with Jaffer Koolee, and though he protested his innocence, and offered his aid in apprehending the ruffians, his mind, naturally weak, was so successfully worked upon by his *disinterested* heir, that *by his advice* he fled into Persia. Circumstances have since occurred which seem fully to establish Mehdee Koolee Khan's innocence."

The civil service is considered degrading, and all respect is reserved for the military. On the other hand, the officers in the army of Georgia, excepting those of the higher ranks, are for the most part persons of mean birth and no education—for to serve in that army is considered a punishment to men of any pretensions—and they are proportionally obdurate, insolent, and overbearing. With subordinate officers of so unpromising a character, what government can be popular or well administered? What people, under a government administered by such agents, can be secure or contented?

The nominal revenue levied from the country has not been exorbitant, but the mode of exacting it has always been oppressive. The peasant who pays a portion of his rent to the government in grain may be, and often is, called upon to transport it at his own cost to a distant magazine, where there happens at the moment to be a deficiency, and is left for several days in attendance, maintaining himself and the beasts of burthen that he has brought with him, at a ruinous expense, till it may please the storekeeper to receive his contribution; and during his absence from home, his agricultural labours are necessarily arrested or impeded. The passage of troops in war, or for the relief of corps, may impose upon him the necessity, at whatever season it may be, however ruinous to his farm, of assisting with his cattle in the transport of baggage or stores. Soldiers of a different creed are billeted in his house, and the seclusion of his family is violated. Services which the government has not required are pretended, for the purpose of inducing him to purchase exemption. He cannot move from one village to another without a passport, which he cannot obtain without hours of attendance or a fee, and wherever he moves he is met by a rude soldiery, whose

personal habits and indecent manners are offensive to all his sensibilities, while his person is never secure from their insults.

The chiefs had been removed, but the inferior nobles were still unprovided for. Their power and influence necessarily fell on the accession of a new authority, with which theirs was incompatible; their revenues were dissipated, and they had no means of recruiting them; their pride was continually wounded by the arrogance and assumed superiority of the Russian officers, and they saw themselves sinking, without a hope of redemption, into the mass of the common people. It is true that the Russian service was open to the young, and some availed themselves of this *gracious* provision; but the consequence of these men was confined to their native soil, and lived only in the attachment of their dependents. To enter the Russian army as a cadet was to abandon these, to identify themselves with an obnoxious race, to lay aside their national habits, sometimes even their religious sentiments, and to mix with the other officers on terms inconsistent with the preservation of their peculiar tenets. Even the Georgian and Armenian Christians had reason to complain of the rigour with which the Russian authorities exacted a strict compliance with Russian habits; and were mortified to find that, in adhering to their national customs in respect to the dress and conduct of their wives and daughters, they gave umbrage to their superiors; that to make themselves acceptable to the government, it was necessary to deck their females in the frippery of Moscow milliners, and have them taught to waltz with the Russian officers.

The defects in the civil administration might possibly, however, have been tolerated, and the rising generation, knowing no better times, and goaded by no re-

collections of past splendour or exhausted influence, might have grown up in habitual submission to the authority which had been offensive to their fathers, but there was another evil of greater magnitude, or which at least was more galling. In most of the provinces the Mahommedans had been the rulers and the Christians their subjects. When the power of Russia was consolidated, the Christians naturally became the favoured people, and domineered over their former masters with senseless insolence, scoffed at their religious rites, and were even known to interrupt their most sacred ceremonies. The Mussulman saw a mosque converted into a stable and another into a tavern, and was taunted by the Armenians with the premeditated insult they had offered to his faith.

The moollahs had lost much of their importance, and with it their revenues had declined. The form of government was opposed to their interests, and they became opposed to the government. No effective measures were adopted to soothe or to restrain them, and, as the only means they possessed of recovering their power or preserving what remained to them, they endeavoured to rekindle religious feelings in their flocks. In doing so, it was impossible to avoid casting some degree of odium on the government, which they considered infidel, and consequently infamous. The shame of submitting to the yoke of unbelieving foreigners became a favourite theme for declamation. Every outrage, and even every incidental disregard of Mahommedan feeling or prejudice, was represented to be a part of a systematic attack on their faith, and there is reason to believe that the conduct of the Russian officers, and of the troops under their command, nay, even of the government itself, was not always well calculated to controvert such an interpretation of their designs. The pilgrims from those

countries who resorted to the tombs at Kerbelaee and Nujjif carried thither exaggerated accounts of the evils and dangers to which the disciples of *Islam* were exposed under the Russian yoke, and roused the fears of the spiritual chief of the *Sheeahs*. The almost total extirpation of Mahommedanism from the Krimea became a familiar illustration of their fears, and an evidence that they were well founded.

While this was the state of the provinces south of the Caucasus, war was from time to time kindled in the mountains, and every war was to the Mahommedan mountaineers a religious contest. Hostilities were carried on by both parties with unmitigated barbarity. If a Russian soldier wandered from his lines, he was assassinated and his body mangled or mutilated—small parties were overwhelmed and cut to pieces. The Russian General,* hoping to appal the insurgents, retaliated by the indiscriminate slaughter of every man, woman, and child in the villages whose inhabitants were suspected of the crime. Religious enthusiasts, who had preached "war in the name of the faith," when taken prisoners, were cut open or hung up by the feet and left to die. But these barbarities inflamed instead of quenching the spirit of resistance in the mountaineers, while they excited the disgust of all classes, and the sympathy of the whole body of Mahommedans. Individuals devoted themselves to certain destruction if they could but revenge their slaughtered brethren, and the Russian General, Lessanowitch, was assassinated, with several officers of his staff, in the midst of his guards, by a devotee from the mountains, who, having effected his purpose, seemed to glory in the honour of martyrdom. The Russian parties, on penetrating into the mountains, found them-

* Yermoloff.

selves successfully opposed in the defiles even by the women of the Chechenses, and the fortified posts on the line of the Caucasus were occasionally surprised and their garrisons destroyed by that tribe or the Kabardan Circassians. The road from Stavaropol to Teflis, the principal line of communication, was not passable without artillery, and that from Bakoo to Kizlar open only to an army. The borders of the Black Sea, from the frontiers of Mingrelia to the Cimmerian Bosphorus, were in revolt, and the western Circassians had never laid down their arms. Kizlar, at the mouth of the Terik, was sacked by the Lesguis, and the vineyards of Kakhetia, on the southern face of the Caucasus, were not secure from their depredations. Such, twenty-five years after the incorporation of Georgia with that empire, was the success of the Russian system in "composing the differences" which distracted and devastated the Caucasus and the neighbouring provinces.

The treaty of Goolistan had not defined the line of frontier between Persia and Russia so distinctly as to leave no room for cavil, and the appointment of commissioners to effect the final demarcation was delayed, on various pretexts, till the fresh impressions of what was really meant by the less definite terms of the treaty had become faint and imperfect. When commissioners, therefore, were at length appointed, numberless disputes arose, and the government of Georgia pressed their claims to insignificant patches of land as urgently as if the existence of their national power had depended on possessing them.

These disputes gave rise to angry discussions conducted on the one side with the bitterness of wounded pride, and on the other with the insolence of conscious power. Various lines of frontier were successively proposed by one party, and rejected by the other.

Commissioners met and parted, without having advanced one step towards the adjustment of the points in dispute; and agents were sent by the Prince Royal to Teflis, and instructions transmitted to the Russian chargé d'affaires at Tabreez, without any progress being made towards the accomplishment of this object.

At length all appeared to be arranged, and a proposal made by the Russian chargé d'affaires was accepted by the Prince Royal, who was charged with the affairs of the frontier. But the Russian agent had exceeded his instructions, and General Yermoloff refused to ratify the engagements which M. Mozarovich had contracted.

Again all cause of difference was supposed to have been removed, and a formal engagement was entered into by an agent of the Prince Royal at Teflis, but this the Shah refused to sanction.

In the summer of 1825 M. Mozarovich repaired to the Shah's camp, for the purpose of endeavouring to obtain his Majesty's ratification of the terms agreed upon between Futteh Allee Khan and General Yermoloff, at Teflis; but his Majesty refused his consent to the arrangement. In the autumn of the same year M. Mozarovich left Persia; and the government of Georgia, acting on what they called the treaty of Futteh Allee Khan, which they had previously endeavoured in vain to induce the Shah to ratify, occupied with a military force the lands which would have become theirs had this treaty taken effect.

One of these portions of land was an uninhabited strip called Gokcheh, which borders on the lake of Gokcheh or Sevan, and which had been in the undisputed possession of Persia ever since the conclusion of the peace. Russian picquets had been placed there some years before, to prevent the desertion of the wandering tribes who pastured their flocks in summer

in its vicinity, and in winter had been regularly withdrawn. To the remonstrance of the Prince Royal against the military occupation of this part of the Persian territory, General Yermoloff had replied by admitting the justice of the Prince's remarks, but excused himself on the plea that the measure he had adopted was mutually advantageous; and concluded by offering to withdraw the detachment, if his Royal Highness should continue to think it necessary.

Yet, after all this, Russia, on the strength of an unratified engagement, concluded by the agent of a deputed authority, took permanent possession of this very piece of ground, and retained it in the face of every remonstrance which reason and justice could suggest.

As soon as the occupation of Gokcheh was known to the court of Tehran, a respectable envoy was sent to Teflis to remonstrate against the measure, and to propose that the Russian detachment should be withdrawn—at least, until time should be given for an appeal to the justice of the emperor. This, too, was refused. The envoy demanded permission to proceed to St. Petersburgh, but could not obtain it; and, in answer to the letters which the Shah had written to the Governor-General of Georgia, he was informed that Gokcheh would be given up by Russia, if the lands of Kapan were immediately evacuated by Persia.

These lands of Kapan had been, from the conclusion of the peace, in the possession of Persia; but within a few years a claim, supported by some weighty arguments, had been set up by Russia, and it remained one of those points which it would have been the duty of commissioners to decide upon. The claims of Persia were at least as well supported as those of Russia; and some of the Russian official maps had marked Kapan as belonging to Persia. It was therefore an

obvious injustice to seize an undisputed possession of Persia, and demand, as the price of its evacuation, the abandonment of claims, which were probably just, to another portion of territory.

At this time the death of the Emperor Alexander was announced, and the confusion which was caused by the annunciation of Constantine as his successor, and the subsequent abdication of the throne in favour of Nicholas, suspended the discussions.

As soon as the power of Nicholas was known to be established, Persia prepared to send an embassy to St. Petersburgh to congratulate the new Emperor on his succession, and to conclude with him the definite settlement of the frontier. But before arrangements could be made to this effect, it was announced that Prince Menchikoff was on his way to the court of Persia, to intimate the succession of Nicholas to the throne, and to remove the causes of difference which had arisen between the governments of Georgia and Persia.

The court of Tehran had begun to believe that Russia was firm in her purpose to act with a total disregard to justice, and to consider only her own convenience and advantage in the settlement of the frontier. All its recent representations had been treated with neglect, or replied to in an arrogant and insulting tone by the government of Georgia. Opprobrious terms had been applied to the Prince Royal, in letters to his servants, and everything seemed to indicate a determination on the part of General Yermoloff, if not of the Emperor, to drive Persia to extremity. At the same time it was whispered that the tranquillity of the Russian empire had been disturbed; that a civil war was carried on in St. Petersburgh; and that the whole tribes of the Caucasus had risen in a mass to assert their independence.

It was known that the misrule of the Russian autho-

rities in Georgia, and their wanton interference with the religious prejudices of their Mahommedan subjects, had produced a feeling of serious discontent. Proposals had even been made to Persia by the heads of the tribes and chiefs of districts to co-operate with her in a war against Russia. Letters had been written by the Mahommedan population of all the Russian provinces bordering on Persia to the head of their religion, imploring his interference in their behalf; and he had come from the sanctuary of Kerbelai, expressly to urge the Shah to take up arms in defence of his insulted religion. The whole ecclesiastics of Persia joined their leader, and the mosques were filled with persons of all classes, lending a willing ear to the inflammatory orations of their Moollahs, while the Shah was threatened with the curses of the Faithful, and even with everlasting perdition, if he failed to take up arms in the holy cause.

In the midst of this ferment Prince Menchikoff arrived in the royal camp. He was treated with honour, and even with distinction, and a calm and temperate negotiation was opened, with a sincere desire on the part of the Shah to see it terminate in an amicable adjustment of all the matters in dispute. Sanguine hopes were entertained that everything would be satisfactorily arranged; and if there were some who for private ends wished to hurry Persia into a war, there were many of the most influential of her councillors who anxiously desired to avoid it. The King himself was of this number; and though he had been induced to give a solemn pledge to the Moollahs, that, if Gokcheh was not restored, he would agree to make war upon Russia, because he would then be justified in doing so, still this pledge, which had been exacted from him by the influence of the Moollahs, on his inability to withstand their demands, was given under a moral

conviction that the envoy of the Emperor would rather relinquish a worthless spot to which his Government had no just claim, than allow the dispute to be decided by the sword.

But in answer to all demands for the evacuation of Gokcheh, the Russian envoy replied that he had no instructions regarding it, and was not empowered to agree to its evacuation. It was then proposed that it should remain unoccupied by either party, until a reference could be made to the Emperor. This he was equally unable to comply with, and he put an end to the discussion by repeating that his instructions extended to nothing beyond some trifling modification of the unfortunate unratified treaty of Futteh Allee Khan.

Those who had been clamorous for war now called upon the Shah to redeem his pledge or forfeit his hopes of heaven. The Mahommedans of some of the Russian provinces were already in arms, and even the Christians of at least one of these had made overtures to Persia. The troops had been excited to enthusiasm by the Moollahs, and the war was commenced.

Even after the forces marched to the frontier, had Prince Menchikoff been empowered to evacuate Gokcheh, they would still have been countermanded, and the war would not have taken place.

In the late war nothing had occurred which could induce Persia to hope that she could hold her ground in the field against so powerful an antagonist as Russia; and though her troops had, on several occasions, displayed considerable valour, and shown that they had profited by the discipline they had received from French and British officers, yet the rapid loss of so many valuable provinces, and the failure of every attempt to make any permanent impression on the Russian power in Georgia, had taught her the necessity

of conciliating as an ally a nation which she had found herself unable to withstand as an enemy.

Under these circumstances it was obvious that Persia was not likely again to seek a war with a power which, under the most unfavourable circumstances, had been able to seize and keep possession of her most fertile and valuable provinces, and that it was more probable that she should show a too ready and obsequious acquiescence in the views of Russia, than that she should feel a desire to renew a contest from which she had suffered so severely.

Russia seemed to have adopted this opinion, and to have made it her policy to push herself by imperceptible advances into the exercise of an habitual influence over the councils of the Prince Royal, trusting that her aid might be necessary to establish him on the throne; and that in this event she would be left in the uncontrolled exercise of an absolute authority in his government. But the harsh, intemperate, and unjust conduct of the government of Georgia to that province and to Persia, had driven both to desperation, and Russia owed it to her character for justice and moderation (if she desired to establish such a character) to investigate calmly and impartially the occurrences on her southern frontier, and, if she found them unworthy, to discountenance and disavow them. On the contrary, however, all redress was denied, and when the Emperor was appealed to he had no ear for complaints. His envoy arrived, and declared that he had no instructions on the most important point at issue between them, and which had been a subject of angry altercation for above a year. The distant representatives of a government, it is true, are almost always more jealous and intemperate than the government itself; and, entering into discussions with all the warmth and virulence of personal feelings, and with

all the pride of power, they are continually goading and harassing the weaker neighbours with whom they may have occasion to communicate. But here the injustice was so obvious, the aggression so palpable, the negotiations had endured so long, and the representations of the suffering party had been so urgent, that it is impossible to suppose the Imperial government ignorant of the facts; and if it was not ignorant, it cannot be acquitted of participation in the hostile views of the Governor-General of Georgia.

The Russian envoy retired from the Court, and, as some military movements were in progress on the frontier when he arrived in its vicinity, he was detained for some time at Erivan, that he might not convey to his countrymen intelligence of the march and distribution of troops which he had seen. No other indignity was offered him, and as soon as intimation of his detention by the frontier authorities reached the Court, orders were issued to permit him to proceed. But the manifestos of Russia, and the columns of her Gazettes, were filled with denunciations of the aggressions of Persia, and of her violations of the law of nations. The sympathies of mankind were appealed to in favour of Russia, and, as the Persians had no Gazettes, these statements went forth to the world uncontradicted. The war with Persia occurred at a moment singularly convenient and favourable to Russia. She was engaged in no other hostilities. The turbulent spirits in the ranks of her army, who had disputed the streets of St. Petersburgh with the Emperor, and whose guilt it was not possible or convenient to ascertain or to punish, there found a field on which to exhaust their ardour. The irritated nation found a new object of attention to divert it from brooding over its own domestic evils; those whose loyalty was doubtful found an opportunity of re-establishing their reputation; the new reign com-

menced with new victories and new acquisitions; the contemplated rupture with the Porte having for the moment been postponed, future success was rendered more certain, by humbling beforehand the only Asiatic power whose common interests and common dangers might have led it to make common cause with Turkey, and the coffers of the Shah contained enough to defray the expense of the contest.

CHAPTER VI

War between Russia and Turkey — Interposition of Napoleon — Bad faith of Alexander — Congress of Vienna — Greek rebellion fomented by Russia — Treaty of London — Battle of Navarino — Treaty of Turcomanchai — Encroachments of Russia on Persia — Renewal of war with Turkey — Treaty of Adrianople — Separation of Greece — Projects of future conquest — Rebellion of Mahommed Ali — Treaty of Unkiar Skellessi — Russia's "protecting" policy — Danger to British commerce by Russian aggrandisement.

THE revolution in France, the death of Catharine, the eccentricities and incapacity of Paul, the fatal catastrophe which terminated his reign, and the ambition and military successes of Napoleon, relieved Turkey for a time from the aggressions at least, if not from the intrigues, of Russia: but in 1806 the increasing influence of Russia in Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia, the unreserved manner in which she exerted that influence to the injury of the Porte, the pretensions she asserted to a right of interference in the internal affairs of these provinces, which she had never ceased to put forward on every favourable occasion since the rebellion of Cantemir in 1711, first enabled her to establish a connexion with their inhabitants; the pertinacity with which she continued, in opposition to the will of the Porte, to raise recruits for her forces in the Ionian Islands, from the Turkish territories on the neighbouring coast, and the intercourse she in this manner maintained with those districts, to the injury of their tranquillity and the interests of the Sultan, induced the Turkish government, at the instigation, or, at least, in accordance with the views of France, to declare war against Russia, who had taken up arms in defence of Prussia, then overrun by Napoleon.

The British Government, desirous to set free the

Russian troops engaged in the contest with Turkey, and thus to enable the Emperor Alexander to augment the forces opposed to the French in the north, endeavoured to impose, by force of arms, upon the Porte, a disadvantageous peace, but failed in that object. The naval attempt on Constantinople and the military expedition to Egypt (1806-7) were amongst the least creditable operations of the war, but they were undertaken solely in performance of our engagements with Russia.

Yet the Emperor Alexander had no sooner concluded the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit with Napoleon, than he accused Great Britain of having violated her engagements, and made this pretended violation a pretext for issuing a hostile and insulting declaration against England. But Napoleon, by the battle of Friedland, had humbled, and by the treaty of Tilsit had bribed Russia, who then indemnified herself for the loss she had sustained in attempting to defend Prussia, by appropriating to herself a portion of the Swedish territories. Nevertheless Napoleon, while imposing upon Alexander a participation in his hostility against England, was too well aware of the importance of Turkey and of the accession of strength which further acquisitions in that quarter would bring to Russia, not to interfere for the protection of the Porte. The treaty, which made Russia his ally and the enemy of Great Britain, stipulated the instant evacuation of Moldavia and Wallachia by the Russian troops.

This war, like all those in which she had previously been engaged with Russia since the days of Peter I., had been disastrous to Turkey. Her fortresses had been taken, her provinces overrun, her fleet destroyed. Servia had taken an active part in the hostilities against the Sultan, and the turbulent spirit of the Janissaries, breaking out into revolt, had shaken the

foundation of the empire. Still Turkey had never ceased to combat with courage, though not with success, and displayed an obstinacy of resistance against victorious enemies, and a power of cohesion in the midst of domestic commotions, such as perhaps no other state under similar circumstances has ever exhibited. Nevertheless the interposition of Napoleon in her behalf probably saved her on this occasion from the incorporation of the provinces beyond the Danube with the Russian empire, as the threatened intervention of England and Prussia had protected her from greater evils in the previous war.

The peace which Napoleon obtained for Turkey at Tilsit was of short duration. In 1808 hostilities recommenced, and after several years of active operations, in which all the military advantage was ultimately on the side of Russia, that power found it necessary, in consequence of the invasion of her territories by Napoleon in 1812, to conclude a treaty of peace at Bucharest; by which, however, she advanced her frontier to the Pruth, secured the navigation of the Danube to her merchant-ships, and obtained for her ships of war the right of ascending that river as high as the mouth of the Pruth,—procured an amnesty for the Servians who had taken part with her in the war,—stipulated for the demolition of the fortresses recently erected by the Turks in Servia,—and engaged the Porte to mediate a peace between Russia and Persia. The Emperor, on his part, agreed to surrender Anapa, and certain other fortified places on the Asiatic coast of the Black Sea, which had been captured during the war; but the stipulation was not fulfilled, and the bad faith displayed in evading it became one of the causes of dissension which in the end led to another contest.

Thus, after an expensive and bloody contest, which

she had herself provoked, Russia was a second time deprived of the most valuable fruits of her victories in Turkey by the interference of Napoleon. Bessarabia was the only territory she acquired, but the peace enabled her to march, at a critical moment, 80,000 men from the banks of the Danube to oppose the French in the north.

The last three wars between Russia and Turkey had been terminated by the intervention, amicable or hostile, in behalf of the latter, of one or more of the European powers, and the necessity of preserving the independence of Turkey as an element of the balance of power in Europe had been received as a maxim in politics which no one pretended to dispute, and which the leading cabinets had shown their determination to maintain.

Europe, weary of the wars she had so long been waging, and sighing for repose, sought, by the Congress of Vienna, to establish on a permanent footing the relations of her various Governments, to restore the ancient limits of some nations, to re-establish the independence of others, and to unite all in an alliance with a view to permanent tranquillity, which was the first desire of all. France had been the common enemy, and hostility to her, or rather to her ruler, had been the bond which united the other nations. To strip her of the acquisitions she had made by aggressions on her neighbours and by an abuse of her strength, was considered indispensable, not in prudence only, but in justice; but the justice of the victors did not extend to a restitution of their own unjust acquisitions, nor to the re-establishment of the independent kingdoms they had themselves overthrown and divided. France was divested of her conquests, and England restored foreign colonies in both hemispheres, but Russia restored nothing,—Finland, Poland, and

all her conquests in Turkey and Persia, were confirmed to her, or remained annexed to her crown, and the proposition to re-unite the broken fragments of the Polish kingdom was met by a declaration from the partitioning powers that a million of men were ready to oppose it. Turkey took no part in these negotiations, and gained no advantage in the arrangements; but the desire for peace was universal, and Russia required some years to recruit after the exhausting triumph she had achieved. So great was the wholesome desire to preserve peace which continued to pervade the councils of every cabinet in Europe, that no one power could have taken up arms without finding itself opposed by the moral influence, if not by the forces, of the European community; and Turkey, though no party to the alliance which had charged itself with preserving tranquillity, yet profited by the moral feeling which would have condemned the first infraction of peace as a crime. Nations were invited to submit their differences to the decision of the conservators of repose, and congresses from time to time assembled in different parts of Europe to adjust the various questions that might have arisen between nations, and amicably to terminate their disputes.

Though no international war had disturbed the repose of Europe, intestine commotions interrupted the internal tranquillity of more than one of the countries in the south. Spain attempted a revolution, which was suppressed by the armies of France. Portugal was occupied by England as a counterpoise to the French power in the Peninsula. Revolutions in Italy were put down, not without foreign interference; and a civil war in Greece engaged the Ottoman empire in a protracted contest.

Russia had on several occasions fomented rebellions in Greece, and in the other Christian provinces of

Turkey, for the advancement of her own objects. She had at all times evinced a desire to preserve her intercourse with the Greeks, and on this occasion the first movement was produced by officers in her service, who issued from her territories to organize a rebellion in Turkey. Her government had been the most active in organizing the alliance intended to preserve the peace of Europe, then necessary to her. After having facilitated, if not excited, the revolt in Greece, she affected to act up to the principles she professed, and offered to aid the Porte in suppressing the rebellion which that cabinet attributed exclusively to her agency. The proposition was at once rejected by the Sultan, and the Russian ambassador at Constantinople resorted to every means to bring about a rupture with Turkey, because she persevered in her attempts to suppress the rebellion which Russia had offered her aid to put down.

Russia was not content with inflicting on the Turkish government the greatest indignities, and suspending her diplomatic relations with the Porte. Russian agents inflamed the petty differences between Persia and Turkey, induced the Prince Royal, in opposition to the wishes of the Shah and the advice of Great Britain, to invade the Ottoman dominions, and attempted to justify to the father the disobedience of the son. The anxiety of Russia to force Turkey into a war had been sufficiently proved by these and other transactions, but the desire for peace was still dominant in Europe, and the Congress of Verona formally acknowledged the right of the Sultan to exclude all foreign intervention between himself and his subjects, whether Christian or Mahommedan. This decision of the congress, whose opinions Russia should have been the last to dispute, was officially announced to the Porte by the British ambassador, and the question

appeared to be decided. But the growing sympathy of the Christian population of Europe with the overmatched Greeks seemed capable of counterpoising the pacific resolutions of their governments, and had already excluded Turkey from all share in their regard and all chance of being judged with equity. Russia saw the advantage which the popular excitement in favour of the Christians and against the Mahommedans could not fail to give her, in respect to the Governments which were opposed to her views; and there remained but the alternative of interdicting, by a threat of hostilities, the intervention in behalf of the revolutionists in Greece, which she seemed determined to resort to; or to curb her ambition by associating with her, in the negotiations by which it was proposed to restore peace in the Levant, other powers, which, acting in concert with her for the advancement of the object she avowed, might confine her interference solely to the accomplishment of that object. England and France invited the Emperor Nicholas, who had recently mounted the throne, to unite with them in restoring the tranquillity of Greece. The protocol signed at St. Petersburgh restrained the three powers to a friendly mediation between the Sultan and his rebellious subjects. The Sultan declined to accept the proffered mediation, and the three powers, founding their right to interfere on the interruption to which the commerce of the Mediterranean was subjected by the piracies of the Greeks, concluded a treaty at London, on the 6th of July, 1827, by which they mutually engaged to enforce, by hostilities, if necessary, the adjustment of the differences between the Porte and the Greeks, on terms to be prescribed to both parties. This arrangement still reserved to the Sultan the suzerainetć of Greece, and a yearly tribute from that country.

But Russia had her own separate grounds of discussion with Turkey, and demanded the performance of certain stipulations of the Treaty of Bucharest, with reference to the internal government of the Christian provinces of Turkey in the north-east; while the Porte, on the other hand, called upon the Emperor to surrender the fortresses on the Black Sea, which, by the same treaty, he had engaged to deliver up, but which, for fourteen years, had been retained in violation of these engagements. The Porte appeared to be obstinate, and Russia, preparing for war, presented her ultimatum, which was unexpectedly accepted. Plenipotentiaries met at Akerman, in Bessarabia, and a convention, proposed by Russia, was accepted by Turkey, on the express understanding that Russia should renounce all interference* in the affairs of Greece. To these conditions Russia acceded, only a few months after she had signed the Treaty of London, which bound her to interfere in those affairs, even by force of arms, if necessary.

The ambassadors of the three Powers, in communicating to the Porte the stipulations of the Treaty of London, intimated the necessity under which they would be placed, if the Turkish Government should persevere in rejecting their mediation, "of *recurring to such measures as they should judge most efficacious* for putting an end to a state of things which was become incompatible even with the true interests of the Sublime Porte, with the security of commerce in general, and with the perfect tranquillity of Europe."

Turkey regarded that note as amounting to a declaration of war, if she declined to accept an alternative which she considered unjust and injurious. The Sultan

* The Turkish Government has publicly asserted this fact, referring to the protocols for its verification, and the truth of the assertion has not been publicly denied.

immediately prepared for defence : he collected an army at Constantinople, strengthened the batteries of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, reinforced the garrison of Tenedos, and diligently occupied himself in improving the discipline of his troops. Repeated attempts were made by the ambassadors of the Powers most friendly to the Porte to induce it to give way, but it firmly or obstinately maintained its resolution to sanction no foreign intervention in the internal affairs of the empire. Yet it is obvious that it expected to be attacked by the Allied Powers : the preparations it was making, and the language it held, leave no doubt on this subject. On the 10th September the Reis Effendi, in answer to questions from the British Dragoman intended to elicit the intentions of his Government, replied, "God and my right,—such is the motto of England,—what other motto ought we to choose, *when you intend to attack us?*"

The intelligence of the battle of Navarino was followed by information of an attack made by the Greeks on the island of Scyros. The Porte demanded satisfaction for the loss it had sustained, and for the violence done to its honour; and at the same time persisted in rejecting the intervention of the Allied Powers in the affairs of Greece, declaring that, until its demands should be satisfied, it could hold no intercourse with their ambassadors. These functionaries, therefore, at length (December 1827) withdrew from Constantinople, and the Sultan was left to infer that he was already at war with England, France, and Russia.

The measures by which Russia proposed to give effect to the Treaty of London showed the results she wished to obtain from it. She proposed "to occupy Moldavia and Wallachia in the name of the three Powers," and even to march an army into Turkey, for the purpose of "dictating peace under the walls of the

seraglio." Having failed to obtain the consent of the other Powers to these violent measures, or to engage them in avowed hostilities with the Porte, she declared that "in the manner of executing that act (the Treaty of London) she will consult only her own interests and convenience;" but this declaration she was obliged to retract.

In September of the same year the Emperor ordered a fresh levy of recruits, amounting to one in every five hundred inhabitants (for the first time including the Jews in the conscription), and thus prepared for the war he contemplated.

But Russia, feeling that her position in Asia would be in the last degree critical, if the contest with Turkey should have commenced before that in which she had engaged with Persia should have terminated, was desirous of bringing to a conclusion the war with that country; and the success of her arms, in the autumn of 1827, enabled her to dictate terms to the Shah.

The war had originated in a violation of the Persian territory by the Governor-General of Georgia, and disputes about the frontier line, which never had been accurately defined on all points, and which, for twelve years, had been a subject of discussion, the possession of the districts on the right or southern bank of the Araxes being one of the disputed claims.

In the negotiations which led to the Treaty of Turcomanchai, by which this war was terminated (February 1828), Russia, while she disclaimed all desire of conquest, and repelled, as injurious, every imputation of an ambitious desire to aggrandize her territory, which she said was already as extensive as she could desire, declared that her anxiety to prevent any future collision with Persia compelled her to establish a frontier line so well defined as to leave no room for doubt or discussion hereafter; and as this could be found only

on the Arras (Araxes), she had no alternative but to adopt the line of that river.

Persia, besides paying the whole expenses of the war, was therefore called upon to cede the important and wealthy provinces of Erivan and Nukhchivan, including the fortresses of Erivan and Abbasabad, because it was necessary to the future tranquillity of the two empires that their common frontier should be defined by the Arras. The sacrifice to Persia was immense, but she was in no condition to renew the war; and she consoled herself with the belief that this arrangement, while it took from her possessions infinitely more valuable, would at least give her back Talish and Moghan, from which the Russians had been driven by the revolt of the inhabitants in the commencement of the war, and which they had not been able to re-occupy. But this was not consistent with the views of Russia; and though these districts were of no real value to her, and even caused her a considerable yearly expenditure, she refused to relinquish her claim to them—treated with contempt every allusion to the promise of General Ritescheff—and, when reminded that she had herself required the cession by Persia of Erivan and Nukhchivan for the sole object of establishing the Arras as the frontier line, and was now violating the principle she had laid down, her only answer was a threat to break off the negotiations, and recommence hostilities. Persia had no alternative, and submitted.

The object of Russia in securing this position is sufficiently obvious. The Arras is fordable, at short intervals, from the vicinity of Julfa (near the great road between Erivan and Tabreez) to a ford called Yeddee Bolook; but below that point it is never fordable. By retaining Talish and Moghan she has secured to herself possessions beyond the Arras, extending

southward to the frontier of Ghilan, from the point where the river ceases to be fordable to its mouth on the Caspian Sea, and has thus laid open one of the most valuable parts of Persia to an attack at any season of the year, and placed herself in a position from which she can occupy Ghilan with most facility. That she retains her views on this rich province is sufficiently proved by the fact that she threatened, only two years ago (1834), to occupy it as a security for the payment of five hundred thousand tomans (250,000*l.*) of indemnity still due to her by Persia.

The possession of Talish and Moghan cannot be pretended to be of any real value to Russia beyond the facility it affords for future aggressions; and that in this point of view it is of the greatest importance is demonstrated by the fact that, from the natural strength of the country, and the hostile spirit of the inhabitants, she was unable to re-establish her authority there, after the conclusion of peace, without the aid of the Persian government.

In the province of Nukhchivan ceded to Russia, and on the left bank of the Araxes, is the fortress of Abbasabad, constructed by a French engineer in the service of the late Abbas Mirza. Russia, not content with the fortress, demanded possession of an unfinished work intended for a *tête du pont*, on the opposite bank, which she represented as a part of the fortress, though no bridge had ever been constructed; and having obtained this unfinished and untenable outwork, founded on the concession another demand. The intended *tête du pont* to an imaginary bridge required an esplanade, and a segment of a circle, with a radius of two miles, was assigned to her for this purpose.

This second position beyond the Araxes opens to her an entrance into Persia on the other flank of the frontier, and at the nearest point of that frontier to

the fortress of Khoé, the most important of all that now remain to Persia. It commands the only available line of communication between Persia and Turkey, the only road by which their commerce can pass, and consequently that by which the British trade with Persia is carried on. Its importance has not escaped the observation of Russia; she selected it as the place which she was to hold in pledge for the payment of the last instalment of the indemnity which was necessary to procure the final evacuation of the Persian territories by the Russian troops. She therefore held it during her war with Turkey in 1828, and felt its value in separating from one another the Persian and Ottoman dominions; but on the payment of the stipulated sum she was reluctantly compelled to surrender it.

By the treaty of Turcomanchai, Persia was again bound to maintain no navy on the Caspian; this stipulation was now made to rest on the prescriptive right of Russia, on the exclusive privilege of having a navy on that sea, which the treaty declares she had enjoyed "*ab antiquo*."—This, however, was an antiquity of only thirteen years, for she acquired the exclusive right by the treaty of Goolistan, which was concluded in 1814.

Meanwhile Turkey, believing herself to be in immediate danger of an attack from the three Powers which had signed the Treaty of London, continued her preparations for war, and Russia, on the other hand, having triumphantly terminated her contest with Persia, and received about two millions sterling in gold and silver from the Shah, did not conceal her intention to come to a rupture with the Porte. She had vainly endeavoured to engage her allies in avowed hostilities with the Ottoman empire, and they had forced her to abandon the intention she had announced

to act independently of them. At Verona she had consented to regard the Greek question as one which belonged exclusively to the internal affairs of Turkey, and in which no foreign power had a right to interfere. She had proceeded to the last extremities of arrogance and insolence, in the hope of provoking the Sultan to resent the indignities she heaped upon him. She had changed her views and her tactics, and assumed every possible shape, and, having failed in every endeavour to accomplish her object, she determined, after the termination of the war with Persia, to produce a war with Turkey at whatever price. Her intentions had long been obvious, but the motive was not then appreciated. It has now been revealed. It was neither a sympathy with her co-religionists in Greece, whom she had so often excited to revolt, and so often abandoned to their fate; neither was it a sudden glow of liberality which had made her enamoured of popular liberty, and had rendered her the friend and prop of liberal institutions. It was a steady and undeviating perseverance in the policy of Peter to raise himself on the ruins of Turkey. The reforms of the Sultan had been successful beyond the hopes of his friends or the fears of his enemies, and Russia became alarmed lest her prey should escape her; lest the internal amelioration of a neighbouring kingdom, and the sympathy which that amelioration had excited in Europe, should in time make it dangerous for Russia to attack Turkey, and impossible for her to subdue it.

The rashness of the Sultan, who, after the battle of Navarino, the departure of the ambassadors, and the preparations of Russia, did not doubt that he was at war with that power, furnished her with the pretext for which she panted. The Porte, surrounded by enemies, addressed a letter to the Pashas of the pro-

vinces, appealing to the patriotism of the Turks, and calling upon them to arm in defence of their country and religion. At the same time it informed them, not that it had been deceived by Russia, which was the truth, but that it had deceived Russia, and signed the Convention of Akerman for the purpose of gaining time.

As soon, however, as the Porte had any reason to suppose that a war could be avoided, it addressed the Russian cabinet through the Reis Effendi, endeavouring to explain away the offensive part of the letter, and expressing a desire to renew friendly relations with the Czar. But the opportunity had long been sought, and now that it was found, his Imperial Majesty was not disposed to throw it away. The answer to the Turkish functionary's conciliatory address was transmitted to his Government along with the declaration of war; and Count Nesselrode, in that letter to the Reis Effendi, clearly restricts the causes of quarrel to acts subsequent to the departure of the ambassadors from Constantinople: for it declares the *friendly intentions and feelings of Russia up to that time.* But subsequently to the departure of the ambassadors, the proceedings of the Turkish government towards Russia and her subjects, although pressing more severely on Russian interests, were in no respect different in form from those adopted towards the other powers and their subjects. Russia had therefore no separate ground of complaint, except the declaration of the Porte contained in the letter to the Pashas, that it had concluded the Convention of Akerman only to gain time; a declaration which the Turkish government evinced a distinct inclination to retract; and which, if even it had been unexplained, was not more inexcusable than the mental reservation of Russia in concluding the same convention on the express con-

dition that she should not interfere in the Greek question,—an engagement which she contracted without any intention to fulfil it, whereas the Porte had adopted that convention sincerely, and in good faith, though it afterwards falsely accused itself of an insincerity it had not felt.

Another ground of complaint against Turkey was, that she had endeavoured to impede or prevent the conclusion of peace between Russia and Persia. This charge, which is supported by no evidence, was certainly not one which could in justice be urged by a Government that had a few years before instigated these same Persians to attack Turkey while she was at peace with Russia.

But it is useless to discuss the question; the real motive of Russia for seeking a war with Turkey has been exposed by herself in a manner that leaves no room for doubt, and makes argument worthless.

This war, the most disastrous in its consequences in which Turkey had yet been engaged, was terminated by the treaty of Adrianople. The Emperor Nicholas, in deference to the jealousy of Europe, had publicly disclaimed all intention to aggrandize his dominions; and yet by this treaty he acquired Anapa and Poty, with a considerable extent of coast on the Black Sea, a portion of the Pashalic of Akhilska, with the two fortresses of Akhilska and Akhilkillak,* and the virtual possession of the islands formed by the mouths of the Danube; stipulated for the destruction of the Turkish fortress of Georgiova, and the abandonment by Turkey of the right bank of the St. George's branch of the Danube to the distance of several miles from the river; attempted a virtual separation of Moldavia and Wallachia from Turkey by sanitary regulations intended to connect

* Otherwise written *Akhaltzik*, and *Akhalhaliki*.

them with Russia ; stipulated that the Porte should confirm the internal regulations for the government of these provinces which Russia had established while she occupied them ; removed, partly by force, and partly by the influence of the priesthood, many thousand families of Armenians from the Turkish provinces in Asia to his own territories, as he had already moved nearly an equal number from Persia,—leaving whole districts depopulated, and sacrificing, by the fatigues and privations of the compulsory march, the aged and infirm, the weak and the helpless.

He established for his own subjects in Turkey an exemption from all responsibility to the national authorities, and burdened the Porte with an immense debt under the name of indemnity for the expenses of the war and for commercial losses, and finally retained Moldavia, Wallachia, and Silistria in pledge for the payment of a sum which Turkey could not hope in many years to liquidate. Having by this treaty imposed upon Turkey the acceptance of the protocol of the 22nd of March, which secured to her the suzeraineté of Greece, and a yearly tribute from that country, Russia used all her influence to procure the independence of Greece, and the violation by herself and her allies of the agreement which she had made an integral part of the treaty of Adrianople.

Greece was finally separated from Turkey, and erected into an independent state ; of which Count Capo d'Istria, who had been a Russian minister, was named president.

In the course of her hostilities with Turkey in Asia, Russia had developed new and extensive projects of future conquest. The Turkish Pashalic of Bagdad had for many years been in the hands of a body of Georgians, who, like the Mamelukes in Egypt, had usurped almost the whole power of the government,

and left the Porte no alternative but to sanction and legitimize the authority which some one of the number from time to time had usurped. The Pasha of Bagdad, when the Russians invaded Turkish Armenia, was a Georgian of the name of Daud or David, a man of much energy and ambition, who aimed at establishing his own independence. A brother of the Pasha, who had continued to reside in his native country, and was now therefore a Russian subject, carried on a petty trade between Teflis and Bagdad, and became the medium of communication between his masters and his brother. Almost all the offices of trust in the Pashalic were held by Georgians, and they all had connexions in their native country,—many of their nearest relatives were in the Russian service. The influence of the government of Georgia in Bagdad began to be felt, and when General Paskevitch found himself at Erzeroom, on the banks of a branch of the Euphrates, and not far from the stream of the Tigris, he conceived the project of descending these rivers, and occupying the modern capital of Assyria and Mesopotamia. But the successes of General Diebitch on the Balkan had placed Russia in so advantageous a position, with means so inadequate to maintain it, that it was considered imprudent to hazard a failure on the side of Asia, and the Emperor therefore abandoned the enterprise for a time.

No opportunity was lost to form connexions with the chiefs of Koordistan ; but these wild mountaineers, though they sometimes yielded to the influence which then was dominant, exhibited on some occasions a fidelity to their sovereign, and a manly spirit and intelligence which did them infinite honour. Tymour, Pasha of Van, on the approach of the Russians, sent a message to the Prince Royal of Persia, offering to deliver up his Pashalic into His Royal Highness's hands, if he would engage to protect it from the

Russians, and surrender it to the Porte at the termination of the war.

Thus Russia, by a long series of hostilities and intrigues, had not only conquered a large extent of the European and Asiatic territories of Turkey, but brought about the actual separation of Greece, and attempted the virtual separation of Servia, Moldavia, and Wallachia from the Ottoman empire,—had contemplated the occupation of Bagdad, and extended her secret connexions to that Pashalic and to the mountains of Koordistan.

She had no sooner been relieved by the treaty of Adrianople from the war in Turkey, than she concerted measures with the Persian government for the reduction of the principality of Khiva, on the eastern coast of the Caspian Sea, and had collected troops at Orenbourg for this purpose, when the revolution in Poland made it necessary to march them in another direction.

The struggle in Poland, and the popular movements in Europe, for a time diverted her attention from the East, but they were followed by a revolution in a portion of the Ottoman dominions, which recalled her armies to Turkey. The Pasha of Egypt had rebelled, and overrun Syria and part of Asia Minor; the throne of the Ottomans was shaken, and the Sultan was forced to seek foreign aid against his victorious vassal; Russia not only offered her assistance, but repeatedly and urgently pressed the Sultan to accept it. He had too much reason, however, to doubt her good faith, and he preferred applying for succour to England and France. But the unwise penuriousness of our policy had reduced our fleet to a scale inadequate to the protection of the national interests at any time, and still less in the midst of the troubles and commotions with which we were then surrounded. One portion of our meagre navy was employed in Portugal, another on the coast of

Holland, and when the existence of Turkey was at stake we had only a few frigates in the Mediterranean. France was almost equally powerless, and the Sultan urged his suit in vain to Governments which had not the means of granting it. Left without any other alternative, he accepted the proffered aid of Russia, and a fleet and army, prepared with almost incredible speed, found themselves for the first time in the Bosphorus. Determined that Constantinople, the Dardanelles, and the Bosphorus should be the prey of no other spoiler, Russia announced her determination to defend them; but, far from taking care of the strength or future security of the sovereign to whom she extended her protection, she left to the other Powers, who now found themselves forced to interpose, the task of prescribing limits to the victorious Pasha of Egypt, and of imposing upon him terms which he considered injurious; and while she forbade him to seize the portion she considered her own, she left him at liberty to appropriate as much of the rest as his power would enable him to retain. When the danger was removed, her fleets and armies retired, and a manifesto of the Emperor proclaimed to Europe and Asia the singular moderation and magnanimity which had induced him to refrain from seizing the capital of a friendly sovereign who had sought his aid, and who would have found in every nation in Europe an ally to resent the treachery, had it been attempted!

But in procuring the signature of the treaty of Unkiar Skellessi, Russia extorted the price of her assistance and forbearance. It was a defensive alliance, by which Turkey was *bound* to afford material aid to Russia in the event of her being attacked, and Russia undertook to protect Turkey against any enemy who might attack her.

By a secret, or rather an additional article, Turkey, in lieu of military assistance to Russia, undertook to close the Dardanelles against foreign ships of war.

All the maritime nations of Europe had acknowledged or admitted the right of Turkey to exclude foreign ships of war from the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus; and this right had been admitted on the understanding that it applied equally to all, and that it was necessary to the security of Turkey, which all had an interest in preserving. But the effect of this treaty, as far as regards the navigation of the Dardanelles, was to transfer to Russia the right of demanding the exclusion of ships of war from that channel,—for Turkey had no longer a right to admit them when Russia might be at war with any naval power.

On the other hand, the alliance being mutually defensive, Russia would involve Turkey in any war in which she might herself be engaged; and as this necessarily implies co-operation, Turkey could not refuse to open her channels to the fleets of the ally with whom she would by treaty be bound to co-operate for what would be their common object.

The maritime nations of Europe were quite prepared o leave in the hands of Turkey the control of the navigation of her own channels, but they did not contemplate or admit the acquisition by Russia of a right to usurp that power; and it is obviously not fitting that she should possess it.

But there is another point of view in which this treaty is not less important. The process by which Russia has effected the subjugation of almost all the countries she has conquered since the reign of Peter I. has been to take them under her protection, then to foment internal dissensions, and at last to annex them to her own empire, under pretence of putting an end

to disturbances she had herself created or permitted. The treaty of Unkiar Skellessi constituted Russia the virtual protector of Turkey.

Notwithstanding the opposition of other powers, Russia has steadily and successfully pressed forward towards the ultimate subversion of the Ottoman empire, and the possession of Constantinople, the Dardanelles, and the Bosphorus. She has conquered from it extensive provinces; has endeavoured to detach from it the valuable principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Servia; and has promoted the abstraction of Egypt and Syria from the Sultan's authority. But still the two powers stood opposed to each other, and, so long as they stood so opposed, every step towards the subjugation of the weaker was necessarily an act of violence. Continual aggressions cannot be made without a sacrifice of character; they attract attention, and afford other nations an opportunity to interfere. There is a point, however, in the progress of subjugation at which resistance ceases and protection begins; a point beyond which force and violence are no longer necessary, and where the absence of collision presents no occasion for third parties to interpose. To a power which has to dread opposition in its career of conquest, the step which enables it to pass this point is the most important in the whole series, and Russia, from frequent experience, well knew its value. There were two ways in which she might effect her purpose; a perseverance in hostility would have afforded the other powers an opportunity to interpose, of which they had often availed themselves with effect, because Turkey would still have been with them; a more insidious and effectual mode of subjugation is that which, by placing the Porte under the protection of Russia, and enabling her to force it into collision with all her enemies, and its own friends, would put its resources at her disposal and

exclude all interposition of other powers, because all collision would be avoided. This was the result that Russia sought to obtain from the treaty of Unkiar Skellessi. This was the price she demanded for her magnanimous and disinterested aid; and, confident that she had effected her object, she withdrew in triumph from what she believed to be the bloodless conquest of an empire.

But the jealousy of Europe was at length awakened; the treaty had transpired, and England and France protested against the fraud. Russia, while maintaining the haughty and imperious bearing which she assumes when she cannot justify her acts, still felt that the just resentment of other powers must be appeased by some real or apparent sacrifice; and having sufficiently, for her present purpose, detached Moldavia and Wallachia from the Porte, offered to withdraw her troops from these provinces, having previously stipulated that the troops of Turkey should never again enter them, and that no Mahommedan should reside therein. In consideration of additional cessions of territory in Asia, demanded for the purpose of obtaining "a line of demarcation between the two empires in the East, such as may prevent every species of dispute and discussion,* and completely put an end to the depredations which the neighbouring tribes have been in the habit of committing,"—that is, a line of demarcation which would give Russia the command of the passes,—for these considerations his Imperial Majesty consented to renounce his claim to one-third of the indemnity (or nearly one million sterling) which he had promised to relinquish when the treaty of Unkiar Skellessi was negotiated, without then requiring additional cessions

* This was precisely the same language she had held to Persia. See page 81.

of territory. The remainder of the indemnity was to be paid in smaller instalments; and Silistria, which Russia held in pledge for the whole amount, to remain therefore so much longer in her hands. Russia thus occupies positions beyond the Araxes in Persia, and beyond the Danube in Turkey; has claims for indemnities in both; has the exclusive possession of the Caspian, and the command of the Black Sea; controls the mouths of the Kur on the one, and of the Danube on the other; and desires to be the protector of the Sultan, and to guarantee the throne to the heir of the Shah,—for the obvious or avowed purpose of subjugating both empires.

While the position occupied by Russia in European Turkey menaces Constantinople and the Dardanelles, the attitude she has assumed in Asiatic Turkey menaces Armenia; she has acquired possession of the mountain-passes that separate that province from Georgia, and of the fortresses that defended the Turkish frontier. By every movement she threatens to interrupt the only line of communication by which British manufactures to the value of one million and a half sterling are yearly carried through Turkey into Persia. She has already advanced to within nine miles of this road, and to about ninety from Trebizond, the port from which it leads. The course which she would pursue, were either to be under her control, may be inferred from her commercial system generally; from the fact that she is our rival in the market of Persia, and that she has put a stop to the transit trade through Georgia, because it interfered with her exclusive commerce on the Caspian.

Yet the Persian trade is but a small portion of what would be lost to England were Russia in possession of the Dardanelles.

The interests we have at stake are numberless, and we acknowledge their importance by declaring that we shall preserve the independence of Turkey. But to enable us to preserve that independence, the value of which we acknowledge, we must not only obtain securities from the only European power by which it is threatened, but must contribute, as far as in us lies, to the amelioration of the internal condition of Turkey and to the augmentation of her strength and resources. Peace in Europe can be preserved only so long as Turkey is preserved. If the Ottoman empire should indeed "crumble to pieces," as some have supposed it is crumbling, the distribution of the fragments would not be effected without bloodshed. The only chance of maintaining peace is to maintain the integrity of Turkey. Those who would persuade us that she is "crumbling to pieces" form a very different estimate of the consequences and effects of recent changes in her system from that which has been formed by those who have observed her most nearly, and who have the greatest interest in discovering that her days are already numbered. While in England Turkey is supposed to be mouldering in decay, Russia found in her growing strength a motive for attacking her. It was because the strength of Turkey was unknown, and her means unappreciated, that the revolt of the Pasha of Egypt was so long unopposed by the powers most interested in her preservation: and it was only by facilitating the reunion of the parts dissevered by that virtual dismemberment that the effects of so great a misfortune could be remedied. Everything that tends to weaken Turkey is favourable to Russia and injurious to the rest of Europe. The erection of Egypt and Syria into a hostile power is the greatest blow the Ottoman empire has yet received; it was one

which was aimed at it by Russia in 1772, and which was rendered ineffectual only by the arrogance of Alexis Orloff, who demanded that the Ali Pasha of that day should acknowledge himself to be a subject of the Empress Catharine. What, from this cause alone, Russia failed to effect in those times, was accomplished in 1833; and no one seemed to remember that it had for more than half a century been one of her projects.

The Pasha of Egypt was a dependant of the Sultan, not an independent sovereign. What power in Europe had an interest in promoting his disobedience, or in facilitating his aggressions? Surely no one of those who desire the integrity, the independence, and the strength of Turkey; for those purposes his obedience to his sovereign should be enforced, and his power to weaken the empire, which it is the interest of Europe to preserve, should be controlled. If Mahomed Ali, whether by concert with Russia, or solely in pursuit of his own objects, is rendering the Ottoman empire less capable of defending itself against Russia, he is doing that which is inconsistent with the future tranquillity of the world; and if his efforts should be so far successful as to render Turkey incapable of being defended, he is the enemy not of Turkey alone but of all Europe.

Greece has obtained an independent existence, and has been politically separated from Turkey; but their interests can never be separated, and to Greece the independence of Turkey must long be a necessary condition of her own freedom. Their commercial relations are beneficial to both, and can best be improved by mutually promoting the internal tranquillity and friendly intercourse by which the interests of each would be advanced. Every arrangement that may tend to produce facility of intercourse and freedom of

commerce between them must be mutually advantageous. Turkey must feel that resentment would be vain, and could only tend to increase the evil of which she complains; while Greece, having had experience of other systems, has learned that the wrongs with which she had to charge Turkey were neither so flagrant nor so peculiar as she once believed them to be. To soften the asperities of irritated feelings on both sides, and sow the seeds of concord and kindness between them, is the duty of all who desire the prosperity of either.

To examine the commercial arrangements by which the nations interested in the preservation of Turkey may promote the well-being of her population, and facilitate the improvements which her sovereign has already begun to introduce, would be beyond the limits assigned to these observations; but it is to be hoped that these matters, and all the commercial bearings of our relations with Turkey, will receive from some competent person the development their importance deserves.

In examining every question of foreign commerce, as it relates to this country, we must keep in mind that it is not the profit of the merchant which to the people of England is the most important consideration, but the amount of their labour which can be disposed of at a remunerating price, or, in other words, the number of hands that can be employed, and mouths that can be fed, in England. The profit of the merchant is altogether a secondary consideration; but where it is large, there we may be sure the consumption will increase. To provide full and constant occupation for the operative classes is the first object. It is because restrictive duties in foreign countries limit the quantity consumed by raising the

price to the consumer, rather than because they affect the profits of the merchant, that they operate injuriously to England; and it is the labouring classes of our population who are most interested in preserving the commercial system of Asia, which is free from restrictions, and in preventing the substitution in its room of the most restrictive system in Europe.*

* A comparative statement of the number of men in England who derive their subsistence from the sale of the produce of their labour in Russia and Turkey would be a valuable statistical document.

CHAPTER VII.

Policy of Russia in regard to Persia and Turkey — Interest of Great Britain in their preservation — Question of a Russian invasion of British India — Effects of British power over Russian commerce — Our duty to India — Importance of protecting Persia.

THE avidity with which Russia had sought, and the pertinacity with which she has clung to every acquisition of territory, even when it could be maintained only at the cost of large pecuniary sacrifices, shows that she values these acquisitions with reference to some other consideration than the mere intrinsic worth of the property acquired,—that she regarded them as a means, not as an end; and the position she has secured to herself, by her treaties with Persia and Turkey, affords unequivocal indication of a preparation for future encroachments.

Her whole history, and the posture in which she actually stands, contradict any professions of indifference to conquest and aggrandizement that she may venture to put forth.

It is not by actual conquest only that Russia may overthrow the independence of Persia and Turkey, and convert the resources of both countries to her own use. To overturn the existing Governments, and establish, by force of arms, her own direct rule, would involve a protracted struggle, and demand frequent and continued exertions of physical power. This would become a drain on her own resources, and would go far to exhaust those of the conquered country, before her authority could be fully established; at the

same time, it could hardly fail to excite the alarm of other Governments, and perhaps arouse them to active opposition. She has therefore pursued a wiser course.

She has confined herself to a system of successive encroachments, no one of which has been of sufficient importance to interrupt her friendly relations with the great powers of Europe; or to appear, when considered alone, a sacrifice fatal to the power that made it; and she has founded, upon her acknowledged superiority in physical means, and upon the success of her arms and intrigues, an influence which is progressively increasing in the councils of the nations she has humbled.

It is, therefore, her policy to maintain the existing Governments, but to prevent them from acquiring strength; and to press her influence upon their weakness, till it becomes authoritative and paramount. She seeks to govern the nations through their natural rulers, till the time shall have arrived for annexing them more formally to her own dominions. No violence is thus called for—no collision need take place; and *if there is no collision, there is no opportunity for other powers to interpose.* No apparent change will be made in the institutions to which the people have been accustomed; and the resources of the countries, unbroken and undisturbed, will be more completely at her disposal than if the forcible conquest of the kingdoms had already been effected. This is no speculative opinion. It is the precise course by which she became possessed of other countries; it is the course she has pursued almost to the verge of consummation in Turkey —it is the course she has adopted in Persia. There, as in Turkey, her system is to solve every question, political or commercial, not with reference to its own merits, or to justice, but by an appeal to the clemency of the Emperor, or the threat of his displeasure. The

domineering spirit of Russia is evinced in every discussion, small or great, in which she has a part, and the humiliation of the Mahommedan governments is studiously exhibited to their subjects.

Whether it be then from the character of her government, or from the force of circumstances, or from the pursuit of an understood and definite object, the fact undoubtedly is, that Russia has been, and continues to be, progressively advancing towards the subjugation of Persia and Turkey, and that those countries, if left to themselves, have neither the physical strength to repel her aggressions, nor, from a want of that strength, the moral courage to resist her influence.

Russia must therefore be met by some opposition beyond what they can offer—must feel that she is in contact on this ground with powers of a different description, and that her further advance will be more difficult and dangerous than it has been; or both Persia and Turkey will ultimately be at her disposal.

The interest which Great Britain has in the preservation of Persia is more immediately with reference to her Indian empire, and her interest in Turkey is more immediately connected with the state of Europe; but the influence of each on the other is such, that the sacrifice of either would almost necessarily involve the fall of both. The resources of Persia in the hands of Russia would suffice to neutralise the whole remaining power of the Sultan in Asia; and the control of the resources of Turkey by Russia, would lay Persia prostrate without a blow. The whole interest we have in both is therefore ultimately at stake in each, and that double interest taken in all its bearings, political and commercial, in Europe and in Asia, is perhaps as important as any we have to defend beyond the limits of these islands.

It is not necessary here to enter on an examination

of the consequences that would result to England from the subjugation of Turkey by Russia,—the repeated declarations of the sovereign of England, that he will watch over the preservation of her independence, sufficiently prove the importance attached to it; but it may be right to say a few words respecting Persia.

We have a commercial interest of large and increasing importance at stake in Persia, where Russia is our rival for the supply of the market. For the last two years the annual amount of British manufactures imported into Persia has exceeded the value of one and a half million sterling, and during the last year it has approached very nearly two millions. This trade has grown up without even the protection of a treaty, because it was free from all burthensome restrictions, but, as it has increased, the trade of Russia has declined; and if Russia should acquire the power to control it, our commerce with Persia could not long be maintained.

The invasion of India by the army of Russia, setting out from her present frontier to force a passage to the Indus, and overtun our empire by a "coup de main," may be assumed to be impracticable, or at least to demand so large an expenditure, and so vast a preparation, as to put the attempt beyond all probability. But the difficulties of the enterprise arise chiefly from the distance which intervenes between her frontier and ours, the facility with which we could multiply impediments on so long and difficult a line, and our power to throw troops into India by sea, in a shorter time than Russia could march them by land. Every approach of Russia towards the south is therefore an approach towards removing these difficulties; and as soon as the resources of Persia shall have been placed at her disposal, and Herat shall thereby have become her southern frontier, there will no longer be any insuperable impediment to the invasion of India.

Fifty thousand Persian infantry, composed of what are perhaps the finest materials in the world for service in those countries, and disciplined by Russian officers, with about fifty guns of Persian artillery, in a high state of efficiency, and an almost unlimited number of irregular horse, could be put in motion by Russia, in any direction, within twelve months after the resources of the kingdom were at her disposal; and the acquisition of such an influence as would enable her, in the event of a war with England, to induce Persia to take part with her against us, would at once give her a complete control of the military resources of that country.

From the moment that she occupies this position, it will become necessary so to augment our army in India, especially the European part of it, as to be prepared for the contingencies that may arise out of her proximity. This would be a large addition to our national expenditure, which would become permanent; because, if Russia were at Herat, we could no longer send out troops by sea as quickly as she could march them by land.

Independent of these military considerations, there are others no less important. From her present frontier, Russia not only cannot invade India, but she cannot exert in that country her disturbing influence, which is confined to Persia and Affghanistan, and does not penetrate beyond them; but, were she established at Herat, the influence she would exert in India, even in time of peace, would be such as to render the government of that country much more delicate and difficult than it now is. Those who best know India, not merely the presidencies but the provinces, will comprehend the change that would be effected in our position there, by the presence, within such a distance as to make a collision probable, of any power equal to

our own.* Rebellions would become more frequent and more formidable. The revenue would in many places be collected with difficulty, and in some the full amount would not be paid. The minds of all men would be unsettled, and every disturbance in the north-western provinces, every movement on the Indus or beyond it, would assume a new character, from the connexion it would or might have with the new and powerful neighbour, to whom all the disaffected would have recourse. If our financial embarrassments in India are even now a source of abundant anxiety, what would be our situation when our revenue would be diminished and our expenditure increased by some millions annually?

Independently, therefore, of the danger of actual invasion, the advance of Russia as far as Herat, that is, the entire command of the resources of Persia, would disturb the whole system of the government in India, even were she to act towards us with more forbearance and good faith than she has hitherto shown, and send fewer secret agents into India than she has hitherto sent.

The power which Great Britain has to destroy the commerce of Russia, and with it the wealth of her nobility and the tranquillity of her government, enabled England to force Russia into an opposition to France, which the Emperor Alexander was desirous to avoid. The clamours of his nobles, who found their revenues annihilated by the obstruction of their commerce with England, and the remembrance of the fate his father had incurred by persevering in the course on which he had agreed to enter, forced him to

* The spirit that manifested itself in India during the Burmese war, when the result of the contest was supposed to be doubtful, will sufficiently illustrate what has been stated. But it must be remembered that this was only a question of the success or failure of an expedition.

yield, though the concession exposed him to the vengeance of Napoleon.

This same power continues to be one of the most efficient checks on the ambition of Russia, and therefore one of the most valuable of the protective means which Great Britain holds for the common benefit of weaker nations. The strength of Russia, exclusively military, cannot be brought to bear upon us directly, and the control which the command of her commerce enables us to exercise is therefore without any direct counterpoise. But as soon as her military power can be brought to bear upon India, she will have established an efficient countercheck upon England which will place her relations with this country on a more advantageous footing than that on which they now stand.

It has been said that the loss of India would be no very serious evil to Great Britain, and that we are, therefore, not called upon to make any great exertion to preserve it; but supposing for a moment that the premises were capable of being demonstrated, the inference would not be just. We have conquered India, and, as a necessary consequence of that conquest, have taken upon ourselves the government of the country, and supplanted almost all the native instruments of government that we found there; by doing so we have incurred the responsibility of protecting those who have submitted to our rule from external violence as well as from internal discord. This is a sacred duty, and we are bound by every moral obligation that connects a government with its subjects to neglect no honourable means of enabling ourselves to discharge it. Were we to abandon India, we would not leave her as we found her. Were we to evacuate the country to-morrow, it would not only be placed in circumstances much more unfavourable than those in which we found it, but it would be left in a condition

more deplorable than ever a country was left in the world. And if it could be proved, which it cannot, that the possession of India is of no value to England, the moral obligation to defend it, until it can be made capable of governing itself, would still remain entire.

If then the advance of Russia to the southern provinces of Persia (or, in other words, the acquisition of a complete control of the resources of that country) threatens to disturb the internal tranquillity of India —to deprive the people of that country of security and peace, even if it should not expose them to another conquest, would it not be a dereliction of our duty towards them to permit, if we can prevent it?

The independence of Persia is the only apparent obstacle to the occupation of a position by Russia which would enable her to destroy in Asia the power of the Sultan, already shaken in Europe—to annihilate our commerce in Central Asia—to force us to diminish our revenues and largely to augment our expenditure in India, where our finances are even now embarrassed —to disturb the whole system of Government in that country during peace, to threaten it with invasion in war—and to oppose to our maritime and commercial superiority her power to shake our empire in the East.

Great Britain has, therefore, a manifest interest in protecting the independence of Persia; an interest of such magnitude and importance that she cannot permit it to be endangered without exposing India to evils from which every Government is bound, if possible, to protect its subjects, and without subjecting herself to a diminution of her influence in Europe, as well as of her power in Asia.*

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* It has been said that we ought to desire rather than fear the extension of Russia; that extension implies attenuation, which is but another name for weakness—that the possession of Persia and Turkey would therefore but hasten her downfall.

Does history afford any example of the sudden or speedy dissolution of an

Every one who knows Persia, and the position in which she has been placed, will admit that her independent existence has been protracted up to the present time only by the countenance and support that Great Britain has afforded her; but the progress that Russia has made, notwithstanding that support, in advancing her frontier and increasing her influence, proves that it has never been fully adequate to the purpose for which it was intended, and that a more efficient system is required to preserve what remains.

Persia, placed in immediate contact with a power whose superior strength she has been forced to acknowledge, and having England for her only efficient ally, has to choose whether she will prepare to conciliate Russia by such concessions, whatever may be their nature and amount, as may be necessary to maintain a good understanding with her overbearing neighbour; or whether she will resist the demands of Russia when they are unjust and injurious, in the hope that the influence and aid of her ally may be able to preserve her independence. But she cannot venture to adopt this latter course unless she knows what she has to expect from her ally. If she has nothing to expect from England, she must necessarily come to the conclusion that any attempt to resist would be hopeless, and she will prepare to concede, from that hour, everything that Russia may desire. All the members of her government will thenceforward endeavour to make

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empire from this cause? The fall of the great empires hastily erected by military leaders, such as Alexander in ancient and Nadir in modern times, was but a division of the spoil when he who maintained the discipline of the camp had been removed, and has no connexion with the present question. But it is said the extension of the Roman empire caused its fall: it would be easy to show that such is not the fact; but supposing that the assertion were correct, let us ask how many centuries this cause took to produce the result. Are we prepared to wait as long for the dissolution of Russia, and to abide all the intermediate consequences of her aggrandizement?

themselves acceptable to those whose influence must be all-powerful.

If the present rulers of Persia were disposed to look only to their personal interests, without any regard to the present feelings or future circumstances of the nation, there can be little doubt that it might be made worth their while to abandon all idea of resisting Russia. It is only a sense of the duty they owe to the nation and their religion, and a feeling of patriotism, that has hitherto prevented them from pursuing this course; and if there be no calculable chance of successful resistance, it may be questioned whether that sense of duty and those feelings may not permit them rather to make advantageous terms while they yet may with the power which is ultimately (as they would then believe) to rule over them, than to protract a hopeless struggle for independence.

It would not be prudent, therefore, to rely too long on the patriotism of the rulers of Persia, however honourable may have been the love of independence they have hitherto shown. For should they lose all hope of support from England,—should they be persuaded that they have nothing to expect from us beyond friendly intercourse or friendly advice,—should they feel a conviction that in no circumstances can they depend on the support of England against Russia, an approximation to Russia would be the probable consequence. Persia values alliance with England as a protection against Russia. When it ceases to be so, it is of no political value to her.

CONCLUSION.

A REFERENCE to the map will show that Russia has advanced her frontier in every direction; and even the Caspian Sea, which appeared to present an impediment to her progress, she has turned to advantage by appropriating it to herself. It will be seen that the plains of Tartary have excited her cupidity, while the civilised states of Europe and Asia have been dismembered to augment her dominions. It will be seen that the acquisitions she has made from Sweden are greater than what remains of that ancient kingdom; that her acquisitions from Poland are as large as the whole Austrian empire; that the territory she has wrested from Turkey in Europe is equal to the dominions of Prussia, exclusive of her Rhenish provinces; and that her acquisitions from Turkey in Asia are equal in extent to all the smaller states of Germany, the Rhenish provinces of Prussia, Belgium, and Holland taken together; that the country she has conquered from Persia is about the size of England; that her acquisitions in Tartary have an area equal to Turkey in Europe, Greece, Italy, and Spain; and that the territory she has acquired within the last sixty-four years (since 1772) is greater in extent and importance than the whole empire she had in Europe before that time.

These are facts which rest on no doubtful evidence, yet they are such as may well startle every thinking man who has not previously reflected upon them, and such as no one who desires to reason on the present state of Europe or Asia ought to disregard.

Every portion of these vast acquisitions, except perhaps that in Tartary, has been obtained in opposition to the views, the wishes, and the interests of England. The dismemberment of Sweden, the partition of Poland, the conquest of the Turkish provinces, and of those dissevered from Persia, have all been injurious to British interests; and though some of them found favour for a time, and for a price given, at Vienna and Berlin, even the kingdoms that have shared her spoliations can now regard them with no other feeling than alarm.

The power and resources of Russia lie in the countries to the west of the Volga, not in the wilds of Siberia; and her empire in Europe has been nearly doubled in little more than half a century. In sixty-four years she has advanced her frontier eight hundred and fifty miles towards Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, and Paris; she has approached four hundred and fifty miles nearer to Constantinople; she has possessed herself of the capital of Poland, and has advanced to within a few miles of the capital of Sweden,* from which, when Peter the First mounted the throne, her frontier was distant three hundred miles. Since that time she has stretched herself forward about one thousand miles towards India, and the same distance towards the capital of Persia. The regiment that is now stationed at her furthest frontier post on the western shore of the Caspian has as great a distance to march back to Moscow as onward to Attock on the Indus, and is actually further from St. Petersburgh than from Lahore, the capital of the Punjab. The battalions of the Russian Imperial Guard that invaded Persia found, at the termination of the war, that they were as near

* Russia is now (1836) fortifying the island of Aland, within a few miles of Stockholm; and forces Polish prisoners, who are there working in chains, to rivet the fetters of Sweden.

to Herat as to the banks of the Don; that they had already accomplished half the distance from their capital to Delhi; and that therefore, from their camp in Persia, they had as great a distance to march back to St. Petersburgh as onward to the capital of Hindostan. Meanwhile the 'Moscow Gazette' threatens to dictate at Calcutta the next peace with England, and Russia never ceases to urge the Persian Government to accept from it, free of all cost, officers to discipline its troops, and arms and artillery for its soldiers, at the same time that her own battalions are ready to march into Persia whenever the Shah, to whom their services are freely offered, can be induced to require their assistance.

Thus, while she accuses the more popular governments of Europe of a desire to subvert existing institutions, Russia is herself undermining every throne within her reach; that of Poland she has pulled down. Since the battle of Narva she has never ceased, by intrigues and by force, to distract and encroach upon Sweden; since the battle of Pultava she has continually sought the subversion of Turkey; since the peace of Neustadt she has perseveringly pursued her conquests in Persia. Her intrigues in Germany, and her ambitious projects, are a source of continual alarm to Austria. France was threatened with invasion, in order to force upon it a government it had rejected. Greece is taught to believe that its tranquillity can be secured only when it shall be a Russian province; Prussia purchases forbearance by acquiescence in the views and even the caprices of the Emperor; hostile restrictions are directed against the commerce of England, and her empire in the East is openly threatened with attack. In the wilds of Tartary, on the east and on the west of the Caspian, on the north and on the south of the Black Sea, in the centre of Europe, on the

Baltic,—everywhere we find her a successful and persevering aggressor. With a larger extent of territory than ever before was subject to one crown, she thirsts insatiably for more, and studiously directs all energies, not to the means of improvement, but to further acquisition.

When the sovereigns of Europe twice demanded and twice enforced the abdication of the throne of France by Napoleon, on what ground did they justify the right they exercised to change the dynasty of France? Was it not that they considered it necessary to their own security? Did they not declare that the sovereignty of Napoleon was incompatible with the tranquillity of Europe,—that the whole history of his life had proved him to be incapable of restraining his ambition, or of permitting other nations to rest in peace, and that therefore they could place no reliance on any protestations of moderation and forbearance he might make? Were his views more grasping, his ambition more unbounded, his arts more subtle, his aggressions more unprovoked, or his acquisitions more extensive, than those of Russia? Or would the evil have been diminished if it had been perpetuated in a race of monarchs, instead of being dependent on the life of one man?

The right of interference in the affairs of independent states is founded on this single principle, that, as self-preservation is the first duty, so it supersedes all other obligations. The just application of the principle, no doubt, requires that danger should be shown, not to the minor interests merely, but to the vital interests of the state which appeals to it. But questions between nations are questions of moral equity, not of recognised law, for there are no judges of the law but the parties themselves, and no tribunal to which they can appeal. Such evidence of danger,

therefore, as must bring conviction to every unbiassed mind is all that nations can ever demand. If, then, the acquisition by Russia of a control over the power and resources of Turkey and Persia (and the one implies the other) would be dangerous to the existence of Austria, to the commerce and Indian possessions of England,—if it would endanger the tranquillity of the southern states of Europe, especially of France, and give to Russia a preponderance which would put in imminent peril the independence of more than one nation, the liberties of more than one people—there can be no doubt that the Powers of Europe have a right to take all practicable measures to prevent the occurrence of so great an evil to themselves; and that, having before them evidence that Russia does in truth contemplate the accomplishment of so dangerous a project, they have an undoubted right to oppose not only its consummation, but also every measure that may palpably tend towards such a result. One of the chief elements of every process of induction by which we endeavour to satisfy ourselves of the motives or intentions of an individual or of a body of men, is previous history and character. If we find that a government has for more than a century steadily pursued an important object through many successive reigns, and has sacrificed about a million of its subjects and an enormous amount of money in efforts to attain that object—if, year after year, we find it renewing these efforts, and accumulating means to effect its purpose—if we find it steadily advancing towards the same end, and resorting to the same means, it is impossible to doubt that it continues to entertain the same views; and, if it disavows them, it should show, by acts, and not by words only, that its policy is changed. Such is the position of Russia in relation to all her neighbours.

But, it may be said, the danger that would attend the successful execution of these designs is doubtful. The readiest mode of solving that doubt would be to inquire what course the nations of Europe, and England in particular, would pursue if Russia were to take possession of Constantinople. Austria talked of opposing it with two hundred thousand men. England and France do not pretend that they would for a moment submit to it. If these Powers, then, have predetermined that they will take up arms to remedy the evil, should it arise, they admit the magnitude of an evil which would justify a recourse to such a remedy, and are therefore bound to oppose every act which must obviously tend to produce it. The consequence will be the same whether the result be brought about by force of arms or by intrigue, and it is as necessary to oppose the one as the other.

If Russia should refuse to afford them the guarantees for the future, which the course of her policy and a regard to their own security entitle them to demand, it will be obvious that she has not only determined to persevere in her designs, but that she is utterly regardless of the peace of Europe, which she affects to have a sincere desire to maintain. If the other powers display a sensitive jealousy of all her proceedings, she must remember that her own acts and the position she occupies justify such sentiments. If her protestations of moderation should be received with distrust, she must feel that the use she has made of them has already destroyed their value, and that acts, not words, must henceforward be the only admissible evidence of her views. The only nation in Europe that attempts to aggrandize itself at the expense of its neighbours is Russia. The only state whose preponderance and ambition threaten to disturb the general tranquillity is Russia. The only power that seeks to put down an

existing government is Russia. All nations except Russia wish to maintain the independence of other countries—to preserve things as they are, and to build up rather than pull down—Russia alone threatens to overturn thrones, to subvert empires, and subdue nations hitherto independent. It is for her, therefore, to secure the tranquillity of the world, by retiring from the menacing position she has occupied, and thus to afford the guarantees for that confidence in her future intentions which will permit Europe to repose in safety. But the positions she now occupies both in Persia and in Turkey are so many pledges of her determination to pursue the policy from which she has not deviated for a hundred years.

No other power in Europe has any interest in Turkey or Persia, except to preserve their independence, and to promote their prosperity and welfare. None of them dream of preparing in either of these countries the means of aggression: they only seek to prevent or repel the aggressions of Russia. If she will *do* nothing to give us security for the future, and only renews her protestations of innocence and moderation, she must expect us to take such measures as we may judge most efficacious to impede and arrest the course she has so perseveringly pursued.

The integrity and independence of Turkey and of Persia are inseparably connected: the one cannot be maintained without the other, and both are necessary to the peace of Europe. Any attempt to subvert or dismember either of these Mahommedan kingdoms is, therefore, a blow struck at the peace and well-being of Christendom,—an unequivocal act of hostility to the nations of western and central Europe.

CONTINUATION.

SUPPLEMENTAL.—CHAPTER I.

Russian intrigues in Persia and Affghanistan — The Shah's expedition against Herat — Russian duplicity — Interference of Great Britain — Constant hostility of Russia towards British interests — Her designs upon India — Her treacherous conduct — Proceedings of Mahomed Ali — Treaties of London—Reforms in Turkey — Infamous policy of Russia in Bulgaria.

It is proposed in these additional chapters to examine the proceedings of Russia in the East, from the spring of 1836, when the foregoing observations were first published, to the present time, November, 1853; and while proceeding with that examination, to refer occasionally to the views announced in the preceding pages.

It was stated (p. 103 et seq.) that Russia sought to acquire such an influence, or such a position, in the countries bordering upon India, as might afford her the means of disturbing the British Empire in the East. What was then a matter of inference, has since become a matter of history. As early as 1835 her minister in Persia had commenced with that view a series of intrigues, both at the Court of the Shah, and in Affghanistan. They were conducted with great precautions to ensure secrecy, but they were discovered and exposed. The most important step in the series, that in fact on which the success of the scheme mainly depended, was taken in Persia. Mahommed Shah had succeeded to the throne in 1834, having previously been named heir apparent; and

being opposed by more than one of his uncles, had overcome their opposition by the aid of British officers and British money. But he had scarcely established his authority, when he resolved to attempt the conquest of Herat. The British Government had uniformly dissuaded Persia from seeking foreign conquests, or engaging in hostilities with any foreign power. While Great Britain desired to give security to Persia, for the purpose of strengthening the defences of India, she had at all times endeavoured to prevent the Shah from converting into means of aggression the elements of strength with which she supplied him for his own defence. She had endeavoured to dissuade him from hostilities with Turkey in 1822, and with Russia in 1826, although upon the latter occasion the provocation justified an appeal to arms; and she had succeeded in preventing an expedition against Herat in 1832. Russia had pursued an opposite course: she had instigated Persia to invade Turkey in 1822, and not only encouraged the projected expedition against Herat in 1832, but supplied an officer of engineers (the Baron Ache) to accompany it. When Mahommed Shah, in the winter of 1835-6, announced his intention to march against Herat in the spring, Mr. Ellis (now Sir Henry Ellis), then ambassador at the Court of the Shah, used all his influence to deter His Majesty from that enterprise, but discovered that his Russian colleague "had expressed himself in very strong terms respecting the expediency of the Shah losing no time in undertaking the expedition against Herat, and had assigned as a reason for the immediate urgency of his doing so, the probability of the British Government discouraging the attempt." This was on the 8th January, 1836. On the 15th of the same month he writes to the Secretary of State: "I feel quite assured that the British Government cannot

permit the extension of the Persian monarchy in the direction of Affghanistan, with a due regard to the tranquillity of India; that extension will at once bring Russian influence to the very threshold of our empire; and as Persia will not or dare not place herself in a condition of close alliance with Great Britain, our policy must be to consider her no longer an outwork for the defence of India, but as the first parallel from whence an attack may be commenced or threatened."

Mr. Ellis offered his mediation for the adjustment of the differences between the Shah and Prince Kamran of Herat; but that proposal, after being accepted by the Persian government, was ultimately rejected. Meanwhile, an envoy from Kandahar arrived at the Persian capital. He expatiated on the readiness of the Affghans, with the exception of Herat, to come under feudal submission to the Shah; and on the facility with which his Persian Majesty might, with their assistance, "like Nadir Shah, push his conquests to Delhi."

In July, 1836, matters were still further advanced, and Mr. Ellis intimates to Lord Palmerston that "his Majesty has been encouraged, and, I have been recently informed, has been promised positive assistance in this design by the Russians, who well know that the conquest of Herat and Kandahar by the Persians is, in fact, an advance for them towards India, if not for the purpose of actual invasion, certainly for that of intrigue and disorganization."

At length the Shah marched for Herat, accompanied by the Russian minister. The British mission declined to accompany the army, and the British officers then employed with it were withdrawn on the express ground that the expedition was undertaken in opposition to the views of the British Government.

For the purpose of securing his line of communica-

tions, it was said the Shah considered it necessary to attack the Turcoman tribes which inhabit the plains at the south-eastern extremity of the Caspian, whose chief offence appeared to have been the resistance they had offered to the Russians on that coast. In those uncultivated plains, and opposed by an active and warlike people, the Persian army suffered great privations, and, reduced to a deplorable condition, returned towards Persia in the month of October. The only person in the camp who opposed this retrograde movement was Count Simonich, the Russian minister, who urged the Shah to advance against Herat. In the mean time, Mr. M'Neill had replaced Mr. Ellis at the Court of Tehran, and on his representations the British Government remonstrated with the Court of St. Petersburgh on the conduct of Count Simonich in Persia. Lord Durham was then ambassador at the Court of the Czar, and his Lordship's answer, dated the 24th February, 1837, is in the following terms :—

"In conformity with your Lordship's instructions, I spoke to Count Nesselrode on the subject of the conduct of the Russian minister in Persia. His Excellency stated that, if Count Simonich had acted in the manner stated by Mr. M'Neill, he had done that which was in direct opposition to his instructions. The Count had been distinctly ordered to dissuade the Shah from prosecuting the present war at any time and in any circumstances. His Excellency said that he was convinced that our minister had been misinformed, and that Count Simonich had never given any such advice to the Shah as that which was attributed to him. Count Nesselrode further stated that he entirely agreed with the English Government as to the folly and impolicy of the course pursued by the Persian monarch."

We have seen that Count Simonich had continued

for an entire year to urge by every argument he could employ, and even by direct promises of support and assistance, the very course which Count Nesselrode declares to have been "in direct opposition to his instructions," as well as foolish and impolitic.

In the spring of 1837 the Shah again began to collect an army for the purpose of attacking Herat; but before the preparations had been much advanced, an envoy from Prince Kamran arrived at Tehran to adjust the differences between the two Courts, and offered every concession that Persia had demanded short of relinquishing the independence of Herat. The envoy of Kamran had put himself into communication with the British envoy, who was also invited by the Persian government to take part in the negotiation. But it soon became apparent that the object of the Persian government was the sovereignty of Herat, Kandahar, and Cabool; and it was distinctly intimated that no conditions which would not satisfy these pretensions would be accepted by the Persian government.

On the 23rd July the Shah again marched against Herat, and on the same day Count Simonich appears to have addressed to his government a dispatch, in which he stated that he had endeavoured to dissuade his Persian Majesty from engaging in that enterprise, and added,—"If his Majesty was not able to convince me of the necessity of making war upon Kamran, he at least proved that he was immoveable in his resolution." On the 8th of September this dispatch was communicated to Mr. Milbanke, the British minister at St. Petersburgh, for the purpose of conveying to the British Government a renewed assurance that the Cabinet of St. Petersburgh and the Russian representative in Persia were acting in concert with the British Government. Yet a few days before this communi-

cation was made to the British representative, the Russian Government had dispatched a secret emissary to Cabool and Kandahar, furnished with letters from the Emperor to the chiefs of those principalities, authorised to promise them pecuniary assistance from Russia, and instructed to promote their acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the Shah of Persia, on condition that his Majesty should capture Herat, and annex it to Kandahar. This secret agent of the Czar, Captain Vicovich, aide-de-camp of the general commanding at Orenburg, arrived in the Shah's camp, which had not yet performed half the distance to Herat, on the 10th of October, and from thence set out on the 13th to execute the task assigned him in Affghanistan. This imperial agent "had everywhere announced that he was sent to intimate the arrival at Asterabad of a large Russian force, destined to co-operate with the Shah's army against Herat." He was furnished by the Shah with funds, with letters for the Affghan chiefs, and with an escort. At Kandahar he found a British agent, Mr. Leech, and, at Cabool, Captain (afterwards Sir Alexander) Burnes. His proceedings at both places were but a series of intrigues hostile to Great Britain, and tending to promote the views of the Shah, which the Court of St. Petersburgh assured the British Government of their anxious desire to discourage. In consequence of these intrigues, and their influence on the Affghan chiefs, the British agents were recalled, perhaps somewhat hastily, from Cabool and Kandahar, and a treaty was concluded by the mediation and under the guarantee of the Russian minister between Kohundil Khan of Kandahar, and the Shah of Persia, by which the former agreed to become subject to Persia, and the latter undertook to defend Kandahar against any enemy who might attack it. The Russian minister undertook to see these stipu-

lations fulfilled, and, if necessary, to compel the Persian Government, by force of arms, to fulfil its engagements. Arrangements were entered into by which the Russian frontier on the side of Khiva, which was to be conquered, and the Persian frontier on the side of Herat, which was also to be conquered, were to be defined. Russia promised to relinquish a claim against Persia for 250,000*l.*, to be applied to the prosecution of the war against Herat. The Russian minister took the command of the Persian troops in the trenches before Herat, and directed the siege and assault of the fortress, and a regiment of Russian deserters, the surrender of which had been demanded from Persia before the army had marched from Tehran, but which had been permitted to accompany it, actually took part in the siege and assault of Herat, after it had been formally surrendered to the Russian minister, and had ceased to be in the service of the Shah.

But the assault was repulsed. A British force appeared in the Persian Gulf, and the Shah, on the demand of the British Minister, coupled with a threat of hostilities if that demand was not complied with, raised the siege of Herat, and returned to his capital.

The Russian Government hastened to extricate itself, as it best could, from the disgraceful position in which it was placed by the detection and exposure of its proceedings and the failure of its schemes. The acts of its agents were disavowed: those agents themselves were recalled and disgraced. Captain Vicovich, shortly after his return to St. Petersburgh, disappeared, and was said to have destroyed himself; and the most solemn assurances were given to the British Government that the Court of St. Petersburgh would not again interfere in the affairs of Affghanistan.

Here then, on the one hand, were the Russian minister at the Court of Persia, and the Russian

agents in the countries towards India, pursuing for three successive years a course unequivocally hostile to Great Britain—pushing on Persia, and aiding her to break down the defences of India; negotiating and guaranteeing treaties hostile to British interests, which bound Russia, in certain events, to employ her military forces in those countries; adjusting the future line of frontier between Russia and the possessions which, by her assistance, Persia was to acquire in Affghanistan; and all this for the avowed purpose of opening the road to India. That such was the purpose is clearly stated by the envoy of Dost Mahommed Khan. In a letter from him, addressed to that chief and received at Cabool about the middle of November, 1837, is the following passage :—

"The Russian Ambassador, who is always with the Shah, has sent you a letter, which I enclose. The substance of his verbal messages to you is, that if the Shah does everything you want, so much the better; and if not, the Russian Government will furnish you (the Ameer) with everything wanting.

"The object of the Russian Elchee, by his message, is to have a road to the English (India), and for this they are very anxious. He is waiting for your answer, and I am sure he will serve you. The letter you sent through Aga Mahomed Kashee pleased the Shah very much, and he (Mahomed Hossein) will soon return to you."

On the other hand, throughout the whole course of these proceedings, the Russian Government continued to give the most positive assurances that it was acting in entire concert with the British Government in Persia; that it disapproved of the Shah's expedition to Herat; and that it was endeavouring to dissuade him from undertaking it at any time or in any circumstances.

Are we to believe that a Russian minister, at a foreign Court, and a host of inferior agents, may continue for several successive years, in direct opposition to their instructions, and after the attention of their government has been directed to their conduct, to carry on with impunity, in the name of their government, measures the most hostile to an allied state?—or, are we to accuse Russia of bad faith? If we assert the good faith of the Emperor and his cabinet, we must deny his authority in his own empire. If we attribute to him authority, we must deny his good faith. But whichever of these alternatives we may choose to adopt, the inference is equally inevitable, that *from the professions or assurances of the Russian government we can derive no security.*

So far as the whole influence of her name, aided by a considerable expenditure of money, by the active military assistance of her officers, by liberal promises of support, and by formal engagements, could be employed to excite all the nations and tribes which occupy the country intervening between her frontier and ours to combine in opposing the views and the interests of England, and ultimately to contemplate an attack on the British empire in India—that influence and those means were as effectually wielded by her agents as if she had been prepared to adopt their acts as her own, and to avow instead of repudiating them.

It has been stated (p. 4) that in 1717 Peter I. made a treacherous attempt to seize the principality of Khiva to the east of the Caspian Sea; and (p. 90) that immediately after the treaty of Adrianople troops were collected at Orenbourg for the invasion of Khiva, and were prevented from proceeding on that expedition by the revolution in Poland. It has also been incidentally mentioned, that, in the course of the arrangements between the Shah and the Russian minister

during the siege of Herat in 1838, the conquest of Khiva by Russia, and the adjustment of the frontiers of Russia and Persia in the countries lying between the Caspian and Herat, was a part of the scheme that was contemplated and discussed. In 1839 a Russian army, of from 10,000 to 15,000 men, which had been collected at Orenbourg under the command of General Peroffski, in anticipation of the Shah's success at Herat, actually invaded Khiva. But the difficulty of procuring water in those arid *steppes* during the summer and autumn had induced the General to select the winter season, when there is snow upon the ground. The expedition was disastrous: the inclemency of the weather, and the fearful drifts of snow, which were driven by the tempests across those open plains, were such as it was found impossible to contend with. The army, after losing a large proportion of its numbers, retraced its steps with great difficulty to Orenbourg, where it arrived in the most miserable plight.

The conquest of Khiva by Russia, which was announced by Count Simonich to the Shah in 1838, was part of the general scheme for the advance of Russian power and influence towards India: although the other parts of the plan had failed, and the acts of the agents engaged in carrying it out had been disavowed, that portion which it was still in the power of Russia to prosecute was not relinquished without an effort to accomplish it.

Let us contemplate for a moment the position that Russia would have occupied if the scheme had succeeded, and that part of it which related to Affghanistan undoubtedly would have succeeded until overturned by force of arms if Herat had fallen. By the concerted action of Russia and Persia, the sovereignty of the Shah would have been established in Kandahar and Cabool as well as at Herat under the

guarantee of Russia; Khiva would have become a Russian province, extending along the course of the Oxus probably to the northern slopes of the Hindoo Koosh —the British and Russian empires in Asia would then have been in contact.

Regarded merely with reference to its military bearings, there might not be anything very alarming in that contiguity, but it must be kept in mind that there would have been an essential difference between the relative positions of the two parties. The chief object of Russia would be disorganization, which she has so often systematically promoted; and in a settled government, such as India, the injury to be inflicted by that system is infinitely greater than could be retaliated by similar means upon the provinces she would have acquired in Khiva or upon her ally of Persia. In those countries there never has been that established organization which is necessary to the prosperity or even to the maintenance of the British Government in India. Contention and disorder would amply serve her purpose; nothing but tranquillity and order would serve ours.

Let it not be forgotten that it was in the midst, not of peace only and general professions of amity, but of special and repeated assurances of cordial co-operation with the British Government in Persia, that this flagrant attempt was secretly made to acquire, by hostile intrigues, a position and influence in the countries bordering upon India, that would have enabled her to disturb, if not to threaten, the British Empire in the East, an attack upon which was stated to be the ultimate object of all these discreditable proceedings.

Great Britain has in India an empire which she holds by a tenure so peculiar, that she is prudently jealous of the establishment, in its immediate vicinity, of any foreign European influence. She has therefore sought, by forming alliances with some of the neigh-

bouring nations, not only to protect India from actual invasion, but also to exclude from it the rival influence of other states. Independent of the necessity for adopting these precautionary measures, which arose out of the very nature of our power in India, there were circumstances in the position, the previous policy and views of Russia, and in the character of her government, which pointed her out as the country from which danger was to be apprehended, and against the effects of whose intrigues and violence it was therefore especially necessary to adopt every prudent and practicable means of defence.

Still the distance which separated her frontier from ours was so considerable; the difficulty of marching an army sufficiently numerous to endanger our possession of India was conceived to be so great; the assurances of friendly feeling towards England which Russia renewed from time to time were so strong; the protestations of the absence of all ambitious views—of all desire for territorial aggrandizement, or even for exclusive influence in the East, were so solemn—and Lord Durham was so fully satisfied of the perfect sincerity of all her professions—that this country was lulled into a feeling of security, from which the voice of the few who did not participate in these sentiments was unable to rouse it. Russia had heard it said that we had entered into recognizances of a thousand millions to keep the peace. She heard a party, whose weight she greatly overrated, opposing every augmentation of our army or navy, and even questioning the value of India and of our Colonies;—and thinking that she had discovered that the temper of the nation was docile and its spirit dormant, her government and her agents cast aside all apprehension of the only danger which would have deterred them. Yet it was not until civil war in Canada promised to

direct the disposable military resources of England to the opposite extremity of her empire, that the intrigues of the Russian agents in the direction of India took such a shape that it was impossible to doubt either the nature of their plans or the tendency of their proceedings.

When Russia withdrew her forces from Constantinople in 1833, she claimed admiration for the disinterested friendship and the magnanimity she had displayed. But she had used the presence of her fleet and army as a means of procuring surreptitiously the treaty of Unkiar Skellessi, which placed Turkey under her exclusive protection, and gave her the virtual command of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles (see pp. 91-93). The discovery of that clandestine transaction had produced strong feelings of distrust and resentment in all the Cabinets of Europe, and England and France protested against it. The exposure of the hostile intrigues directed against the tranquillity of British India for three successive years, during which she had never ceased to give the British Government special assurances of friendship and co-operation, had increased those feelings, and seemed to prove that no reliance could be placed on her professions. Her reputation was damaged, and it became necessary to repair it.

The proceedings of Mahomed Ali in Syria threatened the permanent dismemberment of the Ottoman empire, if not the destruction of the Sultan's power. The Turkish forces had repeatedly been defeated—the Turkish fleet had been treacherously delivered over to the Viceroy of Egypt—Ibrahim Pasha had overrun Syria, had invaded Mesopotamia, established Mahomed Ali's authority in Arabia, and threatened to advance upon Constantinople. In the midst of these disasters Sultan Mahmoud had died, and, when the youthful

Abdul Medjid ascended the throne, it appeared that unless assisted by his allies he would be forced to submit to such conditions as his rebellious vassal might impose. The great powers deemed it necessary to put an end to the troubles in the Levant, which interrupted commerce and endangered the peace of Europe; and the negociations which ensued afforded Russia the occasion she sought to retrace some of her steps, and to regain the confidence she had forfeited.

The energy which Mahomed Ali had displayed in his government, the success of his arms, the extent of his military and naval resources—196,000 men under arms, of which 155,000 were disciplined troops, and twenty-one ships of the line, with nine large frigates—led some even of the statesmen of Europe to speculate on the possible regeneration of the Ottoman Empire in his hands, or at least on the establishment of a separate Mahommedan kingdom, which might serve as a substitute for the power of the Sultan, supposed to be hopelessly prostrated. But Great Britain, having more confidence in the moral force wielded by the Sultan, and regarding the power of Mahomed Ali as destitute of all the moral elements of stability, believed, if the present difficulties could be overcome, that Turkey would yet maintain and strengthen the position assigned to her in the balance of power in Europe. She regarded the revolt and the successes of the Pasha of Egypt as dangerous to that balance, and, desiring to maintain the integrity and the independence of Turkey, proposed to reduce the Pasha to obedience, and re-establish the Sultan's authority in that portion of his dominions in which his rebellious vassal had usurped the government.

France desired to preserve the Ottoman empire, and was prepared, in concert with the other powers, to defend Constantinople and the throne of the Sultan

against any attack that might be made upon either by Mahomed Ali. She joined with the other four great powers in presenting to the Porte on the 27th of July, 1839, a collective note, which assured the Sultan of their protection; and Baron Roussin, the French ambassador, was instructed to present to the Turkish Government a note, in which the Sultan was requested, if he invited to Constantinople the naval or military forces of any other power, to permit the French fleet to pass the Dardanelles. But the Pasha of Egypt had been more intimately connected with France than with any other European nation, and the statesmen then at the head of the French government had formed an exaggerated estimate of his power, while at the same time their distrust of Russia was greater and more openly announced than that of any other cabinet. They were of opinion that Mahomed Ali could successfully resist any means of coercion that Great Britain and Austria could bring to bear upon him, and believed that, if coercive measures were resorted to, it would inevitably lead to the employment of a Russian military force in Asia Minor and Syria, which they would regard as a greater evil even to the Sultan, than the hereditary possession of Egypt and Syria by Mahomed Ali and his descendants.

Russia, looking with no favour on the cordiality of the relations then growing up between France and England, and finding herself pledged by the treaty of Unkiar Skellessi to protect Turkey, eagerly accepted the proposition of the British Government, and sent her ablest and most accomplished diplomatist, Baron Brunnow, to this country to effect a cordial reconciliation between the courts, founded upon the coincidence of their views and objects in the Levant. The baron offered the virtual renunciation of the treaty of Unkiar Skellessi, on the condition that the great powers would

unite to protect the Sultan, and to enforce the acceptance by Mahomed Ali of such an arrangement as might be agreed upon in concert with the Sultan. The views of Great Britain had been too clearly and unequivocally announced, and were founded upon convictions too firmly established, to admit of her receding from the course she had been the first to propose, and she still hoped to overcome the objections of the French Government to concur in it. But Russia appears to have discovered, that, independent of the reasons assigned by France for disapproving of coercive measures, there were domestic considerations that would prevent her Government from accepting the proposals of England, and she knew, at the same time, that Austria and Prussia were ready to accept them; she therefore contemplated not only her own reconciliation with Great Britain, but the probable isolation of France. This latter result the British Government made every effort to avoid, and in the hope of ultimate success postponed the conclusion of the proposed convention till it was no longer possible to delay it. More than once in the course of the negociations, which were continued for many months, it was hoped that the objections of the French Government had been overcome; but these hopes were not realised.

Both the French and the British Governments were desirous to set aside the treaty of Unkiar Skellessi, against which they had both protested as soon as its existence was discovered, and both therefore appreciated the advantage to be gained by accepting that part of the Russian proposition. But France, drawing closer her connexion with Mahomed Ali, and believing that any attempt to coerce him must bring a Russian army into Syria, could not overcome her repugnance to any course that she considered likely to lead to that result. Great Britain, on the other hand, estimating

more accurately, as the result proved, the nature of the Pasha's position, and perceiving its weakness, was not deterred by apprehensions which she did not share. Baron Brunnow found no difficulty in placing his master in entire accordance upon this question with the British Government, whose proposition for the pacification of the Levant had in fact been adopted at St. Petersburgh. But when the part to be assigned to each in the co-operation they were to undertake came to be discussed, the Russian envoy proposed that, if armed intervention should be necessary, *the defence of Constantinople and the Bosphorus should be assigned to Russia alone.* Lord Palmerston required that in such an event the Dardanelles should be opened to the fleets of the co-operating powers, when the Bosphorus was opened to the Russian forces. But this was a demand which the baron was not authorised to concede, and which he referred to St. Petersburgh. In the mean time he urged the necessity of instant recourse to active measures, *leaving the question about the Dardanelles to be settled, if and when it should arise.* He even urged the British Government to take some active measures against the Pasha, without awaiting the conclusion of any formal agreement with the other powers. But the British minister rejected both proposals, and made the acquiescence of Russia in his demand as to the Dardanelles a *sine quâ non.* The Court of St. Petersburgh could not have rejected that demand without renewing the distrust which it was so anxious to remove, and after a little consideration it gave way; but only on the condition *that a point should be determined in the Sea of Marmora, beyond which the ships of war permitted to pass the Dardanelles should not be at liberty to advance towards Constantinople and the Bosphorus.* She felt the jealousy of a lover, and could not with complacency permit any one else to approach the

object of her affections. This puerile demand was obviously untenable, and is worth recording only as an indication of character and sentiment.

The proposed convention was concluded at London on the 15th of July, 1840, between Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Turkey. The four powers, "*animated by the desire of maintaining the integrity and independence of the Ottoman empire as a security for the peace of Europe*," engaged to unite their efforts in order to determine Mahomed Ali to conform to the arrangement agreed upon. If he should refuse, they were "to take, at the request of the Sultan, measures concerted and settled between them in order to carry that arrangement into effect." If after refusing the arrangement he should direct forces against Constantinople, they agreed to send their forces for its defence, "upon the express demand of the Sultan;" the forces so sent to remain as long as the Sultan required their presence, and "to withdraw simultaneously to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean respectively, when his Highness shall deem their presence no longer necessary."

They recognised "the ancient rule of the Ottoman empire, in virtue of which it has at all times been prohibited for ships of war of foreign powers to enter the straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus," and engaged to respect it. The Sultan undertook "to maintain this principle invariably established as the ancient rule of the empire; and, *as long as the Porte is at peace*, to admit no foreign ship of war into the straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles."

Thus was the treaty, surreptitiously exacted from the Porte at Unkiar Skellessi in 1833, tacitly set aside in 1840, the command of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles restored to Turkey on its ancient footing, and the guardianship of the four powers substituted for the exclusive protection of Russia.

No such concession had previously been made by Russia in favour of Turkey, unless under the pressure of difficulties, or from apprehension of danger; but she accomplished her avowed object, for she regained the confidence of England, and of the other powers except France; and that power she succeeded in isolating, so far as the affairs of the Levant were concerned.

The surrender of the great fortress of Acre to Admiral Stopford in a few hours, and the success of the naval and military operations in Syria conducted by Commodore Napier, accomplished in a few weeks the objects contemplated by the treaty of London, demonstrated the real weakness of Mahomed Ali and the moral force of the Sultan, and re-established that sovereign's authority on a firm basis, without affording any occasion for the active intervention of Russia.

The aid afforded to Turkey on that occasion saved the Ottoman empire, if not from utter ruin, certainly from anarchy and hopeless prostration. Russia, whose object it had been, and still is, to raise herself upon the ruins of Turkey, and to obtain exclusive possession of the Black Sea, the Dardanelles, and the Bosphorus, had contributed, and actually desired in all sincerity, to save Turkey from Mahomed Ali. Whatever view she might have taken of his rebellion, while it only weakened but did not threaten to overthrow the Sultan, it could not suit her views to see a Mahommedan power, which she regarded as intimately connected with France and hostile to herself, preparing to overturn or supplant the government which she had undertaken to protect. She foresaw the danger of having to contend with the forces of Mahomed Ali, backed by the far more formidable power of France. She had coveted, and by means not the most creditable had obtained, the position of sole protector of Turkey, but as soon as the office threatened to become hazardous and burdensome

she hastened to share it with her allies, and to make a merit of the concession. She knew how easy it would be to stir up the Mahommedan population against the hereditary enemy of their race, even when she appeared in the guise of protector of the Sultan, and that to undertake single-handed the defence of Turkey, as by treaty she had engaged to do, might have involved her in disgrace. She therefore prudently relinquished the exclusive pretensions she had set up; but she did not therefore relinquish her hereditary policy. There can be little doubt, however, that in the commencement at least of these negociations on the affairs of the Levant she assumed a solidity in the power of Mahomed Ali which it did not possess, and a prostration of the power of Turkey which had not yet been effected, and which did not ensue. Indeed England appears to have been the only one of the powers of Europe who justly appreciated the relative positions of the two parties, who detected the unsoundness of the foundation on which Mahomed Ali had raised what appeared to be a formidable power, or discerned the stability of that on which the Sultan's authority rested. "The house of the one was built upon the sands of Egypt, that of the other was founded on the rocks of Roumelia." To this more accurate knowledge, and to the firmness and prudence of the British minister, who led on the other powers ultimately to accept it as the foundation of their plans, does western Europe owe the present strength of Turkey, and the resistance she is able to offer to the lawless ambition that nothing but force can restrain.

France had not been a party to the convention of July, 1840. She stood aloof, disdaining to seek or to accept participation in a measure which she attributed to the influence of Russia, who had given her just cause of offence. The Court of St. Petersburgh, the consistent advocate and champion of what it considers legitimate

despotism, and the avowed enemy of every manifestation of the popular will, had viewed with alarm the revolution of 1830, and never ceased to treat with disrespect the prince whom the French people had called to their throne. Russia had not only shown her resentment at the change of dynasty, but had contemplated interposing by intrigues, and even by force of arms, to compel that great nation to submit to the monarch it had rejected, and to desert the sovereign it had chosen. Great Britain, mindful of her own history, had at once accepted the change which France had accomplished in her domestic arrangements; and believing that the cordial alliance of these two powers is necessary to the progress or perhaps to the defence of civilisation, and is demanded not less by the dictates of prudence than by a regard for the welfare of mankind, saw with regret the isolation of France on the Eastern question. The British Government therefore earnestly desired to remove the impediments which for the moment prevented the co-operation of allies upon whose good understanding the safety of all that is worth preserving or fostering in Europe mainly depends. On the 13th of July, 1841, that desirable object was happily accomplished. Another convention was then signed in London, ostensibly respecting the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, but the effect of which was again to associate France with Great Britain and the other powers for the defence of the Ottoman empire. The chief danger to that empire, as all the world felt and knew, arose from the unscrupulous ambition of Russia, and its safety could hardly have been ensured until the greatest of the military powers had formally announced its intentions.

The treaty of July, 1840, had declared the desire by which the high contracting parties were animated to maintain the integrity and independence of the Ottoman

empire. The treaty of July, 1841, announced that the sovereigns of Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia, "being persuaded that their union and their agreement offer to Europe the most certain pledge for the preservation of the general peace, the constant object of their solicitude; and their Majesties being desirous of testifying this agreement, by giving to the Sultan a manifest proof of the respect which they entertain for his sovereign rights, as well as their desire to see consolidated the repose of his empire; their said Majesties have resolved," &c.

The five powers which concluded that convention with the Porte thus bound themselves to respect the sovereign rights of the Sultan, and to promote the consolidation of the repose of his empire. Any act by which one of them should thenceforth attempt to trench upon those rights, or to disturb that repose, would be a manifest breach of faith, not only towards Turkey, but also towards the other powers which were parties to that treaty, unless indeed it should be established that Turkey had committed some act of such a nature as would cancel the engagement.

Turkey had suffered much, but she had also gained a great deal of valuable knowledge. The shock which she had received awoke her rudely but effectually from the dream of internal security into which she had fallen. The effective support of the great powers gave her confidence to proceed with her reforms. The increased intercourse with Europe which her danger led her to cultivate enlightened and enlarged the views of many of her ablest men. Her Mahommedan subjects, averse to change, felt and acknowledged the insufficiency of the ancient system, and, having been saved from Mahommedan enemies by the intervention of Christian friends, were prepared for the more liberal toleration which the Government desired to establish. Her armies

had been defeated in almost every encounter by the disciplined troops of Egypt, and all classes began to believe that there must be virtue in a system that could enable the Fellahs to beat the Turks. The regular army at length became a national institution, of which the nation began to be proud. The exigencies of her position had made it necessary to conciliate all classes of her subjects by more careful attention to the equality and justice of the administration; and the prejudices that impeded the introduction of a better system having given way before the necessities of the government and the danger of the times, the Sultan and his advisers were enabled to proceed without obstruction in a prudent and progressive course of amelioration. The result has been that, of the despotic governments of Europe, perhaps there is not one in which the civil and fiscal administrations are more just, or less oppressive or vexatious, than in Turkey. With these ameliorations in her government, the loyalty of her population has become warmer, and even her Christian subjects are now aware that their condition would not be improved, but deteriorated, by exchanging the government of Turkey for that of any of her neighbours. As these changes have advanced steadily but slowly, for nothing moves rapidly in Turkey, the resources of the country have been gradually developed, and its commerce has extended from year to year. Seminaries of instruction in literature, science, and arts have been established, and the learning of Europe has been made accessible to many by the study of foreign languages. A body of military officers of respectable acquirements, and capable of being compared in that respect with those of some nations of higher pretensions, have been trained in the military schools; in short, it may not be too much to say that the progress of Turkey in all that

indicates advancement in the art of governing well is such as several of the Christian nations of Europe cannot pretend to boast of, and would do well to imitate.

That steady progress has been effected in the face of difficulties systematically aggravated and multiplied by the intrigues and active though secret hostility of Russia. True to her principles, she sends her disorganising propaganda before her to prepare the way wherever she proposes to plant her foot. The presence of her secret agents announces her approach, as the stealthy jackal precedes the lion, or the pilot-fish indicates the movements of the shark.

Bulgaria, stretching along the southern banks of the Danube, from above Widdin to the Euxine, for nearly four hundred miles, and with a sea-coast of nearly two hundred, occupies an area of about thirty thousand square miles. The range of the Balkan, which forms its southern boundary, sends down towards the Danube numerous parallel ranges of hills, diminishing in height as they descend, till they sink into slight undulations in the plains. Between these ranges lie a succession of beautiful valleys of great fertility, each watered by its own stream, and widening till it expands into the great alluvial plain that occupies the basin of the Danube. The uplands and sides of these valleys are clothed or sprinkled with wood—on the slopes hang orchards and vineyards, and mulberry groves for the silkworm—the lower grounds wave with corn. The choicest flowers of our gardens are scattered profusely over hill and dale—the hum of bees is incessant, for every house has its hives. Herds of buffaloes and cattle, and of sheep with wool little inferior to the merino of Spain, and of horses, highly esteemed in those countries of horsemen, cover the pastures. This rich and beautiful country is inhabited by about two millions

of Bulgarians, Sclavonians, and Turks, of whom more than one half are Mahommedans. Besides its corn and wine, its wool and silk, wax and honey, cattle, sheep, and horses, tallow, hides, and timber, all of which it exports to a large or a considerable amount, it has iron-mines of great value, which have for centuries been successfully worked, and manufactures of iron and of leather, which supply the neighbouring countries. In the principal town, Sophia, the clang of the hammer is incessant. The peasant population, industrious, cleanly, and prosperous, is better dressed, better housed, and in easier circumstances than the agricultural population of most of the other countries in Europe. Unquestionably there is not anywhere, except in Turkey, a Sclavonic peasant population of nearly equal amount that in these respects can bear comparison with the peasants of Bulgaria, which has been subject to the Turks for five hundred years. In Russia there is nowhere a body of peasants, bond or free, Greek, Latin, or Lutheran, who in their most ambitious dreams could have imagined, far less aspired to, the material welfare of the Bulgarian.

But Russia has already commenced her demoralising system in that country. An English gentleman, of the highest intelligence and honour, visited Bulgaria a year or two ago, for the purpose of inquiring into the causes and circumstances of a contest between the Christians and the Mahommedans in the districts near Widdin. He found that it had been produced by the active intrigues of secret foreign agency, exciting the Christians to revolt, and at the same time inflaming the anger of the Mahommedans, and urging them on to acts of violence. He sums up his account as follows :—

" The alleged revolution is thus concluded, and the attitude of the Turkish Government is really worthy of

remark, not only as offering a striking contrast to the conduct of those powers which have endeavoured to embroil its affairs, but also as furnishing a profitable lesson of forbearance and tact to other cabinets of Europe, which have been similarly situated and have acted differently. Here there are neither executions nor even arrests, and the only persons prosecuted are those who were employed by the Government; provisions are supplied to the families of the victims among the supposed enemies of the Sultan, and steps are being taken for the purpose of restoring their plundered property. The insurgents are informed, that if they have any grievances or complaints to lay before the Government they will be listened to with attention and promptly taken into consideration; and a deputation of five being selected from among them, every facility is afforded by the Pasha for their immediately proceeding to Constantinople, with the view of explaining their position and conduct.

"Such is the modern system of Turkey, and such the ancient policy of Russia. Let justice be done between them."—"The moderation of the Turkish Government under these harassing circumstances, the absence of all revengeful feelings after them, and the perfect impartiality displayed in the manner of treating the two classes of subjects (Christians and Mahommedans) in collision, make it a matter of merited congratulation that its issue should be so favourable; while the Austro-Russian intrigue, which has not even obtained the sanction of success, as many bad actions have, and which has failed partly because it was an anachronism, and partly because Turkey cannot now be shorn of her provinces by such manœuvres as she was formerly, has procured for its authors nothing else than the ridicule of enlightened politicians by its

failure, and the abhorrence of all upright minds by its detection."

But these abortive attempts to excite mutual hatred and contention between the Christians and Mahommedans of Bulgaria are not the most dangerous means of demoralising the population to which Russia has recourse. She employs her ecclesiastics in an organized scheme to poison the minds of the rising generation, and has taken advantage of the religious toleration of Turkey to convert the schools for religious instruction into seminaries for inculcating treason. "It is by education," says the gentleman above quoted, "that this deep-laid scheme is in a course of active execution; no less than twenty-one schools have been instituted of late in the different towns (of Bulgaria) for this purpose; the teachers have all come from Kiew in Russia. Hatred to the Sultan, and attachment to the Czar, are assiduously taught; and their catechism in the Sclavonian tongue, which was translated to me, is more political than religious, while it openly alludes to the incorporation of Bulgaria in the Russian empire. Besides this, the *propaganda* of the Pan-Sclavonian Hetairia, and the agency of other political interests opposed to those of Turkey, are efficiently represented by skilful apostles in Bulgaria."

This is the *protection* which Russia demands that the Sultan shall give her a right to exercise over the Greek Church in Turkey!—this is the *status quo* which Russia requires the Sultan to engage himself by a treaty with her to maintain! It is while she is thus polluting the minds of that population, and making religious instruction the instrument of her perfidy, that she has the effrontery to complain of the injustice of suspecting that her acquisition of the right to *protect* 11,000,000 of the Christian subjects of the Sultan

can in any degree interfere with his sovereign rights, or the security and tranquillity of the Ottoman empire. The catechism taught in these Bulgarian schools is probably similar in its general character to that taught in the schools of Poland by order of the Russian Government.* With a knowledge of these facts—and many more of a similar character are established by unquestionable evidence—knowing, too, the whole course of Russia's proceedings towards Turkey for more than sixty years, and the ascertained and even avowed objects of her policy, it is clearly impossible that any honest man could advise the Sultan to concede the demand that has been made upon him by the Czar, unless he is prepared to recommend absolute and ignominious submission. To speak in the same breath of maintaining the integrity and the independence of Turkey, and conceding that demand, would be simply dishonest.

* Extracts from the new Catechism prepared for the use of schools and churches in the Polish provinces of Russia—literally translated :—

"*Qu.* 1. How is the authority of the emperor to be considered in reference to the spirit of Christianity?

"*Ans.* As proceeding immediately from God.

"*Qu.* 17. What are the supernaturally revealed motives for this worship (of the emperor)?

"*Ans.* The supernaturally revealed motives are, that the emperor is the vicegerent and minister of God to execute the Divine commands; and consequently disobedience to the emperor is identified with disobedience to God himself; that God will reward us in the world to come for the worship and obedience we render the emperor, and punish us severely to all eternity should we disobey or neglect to worship him. Moreover God commands us to love and obey from the inmost recesses of the heart every authority, and particularly the emperor, not from worldly considerations, but from apprehensions of the final judgment."

CHAPTER II.

Occupation by Russia of Wallachia and Moldavia — Her attempts to destroy their commerce — Her invasion of Finland — Remonstrance of the King of Sweden — Interference of Russia in Servia — Her unfounded claim to be Protector of the Greek religion in Turkey — Treaty of Kainarji — Russia's hypocritical inculcation of good faith — The "Holy Places" — Count Nesselrode's reasoning — Probable motive of the desire of Russia to fetter the hands of the Sultan with reference to his Christian subjects — "Pan-Sclavism" — Mischiefs arising from the encroachments of Russia — Duty of the Western Powers.

The Turkish principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, which Russia has now occupied for the eighth time, have long excited her cupidity, and there is no form of violence, fraud, or corruption that she has not resorted to for the purpose of procuring their separation from Turkey and their incorporation with her own dominions; but hitherto the jealousy of other powers has prevented the consummation of her design. These countries, remarkable for their fertility, occupy an area of from forty-five to fifty thousand square miles, and contain a population of nearly two millions. In all ages they have had a large surplus of agricultural produce to dispose of, and were the granaries of the legions of Trajan as they have been of the Russian armies. During the last eighty-five years they have been occupied for more than thirty by Muscovite myrmidons, and have been the battle-field of the Russian and the Turk in not less than twenty campaigns. Since they have enjoyed comparative exemption from the evils of war, the produce has continued to increase, and the trade, especially with England, to extend. The first English ship took in a cargo of corn at Galatz in 1834; from two hundred and fifty to three hundred now find cargoes annually at that port and Brailow, and, together with

the foreign vessels engaged in the trade, bring to this country about five hundred thousand quarters of grain, besides other produce. About two hundred thousand quarters more find their way to Great Britain through indirect channels. The whole of our imports from those countries are paid for in British manufactures, and the trade has been extending every year. The total export of grain from Wallachia and Moldavia amounts to nearly five millions of quarters, and may be largely augmented, for agriculture is there in the rudest state. The progressive increase of produce and commerce in the principalities within the last twenty years is a remarkable illustration of the difficulty of destroying a profitable trade. Before the trade with the principalities was opened, the only countries exporting corn from the Black Sea were the Russian provinces; but when the Danube came to be frequented by our ships and those of other nations, the rapidity with which production increased was wonderful, amounting on an average to not less than from six to seven hundred thousand quarters a year for export, besides the greater consumption which always accompanies increased production and a thriving trade. Russia saw that the Principalities were becoming her rivals, and, more formidable still, were making rapid strides in civilization, which, if not arrested, would speedily make them no longer disposed to submit to her more barbarous domination. She had established by treaty a line of quarantines to separate Wallachia and Moldavia from Turkey, and she had obtained the exclusive control of the only navigable mouth of the Danube. The influence of her agents was paramount with the local government, and the quarantine establishments were under her immediate control. The vexatious and illegal use of these means was freely resorted to for the purpose of throwing impediments in the way of the trade; but

still it continued to increase. At length she resolved to allow the bar at the mouth of the river, on which, by very simple means, the Turks had always maintained a depth of about sixteen feet, to accumulate till now there is barely nine feet. Yet even this expedient has hitherto been unsuccessful. The trade has not yet been arrested, though it has no doubt been prevented from increasing as it otherwise would have increased. The price of the produce must be reduced as the cost of transporting it to the place of its consumption is augmented, and the estimated loss to the principalities from the outlay entailed by the impediments thus opposed to their commerce by Russia is above seven hundred thousand pounds a year.

The consequence of these measures has been that, notwithstanding the influence of a corrupted priesthood, and community of religious belief, Russia has become unpopular in the principalities in proportion as her system has become known and appreciated. But, having failed to gain favour with the people, she has had recourse to other means of making them desire to be incorporated in her empire; she subjects them to all manner of vexations and demands because they are still the subjects of Turkey—hangs or shoots them, or sends them to Siberia as traitors, if they act as loyal subjects of the Sultan—and tells them that they cannot enjoy security or repose till they are the subjects of the Czar. What an outcry would be raised by Russia if similar atrocities had been committed by the Turks! The sympathy of all Christendom would have been claimed for their brethren persecuted by Mahommedan savages, and their vengeance invoked on the perpetrators of unexampled crimes. Ought the sympathy to be less or the vengeance more tardy because the criminal is a Christian?

The proclamation issued by General Gorchakoff, on

the invasion of the principalities some months ago, seemed to promise fair enough treatment for the inhabitants of Moldavia and Wallachia, but it bears an ominous resemblance to that which was issued by General Buxhowden in 1808, when the Russian troops entered Finland for the purpose of annexing it to Russia. He says to the people of Finland, "It is with the greatest regret that his Majesty the Emperor of Russia, &c., sees himself forced to send into your country the troops under my orders. . . . . But his Majesty the King of Sweden is very far from desiring to unite with his Imperial Majesty in the pacific efforts by which the Emperor seeks to re-establish the tranquillity of Europe, so long disturbed, which cannot be hoped for without the happy alliance of the two most powerful empires in the world. On the contrary, the King of Sweden, separating himself more and more from these two states, draws closer his connexion with the common enemy." (Great Britain.) "These motives, as well as the regard which his Imperial Majesty owes to the safety of his own states, oblige him to place your country *under his protection*, and to take possession of it, in order to procure, by these means, *a sufficient guarantee* in case his Swedish Majesty should persevere in the resolution not to accept the equitable conditions of peace that have been proposed to him. . . . . It is his Imperial Majesty's pleasure that all the affairs of the country should have their ordinary course in conformity with your laws, statutes, and customs, which will remain in force so long as his Imperial Majesty's troops shall be obliged to occupy the country. The civil and military functionaries are confirmed in their respective employments; always excepting those who may use their authority to mislead the people, and induce them to take measures contrary to their interests. All that is necessary for the maintenance and

food of the troops shall be paid in ready money on the spot. All provisions shall be paid for according to an amicable agreement between our commissaries and those of the country."

The letter which the King of Sweden addressed to the Emperor of Russia some months later is a curious comment on this beneficent proclamation:—

"Honour and humanity require me to make strong representations against the innumerable horrors and the vexations which the Russian troops have permitted themselves in Swedish Finland. The blood of the innocent victims calls for vengeance upon those who authorised such cruelties. . . . . Can it be made a crime in my Finnish subjects not to have wished to let themselves be seduced by promises which are as fallacious as the principles on which they are founded are erroneous? Is it worthy of a Sovereign to make it in them a crime? I conjure your Imperial Majesty to put an end to the calamities and the horrors of a war which ought to call down on your person and your empire the malediction of Divine Providence."

It would not be prudent, with this experience of Russian proclamations, to assume that Prince Gorchakoff's does not mean the same thing as General Buxhowden's, which it so much resembles. Finland became a province of the Russian empire before the close of the year in the commencement of which that proclamation was issued. But has Austria, has Europe, well considered the consequences of permitting Russia to annex Wallachia and Moldavia to her empire? Do they endeavour to persuade themselves that it would be merely the loss of a province or two, which have added little to the resources or the strength of Turkey, and have been a fertile cause of disagreement between her and Russia—that the Danube will make a well-defined and convenient boundary—and that all causes

of future dissension will be removed? All cause of dissension would indeed be removed, for all resistance would cease; Bulgaria and Servia would become what Wallachia and Moldavia have been, and Turkey, deserted by her allies, would then indeed be prostrate. Her own resources have been proved by the result of every war with Russia during the last century—and they have not been few—to be inadequate to the defence of her possessions; every campaign has gone against her—every treaty of peace has diminished her territory, her influence, and her power. She has not yet lost courage, for she is signally brave, and she has been led to expect, and has sometimes experienced, the support of powerful allies. But if England and France combined, after encouraging her to resist unjust demands, should now recede before Russia, the question of supremacy in Europe will have been decided, not in the estimation of Turkey only, but of every other power. Resistance will cease, not in Turkey only, but everywhere; for the inference will be inevitable that France and England are either unable or unwilling to maintain the independence of Europe, and that in either case there remains no hope of successful resistance.

Meanwhile, the continued occupation of those principalities by a hostile army is wasting the resources of Turkey, laying the foundation of future financial and other difficulties, impeding commerce and civilization, and effectually working out the ends of that power whose present object it is to cripple the Ottoman Empire, and reduce it to subserviency if not to submission.

Servia, with an area of about 12,000 square miles, and a population of nearly 400,000, is one of the Turkish provinces that were instigated by Russia to revolt, and for which she obtained an amnesty and certain privileges in 1774. About thirty years

later a revolt, headed by a Servian officer of the Austrian army, and secretly supported by Russia, then at peace with the Porte, united the whole Servian people in an attempt to assert their independence and expel the Turks. The country is strong and defensible, and as unfavourable for the military operations of large bodies of troops as it is well suited for desultory and partisan warfare. The Turks, from time to time engaged in war, or in differences that threatened war, with Russia, made little progress in reducing the Servians, who were supported by foreign aid. At Yassy (1792), at Bucharest (1812), at Akerman (1826), and finally at Adrianople (1829), Russia had renewed the stipulations in favour of Servia; and in 1829–30 and 1833 the Sultan issued firmans securing the privileges which he had undertaken to grant, but with express reservation of his own sovereign rights. In pursuance of the arrangement then agreed upon with the Servian deputies, Miloch Obrenowitz was elected Prince of Servia, and the internal administration, civil and ecclesiastical, was intrusted to him and to the Servian people, on condition that the ecclesiastics should be subject to the authority of the Patriarch and Synod of Constantinople. Mahommedans were forbid to reside in the country, except in Belgrade and the other fortresses which were still to be garrisoned by the Turks; and all taxes and dues were consolidated into one sum, to be paid into the Turkish treasury half-yearly.

Miloch, having obtained the privileges which he considered necessary for his country, and finding the Turkish government disposed to carry them out in a spirit of good faith, was not so subservient to Russia as had been anticipated, but, on the contrary, drew closer his connexion with the Porte, and, having acquired the confidence of the Sultan by the vigour and fidelity of

his administration, concerted with the Turkish ministers the means of more effectually excluding Russian influence and attaching the Servians to the Sultan. In 1838 a firman, addressed to Miloch, settled the future government of Servia on a liberal footing. The amount of tribute was fixed—the office of kneis or prince was declared to be hereditary in the family of Miloch—a council of seventeen notables and ecclesiastics, to be selected by the prince, and to hold the office during life, was instituted—courts of justice were established, from seats in which the civil and military officers of the government were excluded—punishment without previous conviction by a competent tribunal abolished—all arbitrary exactions declared illegal—freedom of trade secured, and responsibility of the administrative officers to the council enforced—no person, not a Servian by birth or by legal naturalization, to hold office in the government—no taxes to be imposed, or laws adopted, without the consent of the council, or which should be oppressive to the people, or trench upon the sovereign rights of the Sultan. It was also provided that all forced labour, even for the service of the government, should cease, and that persons required to construct or repair public works should receive suitable wages — every Servian was declared to be free and exempt from all molestation unless by proceedings according to law. Authority was given to erect hospitals, schools, and printing-houses, and to establish a post-office; and Servian merchants were enabled to proceed on their business, and to reside in any part of the Ottoman dominions, on production of a Servian passport, without being required to pay any fees or dues to the Turkish authorities. In short, the internal administration of Servia was established on a more liberal footing than was at all acceptable to Russia; and the Servians then felt

that the further influence of that power in their affairs would be exerted rather to restrict than to extend the liberty which the Sultan had accorded to their country. Under these institutions the country made rapid progress in material prosperity and in civilization. But the influence exercised by the popular element, which had learned its own strength and value, was displeasing to some of the Boyards. Miloch, who had risen from the ranks of the people in troublous times by his intellectual superiority, was not acceptable to all, and the malcontents found ready sympathy and assistance from foreign friends. A Russian party was formed, and the prince was deposed and forced to retire into Austria. His successor, having been elected, and invested by the Sultan, was not, after a short time, inclined to be more subservient to foreign influence than Miloch had been; but that influence has never ceased to be exerted in the country for the purpose of rendering the position of the prince insecure whenever he showed symptoms of a desire to be loyal to the Sultan and to escape from foreign interference.

The great majority of the Servians are patriotic and desirous to exclude all extraneous intervention in their affairs. They are content with their present position and connexion with Turkey, which strengthens without annoying them; but there is a formidable party of the Boyards, who hope, by foreign aid, to depress the popular influence, and to re-establish the aristocracy in the dominant position it enjoys amongst the Servian subjects of Austria.

The deposed Prince of Servia, now probably sufficiently pliant, is brought to the borders of the country with a view to alarm the present prince, and bend him to the will of those who threaten to let loose his rival. In these circumstances the government of Servia have declared the neutrality of the country,

a course which is not in accordance with their relations to the Sultan, but which Austria, desirous only to keep the contest away from her own frontier, has sought to promote. If there is reason to believe that Servia will act faithfully on the resolution she has announced, to resist the entrance of any armed force into the country, it may be prudent that the Porte should permit her vassal to maintain that attitude, though it is unquestionably inconsistent with the duty that Servia owes to her sovereign. The position of Servia on the flank of the Turkish line of defence in Bulgaria is one of great military consequence, and to secure Turkey from attack on that side is to render her an important service.

Russia asserts that the treaty of Kainarji, and those which confirm it, have conferred upon her a right of watching over the efficacious protection of the Greek religion in Turkey. Count Nesselrode, in his note of the 20th of June (O. S.), says,—"It seems to be unknown, or left out of view, that Russia at present *virtually* enjoys, by *position* and treaty, an *ancient* right of watching over the effectual protection of its religion in the East; and the maintenance of this ancient right, which it will not abandon, is represented as implying the new pretension of a protectorate, at once religious and political, the bearing and consequences of which for the future *are greatly exaggerated.*

"It is to this misunderstanding that the crisis of the moment is due.

"The tendency and consequences of our pretended new political protectorate have no existence. We only demand for our co-religionists in the East the strict *status quo*—the preservation of the privileges which they have possessed, *ab antiquo*, under the ægis of their sovereign.

"We will not deny that from this may result for Russia

what may justly be denominated a religious patronage; this is what we have *always* exercised in the East. But if hitherto the independence and sovereignty of Turkey have been able to exist together with this patronage, why should either the one or the other suffer in the future from the moment when our pretensions are reduced to what is at bottom a mere confirmation?"

The right to interfere between the Sultan and his subjects, which Russia claims, can be founded only upon treaty. Position alone can give her no such right; neither can she have any right, irrespective of treaties, to constitute herself the guardian of privileges granted *ab antiquo* by the Sultans to their subjects while Russia was still tributary to the Tartars.* It is important, therefore, to ascertain with precision the nature and extent of the rights conferred upon her by treaty. These rights, whatever they may be, are derived from

* Mahommed II., after a siege of fifty-three days, took Constantinople by assault on the 29th of May, 1453. On the 1st of June he declared himself the protector of the Christians, who, according to the barbarous practice of the age, would otherwise have been in servitude to their conquerors. He immediately issued a proclamation inviting the fugitives to return to their homes and their occupations, and assuring them of safety, liberty, and the free exercise of their religion. At the same time he proceeded to the investiture of a patriarch of the Greek Church, the office being vacant by the death of the former patriarch, and ordered that in the election and investiture the forms and ceremonies of the Byzantine Court should be observed. The assembled clergy and laity elected George Scholarius, also called Genadius, with the same rites as had been observed before the conquest. The patriarchs had received their investiture from the hands of the Emperors, and Genadius received his from the hands of the Sultan. Mahommed invited the Patriarch to a sumptuous repast, and gave him a magnificent reception. When he was about to depart the Sultan delivered into his hands the jewelled crosier, the symbol of his ecclesiastical office, and said—"Be the Patriarch, and may Heaven protect you! Rely upon my friendship in all circumstances, and enjoy all the rights and all the privileges enjoyed by your predecessors." The Sultan then conducted the Patriarch to the gate of the palace, caused him to be mounted on a horse richly caparisoned, which was presented to him, and directed the Viziers and Pashas who were in attendance to conduct him to the Synod and thence to the palace allotted for his residence. The churches of Constantinople were divided between the Christians and the Mahommedans, and the limits assigned to the two classes of the population distinctly marked.

In this manner, just four hundred years ago, was the Greek Church placed under the special protection of the Sultans, and so it has remained.

The Russians continued to be tributary to the Tartars during a part of the reign of Ivan III., who mounted the ducal throne of Muscovy in 1462.

the treaty of Kainarji, the stipulations of which are confirmed by subsequent treaties. The articles in that treaty which have reference to religious matters are the 7th, 8th, and 14th.

Art. 7.—"The Sublime Porte promises to protect the Christian religion and the churches belonging to it; and it also permits the ministers of the Imperial Court of Russia to make, on all occasions, representations, as well in respect to the new church at Constantinople (which is spoken of in Article 14) as of those which belong to it, promising to take them into consideration as coming from a person in the confidence of a neighbouring and sincerely friendly power."

Art. 8.—"It will be permitted to the subjects of the Russian Empire to visit the city of Jerusalem and the Holy Places; and there shall not be exacted from them, neither at Jerusalem nor elsewhere, any *karacz*, contributions, duty (droit), or other imposition."

Art. 14.—"After the example of the other powers, it is permitted to the High Court of Russia, besides the chapel erected in the house of the Embassy, to construct, in a quarter of Galata named Beg Oglou, a public church of the Greek religion, which shall always be under the protection of the ministers of that Empire, and held free from all interruption and annoyance."

Here there is a distinct promise, on the part of the Sultan, that he will protect the Christian religion and the Christian churches in Turkey; and any failure to fulfil that promise would form a just ground of complaint and reclamation on the part of Russia. In that sense therefore, but in no other, Russia has a right to watch over the protection, *by the Porte*, of the Christian religion, and the churches belonging to it. But the Emperor Nicholas claims a great deal more. He seems to have founded upon the 14th Article, which has reference only to the establishment of a single

church of the Greek rite in the suburb of Galata, under the protection of the Russian minister, a claim to extend that protection to every subject of the Porte who conforms to that rite. The permission to establish that church in Galata is expressly founded upon the example of other powers, which had, besides the private chapels in their embassies, churches where the service was conducted according to their respective religious rites, under the protection of their ministers. There was a necessity for this: all the embassies are entitled, by conventions and special agreements, to afford protection to persons of various classes not considered subjects of the Sultan. These individuals and families, in most cases either natives of other countries or descendants of persons from different parts of Europe, who had settled at Constantinople under foreign protection, are considered and treated as foreigners, even though they may have been born in Turkey; and, as foreigners, are subject to the jurisdiction of the embassy and consulate under whose protection they reside. Disputes between them are settled, not by the Turkish tribunals, but in the court of the consul, who is armed for this purpose with judicial authority. It was necessary that those persons should have churches in which they could assemble for religious service according to their respective rites; and those churches, as well as the clergy who officiated and the worship conducted in them, were placed under the special protection of the different embassies, for the purpose of guarding them from the intrusion of lawless persons of a different faith, and the interruption or disturbance of the worship there conducted.

The diplomatic relations of Russia with the Porte in 1774, the date of the treaty of Kainarji, were comparatively recent; and it was by that treaty that she first obtained permission to erect a church for the

Greek rite—such as other powers had been permitted to erect for other rites—and to place it and the worship conducted in it under the protection of the Russian minister. This was not an unreasonable demand, for, although there were many churches of the Greek rite in Constantinople and its suburbs, they belonged to the original Eastern Church, which continues to acknowledge the supreme authority, in spiritual and ecclesiastical matters, of the Patriarch and Synod of Constantinople, and which regards as schismatic the Russian-Greek Church, of which the Czar Peter I. assumed for himself and his successors the patriarchate and control. But, upon a concession so unimportant, and which merely placed Russia on the same footing as the other powers had long been, to found a pretension to extend a similar protection to eleven or twelve millions of the Sultan's subjects is to attempt a most formidable usurpation.

The treaty of Kainarji however, as has been stated, gives Russia a right to watch over the manner in which Turkey performs her promise to protect the Christian religion and its churches. But Russia has not yet adduced any instance of failure to fulfil that promise. Count Nesselrode, indeed, appears desirous to insinuate that Turkey has failed in this respect. He says that "it is necessary that Turkey should act towards us in a manner to enable us to *co-exist with* her. She must respect her treaties with us, *and the consequences that flow from them*; she must avoid acts of bad faith, secret persecutions, perpetual vexations practised towards our religion, which *would* create an intolerable situation for us, and one which would compel us to trust for a remedy to blind chance." It will be observed that, while the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, writing in the name of his government, clearly conveys the impression that Turkey has been guilty of

the objectionable proceedings enumerated, he not only does not refer to any instance, but does not even venture to assert the fact. In any case Turkey is not the only power that is bound to respect her treaties and avoid acts of bad faith, nor is Russia the only one that has to complain of the difficulty of *co-existing* with its neighbours. The manner in which she fulfils her engagement to "cease from all enmity and difference," and to "maintain perpetual peace, friendship, and good intelligence" with Turkey, has already been very imperfectly illustrated. The kind of faith with which she has acted is shown by the revolts she has instigated and sustained in so many Turkish provinces, while she was at peace with the Sultan and professing the warmest friendship. The *good faith* of Russia is that which she exhibits in not less than twenty-one schools of Bulgaria, where Russians from Kiew—the Mecca of the Muscovites—teach the children, who are all Turkish subjects, hatred of the Sultan as a part of their religious instruction, and submission to the Czar as necessary to their eternal salvation. These are perhaps included in the "consequences that flow from her treaties" which Count Nesselrode requires that Turkey should respect; and the secret persecutions and vexations, which he insinuates that the Porte has been guilty of, are no doubt attempts on the part of the Turks to put a stop to this desecration of Christian instruction by Russia. If she had already acquired the right of protection which she demands, it is plain that, in self-defence, the Porte would have been compelled to put an end to such an abuse of it, even by force. But there is no foundation in the treaties between Russia and Turkey for any such right, beyond the promise that *the Sultan* will protect the Christian religion and its churches in Turkey. The interference which Russia has hitherto exercised in these matters has been a mere

usurpation, founded not upon right, but upon a defiance of all right, often secretly exercised, and always in a spirit so faithless and so hostile to Turkey, as can leave no doubt of the use that would be made of the right if it were acquired.

The question of the "Holy Places" need not be discussed. It was speedily adjusted to the satisfaction of all concerned, by an amount of concession, in respect to the points connected with those places, so trifling as to be hardly appreciable. The custody of the key—the restoration of the Cross abstracted by the Greeks from the Latin church at Bethlehem in 1847—and the right of access to the church, &c.—appear all to have remained as nearly as possible where Prince Menchikoff found them. So little required to be done, that one has difficulty in believing that there was any real or substantial ground of complaint which could not as well have been arranged by the resident Russian minister; yet the question of the Holy Places was the *ostensible* reason of Prince Menchikoff's embassy, and the only one that was made known by the Czar to his allies. Whatever may have been the cause of umbrage to Russia in respect to those places, Prince Menchikoff obtained prompt and ample reparation and satisfaction. Turkey submitted to the humiliation of dismissing her Minister for Foreign Affairs on the demand of the Russian ambassador, and the whole matter was adjusted in such a manner that his Excellency acknowledged that, in respect to the questions connected with those places, he was satisfied. The real ground of offence may probably have been that Turkey had ventured to enter into an arrangement with France without the consent of the Czar, and this was abundantly atoned for by the removal of the minister who had been guilty of that indiscretion. Upon the questions of the Holy Places, Russia had been in contact not with Turkey

only, but also with France, and it was not until the questions which might have brought her face to face with that power had been settled, that the real object of this great diplomatic demonstration transpired. What the true motive of so remarkable a course as Russia has pursued in Turkey since the month of May last may have been, is still unavowed. But whatever may have been the motive, there can be no doubt that the object was to bring under the protection and spiritual domination of the Czar the Christian population of Turkey; and that this would be inconsistent with the sovereign rights of the Sultan and the independence of Turkey, both of which Russia had engaged to respect, hardly admits of argument.

Count Nesselrode's reasoning in the last of the sentences above quoted is curious; and amounts to this—that although the interference, founded upon usurpation, which Russia has hitherto exercised in the affairs of the Christian subjects of Turkey has deprived the Sultan of the sovereignty of Greece, and of all efficient support from Wallachia, Moldavia, and Servia, and is employed for the purpose of destroying his authority in Bulgaria, still, because it has not yet entirely subverted the independence of the Ottoman empire, it is illogical to say that the extension of the same interference, under the sanction of a treaty, to the whole eleven millions of Greek Christians in Turkey, would be fatal to the independence of the Porte. To most men it would appear to be a very legitimate inference, that the poison which, administered occasionally in smaller doses, has deprived the patient of one of his limbs and paralyzed a great part of his body, would, if administered in much larger and more frequent doses, speedily terminate his existence.

What Russia really demands, and what she interpreted the Vienna note as conceding to her, is, first,

that all persons adhering to any division of the Orthodox* Greek Church shall be placed under *her* religious protection; and, secondly, that they shall enjoy all the advantages conceded to any foreign Christians in Turkey who are under the religious protection of a foreign embassy. This appears plainly enough from Prince Menchikoff's communications to the Turkish ministers, from the Russian interpretation of the Vienna note, and from the rejection by Russia of the Turkish amendments. The note contained the following words:—"His Majesty the Sultan will remain faithful to the letter and the spirit of the stipulations of *the treaties of Koutchouk Kainarji and of Adrianople relative to the protection of the Christian worship.*" The Porte proposed to substitute for the words in italics—"the treaty of Koutchouk Kainarji, confirmed by that of Adrianople, relative to the protection *by the Porte* of the Christian worship."

The effect of this emendation is important. Russia, founding on the extravagant and forced interpretation of the 14th article of the treaty of Kainarji already explained, pretended to have a right to take under *her own* protection the whole of the Greek subjects of the Porte; and the terms of the Vienna note left her still at liberty to assert that pretension. The Turkish reading sets it aside, and reverts to the 7th article of the treaty, by which the Sultan had engaged to protect the Christian religion and its churches, and declares his resolution to fulfil that engagement—the only one which Russia was entitled to found upon in the question at issue.

The original note would have made the Sultan engage "to allow the Greek worship to participate, in a spirit of high justice, in the advantages *conceded*

* Called Orthodox to distinguish it from that portion of the Greek Church which acknowledges the supremacy of the Pope.

to other Christians by convention or special agreement." The Porte proposed to substitute for the words in italics, "accorded, or that may be accorded, to other Christian *communities, Ottoman subjects.*"

The effect of this amendment was to preclude Russia from demanding for the Greek subjects of the Sultan all the advantages conceded by convention or agreement to foreign Christians in Turkey, which the terms of the Vienna note would have left her at liberty to require.

The diplomatists who prepared the Vienna note were obliged to admit that these Turkish amendments were not opposed to the views with which the note had been prepared; but, on the contrary, expressed them more perfectly and precisely than the original version. The only amendments proposed by Turkey that affected the nature of the engagement to be entered into were the two that have been stated. In the rest there was nothing that could well be objected to by Russia; but in the terms of the original note there was a passage calculated, though of course far from being intended, both to displease Turkey and to give an erroneous impression of the historical facts. The immunities and the privileges of the Greek Church in the Ottoman empire, such as they now are, have not been obtained by the intervention of Russia; nor does it appear that she ever interested herself to obtain from the Porte new privileges or immunities for that Church throughout the empire. Her influence has been directed to a totally different object—to make the Turkish government odious in the eyes of its Christian subjects, and to make them look to her for protection—to make them believe that they could obtain security only under her shield, and that they could not, therefore, be secure until her power became dominant. She has, it is true, been instrumental in

obtaining special privileges for Wallachia, Moldavia, and Servia, for the purpose of detaching them from Turkey and connecting them with herself; but even in those cases her constant care has been to secure a right and an occasion to interpose between the Sultan and his subjects.

Count Nesselrode is very desirous to make it appear that Russia is demanding nothing new—only a confirmation of the *status quo*. But he assumes the *status quo* to be what it is not; and it is undeniable that the demand that the Sultan should engage himself to Russia, not merely to protect the Christian worship in his dominions, but to maintain certain particular privileges and immunities granted to his own subjects, not at her instance, but "ab antiquo," and by the free and spontaneous goodwill and wisdom of his predecessors and himself, *is something quite new*. Were the Sultan to agree to such an arrangement, it would no longer be in his power even to extend those privileges without first obtaining the consent of Russia. No change, however slight or however beneficial, affecting the religious and ecclesiastical privileges and immunities of eleven millions of his subjects, could be carried out by the Sultan, even on their petition, without first obtaining the permission of the Czar. Yet it is pretended that this would in no degree trench upon the sovereign rights of the Sultan, or put in peril his independence.

The Sultan has not evinced any disposition to treat his Christian subjects with less favour than heretofore; on the contrary, he has been gaining their confidence by the justice and the liberality of his government. Can it be that this is the real cause of the desire to tie up his hands, and to put it out of his power henceforward to confer upon them any advantages for which Russia would not claim and obtain the chief part of

the credit? Does the desire to secure to herself the protectorate she is endeavouring to enforce by violence really arise from an apprehension that it may no longer be required? Has she discovered that in Bulgaria and elsewhere it is becoming more difficult than formerly she found it to set the people against their sovereign? Has she observed any indications that the Christian population of Turkey have begun to question whether they might not lose rather than gain by a change of masters? Does she fear that if she does not get that population into her hands now they may escape her altogether? The truth appears to be, that the Emperor of Russia, the head of the Greek Church in his own country, contemplates becoming the head of the whole Orthodox Greek Church, and exercising, as such, a spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction similar to that formerly exercised by the popes, and successfully resisted, because it was found to be inconsistent with the rights of the sovereigns and the independence of the nations. There is, however, this material difference, that, whereas the jurisdiction claimed by the Latin popes could be enforced only by spiritual means, the jurisdiction of the Imperial Greek Pope would be enforced by several hundred thousand bayonets.

To attain to such a position may well excite the ambition of an emperor, and is undoubtedly worth contending for. In modern times there has not been presented to any sovereign an object of ambition comparable to this — a new Greek empire, under an autocrat uniting both temporal and spiritual supremacy over more than one-half of Europe, and extending far into Asia. What nation is there that could withstand such a power, if once established? So far from wondering that the Emperor of Russia contemplates raising himself to such an elevation, the only cause for wonder is, that he should be expected to relinquish it, unless by compulsion.

The population of Turkey in Europe, of the kingdom and islands of Greece, and of the south-western provinces of Austria, is chiefly or exclusively of the Greek Church, and is precisely in that stage of civilization when its material resources may be rapidly developed, while its spiritual subjection may still be secured. But Russia is not only the head and sole great power of the Greek Church—she is also the head and sole power of the Sclavonic race, which occupies the countries lying beyond her western frontier, from the Baltic to the Hadriatic Sea. More than half the population of Austria is Sclavonic; and "Pan-Sclavism," which has been industriously propagated in all those countries, contemplates the reunion of the whole race in one great Sclavonic empire. It was the influence she exercised in these two capacities of sole great power of the Greek Church and of the Sclavonic race that had already paralyzed Austria, long before the revolutions of 1848 had forced her to accept Russian aid. It has been the same influence that has excited revolts of the Christian population in Turkey, ensuring to Russia an amount of military success otherwise unattainable, and which have led to the total separation of Greece and the partial separation of the three principalities. The Sclavonic population in the countries beyond her western border are in a low state of civilization, subjects of despotic sovereigns, and governed by people of another race—in Germany, by the Teuton; in the Ottoman empire, by the Turk. Her military power is dominant near her own frontier, and is there regarded as irresistible; her influence is, therefore, silently extending without violence. The only danger she had to encounter on that ground was from the Poles and the Magyars, and both have for the present been overcome. Austria is in danger of sinking into dependence, and Turkey is in danger of being reduced to

submission. Europe, not foreseeing the hazards to which it would one day be exposed, permitted Poland to be dismembered, and the only barrier against the aggressions, the Sclavonic influence, or the overbearing pressure of Russia upon Germany was broken down. Let us not commit the same error in regard to Turkey; and let us never forget that what we have to guard against is, not only military conquest, but any proceeding that threatens to trench upon her independence or to diminish her means of defence.

If any one should be inclined to regard these views as mere speculations, let him examine the history of Russia—let him at least look at the map prefixed to these pages—observe the margin of deep green that marks her acquisitions during the last sixty years, and say how far into the heart of Europe it will extend sixty years hence if her progress is not arrested by the Western Powers. Is any one disposed to confide in her moderation and good faith?—let him look at Turkey invaded in 1853 by a hostile army, in contempt of the public law and unanimous opinion of Europe—the subversion of her independence attempted by a sovereign who had recorded before the world his desire to maintain it—the sovereign rights of the Sultan assailed by a potentate who had publicly pledged himself to respect them—the repose of the Ottoman Empire disturbed by the unprovoked aggression of one of the powers which had solemnly promised to promote its consolidation—the peace of Europe broken by a monarch who had formally declared that its preservation was the constant object of his solicitude—statements the most unfounded put forth in hopeless attempts to excuse so revolting a violation of good faith—and manifestoes, which all Europe knows to be mendacious, bearing the signature of a Christian sovereign, the Head of a Christian Church.

If the object of the Emperor be to obtain spiritual and ecclesiastical dominion over the whole Orthodox Greek Church for himself and his successors—and on no other ground does his recent conduct appear to be explicable—there is no probability that he will relinquish an object of such magnitude while there remains a prospect of success; no present sacrifice would be of much weight in deterring him from the prosecution of that which, if attained, would, with all its almost inevitable consequences, be a greater acquisition than the greatest and most successful of his predecessors have ever made. The problem of the future fate of the Ottoman Empire in Europe would then be solved by the Christian population that inhabits it in concert with their spiritual chief. While Turkey can maintain the independence of the Patriarch and Synod of Constantinople, who is the head of the Greek Church in the Ottoman Empire, the object of the Czar cannot be accomplished; and there are not wanting indications that the spiritual chief of the Greeks in Turkey begins to see the danger to which his authority is exposed. But if we allow the Sultan to be despoiled of his rights, and deprived of the power to protect the independence of the ecclesiastical authorities, preserved and maintained by his predecessors since the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans, it will be too late to speak of the integrity and independence of Turkey or the sovereign rights of the Sultan; the spiritual dominion of the Czar will be extended over all Turkey in Europe, Greece, and part of Austria, and will assuredly draw temporal dominion after it. Who will venture to maintain that Germany, or Italy, or France could, in such a condition of things, be truly independent? The influence of such a power would predominate in every cabinet, and affect the decision of every question. Her support would everywhere sustain the

partisans of her system, and enable them to triumph over their opponents. The unacknowledged weight of her influence, and dread of her power, would gradually modify the institutions of Europe, and silence every voice that was raised against her. Have we not already had sufficient indication, in Germany and elsewhere on the Continent, of the support she affords to her partisans in foreign states, and the success with which she has thwarted and injured those who were hostile to her views and her system? It is while the resources of the Ottoman Empire are still entire, not after they have been shattered in a single-handed combat with too powerful an antagonist, that the mischief can be prevented. Hitherto the allies of Turkey have given her no material assistance, and Russia, having hurled defiance in the face of Europe, maintains her aggressive position, and treats with arrogant disdain the efforts of the Western Powers to preserve peace.

It is no doubt a dreadful alternative to contemplate war, and all the evil complications that may result from it; but France and England must have been prepared for that alternative, which has all along been a possible one, or they would not have taken up the gauntlet that was thrown down.

At the same time it may be feared that the moderation of their tone, their avowed desire and their anxious and renewed endeavours to preserve the blessings of peace to Europe, may have led Russia to speculate upon the probability of their not, after all, resorting to what they so much deprecate. Accustomed to adopt a domineering and overbearing tone, she cannot appreciate a different deportment. Meanwhile she prepares for war, and has gained the time required for preparation without abating one jot of her pretensions. The mere fact that she has assumed, and hitherto maintained, such an attitude, magnifies the impression

of her power, and gives additional weight to her influence. The occupation of Wallachia and Moldavia, and the expenditure entailed upon the Porte, are a great gain to her, whose primary object it is to weaken and harass the Ottoman Empire into subserviency.

But at least we have the satisfaction of feeling assured that every effort consistent with the dignity of the country has been made to preserve peace, till now the apprehension excited in the public mind by the prospect of war is beginning to give place to the still more painful apprehension lest the dignity of the nation should not be adequately maintained.

If Russia is resolved to try her strength, with France and England and Turkey combined against her, she will develop great resources and maintain an obstinate struggle. Let us hope that our tardiness to accept the combat is but an indication that we foresee its magnitude ; and that the two great Western Powers, warned as it were by a mighty voice from the tomb against "a little war," are prepared, if negociation has failed, at once to put forth all their strength—to hit hard—and to strike home.

THE END.

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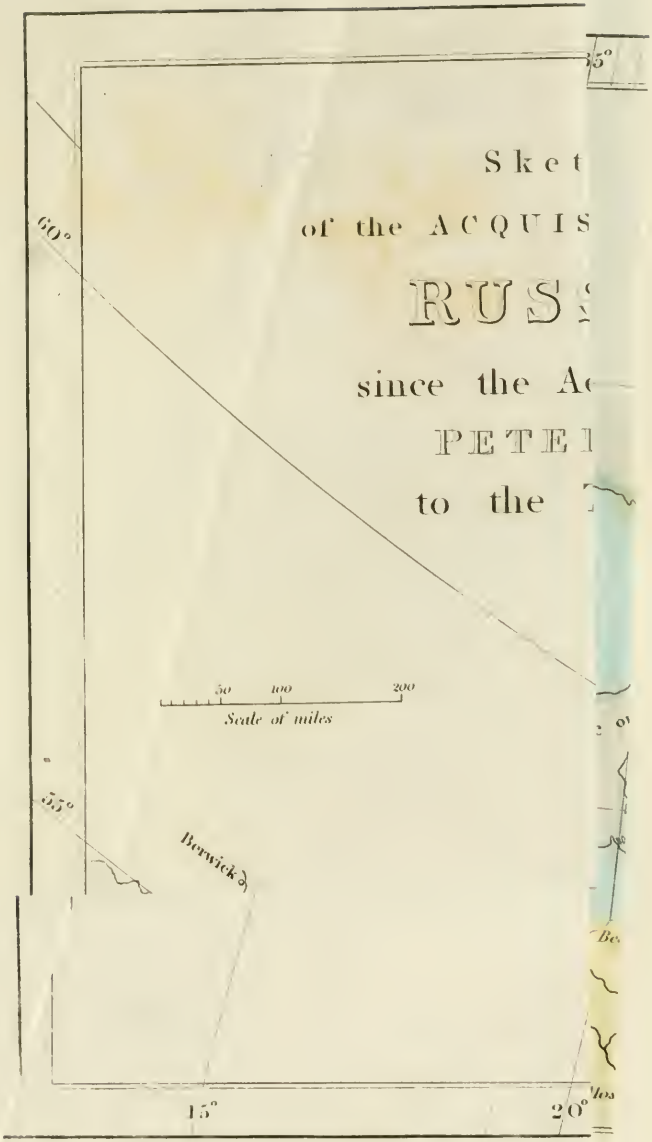
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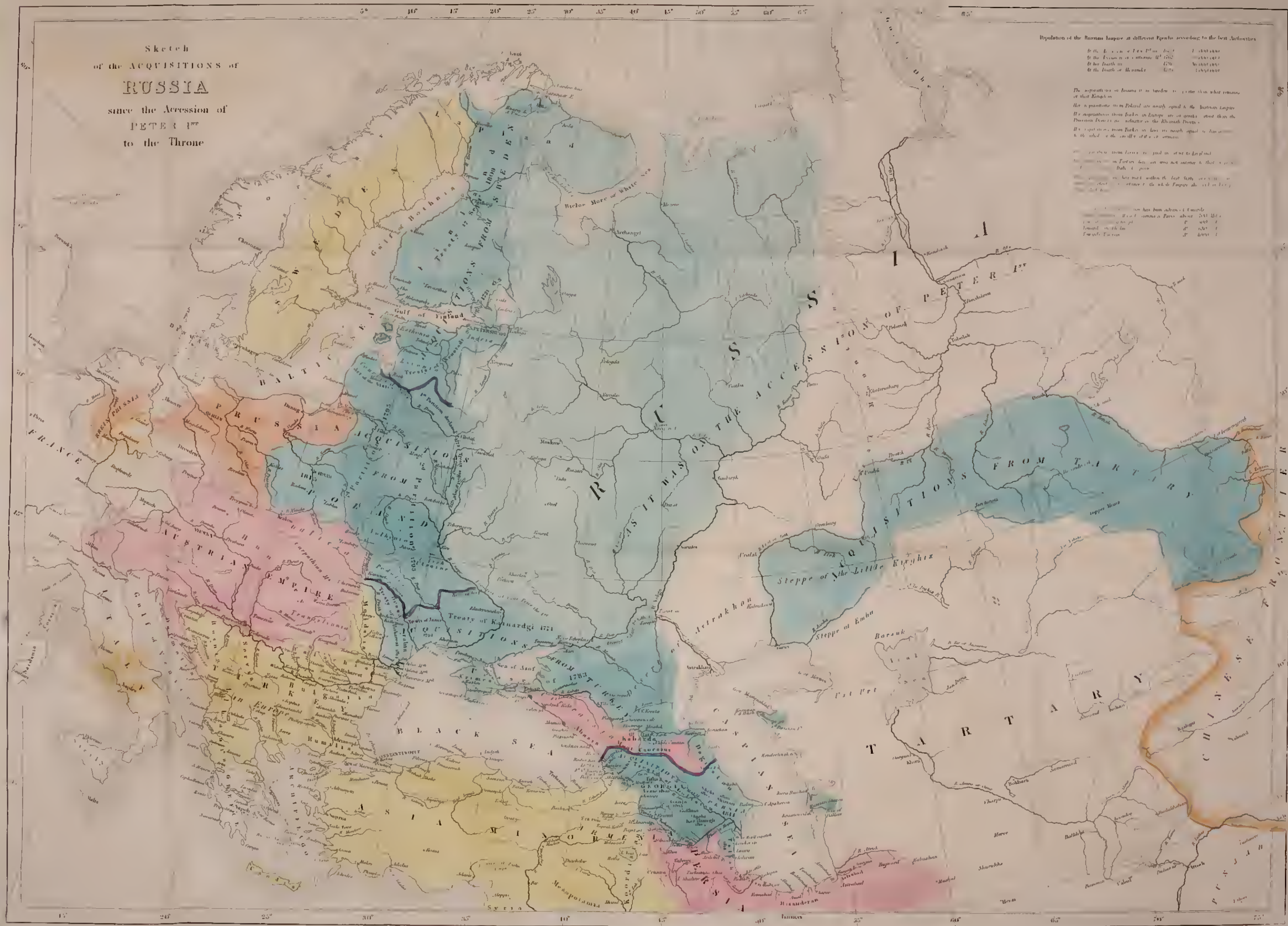

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to the Throne
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PRUSSIA
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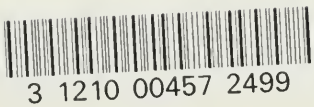

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