



THE
CIRCASSIAN WAR
AS BEARING ON THE
POLISH INSURRECTION.

LONDON :
ROBERT HARDWICKE, 192, PICCADILLY,
FEBRUARY, 1863.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

THE SECRET OF RUSSIA
IN THE
CASPIAN & EUXINE:
THE
CIRCASSIAN WAR
AS AFFECTING THE
INSURRECTION IN POLAND.

GERMAN INTRODUCTION
TO THE
"VISIT OF THE CIRCASSIAN DEPUTIES TO ENGLAND."

By Friedrich Weygand.

"If we do not take care, Russia will obtain the Caucasus, and all the power that possession will give her over Turkey, Persia, &c."

Lord Ponsonby, Sept. 3, 1834.

LONDON:
ROBERT HARDWICKE, 192, PICCADILLY.

February, 1863. Price One Shilling.

Postscript.

February 1, 1863.

THESE pages had just been concluded, when there was placed in the writer's hands an inedited work entitled "*Twelve Years of Diplomacy in Europe*:" drawn up in 1842 by M. de BIELKE, late Minister of Denmark at Berlin and London.

M. de BIELKE places as foremost in the events of the world in recent times "The Discovery of Circassia," which he himself has discovered in official documents and private letters of British officials in London and Constantinople in 1834.

Nothing can exceed the joy and exultation, at this discovery as appears by these letters of the Ambassador at Constantinople, Lord PONSONBY. He instantly applied himself to the formation of a scheme for the dismantling of Russia by restoring Poland, supporting Circassia, and reorganising the Ottoman Empire.

The Russian Government seems to have left no means untried to intimidate him: but in vain.

What is most surprising in this correspondence is, that the full bearings of the discovery burst at once on those engaged. There is not a point left to be supplied to-day; there is not a rectification to be made.

It is amazing that these materials should not have been turned to account either during the intense interest awakened by the sacrifice of the *Væen*, and the debates thereon, or at any subsequent period. It may be, providentially, that these evidences have been thus reserved till the moment (Circassia having in the mean time held her own) when measures of a more practical nature are in progress than any that could have hitherto been contemplated.

It comes out that the views of Lord PONSONBY were eagerly adopted by persons in power in London with the exception of the Foreign Minister, who placed himself from the beginning as their reserved but resolute opponent.

The subjoined extracts will afford the means of judging of the value of this mass of documents when brought to light.

The extracts will be found, p. 95.

1771-2
1479

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VISIT
OF THE
CIRCASSIAN DEPUTIES TO ENGLAND.
CONSISTING OF THEIR
ADDRESSES TO THE QUEEN;
CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE FOREIGN OFFICE, &c.
AND
CORRESPONDENCE
BETWEEN
MR. BEALES AND EARL RUSSELL
RESPECTING
TRADE WITH CIRCASSIA.

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

GERMAN INTRODUCTION

TO THE

“VISIT OF THE CIRCASSIAN DEPUTIES TO ENGLAND.”

THE great contrast presented by modern Europe to mediæval Europe, consists in the organisation for defence and attack; consequently in the duration and effect of wars. The Feudal system was “an armed people.” The Modern system is the antithesis to this. It is conscription. In other words, a disarmed people and an armed Cabinet.

Under the Feudal system the brunt of war fell directly on those engaged in it, and those were the powerful in the State. The nobles and the holders of noble fiefs bore at once the charges and endured the sufferings of the war. It was their interest that war should not be made without necessity, and when made that it should be concluded as speedily as possible. The obligation to service, except when the King himself was present on the field, was in fact limited to forty days. This population of soldiers being at the same time agriculturists, the domestic claims of their fields, in regard to sowing and harvest time, superseded all external considerations, whether of passion or of fame.

The new system, which grew out of the concentration of regal authority, followed by the wars of religion, followed again by the invention of permanent debt, and finally completed by the introduction of secrecy in international affairs, has substituted taxation, minutely applied to the mass of uninfluential individuals, for the personal and pecuniary service of powerful ones. The mass of troops have become mercenaries and machines. The military branch is separated from the political. Both from the diplomatic. The connexion of cause and effect is lost. War in itself becomes

desirable for those who are engaged in it, as the capacity for resisting it is withdrawn from those who pay for it.

The result is that the military establishment, formerly borne by the rent of the land, and, therefore, without charge to the Exchequer, is now become a heavy charge upon the whole people; that debt has been imposed when taxes have not sufficed, so that every nation in Europe staggers beneath the weight of permanent obligations. Whilst war itself, which in the thousand years of the Feudal system had occurred but rarely, and had then but temporarily disturbed the general peace, has become, since the period of the accession of WILLIAM of NASSAU in England, as frequent in its occurrence, as vast and prolonged in its operation, as it has been enduring in its effects.

These reflections are suggested by the appearance, or, at least, the revelation, on the political field of Europe, of a new experience. There has been in England an appeal made to the QUEEN to obtain that commercial liberty of the Black Sea which appeared to have been obtained by the sacrifices of England and France, as the result, and the sole result, of the war waged by them against Russia in the Crimea in 1854. The correspondence elicited by this appeal is herewith presented to the German people as deserving of their most earnest consideration, affecting as it must in its results the future condition of Germany in common with the rest of Europe.

In the course of this correspondence, and from the circumstances that have given rise to it, truths come out of so startling a nature, that in presenting the case to the German Public, it is not the working out of the inferences which constitutes the labour; it is the establishing of the credibility of the facts. These consist in the vast expenditure of Russia upon a country which in itself can make no return for such expenditure: the design which she has formed and executed of suppressing all commercial intercourse between this free and independent people and the rest of the world; the not less daring design and incomparable success of suppressing all knowledge of the existence of such a people; the subserviency of all the Governments of Europe, and their connivance in stopping the trade of their subjects with the Circassians; and, finally, the indomitable resistance which this people has opposed to her overwhelming power, and her still more terrible faculty of disorganisation and corruption.

Here, to the philosophic mind, a most interesting field of inquiry is opened as to the two systems above referred to, which at the interval of years have been established in Europe. We have, on the one side, the Feudal system in all its rude purity, but destitute of all concentration. On the other, we have the purest

expression of the system of conscription; and that not in regard to an equivalent population, but of many populations, each larger than the Circassians, and brought to bear upon them systematically during generations.

In Europe, the making of war is severally contingent on the possession of many things:—

Firstly. Troops. These must be in sufficient numbers. Troops are the result of enlistment, as in England, or of conscription, as on the Continent, and of discipline.

Secondly. Generals: to be obtained only by prior instruction and experience, and the existence of constituted authority.

Thirdly. Ammunition and artillery.

Fourthly. Provisions, clothing, and commissariat.

Fifthly. Money, not only for the current expenses of the war, but also for the means that have to be prepared for it, and for the support of the general authority by which it is organised.

On this money, therefore, ultimately depends the possibility of making war, and that money can only be obtained by taxes, actual or prospective. It must be either collected at once from the people, or it must be obtained from money-lenders, in the expectation of being subsequently paid out of the taxes of the people.

This being the notion in Europe in respect to war, if that war is to consist of a campaign, or even of a battle, it will be at once perceived how Russia has been enabled to cover with a veil of impenetrable mystery the events in the Caucasus. For on the occurrence of so unexpected an accident as that a European should set his foot upon the shore of Circassia, and should persist afterward in narrating what he had seen, that statement would be received as a thing incredible, and therefore be set down as false. Such an explorer would naturally dwell upon the points which had struck him with the greatest admiration and surprise, precisely because they were in contradiction to all his previous conceptions. The effect upon the readers at a distance would, however, be the reverse of what had happened to himself. He was convinced by what he saw. They would be incredulous of what they read. He would say, "Here there is no Government, there is no Union, there are no taxes, there is not so much as money. There is no trade, there are no resources, there is no army, no commissariat. There is no enlistment as in England, no conscription as on the Continent. But the men go out and fight the Russians, and they keep on at this work. One man from a family goes out to fight, the other members of the family support him by their labour at home. When one man of a family falls, another takes his place, and so they go on from father to son, and from

brother to brother. They begin at fifteen; he who reaches to forty is an old man; those who attain to fifty are rare exceptions."

Spectator of such a scene the European would be filled with enthusiasm and admiration. His narrative, unless supported by irrefragable evidence, would be treated with derision. The self-love of every reader would be offended, for the picture would involve disagreeable comparisons; the explorer would be set down as a visionary, and it would be assumed that no war was carried on at all. Russia might have lines of posts to protect herself from the incursions of savage mountain tribes, but that was all. And faith would all the more readily be given to those statements which prevailed up to the year 1834, that the Circassians were so savage as to make slaves of those shipwrecked on their coasts, if even they did not devour them.

The narrator might then be supposed to complete his picture of the terrible array of military power brought to bear by the Russian Empire on these isolated men. He would point out the four hundred miles of coast on the east and the west, along which the maritime power of Russia was exerted against them in the shape of blockade, depriving them of resources and necessaries of life. He would point out the line of the Caucasus, extending 12 degrees, and running north-west and south-east, and so presenting on the south and the north a double line of frontier, and military operations of not less than 1400 miles, with a permanent force, for supplying the war, of 200,000 men, increased during the periods of activity by from 50,000 to 100,000 more. He would have to show that Circassia occupied and consumed continuously a quarter of the military resources of the Russian Empire; and he would probably bring into evidence the gravity of the circumstances by tabular views of the amount of troops employed by Russia in her Persian and Turkish wars, from which would appear the perfect insignificance of her operations against those Empires, and, indeed, as against Europe, compared with her operations against Circassia. He might take the year 1854, and show that the number of troops which passed the Pruth amounted to but 68,000 men, for a war to be carried on against Turkey, England, France, and Sardinia, which war ended in a request to the Russian Government to permit the allied forces to retire from the Crimea, by embarking from the harbour of Sebastopol,* which request was only granted

* "The Plenipotentiaries of Russia announce that they have received orders to declare, in reply to the request which had been made to them on the subject, that the port of Sebastopol will be opened to the vessels of the Allied Powers, in order to accelerate the embarkation of their troops and of their material."—*Protocol No. 22, of the Conference of Paris.*

on condition of the signing of that Treaty of Paris by which they declared themselves vanquished, accepted for themselves the terms of the original MENSCHIKOFF note, and adhered, by a Declaration, to Russia's Armed Neutrality of 1780, which was the sacrifice of England's Maritime Rights and power. In a war thus shameful and disastrous in its results, and which cost the Allies, exclusive of Turkey, two hundred millions sterling, and 100,000 men, Russia's Maritime Power, so terrible to the Circassians by means of a few cruisers, was not even exerted. Of her land forces, not above 100,000 men were engaged, so that the great Powers of the west were discomfited by the employment on one occasion of less than one half of the forces which are permanently engaged against the Circassians.

The Empire against which that war was waged, was thus described at the time by the Prince Consort of ENGLAND:—

“We are engaged with a mighty adversary, who uses against us all those wonderful powers which have sprung up under the generating influence of our liberty and our civilisation, and employs them with all the force of unity of purpose and action, impenetrable secrecy, and uncontrolled despotic power.”*

This Power, operating on behalf of an Empire of sixty millions against disorganised tribes, finds no campaign concluded by a surrender or a defeat, whilst its adversaries to-day are defending the same fields and using the cover of the same corpses that their fathers defended and stood behind, sixty years ago.

Here, then, are the two systems of Europe brought into contemporaneous conflict, resulting in a permanent and normal condition of war, with continual defeats of the great military system, and continual triumphs of the loosest of feudal arrangements.

Although the mission of the Circassian Envoys to England may be said to be the first revelation of this state of things, seeing that it is the first time, except in the Prætorian Guards of the CÆSAR, that Circassians have been beheld by any of the populations of Europe, still announcement has been made at times, and especially in Germany, which may now be accepted retrospectively as evidence. The whole case was stated more than twenty years ago in the “*Conversations Lexicon*.” As that statement has become historical by the continued existence of the Circassians, and credible by their personal presence in the West, it is now reproduced in illustration of the Diplomatic Correspondence which has taken place between the Circassian Envoys and the English Government.

Intelligence of the events in the Caucasus has also from time to time reached the public in the shape of news, glanced at, at the time indeed with some curiosity, but immediately cast aside and

* Speeches and addresses of the Prince Consort, page 156.

forgotten, as having no connexion with the movement of affairs, and no influence on the destinies of Europe. But as it is essential now to establish the links of this evidence, and at the same time to demonstrate from it the vastness of those operations which Europe ignores, we will quote a few fragments from the principal German journals in the beginning of the year 1844:—

“Large reinforcements are being sent by the Russian Government to the army of the Caucasus. The effective force of Russia in that quarter will soon amount to 200,000 men.”—*Sibirian Gazette*.

“Odessa, February 2.—On the 25th of January there was a regular consecration of the troops, who on the same day were to proceed to the Caucasus; it was an imposing ceremony. Although it was notorious that the soldiers were in winter to make a march of 1600 versts, through very desolate districts, and with the certainty of meeting opponents, equally cunning and formidable, there did not seem to be the least depression of spirits; on the contrary, they appeared in excellent order. The Emperor is determined this year to put an end to a war so destructive, both to his soldiers and to his finances. The effectives of the Caucasian army are to be raised to 200,000 men; eight regiments of infantry and four regiments of cavalry, with their artillery, march from Bessarabia, and sixteen battalions from Moscow. The Emperor intends to superintend himself the military operations; at all events, he means this spring to be in those provinces.”—*Allgemeine Zeitung*.

“Borders of Turkey, February 21.—It is said that the Emperor is determined to try the experiment, whether he cannot subdue this chain of mountains by a great combined effort, instead of leaving it to the pettiness of detail. Some believe that His Majesty himself will lead the operations, and for this purpose called around him all the officers who have been accustomed to this species of mountain war. The attacks will be simultaneous and combined, from the Kuban, from the Black Sea, and from Daghestan, as well as from the south side of Transcaucasia; and there is no doubt among the Russians that the expedition will be crowned with complete success. When the campaign is to be opened is not yet determined; it would seem, however, that the presence of the Emperor on the Kuban may occasion some delay, especially if there is any truth in the report that His Imperial Majesty intends to go to Germany. The Caucasians are likewise stated to be preparing for the conflict; and it is said that numerous agents from Circassia are busy in the Turkish dominions in the acquisition of the sinews of war.”—*Allgemeine Zeitung*.

The two Deputies of the Shapsoug and the Abaseck have attended public meetings in several places in Great Britain, such as Edinburgh, Sheffield, Newcastle, Preston, Manchester, Macclesfield, &c. In each of these towns the local papers, describing the meeting, have spoken of it as enthusiastic and unanimous without parallel in their memory. In a Dundee paper the Deputies are thus described:—

“The Chiefs are two remarkable-looking men. Their imposing bearing, their romantic dress, their dark solemn eyes, and yet keen as the eyes of hawks, their eagle-like expression of countenance, and their natural dignity of mien, stamp them as very superior men, and help us to understand why it is that Russia’s hordes have been rolled like waves, in endless succession, to the base of the Caucasian mountains, only to be broken and hurled back like the waves which assault a coast of crags. Raven-haired, black-bearded, broad-browed,

with wide springing eyebrows of sooty black, and eyes which look like moons of jet, 'dark with excess of light,' on skies of pearl, and preserving in all their looks and movements that striking stardiness which our tragedians aim at but do not equal, these bronzed and armed children of the mountains tend to put us out of love with our own specimens of men, and suggest thoughts not complimentary to the types of manhood by which, in this country, they are surrounded. . . . Of the use of the most improved agricultural implements they displayed an intelligent appreciation; and on observing ploughing going on in an adjoining field, each in his turn went between the stilts and traced a capital furrow."^{*}

The words which they have spoken on these occasions were of a nature to produce an effect analagous to that of their presence, although imperfectly given through an interpreter, and only in reply to questions.

The following are some specimens taken from the reports in the local papers.

At Sheffield:—

"In answer to a question of 'On what points are they attacked by Russia?' the Chiefs replied by another question—'On what points are we not attacked?' (Cheers.) The Russian army constantly operating against them numbered 150,000, with the whole force of the Empire as a reserve. They complained most of the blockade of their coasts, which prevented them buying arms in Europe or trading with other countries. In reply to a question as to the annual loss of life in the war, the Chiefs replied that, counting men, women, and children, their loss amounted to 25,000 a year. (Shame.)"[†]

At Leeds:—

"HADJI HASSAN EFFENDI addressed a few words, and said that this was the first time his countrymen had attempted to communicate with the outer world. Their presence signalled a real cry of distress, and they would not have left their country had it not been so. They would go back to their country with a belief that England would not forget them. The present fight with Russia was a question to them of life or death, and they hoped the people of England would not allow that Empire to obtain possession of Circassia. They hoped, if possible, to have help from the land side; but at any rate they hoped to be delivered upon the side of the sea, so that they might have free communication with the rest of the world."[‡]

After such secular and oral testimony as this, we can return with assurance to the statements collected a quarter of a century ago by the German writer, Professor WURM, in the *Conversations-Lexicon*, to which we refer the reader; specially directing his attention to the extracts from REINEGGS, employed by the Russian Government in Georgia at the end of the last century; to those from a Russian officer in the *Minerva* of 1828; to those of M. TAIT-BOUT DE MARIGNY, and Professor KOCH, of Vienna.

The long struggle between Russia and Poland, however inscrutable in the ingenuity of its method, is by no means so, as regards Russia, in its motive. There is no one who does not see

^{*} *Dundee Advertiser*, October 24th,

[†] *Sheffield Independent*, October 16, 1862.

[‡] *Leeds Mercury*, October 31, 1862.

what POZZO DI BORGIO has so well expressed in his Memoir to the Emperor in 1814; that as by the breaking down of Poland Russia had emerged into political existence, so would she by the restoration of Poland be again cast back into nonentity. Poland subjugated, the Russian power might take such development as to endanger the rest of Europe. But it by no means follows of necessity that the measures taken by Russia against Poland were prompted by a foregone conclusion to that effect. There were the rancours of anterior struggle, the animosities of religion embittered by community of race and similarity of tongue. So that, however incredible it may be that Russia should have made use of the Powers of Europe to destroy Poland, still, as regards herself, the destruction of Poland was necessary, and called for every effort of dexterity abroad and sacrifice at home.

As regards Circassia, the case is wholly different and entirely enigmatic. No anterior struggle had existed; there was no intermingling of interest, no conflict of religion, no uncertainty of frontier. The line of demarcation was as distinct as that of land and sea. There were no dangers to apprehend, no acquisitions to effect. And yet Russia has expended, in hitherto fruitless attacks upon this people, the lives of more soldiers, and a larger sum of money, than she has expended, since the great European war, upon Poland, Turkey, and Persia, to which again may be added the expenditure in her late war with England and France, together. It was not gradually that she was engaged, and unconsciously that she became involved in this struggle. Nor has she faltered in the prosecution of this course. Every interval allowed her between particular efforts on distinct fields has been filled up by the prosecution of this military industry in the Caucasus. Lastly, though not least, no encouragement has been given to her perseverance by any such facilities as those which she has found everywhere else of exciting opinion against opinion, class against class, religion against religion, race against race. She has been unable here to manage conspiracies against Governments, and so, getting the command of Governments through conspiracies, to drive them into acts calculated to excite disloyalty and provoke insurrection.

The only solution of this enigma is, that she looks to the subjugation of Circassia, not for itself, but for ulterior objects.

The countries lying beyond are: first, the Ottoman Empire, with Constantinople; secondly, Persia, with the entrance to the Indian Ocean; thirdly, Hindostan itself. So that the sacrifices making for Circassia prove the purpose of acquiring all those countries, which is nothing less than universal dominion.

But if these sacrifices are made with this end, it follows that Circassia stands in the way of her acquiring Constantinople on

the one hand, Calcutta on the other. The sequences of ideas here laid down may be logically established without being practically understood, for this reason: that the European, looking at the map and perceiving on the one side the Caspian, on the other the Black Sea, and knowing that from the first, namely the Caspian, the Persian flag is totally excluded, and that on the other, namely the Black Sea, the Turkish naval power is next to extinct, he would necessarily conclude that it is impossible that such efforts as have been above described could really be made by Russia against the Circassians. He would say to himself, "If Russia does entertain designs against Turkey and Persia, she has no necessity to break down the Circassians, for, especially now that steam is at her disposal, she can send down her forces by sea to the right and left of that barrier."

This inference would be correct if the data were true. The data here are exactly the reverse of the truth. The truth so concealed is the secret of Russia. The naval power, as regards the Black Sea, lies in the hands of Turkey, not Russia. On the Caspian the naval power of Russia is null.

All she has ever effected by the Black Sea is to provision the posts which she holds on the Circassian coast, which, being themselves isolated, count in no ways for ulterior operations. In 1838 the condition of these forts is thus described by the Russian Councillor of State, ECHWALD:—

"Soukoum-Kalé is likewise a ruin for the Russian garrison, of which a great number yearly die of scurvy, not being able to get fresh meat: they are destitute even of good flour and fresh provisions, and of wine and liquors. Provisions are in general wanting in the fortress, *because they cannot go the distance of a verst, without the protection of a gun, to get wood.* If not, they are attacked by the Abkasians, in overpowering numbers. They live, therefore, in a perpetual state of blockade, and are always on their defence."

On this coast, in 1836, Russia possessed six stations, namely, Anapa, Ghelengik, Gagra, Pitsounda, Bampor, and Soukoum-Kalé. The Circassians held but two: Pshad, a small creek, and Soujouksou, a bay. The balance of these is now reversed, Russia having lost all her stations except Anapa and Soukoum Kalé. Ghelengik, the most important of all, both by its bay and harbour and its fortress, being in the hands of the Circassians. The garrison of this place, when held by the Russians, was three thousand men.

Southward of the Circassian coast, that is, a little below Soukoum-Kalé, where Mingrelia commences, down to St. Nicholas, a distance of fifty miles, the country is flat, and in her possession. Between these two points is the embouchure of the Phasis and the station of Poti. From this sea-border a champagne country runs south-east to Salian and the embouchure of

the Kour, and to the frontier of Persia. Judging, then, by the map, nothing will appear easier than for Russia to transport by sea, almost in a direct line, her troops, ammunition, and provisions from Odessa, the centre of her power, to Poti, from whence they would be transferred, continuing exactly on the same line, right across the plain of Georgia up to the very field of war operations, whether carried on against Turkey, or against Persia.

Now, on the assumption that the map is to be our instructor, these enormous advantages thus afforded to Russia in a war against Turkey would be balanced by no countervailing circumstances. Turkey would be assumed to be destitute of the facilities of naval transport on that same sea, and she would be supposed to be placed under the necessity of despatching forces and subsistencies through the whole length of the difficult country of Asia Minor to meet the fresh, facile and abundant, contingents of Russia, who, moreover, would be held to occupy a position of internal menace by proximity to the disaffected and insurgent populations of Armenia and Kurdistan.

But the map which would have suggested these conclusions is not to be read without its key. That key, simple as it is, has never yet been furnished to Europe. It consists in this: *that the Eastern bight of the Black Sea is inaccessible.*

The connexion of the sea-board of the Caucasus with the commercial harbour on the western shore and the military construction on the northern, has first to be shown, otherwise the combination of things so dissimilar in nature to obtain a common result would never be suspected.

The construction of Sebastopol, now dating back ninety years, is the vastest conception that ever entered the mind of the Russian Cabinet. Its own consciousness of its act is expressed in the name given to it, which may be rendered "City of Veneration," or "City of Empire." Nevertheless, it remained wholly unknown until a very recent period. But the Russian Government went steadily on, raising batteries, placing guns, and accumulating stores.*

The grandeur of the design consisted in this—that Sebastopol was wholly useless to Russia as a centre of operations, and presented no possible point of impingement for an enemy. Russia's Emporium was Odessa. Here converged towards the South all

* "The stores accumulated there could only have been accumulated for purposes of aggression, and the manner in which Russia, without being enabled to bring a single man, or a single gun by sea, has relied solely on the defences of the place to defend Sebastopol for many months, shows the danger to which Turkey is exposed."—Lord Clarendon, May 25, 1855.

her lines of communication, so that the fortifications of Sebastopol were constructed to mask Odessa. The design was, therefore, this: that she should have a sham Arsenal by which to disguise her real centre of communications, which, at the same time, should be the one impregnable point on the whole line of her extended and vulnerable frontiers; that she should teach the nations of Europe to consider this as her vulnerable and sole vulnerable point, and on which, therefore, she should draw them as on a naked sword.

The scheme thus planned nearly a century ago, received its fulfilment at the close of the year 1854. A London journal was the instrument employed. The *Times* made the announcement that the Ottoman Empire was menaced by *Sebastopol*. It presented Sebastopol as something so vast, so incomprehensible, and so dangerous, that it, in fact, constituted Russia. This having been accepted by the nation, it became possible for the Governments to send their forces against Sebastopol. No official explanation has ever been given of the expedition to the Crimea, except that the Allies being in Turkey, there was nothing else to be done.*

It has further been stated, and without contradiction, and that under the authority of two members of the Cabinet, Mr. GLADSTONE and Mr. SYDNEY HERBERT, that at the Cabinet Council at which the decision was taken to attack Sebastopol, no reason whatever was assigned. The whole transaction was comprised in the simple words of the then Home Secretary, the present Premier. "Gentlemen, why should we not go to the Crimea?"

The grounds, therefore, upon which the Allied forces of England and France, sent to support Turkey after declaration of war against Russia, were prevented from carrying on any other operation against her whatever, by being sent to Sebastopol, are to be found in the columns of the *Times* newspaper.† The arguments

* "In considering the question of the expedition to the Crimea, the Government had to consider the alternative. England and France had sent an army into Turkey. If that army had been taken back to Constantinople for the winter, it would have been a great disappointment to the people of this country. *There only remained the expedition to the Crimea.*"—Lord John Russell, Dec. 12, 1854.

† After the lapse of nearly ten years—after the failure of every professed object of the war, the *Times* can venture to write as follows:—

"We pronounced for an expedition against Sebastopol with a decision which has earned for us a prominent place in Mr. KINLAKE'S Gallery of the World's enemies. Sebastopol was taken; its capture has done its work; Russia is at peace with mankind; she has moderated her ambition, and she is now deeply engaged in social improvements and reform. . . . Sebastopol remains a ruin and a desolation; the Eastern world is quiet; Turkey is menaced only from Greece, and endangered only by her own misrule. . . . We took the lead—so we are accused—in counselling the siege of

employed in that newspaper consist in statements. It asserted, so early as the 15th of June, 1854, that, "Sebastopol having become a place of first-rate strength and magnitude for all the purposes of war . . . enabled the Russian army to carry on incessant warfare in the Caucasus, and to close the Circassian coast." Proceeding to show how, by means of it, Asia Minor was exposed, and Constantinople in danger, it concludes, "that the grand political and military objects of the war cannot be attained so long as Sebastopol is in existence." And that, "if that central position of the Russian power in the south of the Empire were annihilated, the whole fabric, which it has cost the Czar of RUSSIA a century to raise, falls to the ground." Nor is this all. After stating that the Russian power would be destroyed by the capture of Sebastopol, it goes on to say, that it is of absolute necessity for Europe, that the aggressions of Russia should be stopped, and that this object can be accomplished "*by no other means*"!

The data offered in support of these conclusions consist in the assertion that expeditions against her southern neighbours have been sent by Russia "*from Sebastopol*." First amongst these is quoted Circassia and the Caucasus. The vessels which are employed along that coast have indeed their station at Sebastopol. But the operations in the Caucasus have nothing whatever to do with Sebastopol. There have been two great wars, one with Persia and one with Turkey. With Persia, 1826-7; with Turkey, 1828-9. On these wars we have ample details from various sources, together with the important and elaborate work of General VALENTINI. We are acquainted with every movement of troops, with the source and direction of every convoy; and during these two wars, in the latter of which especially,

Sebastopol. The place was taken, and the World is the wiser, better, happier, and quieter for it."—*Times*, Jan. 24, 1863.

On the 10th December, the *Times* announced that Russia was sending waggon loads of arms into the Danubian Principalities.

On the 11th, it mentioned that Russian merchandise was to enter Tientsin at a rate two-thirds lower than the general tariff for European goods.

On the 13th, its leader contained these words:—"The great event for Europe is the decline of Russian influence." This is said, too, at the moment when the heir to the English Throne is about to have for his father-in-law the Prince nominated by Russia, in her Warsaw Protocol, to the Throne of Denmark. When the Treaty of May, 1852, was signed in London, by which that Protocol was carried into effect, the Russian Ambassador made a formal reservation of the Rights (Pretensions) of his Imperial Master. This is no secret. The Note has been presented to Parliament. Yet the *Times* can say, commenting on Lord RUSSELL's Schleswig-Holstein Despatch, "He (Lord RUSSELL) tells us that a recognition of the independence of Schleswig-Holstein would save us from the risk of the Succession falling to the line represented by the Russian CZAR—a risk against which express provision was made by the Treaty of 1852."

in the words of POZZO DI BORGO, "the whole resources of the Empire were evoked after a preparation of two years," not a single bag of biscuits was sent from Sebastopol. Whilst the supplies are known to have been derived, as naturally they must have been derived, from Taganrog and Astrakan, for the Persian war, being directed through the passes of the Vladi Caucase and Derbend; and, for the Turkish war, from Odessa, crossing the sea to Varna, not, indeed, in Russian vessels, but by means of neutral English vessels taken up for that purpose.* The exploits of the Russian military marine during that war consisted in the loss of a frigate, captured by the Turks.

Although the Turks had the superiority at sea, when their larger vessels were brought out and into play, still it was but occasional cruises which they undertook, and as far as they were concerned, there would have been only a partial obstruction to the passing of small Russian craft to the coast of Georgia, and none whatever to neutral vessels chartered by the Russian Government for transmitting supplies, or transporting troops by that direct line from Odessa, which would have brought them at once without loss or cost on the theatre of war, both as regards Turkey and Persia. The physical formation and configuration of the country, however, rendered this impossible.

USELESSNESS TO RUSSIA OF THE BLACK SEA.

The ancient and traditional character of danger which hangs over the Black Sea has been, in modern times, denied. It is not that the improvement of navigation has dissipated groundless fears, but it is that there is danger on two of the coasts, and absence of danger on the two other coasts. The prevailing winds, in consequence of the direction of the mountain chains, are east and west. Consequently, both to the east and west there is presented the lee shore of a shelterless bay. But it is the eastern shore that is peculiarly so circumstanced by its more rapid curvature, and by its entire nakedness. It opens as a funnel, and a vessel there embayed with a westerly wind has no chance of beating off, no creek to run into, and no holding ground to trust to. The Russian vessels are forbidden to approach under any circumstances, except during the three summer months. And even in these, their stay must not on any consideration be prolonged beyond four-and-twenty hours.

Nor is this all. The vast discharge of waters from the Bug, the Dniester, the Dnieper, and the Danube, are all on the western side, and consequently a current is established downward to the Bosphorus. The overflow from the eastern lip of the aperture of the

* It was by means of these neutral English vessels taken up at Odessa, that the operation of crossing the Balkan became practicable.

Bosphorus drives along the northern shore of Asia Minor, and sweeping round the Georgian Bay returns northwards along the Circassian coast. So that a vessel embayed in a westerly gale is driven by this constant current (increased by such a wind) on the sandy beach of the Bight of Poti; and in the event of escape from such a fate, the iron-bound rocks of the Caucasus await it.

The shore of this bay is shoal. A vessel of any burden would have to anchor at least three miles from the coast. There is no tide to leave it dry, so that it may discharge its cargo into carts; it is to wait there for lighters to come out to receive its cargo, to discharge which, it would then have to seek the inner waters of the muddy Phasis. For this it would require that there were lighters, and the other conveniences of transport and trade, which are wanting.

As Colchis was in ancient times the passage of traffic between the East and the West, and a common centre for the populations of the world—for STRABO speaks of one hundred and thirty interpreters for tongues assembled at its Emporium—it is naturally to be inferred that the ways of the land and the sea were open and easy, and that that way was through the Bight of Poti and the plains of Georgia.* Yet, on closely considering the records, it appears that not even in ancient times was the shore under consideration used for the purposes of traffic. During the greatness of the kingdom of Pontus, largely indebted, no doubt, to its Bactrian and its Indian trade, the points of embarkation, and especially the celebrated Dioscurias, were on the Northern Circassian coast, now represented by Soukoum-Kaleh. These stations being doubtless occupied with the good-will of the natives, just as in recent times this same fort and Anapa were by the Turks. From Soukoum-Kaleh, the natives being friendly, an inland passage was open, through a healthy country lying between the asperity of the mountains and the miasmata of the marches.

After the fall of the independent and great States of Asia Minor, this traffic still continued under the Romans; but it was diverted from the Circassian coast without coming down to the Georgian coast. It found its issue to the sea, as descending from Erivan, through the analogous ports on the Turkish side; such as Batoun, Rizeh,† and Trebizonde.

Behind the sandy beach of this low coast, marshy lands extend for many miles, which are utterly impracticable. At remote intervals narrow causeways have been constructed across them,

* Even the accurate Sir John McNeill mentions the Phasis as the channel of communication between the East and the West.—See Note at page 2, *Progress of Russia in the East*.

† It is from this station that our European name for rice is derived.

just sufficient for two horsemen to pass. Supposing the dangers of the sea to be disregarded, and the difficulties of disembarkation to be overcome, and troops landed, or provisions deposited on the beach, even then would little progress have been made towards their being forwarded to their ultimate destination. For if the Devna, on the other side of the Black Sea, is called the "Valley of Death," this might be termed the "Home of Death." The encampment of the evening would become the hospital or the church-yard of the following morning. Neither could cattle or men be brought there to carry away the provisions, nor could the troops landed issue into the healthier country in sufficient time to effect their retreat. These circumstances being perfectly known no orders could be obeyed, issued with a view of sending detachments or provisions by this route.

The coast is closed by the sea in the winter months, by the malaria in the summer months. Thus it is that in no need, however great, has Russia been able to send supplies by this route. Thus it is that Sebastopol has never been of any active service to Russia; and it consequently follows that the statement that "that fortress is the central position of the Russian Power in the South of the Empire, upon which depends the fabric constructed by the Czars of Russia during a century"—the statement upon which the war of the Crimea was made—is a falsehood. A falsehood so destitute of any semblance of grounds, that it never could have emanated from any quarter whatever save from Russia herself.

There was indeed a semblance prepared by the *Times*, of supplies produced in the Crimea. It used these words on the 4th of October, 1854: "Its extensive and fertile plains provided copious and cheap supplies for the troops." These words were set down under no possible mistake. For it immediately adds, "*The absence of population and trade* left the peninsula as a sort of natural fortress." There was nothing that could be sent out of Sebastopol except that which was sent into the Crimea, and nothing was ever done by the Russian Government to bring anything into Sebastopol except for the subsistence of its garrison. On the contrary, all trade whatever was interdicted by Ukase.

It is further to be observed that this fortress, constructed with the view of defence, and therefore against a formidable attack, was, nevertheless, not constructed with a view to a real attack. In that case it would have been constructed for the defence of Odessa, and not on the barren cliffs of the Taurid Chersonese. The parallel circumstance of our invasion of the Crimea would be presented were England to accumulate vast piles of buildings and stores of provisions in Alderney, with the view of making France expend

all her military resources upon it, under the belief that it was the centre of English Power, that it was no use to assail England anywhere else, and that there was no choice between attacking Alderney and doing nothing. The English nation has believed for a century that Gibraltar was of the last importance as a means of defence, and has risked its very existence to retain it, while, in reality, it could never be of any possible use. A people that could so mislead itself as to the value of an acquisition of its own was easy to deceive as to the value of a foreign fortress. After all, this is but a step in a sequence. The fortification mania began with defending our naval stations. The fortifications of Alderney and Portland are now positively undertaken, upon the grounds that by constructing a fortress that defends nothing, a foreign Power will of necessity go there to expend its military resources, to ruin its army, and waste its time. Henceforward, then, the natural defence of England—her navy—is destroyed in order that a scheme of defence may be instituted, the counterpart of the theory of the invasion of the Crimea.*

This exposition in reference to Sebastopol is necessary to the understanding of the real barrier which is presented to Russia in the Caucasian Isthmus, for it is self-evident that these delusions would not have been practised upon Europe, nor would the expense which Russia has incurred for the support of Sebastopol, and the maintenance of a fleet, have been determined upon unless there were hitherto unsurmountable obstacles raised to her fighting her way down through the South, and establishing her dominion on the sources of the Tigris and the Euphrates. Moreover, whatever may be the connexions which she has established now, as for a long time past, through individuals, with the Governments of France and England, the results obtainable through these connexions would have failed her, had she not succeeded in concealing from Europe generally the dangers and the weakness of her position; and that by means of false notions disseminated with respect to every matter, geographical, religious, political, and military, affecting the countries, seas, and populations lying to the East of the Carpathian Mountains and to the South of her own territories.

* This very argument has been used by the *Times* in reference to Portland. "We, of all people in the world, who so toiled and suffered, lavishing blood and treasure under the walls of Sebastopol, should be the last to underrate the importance of a good fortification as a check to an invading army. The lesson, however, has not been forgotten apparently. Plymouth has been made secure; the mouth of the Thames is virtually impregnable; a tremendous chain of forts is fast encircling Gosport and Portsmouth; and surely, but slowly, as becomes its magnitude and tremendous strength, the Verne at Portland, the Gibraltar of the Channel, is rising into what is probably one of the strongest citadels in the world."—*Times*, January 1, 1863.

USELESSNESS OF THE CASPIAN.

The great maritime expedition fitted out by PETER at Astrachan against Persia, and the pertinacity with which Russia has insisted on the exclusion of Persian vessels from that sea, may lead to the inference that the Caspian, at least, is available for warlike purposes.*

It is commercial navigation which furnishes the sailors and vessels for war. Such trade existed in the time of PETER: not so now. The depopulation of the neighbouring countries and the diminution of the waters from the disappearance of the forests, the encroachments of the sands upon the Eastern Steppes, and the rapid shoaling of the waters of the Caspian Sea, have changed the country in value no less than in aspect. Every year some creek is no longer accessible, some district goes out of cultivation, some village becomes extinct, or some tribe decamps. The country may be said to be returning to a state of nature in its most intractable form.†

The navigation of the Caspian presents greater difficulties than that of any other sea; being shut in from the ocean, it loses the advantage of experience and dexterity in its sailors, and can receive no supply, either in regard to qualification or numbers. It has no tides; it has no islands, capes, or protected lea shores. It is exceedingly narrow in the direction of the prevailing winds, and a large portion of it is so shallow that vessels go aground even when out of sight of land. During a great portion of the year it is wholly unfit for navigation. The vessels are of the rudest construction and the worst materials, and those which may be called sea-going (skhoues), in 1842, did not amount to eighty in number; half of these were rotting for want of employment. They are obliged to put to sea empty from Astrachan; twenty miles from shore they take in half their cargo, and it is not till they are out one hundred or one hundred and twenty miles that they can complete their loading. The navigation of the Volga itself is in like manner interrupted by the shoaling of its waters, and every year brings a change for the worse. The following statement is from a Russian official:—

“Moreover, we must not forget the difficulties of the climate; the fine season barely lasts four months in Russia. The roads are impassable for pedestrians in spring and autumn, and during the winter the cold is too severe, the days too short, the snow-storms often too prolonged, to allow of putting regiments on the march, not to say sending them to the Caucasus, across the uncultivated and desert plains that stretch between the Sea of Azof and the Caspian. The

* This expedition consisted of 442 vessels, and carried 25,000 men.

† At Sarepta they have been obliged to abandon the water-mills erected in 1800.

route by sea is equally impracticable. No use can be made of the Caspian, on account of the arid and unproductive steppes that beset it in on the Russian side. Astrachan, the only town situated on that part of the coast, is obliged to fetch its provisions from a distance of two hundred leagues. The Black Sea is, indeed, more favourably circumstanced, *but it only affords communication with the ports on the Circassian side*, and the mountaineers always wait to make their attack in the season of rough weather, during which navigation is usually suspended, and it is exceedingly difficult to reinforce and victual the garrisons. The tediousness and difficulty of conveying stores is the same by land. With the exception of the forts of Circassia; supplied directly from the ports of Odessa, Theodosia, and Kertch, all the garrisons of the Caucasus receive their supplies from the nearly central provinces of the Empire. Thus the materials destined for the army of the Terek and of Daghestan arrive first in Astrachan, after a voyage of more than two hundred leagues down the Volga, and then they are forwarded by sea for the most part to Korunaskaia, on the mouth of the Kouma, where they are taken up by the Tureomans, on their little ox-carts impressed for the service, and reach their final destination after fifteen or twenty days travelling. The mode of proceeding is still more tedious and expensive for the implements and *materiel* of war, which arrive from Siberia only once a year, during the spring floods of the Volga and the Dnieper. Such obstacles render it impossible to augment the forces employed on the Caucasus.*

The seas on the two sides of the Caucasus being thus unserviceable for aggressive purposes, the peninsula itself remains to be considered in respect to these operations.

THE CAUCASIAN ISTHMUS.

This isthmus is diagonally crossed by a chain of mountains of such fame for its altitude and asperity, as to belong to the mythology of all nations. It is equal to the Alps, but is continuous. Its value as a barrier will be understood by supposing the Alps ranged in a line flanked by two impassable seas, and, so placed, dividing Europe as by a diaphragm. This chain on its western side is wholly impracticable. Near its centre there is a passage, the *Vladi Caucase*, or Vale of the Caucasus, a passage of extreme asperity and danger; and which, though continually used by Russia, has never once been passed by her by force. On the eastern side there is a narrow passage, known by the name of the defile of Derbend. These are her only means of communication with the south, and she reaches them only after having traversed from two to three hundred miles of treeless, waterless steppes. The mass of mountains throughout the whole range are inhabited by warlike tribes, either engaged in fighting against her, or in slumbering subjection; who at any moment, by the slightest concerted movement, could seal against her these two passages, and so hold at their mercy the Georgian army of occupation.

In speaking of the Circassians, the populations of the north-west are generally understood: the name in its more extended

* De Hell's Steppes of the Caspian Sea, p. 318.

application includes the Lesghians on the north-east: populations including between two and three millions, which are permanently under arms. Between these and adjoining the Vladi Caucase are the Kabardians, the Ossetinians, and Tchetchenses, &c., some of whom Russia has incorporated; the others, by their mutual jealousies and dissensions with the surrounding tribes, have afforded her up to this moment the faculty of passage through the Vladi Caucase.

But there still remain the Khanats of Karabagh and Daghestan (the latter being the local generic title for the whole, meaning Highlands) at present in subjection to Russia, although that subjection is scarcely more than nominal. These populations are no less warlike than the Circassians proper. By divisions and mutual jealousies, they have fallen into their present subjection. Their country, one of unrivalled fertility, without the asperity of Circassia proper, is of great strength for defence; the houses are of massive masonry, and horses abound. Russia has not succeeded in being able to withdraw from them their arms. They reckon themselves as equal in number to the Lesghes. They are Mohammedans. Were the jealousies allayed, a result now in process through the political pressure and religious intolerance of the Russian administration, their association with the free Circassians would extend the line of independent country from the mouth of the Kur, on the Caspian, to the borders of the Sea of Azov. To the west and south spread the rich and level lands of Georgia, occupied by a Christian population, numbering another million and a half. These are not warlike, it is true, and they have been hitherto divided from the Circassians by feuds, by religion, and by the effects of intrigue. The line of the ancient kingly race still live secluded under the protection of the Crescent, on the opposite mountains of Adjara. They have neither lost the memory of their past independence, nor have they sunk into apathetic subjection beneath their present rule.

The former sympathies of religion excited by conflict with the Mussulmans, and then centering in a Christian protector from the North, are being replaced by antipathies against that very deliverer, now become an oppressor; and whilst they no longer look with dread at descents from the mountains of Mussulman ravagers, they find themselves exposed to *religious* persecution from their Christian Ruler. The conflict between the new Faith and the old (the Starovirtze), which is actually shaking Russian society to its centre at home, finds its counterpart in the Caucasian Provinces. And as the Rashkolnicks of Russia look to the SULTAN as their religious protector, so also are the eyes of the Georgians turned to the same point alike religiously and politically; as are

those of the inhabitants of Daghestan, the Lesghes and the Circassians. In fact, it depends on the Porte to put forth its hand, not only to repossess its lost provinces of Asia, but to extend its limits to the Volga and the Kouban.

These circumstances, stated for the present moment, have to be retrospectively applied to the wars which Russia waged against Persia and Turkey in the years 1826 to 1829. It will be seen with what enormous difficulties she had to contend in those campaigns, and also with what facility, by the use of the arms against herself which she uses against others, the fabric of her Transcaucasian power might have been shattered.

Every movement across the Caucasus has been accomplished with extreme difficulty, and accompanied with extreme peril. But when she will have turned the Caucasus—when, by the success of continuous operations there, she has spread beyond the Isthmus—then only will have been realised the condition of things which Europe at present believes to exist. Her forces, then, will be conveyed across the sea, and independently of the Caucasus. This point will have been reached so soon as she will have got a footing on the healthy and mountainous portion of Asia Minor, where also there is a port of disembarkation. Thence may be received from Olessa, and expedited through Georgia, troops and provisions for a Persian, as well as for a Turkish war. It is, in fact, at Batoun,* the name of which has not yet been pronounced in political geography, and not at Kokand or at Astrabad, that the first station will have been secured on the route to India.† It has to be observed that her present frontier approaches within nine miles of the caravan route, by means of which the transit merchandise from the West reaches Central Asia.

The obstacle which the block of mountains opposes to Russia

* "Did we, too, not help you? Did we not keep in check 100,000 men? Is Russia not sore and weak by the many years she has been fighting us? If we did not prefer independence to slavery, would not 100,000 of our men be in her ranks? If we were not engaged in defending our country, would not the Russian frontiers be at Batoun."—*The Circassian Deputies on the Crimean War*, Nov. 5, 1852.

† "Two obstacles, indeed, there are, and only two, to this advance of Russia; these are: ENGLAND (!) AND THE MOUNTAIN RACES OF THE CAUCASUS. But for these impediments Russia would unquestionably be able by a great effort to advance her frontier to the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf."—HANTHAUSEN'S *Tribes of the Caucasus*, p. 38.

Beside this assertion of the Russian official, it is well to place the comment of the British diplomatist:—

"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 aggression."—Sir J. McNEILL'S *Progress of Russia*, p. 11.

consists neither in their height nor their extent, but in the warlike qualities of the populations who openly resist her, and in the insecure tenure by which she holds the populations which are nominally subject to her. But the exercise of the military virtues of this people, in this sense, is not to be held as a permanent condition of things. It is contingent solely upon human character, of all things on earth the most variable, and here exposed to the action of that Cabinet which alone has applied itself to metaphysical operations, and which has attained, as exhibited in Europe, to pre-eminence in that pursuit.

We see in individual cases the whole character of a man changed by a word which has entered his ears, by a thought which has formed itself in his mind, by a secret purpose which has taken possession of his faculties. What is effected in the unit may be effected in the mass; and more easily in the mass than in the unit, the difference of conditions being observed. Then the effects become contagious.

The influence of the warlike dispositions of the Circassians, whether on Russia or the fate of Europe or of Asia, flows from an affection of their minds; it is neither reasoned upon nor expressed, but entertained. It is their sincerity which renders rare amongst them, instances of men not pursuing what they openly profess. These dispositions, in themselves most rare and most wonderful, are evidently capable of change, since throughout the remainder of the human race the mass of experience is the other way. That change may be effected by three processes, severally or conjointly. First, by the loss of the hope of independence; secondly, by the loss of integrity; thirdly, by the institution of a general government, so that the fate of a whole people may be placed at the mercy of the mistakes, the passions, the caprices, or the treason of a single man. These are nearly the words employed by Vattel, in accounting for the fall of Poland.*

CIRCASSIAN VIRTUE OF COURAGE.

Supposing that by any one of these processes the motive for those continuous individual and heroic efforts through which the mass of this resistance is presented to Russia were withdrawn, the result to be contemplated would not simply be the facility of secure passage to her forces. She has engendered amongst these populations an industry unknown elsewhere, and without which they can scarcely exist—the industry of War. The implements of the calling of men become the objects of their affections. To

* When a stranger in 1834 spoke to a Circassian of the necessity of a general government, he replied, "We should then be like Turkey; the whole people would fear Russia, whereas amongst us now there is no one child that fears her."

the Circassians, the affection for the bow, and the distinction of the coat of mail, is at least as strong as amongst other races are the affection and respect for the sickle and the plough. There is in them the chivalry of warfare.* As to their arms, it is not pride they have in them, but love they entertain for them. The sense of individual superiority as regards their antagonists, carried to fanaticism, is yet pure of vain-gloriousness. The circumstances of that contest in which they are engaged, environ to them War, with a sense alike of majesty and sacredness. Courage is here virtue in its Roman sense; it is also charity, it is also faith, it is also martyrdom. In it consist the affections of home, the duties of neighbourhood, the respect of ancestry, the care for futurity; and coldly therewith has to be enumerated the sense conveyed in our words, "duty of citizenship."

Their warfare presents to them in their antagonists all that can be imagined most base and abject in man. A great European State, faithless, merciless, and piratical. The troops it employs, when of its own race, abject and cowardly mercenaries; those of other races which it sends against them are drawn from populations which have neither had the heart nor the hand to maintain or assert their own freedom, lending their arms to the Tyrant, by whom their own people has been laid low, against those whom he assails because they are brave and free. Thus has this virtue been nurtured at once by the duties of self-defence, and by the despicable nature of the enemies brought against them.

That virtue has become a habit. Being a habit, it will endure after the circumstances that have given rise to it will have ceased. It is the prominent habit of the race; it is its character. Change now the conditions. Let them cease to hope for independence. Let them cease from being under the necessity of a daily struggle for hearth and home. Let them be managed in secret by an Administration. Then that habit of virtue will pass into the passion for war. Lust of occupation and conquest will replace self-sacrifice and suffering. Russia will have at her disposal for the conquest of Paris and Calcutta the most warlike race on the face of the earth.

ORGANISATION OF POTEMKIN.

It might, perhaps, be inferred, after the admission of this view of the case, that Russia has failed to exhibit in the Caucasus that pre-eminent judgment which has elsewhere marked her course,

* Amongst them it is dishonourable to kill a man by point in quart! This surpasses the chivalry of the old Hindu legislator, who makes it merely dishonourable to take an enemy at a disadvantage.

and that she would have done better—finding them as she did in the time of PÖTEMKIN, and, indeed, up to the year 1834, merely isolated tribes, not one of which cared for its neighbour, unless indeed moved by jealousy or hatred—to have left them without such an amount of pressure as to produce in them a mutual understanding. By extensive culture of their evil passions, seducing them severally into her service, and opening to them, in her armies, and through her wars elsewhere, a profitable field of congenial enterprise, she might have converted these mountains into a boundless nursery of inimitable troops.

It is very easy after the event to reason on the course to have pursued, whilst that event lay still in the dark womb of time. When the organisation of PÖTEMKIN was established, no human foresight could so much as have entertained the expectation that the expenditure, during eighty years, of a quarter of the resources of the Russian Empire would have failed to make any sensible impression on disorganised tribes of mountaineers, and that, at the close of that period, Russia's tenure of her Transcaucasian provinces should be less secure than at the hour in which Georgia was first incorporated.

It has also to be taken into account that the Russian Cabinet at that time was judging and acting under the impression of PETER'S advance into Persia, and probably without a suspicion having risen in its mind of the hydraulic alterations in the Caspian Sea, by the sinking of its level, and the filling up of its estuaries. Still less can it be supposed to have estimated the ultimate consequences to itself of its successes against the Tartar, Kalmuc, and Bourout populations, and the consequent extinction of the camel, and diminution of the breed of horses, by means of which the Steppes were becoming depopulated.

At that time also even Russia herself shared in the delusion of the proximate dissolution of the Turkish Empire—a delusion which seems to have continued down to the period of the admission into her service of the remarkable man who has rectified her former misjudgments, and qualified her for the successes which she has attained in recent times.

Whoever has perused with care the despatches of POZZO DI BORGO, cannot have failed to remark that it is not a confidential servant discussing the application of maxims already laid down, or merely dealing with the details of the execution of orders received from his Cabinet; but that it is the philosopher who is presented, veiling arguments directed against prepossessions, under the semblance of observations made upon measures undertaken. There are two leading ideas presented by him. The one, the impossibility of Russia's maintaining ostensible possession of Constan-

tinople and European Turkey as against the Christian inhabitants alone, even if there were no Turks to fight against; the second, the military power and spirit developed in Turkey, as a consequence of the destruction of the Janissaries, and which he warningly compares with the martial spirit which had been developed in France by the first invasion of the Allies.* It would be needless to have argued in this manner had those convictions been shared by the Russian Cabinet, therefore we may assume that up to that time that Cabinet entertained a belief in the two contrary propositions. First, that the Christian inhabitants of European Turkey would willingly submit to its rule; secondly, that the military power of the Turks was capable of being broken by its arms.

Carrying back these various impressions, latent in the minds of those forming the Russian Cabinet at the period of the organisation against the Circassians by POTESKIN, and the parallel construction of the port of Sebastopol, it must be evident that the acquisition of the block of the Caucasus by no means presented itself as an object of fundamental policy. In the expectation of acquiring Astrabad in the East, in the expectation of securing Constantinople, which closed all access to the Black Sea, whilst at the same time it conferred the command of the White Sea (the sea of the Levant), making Russia mistress of the communications of the East and the West, and the South and the North, the block of the Caucasus remained a mere geographic quantity, deprived from that moment of all political or military value, since no Western enemy could then reach it, whilst she, possessing the faculty of expansion on the East and the West, could wholly disregard its power of passive resistance.

These reasons will be sufficient to show how, in the forming of the first designs in regard to the Caucasus, the process of seduction was not the one adopted. They do not, however, suffice to explain how the system of coercion was that which was adopted. In order fully to understand it we must revert to the real difficulties which then oppressed the Russian Cabinet, as we have done in reference to the erroneous impressions which then it entertained.

CONDITION OF SOUTHERN RUSSIA FROM 1760 TO 1780.

From the borders of Posen to the banks of the Emba, the distance, as the crow flies, amounts to three times the extreme length of Great Britain. It is equal to a line drawn across Austria, Piedmont, France, and Spain in their entire width. It is equal to a line drawn from Stockholm to Madrid, or to one drawn from

* Pozzo di Borgo, November 28, 1828.

Constantinople to Brest. The width of country on this line between Muscovy Proper on the north, the Pruth, the Danube, the Black Sea, and the Caucasus on the south, is not less on an average than the distance between Rouen and Marseilles, between Munich and Paris, between Vienna and Dantzic: covering a surface equal to that of France, Spain, and Austria combined. Between the years seventeen hundred and sixty and seventeen hundred and eighty, during which was planned and matured the system against the Caucasus,* the whole of this vast territory was occupied by populations, many of them nomade, the Eastern portion of them horsemen, the whole of them armed, and constituting portions of the Russian Empire. No Muscovite Proper inherited this territory, with the exception of some towns and some colonies.

The administration of the Empire did not extend to it, nor did the Russian Church. The connexion with the Russian Government was established through submission of princes and of tribes, still retaining their own usages, and through the military organisation, again dependent on tribe usages; through incorporations by Ukase, again on conditions, only at a subsequent period wholly set aside; and, finally, on partitions, in like manner subject to stipulations. The populations of this region amounted to between thirty and forty millions, consisting of Poles, Malo-Russians, Tartars, Cossacks, and Calmucks. The religions were the Roman Catholic, the Starovirtze or old Greek Church, the Mussulman, and the Bhudistic.

During this period Russia was engaged in grave foreign wars.

The danger of such a position will be self-evident, as also the anxieties pressing on the mind of the Council. It requires no incidents to illustrate the reality of the one or the other; yet these are not wanting. In the year 1771, the Calmucks on the Volga, by one estimate exceeding a million of souls, and by none placed at less than half a million, incapable of further endurance, and hopeless of aid from the surrounding tribes, equally oppressed, lifted their tents and departed for China, after being in the first instance furiously assailed by the Cossacks, and afterwards by the Kirghis.

Two years had not elapsed when a Cossack insurrection, organised on the banks of the Yaik by an adventurer of bravery and capacity, but intractable and savage, threatened the entire dissolution of the Empire, and was, after three years, finally extinguished only through his own misconduct.

There was not one of these tribes not ready at any hour for in-

* In 1776 the lines were drawn from the Black Sea to the Caucasus, including nearly thirty fortresses.

surrection; but insurrection on its own basis, and without the idea of concert with another. In each there were valiant and desperate men, always ready as leaders of the rest. Siberia had not yet furnished those resources which it has in later times; and Siberia would have but very partially supplied the internal necessities of the Empire. Of all things was it requisite to obtain a field of warfare, not within the State, so as to establish community of feeling amongst the populations, not too remote, so as to involve it with Foreign Powers. That field presented itself in the Caucasus. There the warlike dispositions of the internal populations could be employed, and thither could they be sent to be killed with honourable forms. Even whilst enlisting their feelings on the side of Russia, the more intractable and desperate of the religious disputants and the political malcontents could thus be disposed of. Whatever the consequences of the policy of violence against the Caucasus, then begun, there can be no doubt that, at the time, it was not only a wise course, but so essential, that it may be safely said that without it that Empire, in its present proportions, could not be in existence.

THE DESIGNS OF RUSSIA BASED ON DESTRUCTION.

Here, again, preconceptions interfere with the understanding of a system, which is purely abstract and scientific. There exists in Europe no more the idea of war without object, than of expenditure without an end. Military occupations being in progress, acquisition is as certainly predicated in reference to the aggressor as thirst would be of the man observed to be drinking water. Not understanding war simply for war, the case arising, we lend to those who make it, either objects or passions to which they are strangers; investing them with faculties which they do not possess, or charging them with follies with which they are not afflicted. For the operation to be understood, the motive must equally be understood, and the motive in this case is the very basis of the Russian system. It is through it that she has effected her progress; by it that she maintains her power. That basis is DESTRUCTION.

On the day and hour when the course of the Russian State began to run, by the formation of the proposition in the mind of some Russian Grand-Duke, "I will conquer the world," the maxim of destruction was accepted, as the means of accomplishment: there was no other. But destruction was not to be applied directly; for if Russia possessed the means in itself of destroying others, conquest would have been the process. It is destruction of one Race and State by another Race and State. It is destruction of each State by itself. This is the object and end of all that she undertakes, whether in movements of a military kind,

which she effects and induces; whether in her relationships of war with Foreign States, or of amity with them; whether in the negotiations into which she enters, or the Treaties with which she binds herself; whether in the outward manifestations of her power, or the secret communications of her Ambassadors. It pervades alike the ostensible evidences of her hostility, and the confidential marks of her regard.

A valuable illustration is furnished by the news of the day. A leader in the *Times* recites the earnest, friendly, and affectionate language of the Russian Minister to the Envoy of the United States at St. Petersburg, conveying that it is one of the chief objects of desire to the Russian Cabinet, to see the United States united, independent, and happy. He is believed. His words are reported. In consequence of this and similar words, both parts of the disrupted States look to Russia, and to Russia alone of the Powers of the world. Yet this rupture has been a most grievous calamity to England and France, whose interest it is that these grievances should be composed; whilst this calamity for them is profit for Russia. The calamity for them consists in the cessation to produce cotton and grain. The substitute for cotton being flax, and the substitute for American grain being Russian grain; it follows that if accident alone has produced the Civil war, accident has profited Russia more than all her own capacity. If she has at heart the composing of dissensions which will deprive her of the benefits of this accident, she will have given an example of self-denying and self-sacrificing philanthropy, the parallel to which is not to be found in the annals of mankind. The words of the Russian Minister, Prince GORTSCHAKOFF, were as follows:—

“The hope of reunion is growing less and less; the separation which I fear must come will be considered by Russia the greatest of all possible misfortunes; Russia alone has stood by you from the first, and will continue to stand by you. We are very, very anxious that any course should be pursued which will prevent the division which now seems inevitable.”

The American Envoy, Mr. BAYARD TAYLOR, goes on to say:—

“At the close of the interview, he seized my hand, gave it a short pressure, and exclaimed, ‘God bless you!’ His manner convinced me that he desired his words to be reported.”*

Here is an instance of the use of terms of cordiality and affection in furtherance of a purpose of unmistakable destruction applied on a gigantic scale, with no possible aim of occupation, but merely of financial advantage, carried on in the New World, without the moving of a single vessel or a single soldier, being utterly in-

* American State Papers quoted in the *Times*, Dec. 23, 1862.

scrutable both to the victims and the spectators of the design, and having as its result the reducing into complete dependence upon Russia of the whole of Europe for its imported corn, which will then have to be paid for at considerably advanced prices.

That, therefore, which above all things was necessary for Russia, in order that the Poles, Cossacks, and other tribes should be fused down, was a commensurate slaughter-house.

The results have justified the design. The Cossack populations, since the final suppression of the rebellion of Poughatcheff, never again raised their heads. Transferred in large bodies to the banks of the Kouban and the Terek, they have ceased to be dangerous to the Empire, have submitted to the piecemeal deprivation of all their privileges, and have so far been incorporated into the military system, that the words "Cossack" and "Russian" have become in Europe interchangeable terms. The Tartars have in like manner been decimated into innocuousness, the Malo-Russians, placed between the Cossacks and the Poles, have yielded to the levelling effect, and actually furnish the cavalry and artillery to the Russian armies.*

The first partition of Poland was effected in 1772, during the heat of the Cossack insurrection and during the war with Turkey, which closed by the first acquisitions made from that Empire in the Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardgi. To what extent the continuous success of Russia against the Poles during the three subsequent generations of struggle, themselves alone far more than a match for Russia, is owing to the continuous abstraction of its population for the Caucasian war, and the expenditure there of the most resolute, capable, and indomitable spirits of that people, can only be ascertained from the military archives of Russia. But this will appear at once evident—that Poland could not have fallen, had her people entertained in respect to the Turks that appreciation of their value which the Turks entertained in reference to the Poles, whose Sultan, alone of the monarchs of Europe, endeavoured to avert their partition, and protested against it. No doubt the origin of this perverting infatuation may be traced to their early conflict with the Turks; and more especially to the pride that preserved the reminiscence of the chivalrous intervention of SOBIESKI before Vienna. But that which especially shut out from them the saving thought of

* In the autumn of 1853, it was announced from Bucharest in the London newspapers that orders had been issued to withdraw the Russian cavalry to the rear along the whole line on the Danube. On the same day it was announced that fourteen men (cavalry) had been shot for attempted desertion. It was not known that the cavalry were Malo-Russians, and that the affinity and affection of the Malo-Russians were with the Turks rather than the Russians.

community of interest with the Ottoman Empire, has principally to be referred to the war in the Caucasus. The Circassians being Mussulmans, and the Poles being employed against them, and being so employed in a lawless war, on the one hand the sense of justice in public dealings was lost, and on the other a hatred of the Mussulman engendered.

Such is barely the state of the case in respect to Poland as managed up to the present day by the Russian Cabinet. But it is impossible to dismiss the subject on these terms, and without some further indications of the, so to say, inner sentiments of the Polish people, which may be hereafter developed, into the most important of all means of political action. The slightest consideration given to the subject must satisfy even a superficial observer, that a consciousness of identity of interests with the Turks, were it established throughout the twenty millions of the warlike and enduring Polish people, must have the effect of maintaining Poland herself as a barrier on the north-east of Europe, and so restrain that physical pressure of Russia, which, not resisted by Poland, must add Poland to its own pressure when brought to bear upon Europe. In a word, the reparatory and defensive stipulations of the Treaty of Vienna made at that time to consist in a Constitution for Poland, guaranteed by Europe, can now only be replaced by an individual attachment of the Poles to the Ottoman Porte, so as to secure the impossibility of the military action of Russia against the latter, and at the same time to insure the present endurance of the Poles in the hopes of future restoration, whether from the successes of the Turks in arms, or from the assertion and preponderance of the influence of Constantinople.

Scarcely had the victory of SOBIESKI been achieved when a reaction took place; and the wiser of the Poles deplored the insurrectionary act against the traditional policy of their country. Under the Jagellon kings, the relations of Poland and of Turkey were those of alliance. The Polish noblesse in the *Pacta Conventa*, forbade all expeditions directed against the Ottomans, and this friendship was broken only by the incursions of the Cossacks into Turkey, and of the Tartars into Poland, at the instigation of Russia. Nevertheless, armies of the Tartars of the Crimea, sent through the authority of the Porte, appeared before Warsaw to resist the Swedes, and in Gallicia to resist the Transylvanians. The agent of CHARLES XII. at Constantinople, employed to establish an alliance between Sweden and Turkey, and to induce the latter to declare war against PETER the Great, was a Pole, PONIATOWSKI. The Confederation of Bar based their operations less on the hopes of support from Western Europe, than on the

assistance of the Turks. These dispositions of the Poles, CATHERINE adroitly turned to account to destroy all interest for them in Europe, by designating them in her Manifestoes as "Enemies of the Christian name," whose object it was to introduce the Mussulmans into the heart of Europe. During the war of the French Republic, General DOBROUSKI presented to the Directory a plan of operations for France against Russia, by a combination with Turkey; and another DOBROUSKI, having successfully presented a similar plan at Constantinople through the instrumentality of HUSSEIN PASHA, the famous Pasha of Widdin, organised Polish legions in Bulgaria and Wallachia.

However these ancient traditions may have slumbered in the interval and down to the insurrection of 1830, they were then by the shock suddenly revived, and from Warsaw two agents (WOLICKI and LINOUSKI), were sent to Constantinople to persuade the Porte to take up arms. The Poles should have thought of this two years before, as they were told by the Turks; but still, notwithstanding their own recent defeat, they would not have been disinclined, as the Reis Effendi expressed himself to General GUILLEMINOT, to support Poland, by sending 200,000 horsemen across the Ukraine. Whether or not such operation was then within their capacity, at all events war would have been declared against Russia, but for the interposition of the English Government in a form which overmatched the penetration of the Porte.

As the Poles in raising the standard of revolt had mistaken their time, so on their discomfiture and migration, they mistook their way. As they had waited until Turkey had been beaten before taking up arms, so afterwards they wandered away to the West of Europe, instead of returning to Turkey, where affections and lands awaited them, and where, finding a home, they might have established a link, to become hereafter a pivot of action. Here again the general infatuation did not remain without protest. Their best, if not their only historian, MOCHNACKI, writing in 1833, repeated to them what JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU had told them in 1791, and pointed out to them Turkey as their refuge and their hope; and that for not them only, but for Europe itself, saying that it was at Constantinople that the stand had to be made "for India, for Poland, and for Civilisation."

The Polish emigration in Europe sinking into frantic doctrines, and mixing itself with every wild scheme of Revolutionists, and every lawless enterprise of perfidious diplomacy, lost every memory of their land, and every sense of human right. Still, again, a protest has not been wanting; amongst the emi-

grants those of historic name and recognised station have adhered to the traditions of their race, and associated themselves with Turkey. Here an incident presents itself calculated to produce the gravest consequences for the future.

The Poles of the emigration offered their services to the Allies, in the war against Russia of 1854. A more deplorable act can scarcely be imagined, if taken to imply that the Poles believed that war to be sincere. On the other hand, assuming it to be understood by them that it was insincere, their association with it was an effort of genius, because it did present to the eyes of all Poland the flag of Poland beside that of Turkey on the battle-field against Russia. Thus the deception of which the Poles and the Turks were alike the victims, was converted into the basis of an alliance for future times, which must have the effect of discomfitting the plans and breaking the power of that Government, which has been enabled to use the great Powers of Europe as the merest instruments of its will.

Throughout the Ukraine the germ of such thoughts have been secularly established. The popular prophet, WERNYHORA, has left behind him words which have passed from generation to generation, but of which the sense remained to these latter times to be developed.

“The DELIVERANCE of Poland shall come only when the Ottomans shall water their horses in the Vistula,”

Nor is it to be forgotten that still there are remote villages where the Mussulman Prayers are recited by a Polish population; that the Polish Ulans (from the Turkish Oghlan, boy) designated simply the cavalry regiments which the Tartars placed at the disposal of the Kings of Poland.

The Mussulmans introduced by WITOLD, brother of JAGELLON, all received in Poland the rank of Noble, and their fidelity was inviolable to their adopted country. Nor did they all retire into the Turkish possessions in the eighteenth century.

A prosperous people being regardless of the future, is also forgetful of the past. An unfortunate people applies itself to recover its traditions; and when it is successful in doing so, provides for the future. Now is the time for Poland to undergo this study, and to prepare for this result. It has to learn how great is its good fortune in not having a Europe on the East, as well as on the West; it has to replace passion by reason, and the mean by the noble affections of the mind. It has to exclude the thought of wreaking vengeance some day on the Nations of the West, by whom it is betrayed, by imposing upon itself the noble desire of saving those nations from Russia and themselves.

Returning now from this digression to the period under review,

we have to conclude that down to the Turkish war of 1828, the conversion of the Caucasus merely into a slaughter-house had sustained the Russian Empire within, and protecting it from disruption, had given to it its dimensions at home and its authority abroad.

From this period a new era opens for both the parties.

THE RECENT POLICY OF SUBJUGATING THE CAUCASUS.

The Circassians, up to this time, had not looked upon Russia as animated with the purpose of their subjugation. No desperate efforts had been made for the establishment of lines of forts, except that of the north; no large armies had been moved against them. It was border warfare, not general pressure. It was a scattered guerilla, but no concentric operations. Consequently the idea of community among themselves had not arisen. There were so many tribes, just as there were so many families. On the other hand, the Turks were in their country. They were established on three points of the coast. The deputed Governors sought to make themselves men of importance, pretended to authority over the people, and carried on intrigues amongst the clans. The external feelings of the people consisted rather in the dominating jealousy of Turkey, than in the native hatred against the Russians. The whole was reversed by the war of 1829, and the Treaty of Adrianople which followed it. The withdrawal of the Turks, and the surrender by them of the posts which they held to the Russians, brought the latter down upon the scene, so as to shut them in on all sides at once. The jealousy for Turkey ceased; fear for Russia took its place; and by the interference with their trade the pressure fell upon the whole people. The pretended cession in the Treaty of Adrianople of Circassia to Russia might indeed be known to some of them; but it was Russian garrisons on the coast, and Russian cruisers pursuing, sinking, and capturing the small craft by which their habitual traffic was carried on with Constantinople, that announced to them the fatal change that had taken place. Here was the germ implanted, though it lay latent for a time, of the creation of a people of Circassia out of these isolated tribes.

On the other hand, the Russian Cabinet had to view in Circassia wholly different objects from those of 1770. The Caucasus, appeared no longer as at that period, a mere geographical incident, which could be left out of account in carrying on the operations which were to put it in possession of the Ottoman Empire. For it had now discovered that that Empire was not to be conquered in itself; that in order to shake it by warlike means

from the West it was requisite to paralyse it by heavy blows, or by powerful menace in the East, so as to prevent the warlike populations of Anatolia, by the dread of an invader in the rear, from being brought up to face its armies on the Danube.

A policy based upon the purpose of acquiring does not exclude the necessity of self-defence. It must not, therefore, be considered that gain was the only consideration by which it was influenced. It is a very different picture that is shadowed forth by **POZZO DI BORGIO**. Speaking of Turkey he designates the prospective relations of the two Empires in these words: "**THE DANGERS OF THE FUTURE.**"

As this word "danger" is unintelligible to any save the acting persons belonging to the Russian Cabinet, it would be improper to quote it without some accompanying indications of the accuracy and value of the term.

First. Turkey regaining a military organisation, threats would cease to determine the policy of the Porte. Any difference, therefore, arising between the two Governments, a mere order to the Port Captain of Constantinople would paralyse the internal condition of the Russian Provinces of the South; the closing of the Bosphorus to the trade of Russia, if continued for a moderate space of time, would, without the firing of a shot, or the movement of a single company of soldiers, reduce Russia to the necessity of accepting any terms imposed by the Porte, on penalty of bankruptcy of the Government, and of one-half of the landed proprietors, which would of a certainty be accompanied by an insurrection of the whole of her southern provinces. In fact, the geographic position of the Bosphorus in reference to the material condition of Russia, and of the Porte in reference to the populations of Western and Southern Russia, constitute the Russian Empire a mere dependency of Constantinople from the moment that the Government there established acquires a self-subsisting character, and, emancipating itself on the one side from the dread of a Russian descent, and on the other from deference to the suggestions of the European Embassies, resolves to be guided according to its own institutions; that is, by the Law of Nations, in its dealing with Foreign Powers.

Secondly. Turkey, recovering through her military organisation her power of action, would be expected to reverse those restrictions upon her own exportation imposed in the time of her weakness through the threats of Russia, and subsequently continued by means of the **English Commercial Treaty**; in which case Russia would cease to be an exporting country. All the raw materials which she furnishes can be obtained at a lower cost, with greater facility for effecting returns, from the Ottoman

Empire, and in amount equal to any present demand in Europe. As for instance, corn, tallow, with oil as its equivalent, hides, timber, copper, iron, flax, with cotton and silk indirectly bearing upon the consumption of flax.

Thirdly. This same military reconstruction would render Poland unincorporable in the Russian Empire.

Fourthly. It would render hopeless the projected operations with a view to the subjugation of the Caucasus, and so close the door to future ambition in the east and south.

Fifthly and lastly. It would frustrate that deep and far-seeing design which had led to the erection of Sebastopol on the Crimea, to be as a mailed fist, on which the forces of the West were to be brought some day to break themselves, when the time had come for Russia to use the unconscious armies of England and France to prostrate Turkey in the shape of allies, and to acquire for herself the prestige of a triumph in a single-handed war with the great nations of the West.

These indications will suffice to explain why **POZZO DI BORGIO**, in 1828, characterised the future relations of Turkey and Russia, as those of danger for the latter.*

* Even so far back as the Treaty that gave Russia her present frontiers (1812), and before the occurrence of that political convulsion which ended in the destruction of the Janissaries, it was the danger to which Russia was exposed that occupied those either composing her own Cabinet, or the servants of other States, working for her ends. Sir Robert Wilson was sent by Lord Castlereagh to Constantinople in 1812 to be attached to the Embassy of Mr. Liston, and was employed, as appears from his own letters, in engaging the Grand Vizier not to break the Peace which he had just signed with Russia, "for fear of a war with England." After this he proceeded to Moscow, to join the Russian army as British Commissioner. When at St. Petersburg, he took the remarkable step of attempting to induce the Emperor to renounce the obnoxious clauses of the Peace of Bucharest, moved by "a sense of the duty which I owe your Majesty, and animated by an affectionate attachment to your Majesty's person." Thus begins the letter he addressed to Alexander, in which, after referring to the reforms about to be commenced, "which will give the Turkish power a very formidable character;" he goes on to argue on the wisdom of conciliating the Turks. He thus deals with the special provisions of the Peace of Bucharest:—

"If Russia, by the line of the Pruth and the Danube, had acquired a military line of defence, that would prove a barrier to the hostility of the Turks, and if security had been obtained by the Peace of Bucharest, then the maintenance of its stipulations (although they checked the advantages of a cordial Union with Turkey) might be a plausible measure. * *"

"But when the security is not acquired, and only an imperfect military line is obtained, a line that cannot in any case be offensively useful, and must defensively produce disasters, then the terms of such a Peace are at the moment mischievous, and, as regards the future, most prejudicial." Sir R. Wilson makes the following remark on this letter: "The Emperor admitted the utility of the proposed modification of the Treaty of Bucharest, and was

It may now be desirable to introduce the passage in which those words occur; it is as follows:—

“The Emperor has put the Turkish system to the proof, and His Majesty has found it to possess a commencement of physical and moral organisation which it hitherto had not. If the SULTAN have been enabled to offer us a more determined and regular resistance, whilst he had scarcely assembled together the elements of his new plan of reform and ameliorations, how formidable should we have found him, had he had time to give it more solidity, and to render that barrier impenetrable which we find so much difficulty in surmounting, although art has hitherto done so little to assist nature.

“Things being in this state, we must congratulate ourselves upon having attacked them before they became more dangerous for us, for delay would only have rendered our relative situation worse, and prepared us greater obstacles than those which we meet.

“If required to add another proof of this truth, I would seek it in the whole tenor, and in the views contained in the confidential note of the Imperial Ministry. Far from lowering the demands and conditions of the peace, I have seen, with lively satisfaction, that it augments them, after the campaign has afforded us a more correct estimate of the real state of things, and has convinced us of the necessity of establishing principles, in order to diminish the dangers of the future.”

These, however, were not the only considerations calculated to **awaken the solicitude, and thereby develop the intellectual faculties of the Russian Cabinet,** at this more recent period.

The depopulation of the steppes, an object in itself at the former period, when the subordination of the Calmucks, Tartars, and Cossacks had at all risks to be secured, now presented itself, as fully experienced in the wars from 1826 to 1829, as a serious obstacle. The mere crossing of this region (included in her own frontiers) has cost her relatively as to numbers, in some cases, a loss equal to that which the English army incurred during the whole campaigns of the Peninsula. The loss of stores and cattle was, of course, analogous; and the periods of the year during which any passage could be effected was reduced to three or four months. Henceforward all operations against the two Mussulman kingdoms could only be conducted at enormous sacrifices; and the number of troops that it was possible for her to employ was reduced to a third of those which she was enabled to bring on the theatre of war—then so much closer to her resources—in the middle of the last century.

Eastward, there was no longer any possibility of illusion or mistake as to the altered condition of the Caspian Sea; its unavailability for warlike operations on a large scale was now

disposed to accede to it when I left St. Petersburg. But the moment of pressure was lost from scruples of delicacy; and as the exigency passed, the conciliatory feeling died away.”—*Appendix to Sir R. Wilson’s “Russian Journal.”*

* Portfolio. First series. Vol. i. pp. 348-51.

established. There remained no chance of impression to be henceforward made by military effort, save by accumulating and concentrating power in the Transcaucasian region, and grouping it round Tiflis, which thirty years ago was aptly defined as "the eye with which Russia regarded the realm of CYRUS." Thence alone could she now make her spring. From that basis could she drive the wedge between the two Mussulman States. But for this purpose it was necessary that the Circassians should be reduced, and the Caucasus converted from a slaughter-house for her own obdurate subjects, into a nursery of troops for the conquest of her neighbours.

All this while the rest of the world remained in as complete ignorance of the affairs in which Russia was engaged, of the measures she was prosecuting, and the inducements and apprehensions which influenced her decisions, as if all these belonged to some other planet. That which did transpire in reference thereto, consisting entirely in misrepresentation, were helps that were afforded to her from the West. Thus it was that POZZO DI BORGO wrote at this time: "Public opinion has already sacrificed to us the fortresses and the Asiatic littoral of the Black Sea." We can therefore be at no difficulty to discover from whom the suggestion came to introduce into the Treaty of Adrianople that clause by which Turkey is made to appear to hand over Circassia to Russia.*

The misrepresentations spread through Europe bore chiefly upon two points. The first as to the character of the Circassians: they being made to appear as savages. Such was the terror so inspired, that, in 1834, the landing of the one Englishman who reached the country was effected by a boat dropping him on a bare point, and then hastily returning on board.

The other misrepresentation was in reference to the power of Russia. The new operation adopted to create in the Caucasian Isthmus a nucleus and nursery of aggressive force, was represented as a measure originating in folly and productive of danger. The word was passed, and by every one accepted, "Russia is weakening herself." This has been the ready answer of European Ministers in European Parliaments whenever they were called to account for subjection or connivance. But it was particularly laid down so far back as 1826 in reference to the Persian war, which was the first event in more recent times that awakened alarms as to the ulterior designs of Russia. An eminent literary man, KLAPROTH, after a simulated quarrel, pretended to

* When in former Treaties Russia pretended to cede Circassia to Turkey, it was, of course, with a view to this resumption.

escape from St. Petersburg, carrying with him important documents, which were successively communicated to the English and French Cabinets, purporting to be the plans for the invasion of India. Having thus added to his pre-eminent authority as a literary man the title to guide Europe from his recognised position of hostility to Russia, he prepared the public for the Persian war by a series of expositions, which first appeared in a French paper, the *Courrier Français*. The statements they contained were accepted as truths, and the conclusions they contained became henceforward maxims. The nature of both will be apprehended from the following extracts:—

“Since Russia has extended her possessions beyond the Caucasus, she finds it necessary to maintain a numerous army in the newly-conquered provinces. But the countries occupied do not afford sufficient provisions for the army, and supplies must therefore be forwarded by the Black Sea (?) and across the Caucasus, along a road seldom practicable for waggons. All articles necessary for the equipment and arming of troops, being conveyed in the same manner to Georgia, it will be readily perceived that the possession of that country must be burthensome to Russia. Forty thousand men scarcely suffice to keep down the population of Georgia, and the warlike tribes of the Caucasus, who are ever on the watch for opportunities to plunder the country, and to carry off the inhabitants into slavery.

“Constantly menaced on one side by the unsubdued mountaineers, the Russians cannot make a free disposition of the forces which they have to the south of the Caucasus. A war with Persia must greatly embarrass them; for though it is easy (?) to order a hundred thousand men to pass this chain of inhospitable mountains, it is quite impossible to feed them when they have arrived at their destination. No part of the Caucasian Isthmus produces corn in sufficient abundance to admit of any considerable exportation; and if a surplus did exist, the difficulty of the communication would prevent its conveyance to the less fertile provinces. The great obstacle which this deficiency of provisions presents *will always prevent* Russia from augmenting her army in Georgia, and from *making extensive conquests* in Persia.”*

The ignorance and the misinformation of the public and the Cabinets of Europe was shared in to the fullest extent by the internal populations of the empire; and as amongst these the Poles had communications with Europe, and were considered authoritative in regard to Russia, their delusions and passions in respect to the Circassians, and the other populations of the Caucasian Isthmus, powerfully contributed to aid Russia in giving that false direction to European opinion, by which alone she could be suffered to prosecute her designs, and finally to achieve them.

RESISTANCE OF ENGLAND IN 1835.

While the Russian Cabinet, engaged in such great and difficult affairs, composed of men selected for their eminent capacities, not owing their entrance into office to extraneous accident, or liable

* Portfolio, 1st Series, vol. i. p. 325.

to expulsion on political considerations, were thus daily acquiring a progressive pre-eminence in the faculty of dealing with circumstances and with men, the other Cabinets presented no parity of conditions, out of which might arise, upon any given transaction, a successful competition with Russia; or even so much as the power of observing that which she was engaged in doing, or that which she intended to effect. The necessary consequence of this relative position was, that Russia was invariably enabled to make use of foreign cabinets for the advancement of her ends, even when these Cabinets thought they were opposing her. This condition was enunciated as an unquestionable maxim in the organ of the Conservative party when the Duke of WELLINGTON was in power in 1835, as follows:—"From the moment that a Power, which we still consider barbarous, was enabled to interfere in the affairs of Europe and of Asia, the Cabinets and Statesmen of Europe have become the tools with which she works." The composition of such a sentence—to say nothing of its appearing in the *Quarterly Review*, the organ of the party then in power, and its acknowledged authorship by the most eminent diplomatist in the service of the British Crown (author of the "Progress of Russia in the East," and soon after British Envoy in Persia)—could only be understood as the announcement that the era of ignorance, delusion, subserviency, and connivance, had passed by, and that England, now repossessed of sight, was about to recover her faculty of action, and exert it for the restoration of the States she had been hitherto aiding Russia in humbling, coercing, deceiving, and destroying.

The European public accepted this conclusion, which the attitude assumed by England during two years had all the appearance of justifying; at the end of which time, the sacrifice of an English vessel to Russia on the coast of Circassia, while engaged in peaceable traffic with the Circassians, signified her relapse into her anterior condition—with this difference, that she had hitherto only sacrificed others, while now she made sacrifice of herself. The temporary resumption of her position by England in the years 1835-6 did not, however, solely depend on the perception of Russia's designs, and a just estimate of her character by Sir JOHN MCNEILL. There was, then, another English diplomatist who had also arrived at the same conclusions, and exhibited an equal courage in the attempt to give them effect; whilst there was also a Sovereign in England, who, like LOUIS XV. in France, had formed the idea of a concert for the protection of Europe against Russia.

That other diplomatist was the then British Ambassador at Constantinople, Lord PONSONBY, brother-in-law to Lord GREY.

We have, therefore, at this period two members of the British Diplomatic Service—the one the representative of the King in Turkey, the other the representative of the King in Persia—who, at a given moment, break through all previous forms and traditions of office, who simultaneously address their Sovereign, the Cabinet, and the public, calling for a reversal of the policy hitherto pursued, denominating it subserviency, denouncing the fatal consequences that must follow upon its prosecution, and asserting the opposite course to be the safe one, and also easy; being nothing else than this, that England should detach herself from the Cabinet of Russia.

It is natural to look for some immediate cause for so unexpected an event. This cause we have not far to seek. It is to be found in the knowledge then acquired of Circassia, and therewith the secret of the weakness of Russia. The result of this discovery was the sending of a British vessel to trade with the Circassians. This was the course which, after mature deliberation by the best-informed and ablest men, who at the same time, occupied high stations in the English Government, was adopted as the means of saving India, Persia, and Turkey. The individuals engaged in this operation were the King; his Private Secretary, Sir HERBERT TAYLOR,* the two Under-Secretaries of State for the Foreign Department, Mr. BACKHOUSE, and Mr. FOX STRANGWAYS, now Lord ILCHESTER, the Envoy in Persia, and the Ambassador at Constantinople; the whole acting with the apparent sanction of the Foreign Minister, and with the assenting cognisance of the Premier, Lord MELBOURNE.

This incident is here referred to, to show that when for a time the case was taken up on the other side, the Caucasian Isthmus came to be considered as of just as high an importance as, it is evident from the anterior statements, it was considered by the Russian Cabinet itself. As the possibility of future progress was held by the Russian Cabinet to be wholly involved in the operations in the Caucasus, so to the English Cabinet, when for a moment opposing her, was it equally certain that by frustrating her designs in the Caucasus her schemes against the South and the East would be frustrated also. Here, also, was shown the application of the maxims above enunciated—namely, that to counteract Russia, no warlike operations were requisite, but merely the cessation of subserviency; as the *Vixen* was not sent out to fire shot, but merely to exercise England's indefeasible right to trade with an independent people.

* This office, one of the highest importance, has since this period been abolished as troublesome to the Cabinet. The then holder of it was a man of eminent authority.

It is doubtless desirable to ascertain, if possible, in what terms those two eminent British diplomatists defined the position of Circassia, and what relative importance they gave to it, in the affairs of the world. In regard to Lord PONSONBY, we are not left in doubt, a letter of his on the subject having been produced on the 23rd of February, 1848, in the House of Commons, in which he refers to the despatches which he had sent home to his Government in reference to the futility of any claim of Russia on that people, and in which he speaks of Circassia as a position second in importance only to Constantinople. He has elsewhere said, "*Constantinople breathes only under the shadow of the Caucasus.*"

As to Sir JOHN MCNEILL, it may be said that Circassia is the pivot of his work "*The Progress of Russia,*" just as it is of the designs of Russia. When he was first informed by an eye-witness of what he had observed in Circassia, the words in which he expressed the effect made upon him were these: "This alters the balance of power throughout the world." The following passage will show how he speaks of the country in his published work:—

"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, seem 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 CATHERINE to purchase the sovereignty of Georgia and Imeritia, at the price of large donations to many chieftains, a considerable pension to HERACLUS, 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 enormous 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 in as much 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."*

* Sir John McNeill's *Progress of Russia*, Second Edition, 1838, p. 51.

VALUE AND RESOURCES OF CAUCASIA.

When Russia exchanged her policy in reference to Circassia; when, on the one hand, ceasing to require it any longer as a place of butchery for her nominal subjects, and reduced to depend on its active resources for the means of future aggression, the case had naturally to present itself in this form: What can be made of it?

It becomes necessary, as the first step, to take in this country as one and as a whole. This is by no means easy to accomplish. Nowhere on the earth is there such an immediate and striking contrast between mountain and plain, between freedom and subjection. Our maps not only give us the distinctive lines dividing three Empires from independent States, which are again commingled, but each new map gives a new delimitation.* Then there is the distinction between Mussulman and Christian. The separation of the quarters of the globe causes our maps to be intersected on this line by the boundary between Europe and Asia. If, again, looked at in a general map of the Russian Empire, its dimensions dwindle into insignificance by the contrast to the eye with the enormous though vacant space included within its frontiers.

To attain to this idea of unity we must find a general name applicable to the whole; that name we might naturally derive from the sea adjoining it to the East, and which particularly belongs to it, and from the mountain which gives to it its character. The names of both are derived from the same source; Caspian from Cassiapa, the Caucasus from Koi-cash, or Kav-cash, the Mountain of the Cash, originally belonging to the Indian Caucasus, or Himalaya. The name of Caucasus is, indeed, unknown in the country, but it is still preserved in Cashbeg, the peak second in height, whilst the principal peak is known as Elbrouz, the Arabic form of Borgh, the term applied in the Zend to the Indian Caucasus. This was, therefore, in ancient times the country of the Cash.†

The scientific men of Russia early discovered the necessity for

* Besides the maps of Chambers, those of the "Useful Knowledge" Society, and others, it is well to note that those published by the Government for the Civil Service Competitive Examination efface Circassia from the list of nations, and add its soil to the territory of Russia.

† The Cash are no other than the Cuthites; and China derives its ancient name of Cathai from its conquest by the same people. The Cuthites and the Cash are no other than the Turks, whose primitive seat of Empire was Kashgar, "mountain of the Cash," whence their conquering invasions were made to China, India, and the West.

a common name for the country inhabited by the Circassians and the Georgians. They gave to it the name of "Caucasian Isthmus." The Government of Russia, from a similar necessity, fell upon that of "Trans-Caucasian Provinces." The particle, Trans, and the adjunct, Provinces, both implying a Russian sense, being eliminated, leave us the term CAUCASIA, which, if adopted, will combine convenience without insinuation; whilst, merging into it, on the one side Circassia, on the other Georgia, the susceptibilities of either people are set at rest.*

The justice of any general designation must, however, depend on the existence, amongst the Georgians, of a general desire to recover their independence. Their faculty to do so need not be taken into account, the warlike masses which surround them, once put in motion, being perfectly equal to that end, if once we obtain the assurance that the Georgians, while seeking their independence of Russia, are brought to look to the independent tribes on the north and west, and the Mussulman tribes on the east, as engaged in a common cause. There is no problem of more importance in its solution to the future fate of mankind, and it resolves itself into a very simple question: namely, whether or not the pressure of Russia has or has not as yet effaced religious antipathies? It is proposed here to show that that question can be absolutely answered; and in the affirmative.

First of all it must be recollected, or, at all events, established, that the annexation of Georgia to Russia was not effected by military means. On the Georgian people there have not been left the crushing memories of a defeat. They only recollect that Russia, by fraud and composition, by treachery to their Prince, and false promises to their people, surreptitiously got hold of their country and crown.

In the second place, it is to be borne in mind, that they dwell, so to say, within the continual sound of war, and, consequently, know that small tribes can live despite the Russian Empire. Although the mass of troops required for the war in the mountains has proved hitherto sufficient to keep them in subjection, there is no illusion as to the vastness of the Russian power. They also know that the Circassians, during the Crimean war, desired to free Georgia; and, in Tiflis, the hearts of the people bounded with exultation on the arrival of the news of the first Russian defeat before Kars.

* The Daghestanees have for years in their jealousy of the Independent Tribes been moved to indignation at the very name of Circassia. In the recent address to the Queen of England of the Daghestanee chief, Mehemet Khan, the word "Circassians" is positively introduced, and the danger pointed out that would accrue to them from the subjugation of that people.

So far back, however, as their incorporation, representatives of their princely House disdained to accept the proffers of Russia, and sought refuge amongst the Mussulmans, and to this day dwell on the anti-Caucasian chain of the Ararat, watching from those heights which overlook their native country for the hour of their return. Some of them even, in conformity with a like change in the formerly Christian populations of that district, have become Mussulmans—a result which has almost universally attended in this direction alike the presence and the approach of the Russians.* From the moment, therefore, of their incorporation, the eyes of the Georgians were turned towards their Mussulman neighbours. Whilst as yet no amicable relationships existed between them and the free Circassians—whilst as yet subsidies continued to be paid and some respect for rights and usages observed, the Georgians looked to incorporation with Turkey. During the war of 1812, such was the importance attributed to these dispositions of this population lying at the extreme east of the two empires, that thereon was based the resolution then adopted by the Porte, not to treat at Bucharest, but to prosecute the war with the view of recovering the provinces lost in 1774, and not to rest content short of the recovery on the east of the frontiers of the Khans of the Crimea and Astrakhan. This determination was overruled by England, who forced the Treaty of Bucharest (including the dismemberment of Turkey in Bessarabia), by a threat of war.

The recent publication by Sir R. WILSON, British Military Commissioner during the French invasion of Russia, enables us to offer an official confirmation of this statement. In a letter addressed to the Emperor of RUSSIA on the 12th of September, 1812, he uses these words:—

“Your Majesty is aware that the proclamation of the Turkish peace was delayed for a considerable time after the ratifications had been exchanged at Bucharest. The delay excited great uneasiness in Count ITALINSKY and Mr. LISTON, and the hostile language of the Reis Effendi induced them to apprehend that advantage might be taken of the war in which Russia was engaged, to advance pretensions beyond even the *status quo ante bellum*. In a conference with the Reis Effendi and Mr. LISTON, the former even intimated that *Georgia was rather a Turkish*

* A writer in the *Portfolio*, in 1838, then estimated the converts to Islam within the present century and a half, at five millions.

“Muscovite Policy has carried on a successful war with the Heathen of Central Asia; it alone has made converts among the stubborn Mussulmans. It has at the same time turned Protestant Germans in numbers from their faith, and made them as thorough Russians as the population of Moscow.”—*Times*, January 27, 1863,

than a Russian appendage, and he stated that Georgian deputies had already come to solicit Turkish protection and incorporation."

"The tacit withdrawal of the Servian Article, and the secret Article relative to the establishment on the Phasis, was, in that conference, held to be insufficient, and an explicit declaration of their dereliction was insisted upon as a *sine quâ non* of peace. It was, however, evident, not only on that occasion, but on various others, and from multiplied sources of intelligence, that the Reis Effendi, and a very powerful party in the Divan, being aware of the French and Austrian Treaty that guaranteed the integrity of the Turkish dominions, and of the exigencies which would oblige a diminution of the Russian Imperial forces on the Danube, considered the peace *in toto* as most disadvantageous and discreditable to the interests and honour of the Ottomans. The Grand Vizier himself confessed to me afterwards similar sentiments, and told me 'that only the fear of a war with England had induced him to terminate the negotiations with the expedition he had done.'"*

From 1812 Georgia slumbered till 1826, when, during the Persian war, a general rising was all but accomplished by a sudden inroad into Daghestan of two Persian adventurers. The occasion was too brief and the operations too restricted to allow of any notable manifestation; and it was not till the Polish war of 1830-1 that any specific plan of emancipation seems to have been formed in Georgia. The occasion was again lost between the delay and the uncertainty of information from the West, and the waiting upon movements from the East. No Polish emissaries came to them, and the Persian army, which they expected, and which, under the Crown Prince, ABBAS MIRZA, was actually on its march, was pursued by the Secretary of the British Legation, and forced, under a threat of war from England, to halt and to retire.

The Georgian leaders, thus foiled, were not, however, disconcerted. The conspiracy was not dissolved. They awaited only a more favourable opportunity, which soon after they judged to have arrived. The ensuing proceeding we give in the contemporary words of a diplomatic agent:—

"The war with Poland followed those with Persia and with Turkey. The country being then drained of resources, the Georgians had the hardihood to form a scheme of a national revolt. They were, however, too tardy in their movements, and after England had held back the other Powers, France included, then ready to fall on Russia, and had so laid Poland prostrate at her feet, the confederate Georgian provinces remained alone exposed to her vengeance. But still they did not despair of success, and conscious of the facility with which their country might be rescued, and Russia's re-entrance into it rendered impracticable, they continued prosecuting their design up to the year 1833, when they imagined that the movements of MEHEMET ALI furnished

* Appendix to Sir Robert Wilson's Journal during the Moscow Campaign.

them an ally in Egypt, and would enable them to accomplish their purpose. Their mistake originated in the representations made by the agents of MEHEMET ALI, that his movement, though apparently directed against the SULTAN, was concerted with him with a view of freeing him from Russian domination. They consequently sent to urge the advance of a body of troops to the Caucasus. These documents, as may be expected, immediately found their way to St. Petersburg, and as soon as the Russian squadron was anchored in the Bosphorus, and that great combination happily concluded by the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, the Georgians paid the penalty of their hardihood on the one side, and their confidingness on the other, and the twenty-four chiefs who had signed the document transmitted to Egypt were sent to expiate their crime in the mines of Siberia."

In so grave a matter no source of information can be neglected, and so scanty are the stray lights thrown upon it, that the task of collection is no less facile than important. The work of Sir J. MCNEILL being within the reach of whoever desires information, it is sufficient to refer to it without reproducing here its contents. The substance of the pamphlet is the condition of the tribes of the lowlands and of the mountains, and especially of the Georgians. When it appeared, the sense of those portions was not apprehended. Now that they might be understood the work is forgotten. No one will to-day peruse its pages without drawing from them two inferences: the first, that the occupation of Georgia has hitherto been serviceable to Russia only as enabling her to assault the Caucasus in the rear; the second, that her rule and operations must be preparing the whole populations of the lowlands for amalgamation in order to throw off her yoke.

On the north, the line dividing Caucasia from the Russian Empire is geographical—namely, the respective courses of the Kuban and the Terek flowing east and west, north of which spread the Steppes, and south of which rise the mountains.

To the south we must take the frontiers of Russia as laid down in the Treaties of Adrianople and Turcmanchai.

By drawing a straight line from the mouth of the Terek to that of the Kuban, another from St. Nicholas on the Black Sea to St. Nicholas on the Caspian, and again joining these extremities by two lines, we will obtain a trapezoid, of which the contents will be about equal to that of the country if the sinuosities of the coast and the frontiers are followed. The sides of this figure will be respectively, north side, 550; south side, 450; west side, 350; and east side, 400 miles in length. The extreme length being 800 miles, exceeding the distance from Turin to Syracuse; the extreme width being 400 miles, nearly equal to the distance from Munich to Rome. In surface this country will exceed more than twofold the dimensions of Italy, and nearly approach to those of France or of Austria.

The region, wholly independent, and actually at war, extends on a continuous line, cut by a single pass, five hundred miles,

upon an average width of one hundred. The proper Circassian territory is thus equal to Italy. If, like Italy, it is assailable on both sides, unlike Italy, it is inaccessible throughout its entire centre.

The rugged region furnishes subsistence for the whole of its present inhabitants, who draw nothing from the plains, and enables that portion of them which carries on the war to be supplied by the labour of those who remain at home. The remainder of Caucasia consists of plains, or of country which though mountainous and strong, is nevertheless of extreme fertility. This rich land, lying between the parallels of Messina and Rome, is again equal in extent to the whole of Italy. This is the country of the peach and the pheasant; to it the Western World owes the cherry and the vine: from the wild vine, the creepers on the forest-trees, the grapes are to this day carried to the wine-press. It is the land of the mulberry, and consequently of the silkworm. On its uplands the cotton-bush is said to be indigenous, and rice, which flourishes there without irrigation, derives its Western name from a harbour in an angle of the adjoining coast.

To arrive with any accuracy at the numbers of the people is utterly impossible. A statement, drawn up in 1850, by a Turkish trader, who had for twenty years been continually in the habit of visiting every part of the independent country, gives the following as the numbers of arm-bearing men who might be called out for local defence:—

Circassia, west of the Vladi Caucase, 160,000.

 " east of the Vladi Caucase, 200,000.

Daghestan (in case of insurrection), 80,000.

There then remain the people of Georgia, Immeritia, Mingrelia, and Gouriel, of whom the estimate may be more popularly made by houses. Calculating these by five, the numbers vary, according to different calculations, from one million to two millions and a half.

We will probably not be far wrong in setting down the Caucasians at six millions of souls, and then dividing them into two equal parts, the one of which is absorbed in war, and the other available for agricultural industry.*

* Haxthausen, on Russian data, classes and estimates the population as follows:—

	Square Miles.	Population.
Transcaucasia	66,550	2,150,000
Ciscaucasia	56,080	620,000
Free Mountaineers	46,560	1,550,000
Total	169,190	4,320,000

By this calculation the country exceeds Great Britain and Ireland by 50,000 square miles.

Such, then, is the picture which has been presented to the Russian Cabinet, than which nothing can be more calculated on the one side to alarm, on the other to excite. Here is a mass of 400,000 warlike men, all armed, and a large proportion mounted, requiring but the slightest concert of feeling and of motion to crush at once her armies in the South. These armies are in the midst of a subject population of a million and a half, who, on the occurrence of such disposition among the warlike tribes, would be ready to rise upon them and cut them off in detail. This is not only what she has to fear, but what she has to risk, in striving to attain to that point from which alone the attractive features of the case present themselves. What Russia has to look to, on the favourable side of the account, is:—

First, an unlimited supply of ready-made soldiers close to the field of future operations.

Secondly, an unlimited supply of provisions for a war in Persia, and in Turkey.

The plain of Georgia, though narrow and irregular, still has an extreme length, as between sea and sea of four hundred and fifty miles; and as it might easily maintain a population equal to that of Italy, so from the large elbow-room afforded to its present inhabitants, were the fictitious obstructions removed of war and mal-administration; and if the tribute were received in kind, and made to consist in gommi—a kind of millet, which forms the staple food of the Circassians—Indian corn, and other grains, there is not a family of agriculturists that could not immediately supply provisions for two soldiers. The Russian Cabinet must be conscious that it holds in its hands, in Georgia alone, the resources with which to pay and to feed two hundred thousand men, together with the available materials for carrying on a permanent war against her southern neighbours, on these dimensions.

Whilst the history of Russia, looked at from without, is one of such undeviating success, that it has become logical to define it by the word "progress," as it has, indeed, become customary so to do; looked at from within, that is to say from its own point of view, it would have to be described in a very different manner. Its conceptions of action are so vast, the facilities of deception and subornation so great, the reports of agents necessarily so sanguine, and equally of necessity the habits of systematic operation so predisposing to overlook incidental obstacles, that the years, and months, and weeks, and days, must be severally concluded with disappointment, as they have been passed in anxiety. Her most confident schemes, in respect to the largest incidents, have been doomed to provoking discomfiture, by reason of unexpected accidents, unprompted by any counteracting intelligence; and

the fruits of long-matured conceptions have been filched from her grasp, by the very means she has taken to achieve them. It was thus that PETER'S expedition, when Persia was at his feet, and when he expected to stretch his hand forth upon India, was followed by the parturition of a Nadir Shah. It was thus that the crossing of the Balkan gave to the Ottoman Empire an army of four hundred thousand men, with a revenue to support it. If, as a servant of her own has said, all her sacrifices in the Caucasus havê left her, "not a whit advanced from where she stood sixty years ago;" so may it be said, that in regard to the whole of the East, all her sacrifices and all her triumphs have left her less advanced than she was at the close of the reign of PETER, a century and a quarter ago.

GUSTAVUS III. has observed this phenomenon, and has traced it to its source. "As she advances, and becomes known, new enemies spring up under her feet;" he adds; "but she overcomes this resistance through her influence over Cabinets at a distance."

Thus also it is that in the remarkable Memoir, prepared for the instruction of the present Emperor, the abstract of which we owe to the disturbed conscience of a Prussian Minister, it is laid down that future advance in the East will result from Russia's "influence over the Cabinets of Europe." To this, however, is conjoined the necessity for vigorous military action against the Caucasus.

This truth and rule receive a striking confirmation in the events in China, where Russia, since her defeat of 1688, has remained wholly in check until the last few years, and where now she has been effecting the most wonderful and rapid progress. Here the European Powers have been brought into play, pretexts being available—first, of objects special of their own as against China, and then the old one of jealousy of Russia, and the necessity of counteracting her.

At Constantinople and at Teheran she maintains her position solely by the presence of the English and French Embassies. Were these withdrawn, every vestige of influence over these countries would disappear. How is it, then, that she has not sought to introduce European diplomatic agency into the Caucasus? It is that there the internal character and constitution, being different to that of any other spot of the earth, so must the operations conducted against it be exceptional. There is no pretext which the European Powers could avail themselves of, because the Circassians and the Russians ARE AT WAR. And as she has succeeded so long in preventing the knowledge of even the existence of that people, so must she prevent the knowledge of the cha-

racter of the war that is carried on, and, above all things, stop commercial intercourse. The European Powers did all that she could require from them, when, in 1831, their representatives at Constantinople communicated in secret to their Consuls a Regulation which had never been made, but was only spoken of; so that every Consul privately warned the captain of every merchant vessel of his nation not to approach the coast of Circassia. So tender and delicate was this operation, that, with all her dexterity in composition, she was unable to write out a Regulation which should not be compromising, whilst the Government of England, which was followed by the other European Governments, in giving effect to this prohibition privately through the Consul at Constantinople, could not venture to communicate it to LLOYD'S, which is the channel, to the trade, of all communications effecting foreign commerce. So absolute and so secret was the understanding between the British Foreign Office and the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, that when, in 1836, the King of ENGLAND undertook to send a vessel to that coast, through a direct communication to a merchant in London, and when he questioned the Foreign Minister as to any legal obstruction to that trade, the Minister suppressed the Regulation of 1831, and replied to His Majesty in the negative. When the merchant in question then formally addressed the Foreign Office, putting the same question, again the Minister, in his replies, suppressed all knowledge of this Regulation. But in the interval between the correspondence in London and the arrival of the vessel at Constantinople, the Russian Minister repeated there the warning of 1831.

To estimate the importance to Russia of preventing access to the Black Sea, let us follow for a moment the consequences that would have ensued had the *Vixen* discharged her cargo of SALT, and taken in in return wax and other articles which had been prepared for shipment. Immediately the trade would have been opened with the Danube, an outlet which Russia was equally engaged in closing; and the rock-salt of Wallachia would have supplied the mountaineers with a necessity of life, and that at a low rate. This supply would have affected at once the *health* of the soldiers engaged against Russia, and the *preservation* of meat for their subsistence.

The trade so opened, they would then have been enabled to obtain GUNPOWDER. Arms they have in abundance, and of a manufacture unrivalled in the rest of the world. The beautiful *savat* work in silver is exclusively their own, although now copied by the Russians in Tula. The ornamental part, whether the inlaying of gold on steel, the embroidery of gold and silver on stuffs, or the mosaic-work of leather, is of the most refined taste, and of a

style peculiarly their own. Anything like their shirts of mail has never even been seen in Europe, and these are sometimes of an estimated value of 500*l*. Their swords even are original in form. Human ingenuity has expended itself on this weapon, but nowhere else has the idea arisen of a sword without a guard! In it may be read the history of the people; in it the history of all true defence, which lies in reaching the life of your adversary, not in manœuvres to protect your own. This is the sword of chivalry, the sword which in their hands has never been drawn without cause, and never been sheathed without honour.* As to the steel of which it is composed, it suffices to say that the Damascene art, lost everywhere, has taken refuge with them, for there still remain three manufactories in Daghestan where it continues to be made. Then come the bow and arrow. One of the former, tested in London, is equal to 100 lbs. It is composed of five pieces, and is supposed to be three hundred years old. The arrows made with the most scrupulous imitation in Edinburgh have failed, as discharged from any bow made in Europe, by scores of yards, of the recorded flight of those of Circassia.

These are their weapons—the weapons of antiquity,—with which, doubtless, they met and discomfited the sword of Rome, the backward arrows of the Parthians, the spear of the Tartars, the chariots of the Assyrians, and the slings of the Hyrcanians.

But in these days a new instrument of warfare has arisen, consisting of tubes and explosive powder. With this novel fashion they have scarcely habituated themselves; and yet, seeing the relatively expensive nature of the ancient artillery, and the constant employment against them of the modern artillery, whether in the shape of muskets or of cannon, they stand at a terrible disadvantage. As they live by war, and can only live by success in war, for their gunpowder, being a necessity of war, becomes a necessary of life. Therefore the free introduction of salt involved the free introduction of gunpowder.

At how many men shall we reckon Russia's yearly consumption on account of this introduction of salt and gunpowder? Would it be too much to place it at a regiment? Might it not also mean the failure of an expedition or the capture of a fort; and consequently of many expeditions, and many forts? Who can predicate the effect on the *morale* of the Russian armies of one hundred hand guns of long range amongst the Circassians, who at present, without artillery and without engineering, escalate and take forts according to the ancient fashion?

If freely supplied with gunpowder and muskets, would not

* In the photograph of Ismael Effendi, one of the Circassian Deputies, this sword is represented, held in his hand.

cannon follow, with men qualified to use them? Would Russia then be able to preserve a single post on the sea-board, or on the line of the Kouban, or the Terek? And would not these expeditions against Tiflis, Ganaj, Georgewisk, &c., be familiarly discussed in every Circassian hut, now only not discussed and not executed through the deficiency of artillery.

Nor is this all. The troops employed against them in the North are cavalry. Cavalry means horses, and horses require provender. Provender, as a material, is both bulky and inflammable. The Steppes do not supply it. The spring season affords luxuriant and abundant grasses, but thereafter the existence of the horse, on the Russian side of the lines, depends on the stock in hand, which stock has to be transported from distant regions. Judge, then, of the havoc which a few cylindrical musket-balls of JACOB or NORTON might make. The mere terror of explosive and igniting balls would rival, along the four hundred miles of frontier line, that produced in a fleet of line of battle ships, by a gun-boat throwing red-hot shot. With this difference, however, that a gun-boat might be sunk. For the Cossacks of the Kuban and the Terek there would remain no alternative but that of flying to a land of grass, or passing over to the Circassians. These, thus relieved on the North, would face to the South; and with their rear perfectly protected, would apply themselves to the recovery of Georgia.

Surely these are reasons enough for Russia to have strained every effort and run every risk to prevent the communication of all European nations with the Circassian coast.

But there are collateral effects of no less importance.

Gunpowder being to be procured amongst the Western Circassians, those of the east and those of the south, down as far as Salian, would have repaired thither to procure it. Communication would have been established between the tribes at that time knowing nothing of each other, or jealous of each other; the inevitable consequences would have followed of insurrection in the south-east. The Avars of Daghestan would have thrown in their lot with the general confederacy.

The salt would have been obtained from Wallachia; severally the opposite populations on the two sides of the Black Sea would have come to know of one another; and that isolation of her victims by which Russia works her way, would have ceased.

The most important of collateral results remains behind. It is the effect that would have been produced upon the Ottoman Empire.

Before the Treaty of Adrianople, a considerable traffic was

carried on between Circassia and Constantinople. The pretended regulation of 1831 was therefore a blow struck at Turkey; and the value at that moment to Russia of its acceptance by Mr. MANDEVILLE, the English Minister, and its communication by him to Mr. CARTWRIGHT, the Consul-General, to be privately communicated to English captains, who knew nothing of this traffic, and had not the remotest idea of engaging in it, was, that Turkey was obliged to submit to a Regulation which had received the sanction of the English Government. It was therefore England who, by an unavowed and, as regards herself, inoperative sentence, and not Russia, that stopped the communications between Constantinople and Circassia for now thirty-two years; that is to say, since the year 1831. During which time Turkey has had to endure the sinking or the seizure of innumerable *Vixens*, without even so much as the ceremonial of an Admiralty Commission for their confiscation.

This humiliation of the Porte, as bearing upon events continually in progress, produced in effect a conspiracy between it and Russia. It had to cover its own remorse by misrepresentation, and to invent excuses for co-operation with its known enemy. In reply to remonstrances by a European, one of the highest officials of the Empire expressed himself in these terms:—

“The Circassians have themselves only to blame if they are at war with Russia; or if, being at war with her, they are not successful. For by their lawlessness they provoke her vengeance, and by their insubordination they throw away their advantages.”

As the Turkish Government has to supply reasons for the abandonment of this people, so has the Russian Government or its officials to offer reasons for attacking them. The following words of a Russian diplomatist, in 1840, give the case as Russia presents it:—

“It would be easy to put an end to the war in the Caucasus, either by leaving it alone, or by striking it down by a series of heavy and concerted blows. But the Imperial Cabinet has other views. It desires to keep up the martial spirit of its army, while at the same time it secures a political safety-valve.”

Russia has always to keep in view, in every sentence that she utters, that there must be combined invariably a double picture of her own position, and especially in reference to the Caucasus; having to act upon two people of wholly dissimilar character. From the Eastern world she has to veil the inspiring knowledge of her reverses. To the eyes of Europe she has to parade the consolatory assurances of her debility. In the sight of the one she has to appear an inevitable destiny. To the other she has to be represented

as so silly as to be constantly weakening herself by her own operations.

Now it is not only the disgrace and degradation that ensued for the Porte, who never ventured so much as to remonstrate, but it was the feelings of the members of the Divan that were outraged. Every Turkish official yearns towards Circassia. Every statesman that Turkey has produced has felt that the support of Circassia was necessary to the existence of the Empire. Far-seeing policy and impulsive desire coincided. It was not armies that had to be sent. It was salt and gunpowder. There are, besides, Circassians in high office at Constantinople—Circassians who are wealthy men. Just as in Europe money is subscribed for a country afflicted with famine, or a population that has suffered from inundation, so in like manner at Constantinople there were always ready those who would subscribe gunpowder and salt for the populations of the Caucasus famished by the English Consulate, and overwhelmed by the Russian forces.*

Now, if the trade had been opened by the *Vixen*, the Porte would have been relieved from the humiliation of the confiscation of its vessels, and so have recovered its independence. Charity and foresight would have had free course, whilst abundant supplies would have reached the Mountaineers without charge. The dispositions to aid them, instead of being cowed and crushed, as they have been, would have taken root, and developed themselves. The number of Circassians holding office under the Porte would have been increased, so that without shock, or apparent movement whatever, an amalgamation would have taken place of Circassia and the Ottoman Empire.

When General CHARNOWSKI returned from the East, he was asked by a friend what he had principally remarked there. His answer was, "I have seen a country over which is cast the shadow of the *Vixen*."

The visit of the Circassian deputies to England has suggested the idea of repeating the experiment of the *Vixen*, and, therefore, of reproducing a crisis similar to that of 1837, when, as it was then said, "the fortunes of Russia and the world lie under the hatches of a British schooner."

In the interval, however, an English steamer, the *Kangaroo*, was chartered at Constantinople for Circassia, and despatched thither, laden with arms and ammunition, in February, 1857. It proceeded to coal at Sinope; from thence to Toabs, on the Circassian coast, where it landed Polish, Hungarian, and other adventurers, together with cargo. The weather being stormy, the

* See the extracts already made from German newspapers in 1844, p. 10.

Kangaroo had been unable to tow a brig similarly laden through the gut of the Bosphorus, and some weeks elapsed before it was enabled to continue its voyage. After the transaction was completed, the Russian Embassy at the Porte put itself in motion, and required and obtained the exile from Constantinople of ISMAEL PASHA, a Circassian himself, who had contributed large funds towards the expedition, and of FERHAD PASHA (the Hungarian General STEIN), who had been active in despatching it. After a few months of country life, they were recalled to Constantinople on the fête-day of the Emperor, and as an act of Imperial magnanimity.

Here two questions will naturally be asked. First, why it is proposed now to send a vessel, since the way has been opened? Secondly, why, vessels having been sent, the results as above stated, have not been obtained?

The answer is simple and conclusive. The expedition was planned by the Russian Embassy itself. ISMAIL PASHA, on the one side, and the Poles embarked on the other, being alike dupes of a conspiracy in furtherance of that general scheme of amalgamation for the whole of Caucasia which has been expounded in the foregoing pages. The adventure, however, was an unfortunate one. The manager of the treachery, and the only one apparently cognisant of it on the spot, was detected by the interception of a letter from him to the Russian general. He was tried by a court-martial, condemned, and escaped with his life only through the influence of SEFER PASHA and some other persons, not Circassians, who were not inclined to see the particular crime of treachery too severely visited.

In the course, however, of these proceedings, a confession was drawn up by BANGYA, in which he attempts to justify himself to the Poles, the members of the Court-martial, on the grounds of obedience to his natural chiefs, by whom he had been sent to tender this service to Russia in the hope of obtaining from her compensation in her good offices in reference to Hungary. He says, "As Poles you must feel you would not stop at any means which might serve your country. By obeying the orders of my chiefs in the mission entrusted to me here, I still wished to be of use to my unhappy country."

The scheme itself will be found developed in the following extract from the confession:—

"At the same time I entered into communication with ISMAIL PASHA, Post-master of the Ottoman Empire, a Circassian by birth, who appeared to me patriotic and able to make sacrifices for his country. I consulted with him on the manner in which it might be possible for us to send into Circassia arms, ammunition, tools for artificers, good officers and artisans. But the real plan

of the expedition was arranged between FERHAD PASHA,* Colonel TÜRR, and myself. Captain FRANCHINI, *military secretary to the Russian Minister, was present at several of our conferences.* The object was to *gain over Circassia to Russian interests in a peaceable, slow, but certain manner.* Russia may carry on the war for another period of thirty years, and lose several armies without a chance of conquering the mountaineers, and even if by immense sacrifices she succeeded in conquering the country, *every war with the Porte, by putting an end to her maritime power in the Black Sea, will render the occupation of Circassia impossible.*

“On the other hand, it would humiliate Russia in the eyes of Europe to leave the Circassians in peace and not to attack them; it is therefore necessary to put an end to an expensive war and to give satisfaction to Russian honour and interests. When *once* Circassia should have submitted to the direction of FERHAD PASHA and of myself, our plan would be:—

“1st. To choose some native prince who would bring the whole country under his rule.

“2dly. To persuade the Circassians that they are not to expect any assistance either from the SULTAN or from any other Power.

“3rdly. To demoralise the mountaineers by dint of defeats on the field of battle—defeats studied and prepared beforehand.

“4thly. To bring them to recognise the CZAR as their nominal sovereign, without paying any tribute, but admitting garrisons into the country.

“The Russians, in the mean while, were to refrain from all attack on Circassia, and come to our assistance by operating on a large scale, only when the Circassians should have been already rendered tame and tractable. The Hungarians imported into Circassia would be placed about the prince; the more capable would be entrusted with the important posts. All the public functionaries would be chosen among our creatures.

Captain FRANCHINI assured us that Russia required nothing more than apparent submission, and concluded with much reason, that if before the war several thousand Circassians allowed themselves to be led by Russia to fight against their own countrymen; in future, when all motives of enmity between the two nations shall have disappeared, a multitude of young Circassians would eagerly join the Russian flag.

“By opening up the ways of commerce a competition between the Greco-Russian and Turkish traders would be inevitable, and then Russian merchants would overrun the country in the same way that the Turkish do now. Like the Circassian soldiers returning to their country from the Russian regiments, the Russian traders would also propagate Russian ideas in the country. Peace, commercial intercourse, the luxuries of life to which the richer inhabitants would get accustomed, the marks of imperial favour, money, and Russian orders would do the rest, and in twelve or fifteen years all these means of influence will make Circassia what Georgia now really is.

“We had the hope to obtain for our expedition the concurrence of several Circassians, or friends of Circassia, high in place, with the intention of compromising them and preventing their future intervention in the affairs of their country.

“The 22nd September ISMAIL PASHA recommended me to engage for Circassia several hundred Poles who were barracked in Soutari, and who had formed part of the legion under ZAMOYSKI, since the employment of the Polish element might

* At the time mentioned Ferhad Pasha was writing voluminous letters to persons in England, declaring the English and French Governments to be in collusion with Russia, and asking assistance for plans respecting Turkey.

become very dangerous to the Russians, and since the fidelity of the Poles might be relied upon in an enterprise against Russia. I promised to reflect, and went the same evening to FERHAD PASHA to communicate the news. This proposal did not agree with our plans, but it was difficult to reject it. The Circassians did not merely ask for officers, they wanted also soldiers, and we had no plausible motive to refuse the co-operation of the Poles, whose hatred to Russia is notorious. FERHAD PASHA had also heard that efforts were made among the Poles to make them act in Circassia."

At the time the most extraordinary efforts were made in all parts of Europe to discredit this confession and the circumstances connected with it, although no European journal would give insertion to it. It is brought within the knowledge of future history only by the act of the Poles, aided by some English gentlemen at Constantinople, who transmitted the documents to London, and there had them published. The Circassian Deputies when at **Manchester were closely questioned in respect to the transaction. Their answers confirmed in every respect the statements which had been sent from Constantinople, and with which they themselves were wholly unacquainted.**

Having seen Persia filched from her grasp by a slave who became a King; having seen Turkey filched from her grasp by a SULTAN who became a reformer, Russia must have acquired the habit of looking to possibilities in an unfavourable as well as a favourable light. She must have said to herself, "What are the unfortunate contingencies which may come to pass in Transcaucasia if I fail to subdue it by arms, or bend it to my will by contrivance?" It is not of likely, but of unlikely, things that we here speak. What we point to is not, therefore, an amalgamation with the Ottoman Empire, but the rise of a distinct and native power. Let us consider the case with a view to such a possibility, which requires that we should bring within the range of vision the regions, positions, and populations adjoining it on the south; a just estimate of which is, moreover, requisite for any one who would understand either what Russia meditates, or what it is possible for her to accomplish.

If the Caucasus is a rampart, the Ararat, with the group to which it belongs, is a fortress. Its northern slopes come down to the valleys of the Phasis and the Kur.

The strength of the country is further demonstrated by the endurance of the population. No more can a date be assigned to the Kurds than it can be to the Circassians. They, too, have seen the tides of historically recorded empire ebb and flow, rise and disappear around them. XENOPHON, twenty-two centuries ago, describes their condition much as it might be described to-day; and amongst the stores of the British Museum may be consulted the vivid impersonations of Sir ROBERT KERR PORTER,

of costumes which in richness and picturesque effect convey anything but the idea of a rude and savage people.

The mountain chain of Zagros, which they inhabit, rises to the height nearly of Mont Blanc, exceeding 14,000 feet. It is intersected by rich and beautiful valleys and plains, under the most healthy climate. They can muster 100,000 hardy, warlike, or rather desperate, men, trained and armed. These are almost all horsemen, and their breed of horses is admirable. They have strong feelings of clanship, and conjoin the professions of shepherd, agriculturist, and robber. Magnificent ruins, however, attest higher qualifications, and the name of SALADIN, a Kurd, throws round their savage nature a halo of romance.

The larger portion of the group is inhabited by a very different population, the Armenians, formerly, like the Jews, most warlike, are now the reverse. They trace back their pedigree to Haic, the son of Togarmah. From one of their kings Ararat is said to have derived its name, so that their permanency, like that of the Kurds, affords a corroboration of the strength of the country. Both concur in their political leanings, and these are towards the Porte; the Kurds finding in the Nizam a field of distinction, the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire one of speculation. Were Russia to be to-morrow in possession of Anatolia, she would find in the Masian mountains a second Caucasus.

Were a Caucasian kingdom to arise, it would be protected on the south against Persia and Turkey by a scarcely less formidable barrier than on the north by the Caucasus. It would lie between two ramparts which no engineers could blow up.* It would be defended by seas for ditches, and these wholly untraversable by an enemy. It would thus be an unassailable fortress, exceeding in extent Great Britain and Ireland, with the most beautiful climate, under the mildest zones, and bearing the richest produce. Traversed by the sea breezes along its length, cooled by those from the snowy tops on the north and on the south. It is capable of bearing a population of twenty millions of souls: it is a "virgin" soil for grain, and could inundate Europe with silk and cotton.

Such a possibility would have sufficed to prompt all the efforts that Russia has made in order to render it an impossibility. In the meantime she has to take her measures as imperiously to break the prosperity of the plains, until these come securely into her hands, as to crush the martial spirit of the mountains.

This contingency had to be guarded against by the self-same

* Sir R. Kerr Porter, in passing through the Vladi Caucas, found the Russians at work demolishing an ancient fortress, lest it should be occupied by the Circassians. He remarks, "But they cannot blow up the mountain."

process through which the whole operation had to be conducted, namely, the preventing of intercourse with the West. The combination of the clans of Circassia under one chief had never yet taken place, and every probability was against it. For a Caucasia to be created, it required a confidence to be placed in the same individual by the mountaineers as by the inhabitants of the plain, by the Mussulmans as by the Christians. This new creation could, therefore, only be effected by a stranger.

The like has happened before. The Lebanon, shortly after it became divided into two hostile sects, devised for itself a similar process for obtaining tranquillity at home together with defence. Maronites and Druzes concurred in selecting a foreign Prince, the conditions of whose rule were, that he should neither be a Druze nor a Maronite; and that he should bring no strangers with him into the Mountain. On the failure of this first line they elected a second and then a third. Thus they preserved themselves for a thousand years, free from religious war or persecution, and independent.

To a similar process the Russian Empire itself owes its origin. A foreigner and an Englishman, by obtaining authority over the discordant elements and hostile races then inhabiting the *Sarmatian plains*, instituted that dominion which soon after was called *Muscovite*, and is now known by the name of *Russian*.

If this danger had not presented itself to Russia as a forethought, it was forced upon her at the very moment that a stranger from the West landed on those shores. Within thirty-six hours ten thousand of the Mountaineers were assembled, representing various tribes. Amongst them spontaneously arose the project of a Union, and their proposals were conveyed through a Georgian. This Georgian had been in the household of the *SULTAN*, and was sent from Constantinople with a view to such possible contingency by a former Turkish Ambassador in London. In the course of the years 1835-6, had there been in the English Cabinet freedom from private engagements towards Russia, this Caucasian State would have been erected; and the hope of success being broken alike in the Cabinet of Russia and amongst its people, Europe and Asia would have been spared the wars, insurrections, and commotions which from that time they have undergone, and rescued from those further contingencies of a similar nature to which they are exposed.

The reasons, however, which impose it upon Russia as a very necessity of existence to exclude all observation from the Black Sea, would be very inadequately understood without the knowledge of the condition of her navy.

THE RUSSIAN NAVY IN THE BLACK SEA.

During the Polish war one Pole had the idea of striking in this quarter the enemy of his country. His views were exposed in a memoir which was circulated as a curiosity, but which bore no signature. The writer had been for several years a common sailor in the Russian fleet. He described the composition and condition of the crews and their dispositions. According to his statement they consisted of drafts from the Baltic Provinces and of Poles. No apprehension being entertained in regard to men so circumstanced, the police regulations observed through other departments of the State were neglected. Thus the crew of each vessel was a body of ready-made conspirators, wanting only a leader and an occasion. These dispositions were fomented by the oppression under which they groaned, and the misery they endured. The service in regard to the mere nautical part, he sets down as destitute of all faculties of seamanship. The writer thereupon proposed that the Polish Government, in connection with the independent tribes of Circassia, should issue letters of marque for the Black Sea, purchasing the vessels in Europe, sending them disguised through the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. He asserted that with one or two such vessels, the whole Russian navy could be secured, and thereby an insurrection in the South called forth to co-operate with the Polish movements.

When, six years later, the *Vixen* was captured in the bay of Soudjouk-Kaleh by the Russian brig *Ajax*, entering seaward, a prize crew was put on board of her, and the eight English sailors were transferred to the *Ajax*. During the passage from Soudjouk-Kaleh to Sebastopol, the crew of the *Ajax*, being in part from the Baltic, found means of communicating with the English sailors, and entreated them to aid them to take possession of the *Ajax*. These Englishmen replied to them, that there would be no use in capturing the *Ajax*, as she would be immediately retaken by the other Russian vessels. Their answer was: "The crews of the other vessels are the same as the crew of the *Ajax*. When we have taken the *Ajax* and secured the officers, we will sail into Sebastopol and secure the fleet."

The project was seriously debated; it was resolved in the negative, upon grounds wholly irrespective of success: these were, that the capture of a Russian vessel would be disapproved of by those who had devised the expedition. The circumstances here stated are drawn from the correspondence of the master of the *Vixen*, Childs. This portion was, however, suppressed in the

correspondence as published. Corroboratory references will, however, be found in contemporary publications.

If the foregoing statements in reference to Sebastopol have obtained in the reader's mind any degree of credit, he will be in a position to look at the term "Russian Fleet in the Black Sea," as similar in nature to "Sebastopol the centre of Russian Power." The latter delusion being the greater of the two, it will be easier to admit of the truth in the former. It would lead us too far to make the attempt either to trace the processes by which the truth has been misrepresented, or to present in themselves the nautical circumstances of the Black Sea. We must content ourselves with stating that there is but one conclusion in the minds of those conversant with the case. That is, that Russia is totally destitute of naval means of action. In the "Progress of Russia," that arm is not so much as once referred to by the British Envoy in Persia. The British Ambassador at Constantinople, Lord STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE, at the close of 1853, spoke of the injustice and the danger of restraining the maritime action of Turkey against Russia, when the Turkish fleet was kept by the Allies in port, so that the Sinope squadron might be sacrificed. His predecessor, Lord PONSONBY, at the same time published a letter, in which he uses these words: "You have entered the Black Sea, not to protect the Turks, but the Russians." In the course of the following February, 1854, a diplomatic servant of one of the Western Powers, and conversant with the East from his boyhood, spoke these words: "If there could be a question as to the superiority of Turkey over Russia in reference to the land, I should not have deemed it possible that there should be any such question in reference to the sea." The first diplomatist of Austria, PROKESCH VON OSTEN, has borne testimony to the same effect. Finally, at the Conference of Vienna, the Plenipotentiaries of Russia could so far trust to the delusion she had established of her supremacy in the Black Sea, as to make use of the statement of the contrary truth as an argument for a particular end. (See Eastern Papers, No. 13, pp. 77, 78.)

Having now completed the exposition of the case, and shown why Russia, in order to prevent intercourse, has aimed at suppressing knowledge of everything connected with the Black Sea, Sebastopol, and the Caucasus, we proceed to the immediate circumstances which have torn the veil from this mystery.

THE ARRIVAL OF CIRCASSIAN DEPUTIES IN ENGLAND.

The remarkable step taken by the Circassian people, of sending their own delegates to Europe, presents a wonderful contrast with all contemporary things, and carries us at once back to our

schoolboy associations of Greece and Rome. These delegates are not diplomatists. They were not deputed to Governments. They are sent to the Kings and to the people.* They expect to be received in an assembly, according, as they say, to the fashion of their own country. Having failed to obtain admission to the Queen of ENGLAND, they at once address themselves to the people. For the first time for many generations, a people in Europe is addressed by the representatives of another people.

Nor is this all. What they call upon the people to do is something which the people can do themselves, and in which every single individual, however humble, can bear his part. They do not ask for votes of sympathy; they do not ask for public resolutions, or for petitions to Parliament. They simply say, "Come and traffic with us. We do not fear Russia by land, we can easily stem the torrent of her invasion on that side, if you will not render the sea our enemy by submitting to have your own legitimate trade cut off. If you are merchants, you can send out ships. And if the merchants fear to do so, you can subscribe pounds or pence towards sending out a ship, and so you will open the way for merchants without fear to pursue their natural avocations."

In their private conversation they have gone further:—

"The English nation thinks itself secure, and is indifferent. They know nothing of what is going on in the world, and are backward to seize the opportunity which we afford them of delivering themselves from the greatest dangers. If very few of the English only were to undertake this work, they may procure the means of doing so from others who are not so indifferent. There are in Turkey many powerful men who, though they would not venture to charter an English ship from Constantinople themselves, would assist you in doing so if they were confident that you were sincere. There are even Circassians who are wealthy. There are kings in Europe besides those of England and France, who must desire that the power of Russia should be broken. Here is the way to break it. The Polish nation itself has means as well as numbers. Circassia offers them a second Poland which English ships can reach."

The result has been that a Circassian Committee has been instituted in London, the Chairman of which, a lawyer of eminence, has been known for many years by his persistent and strenuous efforts in the cause of Poland. This body, unlike the Polish Association, has proposed to itself a definite and practical object,

* When in 1857, the Circassians appealed to England, one of the reasons given in Parliament for rejecting their appeal was, that they had addressed the Queen, and not the British Government.

which is no other than that of chartering a ship to convey the deputies home to their own country. The deputies thereupon have taken their departure for Constantinople, to confer with their countrymen there assembled; proposing there to await the vessel, having solemnly sworn before their departure to embark in that vessel, with the full knowledge that they devote themselves thereby to death in case of capture; but reckoning that their death in that fashion will be more beneficial to their countrymen than thousands of lives merely sacrificed on the field of battle.

Thereupon this Committee has applied itself to prepare the legal grounds for its enterprise. It has addressed the Minister for Foreign Affairs, stating its purpose, and requiring to know whether there are any legal impediments to its execution. No such impediments have been brought forward by the Foreign Minister in reply; the Committee thereupon declare that they hold that no legal impediments exist. It follows that, should the vessel be captured by the Russians, recourse would be had to a Court of Law for the payment of damages by the Foreign Minister.

The Committee have likewise applied to the Privy Council to ascertain whether any warlike obstructions of the character of blockade had existence, and to the Committee of LLOYD'S as to the existence of any regulations of a municipal character. The reply of the first body has been a reference to the Foreign-office; and of the second the denial of the notification of any such regulations.

This method of procedure is calculated to give confidence alike in the judiciousness and in the legal and practical sense of the Circassian Committee; whilst the correspondence itself puts aside all doubts as to any grounds of lawful objection that can be taken by the Russian Government to the expedition in question. The vessel to be sent will, therefore, be a repetition of the affair of the *Vixen*, under circumstances very different to those of 1837, not only in regard to the source of the expedition, but also to the dispositions of the Ottoman Empire.

THE CONFISCATION OF THE "VIXEN" IN 1837 CONTRASTED WITH THE CASE OF A VESSEL SENT OUT IN 1863.

The capture and confiscation of the *Vixen* was an event calculated (as it has proved) to deter any merchant from again trying such an issue. Not so when the resolution to try it has once been formed independently of commercial objects. That confiscation then becomes a favourable instead of an unfavourable precedent, for the following reasons:—

The English Government notified to the Russian its assent to

the Act of Confiscation, not on the grounds of any Blockade instituted by Russia, nor on the grounds of any Regulations instituted by Russia that could affect territory not in her possession. Now these were the only obstructions ever spoken of to the Trade of Circassia. It was, though wholly without foundation, to one or other or both of those causes, that this Confiscation in 1837 was and has ever since been attributed. The Admiral in command of the Black Sea, announced its capture because of a "breach of bockade," and for carrying on trade "with the enemies of the Empire." The Vice-admiralty Commission of Sebastopol (for no legal tribunal was called into play) condemned the vessel on different and incompatible grounds; namely, the infraction of sanitary, police and customs regulations.

"The moment for firmness in language and decision in act has arrived; and let it not be forgotten that a neglect of such junctures—a constant sacrifice of opportunities in dealing with a powerful and encroaching adversary—must at length place us in a position where to struggle may be vain, and we may awake from our lethargy too late for safety."

These words are from the Preface to the second edition of Sir JOHN MCNEILL'S "Progress of Russia." It was published in 1838. The sentence must therefore have been written with reference to the *Vixen*, and while the betrayal of that vessel was still kept back from the public.

The English Government accepted the seizure and condemnation again on wholly different grounds; namely, the *de facto* occupation by Russia of the bay on which the *Vixen* was captured. These grounds were assumed on an assertion to that effect in a despatch of the English Ambassador at St. Petersburg, Lord DURHAM.

Sir STRATFORD CANNING moved for the copy of the decision of the Admiralty Commission under which the *Vixen* was condemned. He was told by the Foreign Minister that all the documents on the subject should be furnished.* This document is suppressed, if indeed it ever existed. All that is given is an article in the *St. Petersburg Gazette*. In this article the *Vixen* is declared confiscated as a smuggler. If, then, this document really exists, it must be in accordance with the statements of the officers on the station. These officers prove in their statements that Soudjouk-Kaleh was not in possession of the Russians, since they declare that the *Vixen* lay at anchor there thirty-six hours before it was overtaken by the *Ajax*. An Admiralty Commission could only

* The Conversation in which this promise was made, took place in the House of Commons, June 16, 1838. It occupies three columns of the *Mirror of Parliament*. It is entirely excluded from *Hansard's Debates*.

have dealt with a matter of blockade; a matter respecting the customs must have been referred to a finance commission. If it is not so, why was this document suppressed by the English Government? If it was really, as Lord DURHAM asserts, published in the *Journal de St. Petersbourg* of the 12th January, 1837, it must have been to exhibit, by its contradiction with the article, the omnipotence of Russia over the British Crown. The archives of the British Museum do not afford the means of ascertaining the truth, since the *Journal de St. Petersbourg* is excluded from its shelves. Perhaps some one who has access to a file of the Russian papers will make the inquiry.

Throughout the whole of this correspondence Russia no where asserts that Soudjouk Kaleh was in her possession, nor does even Lord DURHAM in his despatch say that he was told so by the Russians. He speaks as of his own knowledge. There must **have been some reason** for the avoidance by Russia of saying that Soudjouk Kaleh was in her possession, which she could easily have done, seeing what Lord DURHAM had written. She could also have made Lord DURHAM's statement true, by occupying Soudjouk Kaleh; for not only the expedition but the destination of the vessel was known to her many months before the vessel left London. The season of the year was also favourable, and the anchorage was good. She might have transferred there, with the greatest facility, a body of troops, and erected a redoubt in the bay as she afterwards did. She might at all events have kept a squadron of vessels there constantly at anchor. But she did nothing of the sort. On the contrary, with her vessels almost within hail, at Anapa on the north, and Ghelengik on the south, she allowed the *Vixen* to sail by her observing ports, and her vessels both at anchor and under sail. It was only after thirty-six hours of uninterrupted communication had been allowed to her, that the *Ajax* was sent in to capture her. The public naturally disregarded the despatch of Lord DURHAM containing a falsehood too glaring to be deemed worth while dwelling upon, to accept the interpretation thus prepared for them, of Russian municipal regulations affecting territory not in her possession, to the extent of excluding all communication with it.

The game so played was the only one which, on that occasion, could have saved Russia. It was successful only because no one could have guessed it beforehand. Having been played, it is expended, and cannot be attempted a second time. The *Vixen* is, therefore, a drama which may be repeated from London, but which cannot be repeated from St. Petersburg.

The confiscation of the *Vixen* took place only eight years after the war between Russia and Turkey, in which the former had

been successful and the latter beaten; and also after (to use the words of POZZO DI BORGO) "the public opinion of Europe had abandoned to Russia the forts and coasts of the Asiatic shore of the Black Sea." The repetition of the experiment, if now made, will be under circumstances very different, and, indeed wholly the reverse of the former ones. Eight years have now again elapsed since a war between Russia and Turkey, in which the former was beaten and the latter triumphant; and after the public opinion of Europe, in consequence of this event, had, by the Treaty of Paris, resumed from Russia that eastern coast of the Black Sea which had been abandoned to her in 1829.

The sacrifice of the forces of England and France in the Crimea, the failure of their attempts upon Sebastopol, the fall of Kars, the failure of the Allies to impose upon Russia an indemnity for the expenses of the war, and the peace concluded, not by rejecting, but by accepting the Note of Prince MENSCHIKOFF, are disastrous events, which must be separated from the war of the Turks and the Russians, and set down solely to the account of the Allies. Those Allies, by the false arrangements which they made, and by the point which they chose, defeated themselves, and apparently involved the Porte in the consequences. The war, according to the British Secretary at War (MR. SIDNEY HERBERT) "presented this peculiarity, that we were agreed with our enemy, but not with our Ally." From this position the other peculiarity flowed, that the Allies of Turkey were beaten by Russia, whilst Russia was beaten by Turkey. This will be seen from the simplest statement of those circumstances which have passed before our eyes, but which the daily comments of the press have rendered incomprehensible throughout Europe.*

Russia pretended to interfere in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire in reference to the Holy Sepulchre. The Porte refused to admit such interference. The Governments of England and France, but especially the former, attempted to induce the Porte to consent to this interference, and failed. The English Ambassador obtained, by using the utmost pressure, and after being closeted for several hours with the SULTAN, that the Northern Provinces of the Empire should be left unoccupied by Turkish troops; thus a territory equal to Great Britain remained without a single soldier to oppose the Russian advance. The Russians then, on the 8th of July, 1853, crossed the Pruth with eight thousand men without a declaration of war, pretending that they advanced to seize the Danubian Principalities, and to hold them as a "material guarantee" for the fulfilment by Turkey

* "This inscrutable mystery."—Lord John Russell.

of pretended engagements towards her in reference to her Christian subjects. The English Government, which had caused the withdrawal of the Turkish forces, now required of the SULTAN that he should not proclaim war, but endure the invasion, promising at the same time to have the affair settled by arbitration of the Great Powers. The award issued from Vienna in consequence was neither to reject Prince MENSCHIKOFF's Note nor to denounce the invasion of the Turkish territory, on which was subsequently based their own declaration of war. It even went beyond the MENSCHIKOFF Note, by the addition of a most remarkable term. That Note required that Turkey should fulfil the "spirit" of her engagements towards Russia; the Vienna award added "AND LETTER."

It was now to be expected that nothing remained for Turkey but to submit. The whole forces of the Russian Empire were on the march for the South, Wallachia and Moldavia were occupied, a general insurrection of all the Christian subjects throughout the Empire was daily expected, and all Europe backed Russia in her pretensions. The majority of the persons composing the Turkish Government were smitten with terror. They shared with the generality of Europe in ignorance of their own strength and of Russia's weakness. But that happened which had happened before after the battle of Navarino, and on the demand for the extradition of the Hungarian Refugees. A sense of dignity and of honour made up for the deficiencies in knowledge and capacity, and the Porte declared war. No efforts were indeed made to accumulate troops; and the operations of the war, thus hurried by a shock as an abortion into being, were left to local chances. General BEM had three years before addressed a letter to the SULTAN, in which he used these words: "Your Majesty's troops will always give a good account of twice the number of Austrians or of Russians, if brought into the field against them, and Your MAJESTY can bring into the field twice the number of troops that these Governments can conjointly bring against Your MAJESTY."

The anticipations of this great General were fully borne out by the battles of Kalafat, Otenizza, and Citate, where the numbers on both sides afforded three several opportunities of testing their truth. But they were destined to receive a far more wonderful confirmation before Silistria, when the whole available force of Russia was broken by the garrison of a single town. The event was announced by the *Times* in the following words:—

"Swift and terrible has been the retribution which has fallen on the Russian army engaged in this shameful and unprovoked aggression, and the chastisement is rendered the more humiliating

to the pride of the CZAR, and the more important to the political independence of the Porte, by the fact that a division of the Turkish army, unassisted by European troops, has sufficed to expel the invader with unexampled losses. These glorious results belong to the Turkish arms exclusively, and the soldiers of the SULTAN never fought with more devoted, and successful bravery, than on this occasion."*

The defeat of the Russian army, and its flight northward, withdrew from Russia that "material guarantee" upon which she had seized to enforce the MENSCHIKOFF Note. Russia was left in the alternative, of withdrawing the MENSCHIKOFF Note, or continuing the state of war. The state of war being continued, on the supposition, of course, that no Allies interfered, and that no Austrian troops entered Wallachia, Russia could do nothing, as the Turkish forces would now be posted on the Pruth, or rather in Bessarabia, which must have fallen. The present condition of the Steppes intervening between the Dniester and her resources, renders it impossible to bring up an army in a condition to meet an enemy in Bessarabia without Bessarabia itself for a place of recruitment.

On the declaration of war being issued by the Turkish Government, Odessa, in common with ISMAEL and the maritime towns, was seized with a panic, and the principal inhabitants fled. (See reports of Consul YEANES.) So conscious were they of their unprotected condition, alike by land and by sea, and so prevalent was the alarm of a general insurrection, which would ensue upon the appearance of a Turkish naval expedition, looked for as a necessary consequence of a declaration of war. Russia was from that moment placed without the limits of any possible action; and whilst exposed to eminent hazard from internal insurrectionary movements, could do absolutely nothing to injure her enemy.

On the other hand, Turkey had every means of action open to her at her option. She could support Poland, and restore it; she could by a word recover Georgia.

But, without taking any active steps, without expending a piastre, or moving a soldier, she could by merely sitting quiet, extinguish the Russian Empire. For, being at war, the Bosphorus was closed.

Up to the period of this war, the designs of Russia against India, whenever discussed, or however concluded upon, were always set aside as of little or no moment, through the consciousness which every Englishman entertained, of the absolute control

* *Times*, June 22, 1854.

which his country possessed over Russia. It was felt that England being able to strike Russia in her commerce, was in possession of a counter check, which would prevent Russia from ever using any facilities of injury which she might possess. Now this check consisted solely in the geographical conformation of that Empire. It is this. The exports of Russia give her her wealth, and upon their free interchange with the world depends the revenue of the Government, and the loyalty of the nobles to their Sovereign. But Russia has got no sea-board commensurate with her dimensions, and indeed no sea-board at all. The Baltic and the Black Sea, which she has reached in recent times, are themselves but estuaries of confluent rivers, from which the ocean is only arrived at through a narrow gut. It is thus that by a few men-of-war, or indeed by a few privateers costing the State not a penny, England obtained this check over Russia, and thus secured at once her tenure of India, and her confidence as a great Maritime Power. The cruisers and the privateers having of course the faculty to search all vessels, and to seize all enemy's property.

Now, from the moment that the state of war exists between Russia and Turkey, the latter *ipso facto*, becomes possessed of all the power over Russia, which England had abandoned at Paris in 1856, or at least one half of it. She might indeed succeed to the whole by issuing half a dozen letters of marque for cruisers in the North. She has never done so, for dexterity and combination are qualities that belong only to Russian action.

In the case, as we have placed it, the alternative for Russia was therefore the withdrawal of the MENCHIKOFF Note, or the acceptance of a normal condition of war with the Porte, by which the exportation from all the countries watered by the Volga, the Don, the Dniester, the Dnieper, and the Bug, would be suppressed, the internal movements of commerce arrested, the commercial cities afflicted with panic, bankruptcy, and famine. The agricultural population, unable to sell their produce, which the city population would be unable to buy; and in fact the whole country exposed to convulsion, insurrection, and anarchy. It is easy to calculate how many months such a condition could have endured.

This war never could or would have been undertaken by Russia, had she not beforehand most effectually taken her measures to prevent the occurrence of such contingencies, or the revelation of such a position. She was prepared for the alternative of her own defeat by the presence of the Allies in the Black Sea, who restrained from action the Turkish fleet; who, by allowing her commerce to go free, prevented the Turks from interrupting it; who did not blockade Odessa, although that blockade had been three times announced in Parliament, but

who did blockade Constantinople by stopping the supplies from the Danube, as soon as the Provinces were freed from the Russians; and who, pursuing the same plan in the Baltic, made themselves tributary to Russia for enormous sums of gold, whilst they were nominally at war with her—twenty-seven millions of which were paid by England alone.

As, therefore, the consequences to be drawn from the opening of Circassia, must in reality depend on the dispositions of the Turkish Government, and as these dispositions must ultimately depend upon whether that Government quails before Russia, or is conscious of the power of resisting her, the difference will at once be apprehended between an experiment of this kind, made after a war in which Turkey had been beaten, and the same experiment made after a war in which Russia has been beaten.

We now come to the Treaty of Paris: Article 11, is as follows:—

“The Black Sea is *neutralised*; its waters and its ports, thrown open to the mercantile marine of every nation, are formally and in perpetuity interdicted to the flag of war, either of the Powers possessing its coasts, or of any other Power, with the exceptions mentioned in Articles 14 and 19 of the present Treaty.”

The term “neutralised” has no sense, and “Black Sea,” is a generality. If anything had been agreed to be done, that would have to be specified, and the parties to be named. These would be the parties to the Treaty, and not others. Supposing anything had been stipulated and agreed to by Russia and Turkey, that would not affect the “Black Sea” as such, but only their own coasts on the Black Sea. The term “Black Sea” is, therefore, only introduced to obtain some vague and general authority by which to regulate the intercourse with the Circassian coast, not with a view to throw it open to “the mercantile marine of every nation,” but to exclude the mercantile marine of every nation. And so in the ensuing Article (No. 12), Russia and the Sublime Porte are mentioned as the two Powers possessing that sea.

There is, therefore, in the terms of this Treaty nothing which can affect favourably the project in question, but the reverse. The real sense of the Treaty of Paris is, however, not the sense that has been put forward by the Western Governments who signed that Treaty; the last thing that they would desire is, that the real sense of that Treaty should be understood. Their self-managed discomfiture in the war is veiled, under the natural sense of the words:—“The Black Sea is open to the commerce of all nations.” This is what they have offered to the nations as the accomplishment of their design “to arrest the aggressions of Russia;” and on the other hand, as the compensa-

tion, and the sole compensation for the sacrifice of one hundred thousand of their troops, and two hundred millions sterling of their treasure.

At all events, the generally accepted sense of the Treaty of Paris as having freed the Black Sea, will facilitate the expedition on the part of the English public, and render to the English Government far more difficult either obstruction made now, or sacrifice endured afterwards. For then various questions would be raised of a most painful nature to individual statesmen, most alarming to the Government generally, and most exciting to the people, namely:—

“Why did you go to war with Russia in 1854?”

“Were you beaten by Russia in that war?”

“Were the Turks triumphant till you interfered?”

“Why did you suspend and afterwards surrender the Right of Search?”

“Why did you spare Odessa?”

“Why did you attack Sebastopol?”

“Why did you not recover Bessarabia?”

“Why did you not help the Circassians?”

“Why did you betray Kars?” And, lastly,

“Why did you, the English Government, refuse the offers of Austria, France, and Prussia, to restore Poland?”

In fact, such proceedings on the part of the English Government against the undertaking of the Circassian Committee as would bring the case into a court of law, would be nothing else than putting the English Government on its trial for connivance with Russia in a war against herself.

But the Treaty of Paris contains something more than stipulations affecting the Belligerents. The Plenipotentiaries assume to themselves a prerogative hitherto unheard of amongst men: that of being a congress to alter the Law of Nations. In this character they abolish, or pretend to abolish, for those who are parties to that act, the right of capturing the persons and property of enemies on board the ships of neutrals. Now, it would appear that from the moment of the signature of that Treaty down to the present, Russia had never ceased one moment from the operation of her cruisers in the Black Sea, employed in watching the Circassian coast, and the operations of which consist in capturing Turkish vessels, and in confiscating whatever property she finds on board, whether Turkish or Circassian, and in seizing the persons of Circassians. This matter has been officially brought to the knowledge of the English Government in reference to the recent capture of seventy-two Circassians returning home after having made arrangements for emigration

into Turkey. The English Minister replied by declaring his intention not to interfere between the Russians and the Circassians. (See Letter of Lord RUSSELL, 12th December, 1862.) So that it is evident that in regard to the Declaration on Maritime Law, no less than in regard to the Treaty of Paris, the English Government in signing engagements, and in suffering engagements so signed to be violated, has been carrying through the same design as in the war of 1854. But this also is a matter that has to be concealed; and the expedition of the vessel to Circassia will have the effect of exposing the hollowness of the Declaration of Paris* no less than that of the Treaty of Paris.†

We now come to the practical issue: What will Russia do? Will she pursue the same course as with the *Kangaroo* and its consort in 1857, or with the *Vixen* in 1837? Will she allow the vessel to land and complete her voyage, as the safest course, trusting afterwards to the chapter of accidents; or will she seize the vessel to stop the chapter of accidents?

In the first case the matter is solved.

In the second comes the knot. This we have now to consider.

This time the vessel will be insured. This time the affair will not be in the hands of a merchant, who, having his fortune at the disposal of Russia in the Danubian Provinces, could be made bankrupt, and so be prevented from taking any steps. If the voyage be interrupted the case will now be brought into a court of law, as between the underwriters and the Foreign Minister. There will be no possibility of evading a legal issue by the unsubstantiated words of an Ambassador at St. Petersburg, asserting a *de facto* occupation where none existed; for two reasons.

First. In the recent correspondence between Lord RUSSELL and the Circassian Deputies, he speaks of the Circassians as an independent people; and, consequently, no statement of an English Ambassador to the Court of St. Petersburg, whether made by

* Russia may reply: "The Declaration of Paris has reference only to belligerent rights and not to municipal regulations." This is all that is required, namely, a confession that her proceedings are piratical.

† A subsidiary Convention to the Treaty of Paris was signed between the Emperor of Russia and the Sultan, "limiting their naval force in the Black Sea."

Article I. The High Contracting Parties mutually engage not to have in the Black Sea any other vessels of war than those of which the number, the force, and the dimensions are hereinafter stipulated.

Article II. The High Contracting Parties reserve to themselves, each to maintain in that sea six steam-vessels of fifty metres in length at the line of flotation, of a tonnage of eight hundred tons at the maximum; and four light steam or sailing vessels of a tonnage which shall not exceed two hundred tons each.

him or imputed to him, can be accepted as evidence in reference to any event occurring, not in Russia, the country to which he is accredited, but in Circassia.

Second. The underwriters being the plaintiffs, the ordinary forms of a court of law would require the preliminary introduction of proof, in reference to this matter, from the log of the vessel and the crew.

De facto occupation and municipal regulations are thus wholly excluded by the terms of submission, and cannot be pleaded.

Blockade cannot be pleaded, as no blockade has been proclaimed, nor has a Declaration of War issued.

As there is no plea that can be set up, so is there no question as to the verdict.

It is true that the acts of pirates are exempted from the contingencies of insurance. This gives everything that can be desired, since there can be no alternative between the term "piracy" being affixed by a court of law to the acts of the Russian Government, and the British Minister being cast in damages for connivance in piratical acts.

But this is not all. The Circassian Deputies will be on board the vessel. In case of capture, they will be seized, and sent to Siberia.

That the combination of two such results will have effects of great importance on Europe, cannot be doubted. But there is an effect which they will have in the East, of far greater importance, and which will not easily be apprehended. It will establish the conviction, or at least point towards the conviction in the mind of the Porte, of the connivance of the English with the Russian Government. There can be no event more fatal than this to Russia. Nothing stands between the Ottoman Empire and entire independence, but its reliance upon England as being opposed to Russia.

That the Queen of ENGLAND is endowed with extraordinary qualifications is now a secret to none. Scarcely less so is it that she is inspired with a fervent zeal for her country's honour and welfare. Her whole life has been a struggle against that system on the part of her Ministers which, during twenty-five years has placed the resources of England at the disposal of the Government of St. Petersburg. The commencement of her reign was signalled by the sacrifice of the *Vixen*, a subject on which she was not informed: it having been delayed until her accession, because it could not have been attempted under her uncle and predecessor, WILLIAM IV., who on that subject was informed. She has lived to see Deputies from that betrayed country arrive in her dominions to claim her protection. Her Minister, in

answering their first appeal, does so in the name of the Government, to the exclusion of the name of the QUEEN. It is, therefore, to be inferred that the QUEEN has remained for the past uncompromised in reference to Circassia; and that is all that is required to be able to estimate the course which the QUEEN will adopt in case of the seizure by Russia of this vessel.

Indeed, the decision of the QUEEN can scarcely be considered a matter of prospective speculation, seeing that Lord RUSSELL, after refusing to receive the Circassian Deputies, and after passing by the Crown in rejecting their appeal, did receive an exiled Prince from Daghestan, or that large portion of the south-eastern Caucasus which has submitted to Russia, and did offer to be the channel of his appeal to the QUEEN. This change in Lord RUSSELL is explicable only by information having reached the QUEEN in reference to Circassia, and by her having engaged the Foreign Minister to co-operate with her in its behalf.

To predict which alternative Russia will select is impossible; for her decision will be based upon arrangements with, or estimate of, individuals in London, Paris, and Constantinople. Clearly the case for her will be one of a choice of difficulties. It may, indeed, be equally difficult, on the other side, to say which of the two alternatives would be most desirable for the promoters of the expedition. This at least is certain: that from the moment the vessel sails the blow will have been struck—the first blow that ever, in the course of her history, will have been, in sense and sincerity, struck against her. A blow the counterpart to that directed against Sebastopol. It will be, not against her one invulnerable, but her one vulnerable point; one which she can neither endure nor parry, and which can be struck without cost or loss—above all things, without the intervention of an European Government. So that while, on the one hand, it is the means by which the aggressions of Russia can be stopped, so is it the only thing which the people of Europe can do for themselves, and which, indeed, might be done for all by any individual combining in himself public-mindedness and moderate fortune.

INTERNAL DANGERS OF RUSSIA.

It has always been the practice of at least the diplomatic portion of the European public, to dispose of any anxieties occasioned by the external operations of Russia, by adducing her internal weakness, the embarrassment of her finances, and the insubordination of her people. While ignoring the existence of Poland in their dealings with Russia, they have taken their stand on the existence of Poland, when they had to discuss Russia among themselves. Now, it has invariably proved that

this "internal weakness," that this "financial penury," and this "running sore" of Poland, have never served in any way to avert any external blow, or to prostrate any foreign combination. Since the institution, by intervention in Greece, of the diplomatic process of acting upon nations by means of protocols and conferences, and during peace was commenced, it has been the task and business of those who have remained the depositaries of the ideas which found acceptance with the Government of England in the years 1835-1836, to expose the delusion of connecting in any way the internal condition of Russia with her diplomatic operations. To-day, however, the case is materially altered. The case before us is not one where Russia proposes to do something, while the rest of the world is called upon merely to accept or reject; the internal position of Russia has become so alarming and so critical, that the sense of danger must hamper her in every step she might otherwise be disposed to take, in counteracting a project devised directly against her, and having its source in a body over which neither she nor any Government can exercise control.

It becomes, therefore, of the last importance, to form for ourselves a correct estimate of the internal condition of Russia at this moment. The impenetrable veil with which she has surrounded herself, the absence of all the means of information common in Europe, render such an endeavour exceedingly difficult: so that we will have to proceed on induction conveyed along the slenderest threads.

The point with which we should begin is, however, not to be classed under these heads. It is an event distinguished by its notoriety and authenticity, no less than its importance: the occurrences in Poland of the last two years.

The next event, no less authentic, and where the interpretation alone remains in doubt, is the **Emancipation of the serfs.**

The third is the **alteration in the condition of the army, progressively attained to, now culminating in the new process of Conscription.**

The fourth is the **increase in importance of the Starovirtze, and the extension, in a political sense, of their ideas, throughout the people.**

The fifth is the **disaffection of the nobles.**

No. 1. A generation has passed away since the breaking down of Poland, and the fall of Warsaw. Twenty-nine years have elapsed since the Emperor NICHOLAS said to the Chiefs of the Poles, assembled under the guns of the new citadel of Warsaw, "I am glad the time has come when I address you no longer as King of Poland, but as Emperor of Russia." No other ex-

pectation could have been formed at that time than this—that the then living generation might give for a period trouble to the Russian Government, but that thereafter it would adjust itself to circumstances and submit to fate.

This impression received full confirmation from subsequent events. From without, no indication appeared of an intention on the part of any European Government to support it. On two occasions, one after the lapse of eighteen years, the other of twenty-four years, two events occur of very different characters, each presenting, and both combining, every possible inducement to the Polish people to arise and assert their independence, unless their spirit were wholly and absolutely broken. The one was the convulsive revolution that swept over Europe in 1848, encircling the Russian frontiers from Bucharest to Copenhagen, and to which no echo came from Poland, even in a whisper. The other was the war declared against Russia by Turkey, followed by the movements of the fleets and armies of England, France, and Sardinia, assailing her on the North and the South, and accumulating their line-of-battle ships at once in the Baltic and the Black Sea. Yet Poland remained as the burnt-out hearth on which the spark and the torch fall alike in vain. The inference is now ascertained to be erroneous. The events commencing in the year 1860, show that the Poles, as a people, have not resigned themselves to the conditions made for them. Although they have not been tempted to take up arms when the occasion offered, it is now evident that they had no idea of exchanging their character of Pole for that of Russian.

The revelation of this position we owe to no movements on their part, but to procedures taken against them by the Russian Government—procedures which are intelligible only by the purpose of driving them into open rebellion.

No. 2. The driving of the Poles into insurrection is connected with the organic change in reference to the Serfs. The Russian Government is constituted for external, and not for internal purposes. It is through its diplomacy that it secures its finances and its administration. The emancipation of the serfs is, therefore, to be looked upon as a measure connected with its diplomacy; not as being prompted either by any internal necessity or advantage, or by any movement of political opinion acting independently of necessity or advantage. The motive may be explained by the evident results which are presented in two very distinct forms. The one, the obtaining for Russia a character of liberality, so as to efface what remains of sympathy for the Poles, whilst facilitating the passage of revolutionary movements under the

direct patronage of the Russian Cabinet. This is Russia's lever of action in Europe, which has to be strengthened by all possible means.

The other is the morselling of the State internally, and the reduction of that population hitherto possessing its rights, its station, and its connexion as Serfs, into a thoroughly disorganised mass, each losing all other sense in the precariousness of individual existence. The latter being a result desirable only by reason of the Government experiencing resistance, or apprehending opposition to its action abroad.

But out of this comes a most important change for Russia in reference to Foreign Powers; emancipating the Government from the sole dread which it entertained respecting them, namely, the control they might exercise over its trade.

The Declaration of Paris of 1856, forbidding the capture of belligerent property in neutral vessels, appeared indeed to have already effected this object. But still any day a minister might have arisen in England to reverse that Act. Then it required again but a few cruisers at the Sound, or the Dardanelles, to bring upon the present, or any subsequent Emperor of Russia the fate of PAUL. The Serfs being emancipated—the nobles become powerless. Neither the miseries nor the interests of the nation having a voice, the Government is relieved from such inconvenient control, and, unembarrassed within, could boldly venture its stakes abroad.

So serious an operation, and hitherto without parallel, whilst it evinces necessities without parallel, must be accompanied with an equivalent strain upon the military resources of the Empire. Even the Chartist movement in England alarmed the Duke of WELLINGTON, on the grounds of the exhaustion of the troops in mere observation.

This was precisely the condition of the Polish population. So that the army had to be simultaneously employed in observation of the Polish people and of the Russian; with the prospective danger of a mutual gravitation of the two bodies towards each other, not in the sense of amalgamation, for the furtherance of the designs of the Russian Cabinet abroad, but of concert to resist its oppression at home.

If these positions are correct, the explanation is at once afforded of two measures concurrently adopted, and severally inexplicable, namely, the emancipation of the serfs, and the attempt to drive the Poles into insurrection.

The latter design has been frustrated by a spirit of endurance quite as remarkable in its line as has been the active self-sacrifice

in respect to the Circassians. But for this calm pertinacity of each individual of a whole people, the Government would have attained its end, and the reappearance in any one province of a Polish flag would have instantly altered the whole face of affairs. From that moment it would have been the Russians against the Poles, and the Poles against the Russians; and that terrible passive resistance of the whole mass would have subsided, as heretofore, into a mutual antipathy of races.

The Government, foiled in its first attempt to produce a Polish Insurrection, has not thereupon desisted, but has pertinaciously pursued its purpose. Count ANDREW ZAMOYSKI, the man of greatest authority amongst the Poles, and to whose mild character and moderating influence it could not but attribute in a great degree the passive endurance of the people, was first called to St. Petersburg and then banished into Europe. Whilst to the Poles was conveyed a terrible message, in these words: "The policy adopted by the Imperial Government in respect to Poland, is that of extermination, and it sees no reason to change it."

The Poles of the emigration, who preserve channels of communication with every part of the country, who are looked to for direction, and who have hitherto exerted themselves in the line of moderation and submission, had now to be led to believe that the moment of action had come. Bakounin was let loose again, and sent round through Siberia to enlist them in a Russo-revolutionary scheme. These plans failing, after having all but succeeded, they were confidentially put in possession of the very original of a protest on the part of the Russian officers, against being employed in coercive measures against the Poles.

The picture we have here is that of an empire composed of two large masses of population ethnographically cognate, although religiously and historically divided, with an agglomeration around them of outlying and unwilling incorporations—the Government of which is exerting itself to produce a rebellion amongst the one of those two masses, consisting of twenty millions, and cannot succeed!

No. 3. It is the army which imposes upon Russia the necessity of calling forth a revolt amongst the Poles. That army is unequal to the duty of **watching and overawing** passive resistance, common at once to the **Russians and the Poles**. It might be expected to be so, in consequence of the change in the dispositions of both people. But there is another cause. *The change in the army itself.* It is impossible to collate the events from the middle of the last century without being struck with this change.

Remarkable enough, if we compare the operations effected under TODLEBEN and SUWAROFF.* But still more so, if these be compared with the operations on the Danube under the anonymous general of 1853, and the disgraceful and disheartening reverses which have almost regularly marked the operations in the Caucasus. The failure of the expedition to Khiva, more than all the others, has destroyed throughout the populations of Russia, the sense of the invincibility of their armies.†

The war in the Caucasus was to afford to Russia, all other considerations apart, a reserve, always ready, of formed and experienced officers, and of men, veterans in war. To this end, a single defeat is not uncondemnable, as the history of CHARLES XII., no less than that of the Bœotians shows. But it is not by a series of defeats, and the total inability to succeed, that a proud and martial spirit can be engendered in an army. From the moment that the Caucasian war ceased to have the object of merely killing the forces sent to supply it, and was converted into a

* "As to material force, that armed force, which in the actual state of things is the principle instrument of the power of Russia, has it become more formidable by the numbers and the spirit of the troops, as well as by the capacity of those who lead them? There is nothing to prove this. The war against the Turks (1828), especially the first campaign of that war proves rather the contrary. The war against the Poles did not last less than ten months; and when the disproportion between the two armies is considered, the nullity of the resources of the Poles, deprived of all succour from, even of all communication with, foreign countries, what a low idea must one not form of an army which they could hold in check for so long?"

"Finally, that struggle, that horrible struggle of extermination with the mountaineers of the Caucasus, what success, what triumphs does it offer as compensation for the enormous and painful sacrifices which it entails upon the Russian Nation?"

"Military force is, we repeat, the great instrument of power for Russia. The nation, as well as the Sovereign, wishes to have a powerful army. Nothing is more natural. But the more the army is numerous, the more is intelligence required to organise it, to preserve it, to direct it. Well, what do all your means of organisation, preservation, and direction, amount to? You organise the army by a recruiting system, made up of atrocities and absurdities. How do you preserve it? In its ranks death commits more terrible ravages than in the army of any other country; they even surpass all that imagination can conceive.

"During a war for which you had been preparing many years, which you waged in countries long familiar to you, during the last Turkish war, you suffered to perish—as we have elsewhere mentioned—in the hospitals alone, more than fifty thousand soldiers in the space of a single year. Finally, you cause this army to be led by officers, formed in the corps of cadets, where the military exercise only is taught, and nothing more."—*La Russie and les Russes*. Par M. Tourgeneff. Vol iii.

† There is not a village throughout Russia Proper, nor the hut of a Mudjik, in which the events of that expedition are not perfectly well known, and their consequences reasoned upon in a hopeful sense as regards their own condition.

purpose of acquisition, and therefore of war as such, it assumed its demoralising character for the whole Russian army.

Hitherto the Russian soldier had been peculiarly distinguished by loyalty. The only exception, if exception it can be called, is the most glaring of proofs. It occurred during the retreat of the French from Moscow, when the army was on the point of revolt, in consequence of seeing with what facility the French might have been totally exterminated; and thence, and from the private communications going on between their generals and the French, they suspected treason.*

* When Sir R. Wilson reached the Russian army he found the generals in open dissension with the Commander-in-chief, Barclay de Tolly, for having already suffered the enemy to overrun so many provinces, and not having defended the line of the Dnieper. The army resolved to send "for a new chief" to the Emperor, and also to make a Declaration, "that if any order came from St. Petersburg to suspend hostilities, and treat the invaders as friends (which was apprehended to be the true motive of the retrograde movements, in deference to the policy of Count Romanzow), such an order would be regarded as one which did not express His Imperial Majesty's real sentiments and wishes, but had been extracted from His Majesty under false representations or external control; and that the army would continue to maintain his pledge, and pursue the contest till the Invader was driven beyond the frontier."—p. 112.

Sir Robert Wilson undertook to be the bearer of this message "to mitigate the unavoidable distress of the Emperor." He found the Emperor aware of the state of the army; he said he had heard that Hetman Platow had even said to General Barclay, on the evacuation of Smolensk, "You see I wear but a cloak; I will never again put on a Russian uniform, since it has become a disgrace." Sir R. Wilson represents the Emperor as becoming calm, after a few struggles, on hearing his communication. He put off giving an answer until the next day, when he replied that he should carry back to the army pledges that the war should be carried on "whilst a Frenchman was in arms this side the frontier." But the Emperor would not give way on the point of choosing his own ministers. Count Romanzow, he said, must remain. Marshal Kutusow had been appointed to succeed Barclay de Tolly, before the arrival of Sir. R. Wilson. His appointment was not changed in consequence, although he was sent to carry out the very policy complained of. His first step, on taking the command, was to arrange a secret meeting with the French Marshal, Lauriston, at midnight, beyond the Russian advanced posts (p. 182). The proposed meeting was discovered, and a dozen generals met together and told Wilson that if Kutusow went to that meeting he would not be allowed to resume the command. Alexander publicly rebuked Kutusow, but he was nevertheless continued in the command, and continued to follow persistently the same course, namely, sparing the enemy. At Czernicznia he stopped Benningsen from pursuing Murat, and acted, says Wilson, "as if desirous of averting the catastrophe of his enemy" (212). At Maro Jaroslavets, not only was the French army spared, but the Russian army was endangered by a retrograde movement on a narrow causeway. Suwarrow said to Wilson, "We will hold to the last, and at least save our honour out of the wreck, but we are lost." To Wilson's remonstrances Kutusow replied, "I am by

In this respect also the aspect of things is entirely changed. DESERTION is now the "danger" for Russia in a war with Turkey, whenever the forces of the two, in anything like comparative numbers, are brought upon the same field for any continuance of time. This was one of the arguments laid before the Divan in 1850, and discussed by it, on which was founded the proposal that the Porte should require from Russia the withdrawal of its army of fifty thousand men from the Danube to behind the Pruth. Turkish subaltern officers being examined upon the point, gave testimony in entire corroboration. The instantaneous compliance of Russia with this demand, and her retirement from the Provinces, notwithstanding the Treaty for seven years' occupation, show that the arguments which had determined the Porte were understood and accepted by Russia.

The highest European military authorities have conceded to the Russian forces the distinguishing qualification of courage. This aggregate courage has been explained by individual fear:—severity of discipline, and terror for their officers, overcoming the dread of the bullet, so as to keep the line unbroken and the march uninterrupted.*

This discipline has been in course of gradual relaxation. The army, as a body, is asserting rights, demanding and extorting privileges. The term of service has been successively reduced from the period of life to twenty-five years, and latterly so low as ten: opening an escape for the soldier, and re-incorporating disciplined men with the population. The power of unlimited

no means sure, as I have told you before, that the total destruction of Napoleon and his army would be such a benefit to the world; his succession would not fall to Russia, or to any other Continental Power, but to that which already commands the sea, and whose domination would then be intolerable" (p. 235). Similar instances are accumulated on every page of Wilson's Journal. On Kutusow's refusal to support his advanced guard, engaged with the enemy at Biskowo, Wilson sent an aide-de-camp to St. Petersburg to tell the Emperor that the army "fell dishonoured, if not betrayed." When compelled to inaction before Krasnoi, the cry "Moscow, Moscow," rang through the ranks; and finally an attack was made without orders from the Marshal. After the crossing of the Beresina, the Russian troops suffered nearly as much as the French, and lost on the march, says Wilson, above 90,000 men. When at Wilna, Alexander sent for Wilson to make a "confession" to him. Which was that, in giving the Order of St. George to Kutusow, he had "to submit to a controlling necessity," because *Kutusow was supported by the nobility of Moscow!*"

Napoleon being the goose that laid the golden egg for Russia, was neither to be taken, nor killed.

All this is of course entirely omitted by the regular historians, and especially in works of which presentation copies are sent to the Emperor of Russia.—See Alison.

* See "The White Slave" for some most interesting and instructive observations of the author, on that head.

punishment has been withdrawn from the officers, and regular sentences are now required, so that the sinew of that stolid courage, which had appalled their enemies when the Russian forces marched "on" Europe, is broken.*

Whilst the nerve of discipline was maintained, the endurance of privation affected neither the courage of the Russian soldier on the field of battle, nor his loyalty to his Sovereign; when relaxed, the economics of the Government, or the peculations of the officer, come to enter essentially into the calculation of result, under a strain upon its faculties, either by the growing mass of dissatisfaction at home, or by insurrectionary movements at a distance; such as those now threatened on the Persian border. Black bread with no butter, boiled barley twice a week, and five shillings a year pay with deductions, does not seem to be a safe rate of rations and pay for an army in the midst of an insurgent population, or in face of an enemy (the Turks) receiving without deductions the same pay for one month, and daily fed on pilaff, white bread, and meat, with the addition of salt, pepper, onions, charcoal, and butter.

The protest of Russian officers shown to the Poles at Paris, against being employed in crushing Poland, though no doubt a forgery, is at the same time no invention. The same may be said of the counter-declaration which has recently been addressed as a letter to the editor of the *Times*, and inserted in that paper. No doubt the officers, as well as the men of the Russian armies, loathe the service on which they are put in Poland, seeing that the species of resistance opposed to them evokes no national feeling. But those dispositions would immediately change were the Poles, upon the faith of them, to rise to reclaim against Russia their independence. It is, therefore, on the continuance of the Poles to resign themselves to their present fate, that will depend that progression in the deterioration in the Russian armies, which has prompted the Government to provoke this internal contest.

But the military system is at this moment undergoing a total revolution in the new form of recruitment, both in Poland and in Russia. This is the very point upon which passive resistance may assume an active character, whether for the Russian peasant or the Polish, creating the critical point in the history of Russia.

As to the Russian peasant there appears to be an amelioration as regards the selection of men, since the proprietor no longer designates the individual, and since it does not, consequently,

* When the Russian soldier speaks of operations against Europe, he uses the phrase in the text. He changes the expression when Turkey is in question, and says "March to Turkey." The memorable threat of Nicholas, at the commencement of the Polish insurrection, may be here recalled, "*Rouler Varsovie, et marcher sur l'Europe.*"

follow that the reprobate portion of the community is drafted into the army; but, on the other hand, the line of separation is comparatively effaced between the population and the army, so that the latter can no longer be employed with the same facility against the former.

As regards the Poles, Conscription has been changed to *Proscription*. It is as if the Mayor of every petty town in England received a packet of sentences of transportation, or of confinement to hard labour for ten years, and then walked about the streets distributing them as he went along; and in case of the receivers refusing to repair to gaol, sent for the military to a neighbouring barrack to seize them and drag them through the streets. The effect of the introduction, in this fashion, of recruits into an army, in which pity for the Poles has taken the place of hatred, cannot be problematical.* This, while coming under the head of the army, must also be transferred back to the head of Poland, as it is impossible to conceive a measure more effectually calculated to create insurrection. If it fails, it is difficult to see to what further means the Government can have resort.

No. 4. The Starovirtze: This vast branch of the history of Russia, unknown to the rest of the world, can only be here indicated in the faintest manner, because of its bearing at this moment most essentially and critically upon the events in progress. The Starovirtze, or "old believers," are those, as their name designates, who remained faithful to the profession of faith of the Eastern Church (Greek), when the new Russian State Religion was introduced, by which not only the Pontificate was absorbed into the Imperial person, but that person assimilated to the God-head by "WORSHIP" being paid to him.† These old believers

* The Poles in each Russian regiment are known by the name of "the unfortunates." The system of companions employed in our own army to ensure the good conduct of the men, is employed in the Russian army in reference to the Poles, each of whom has two or three Russians allotted to him as observers.

† The present Russian Church is a near approach to Buddhism, the Czar being the normal Delai Lama. The name of Nebuchadnezzar, which is translatable in modern Russian, means, "There is no God but the Czar." If the Russian and the Assyrian people are not identical, the system at least of St. Petersburg to-day closely resembles that of Babylon at the time of the handwriting upon the wall. The following is from the Catechism:—

"Q. What duties does religion teach us, the humble subjects of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia, to practice towards him?"

"A. Worship, obedience, fidelity, the payment of taxes, service, love, and prayer, the whole being comprised in the words worship and fidelity."

This Catechism is published by special order of the Russian Government, and printed at Wilna in 1832, for the use of schools in the Polish Provinces.

consider the CZAR to be Antichrist; and between them and the Government a struggle has been carried on ever since the time of PETER, consisting of persecution on the one hand, and martyrdom on the other. This malignancy, originating in religious belief, has extended to political affairs, and they have held the attempts of the Russian Cabinet on the independence of Foreign people, in no less horror than the pretensions of the CZAR to divine honours. The seat of this faith is Malo-Russia, including the Cossacks; but its ramifications extend throughout the whole Empire; finding at times even entrance to the highest offices, and within the precincts of the Court. Their numbers are estimated at twelve millions, and the cavalry and artillery are so far believed to incline towards them as to be distrusted by the Government, whenever troops are to be employed against them. Externally, the leanings of this body are towards the Porte, who in the year 1846, preserved for them the continuation of the apostolical succession of their priesthood.

It would now appear that the Starovirtze are assimilating to themselves the rest of the nation under a secular aspect, and that what may be termed their puritanical notions in reference to Government, are spreading independently of their religious dogmas. This new political conviction has found for itself a native and striking formula, which is this:—

“WE ABJURE THE WILL OF PETER THE GREAT.”*

A quarter of a century ago Monsieur de CUSTINE defined as follows the, so to say, atomic connection between the internal condition of Russia and its external action. “The Russian balances the expectation of future dominion against the

* “Whoever judges of the Russian Opposition only by Bakounin and Herzen, will form a false idea of what is going on now amongst the Russian nation. I have met a great number of Russians, who reason in the following way: ‘Slavery has not been an old Russian Institution. Its first foundation was laid by Boris Grodhoff; it has been sanctioned by the houses of Romanoff and Oldenburg. The latter, a foreign dynasty has tried to destroy all things national and Russian. They have made Russia the battle-field of all ambitious intriguers. Nearly all the Russian Diplomatsists are Foreigners. The Russian Nation has nothing to do with the Testament of Peter the Great; it abhors conquest abroad, which is synonymous with slavery at home. To make Russia free, it is necessary to make it Russian again—to drive the Foreign and Russian Diplomatsists from the soil of Russia.’ Such reasoning is a highly remarkable symptom. I have had the opportunity of conversing with great numbers of Russians, and all these were the most bitter enemies of the Russian foreign policy. How wonderful, were the Russians themselves to rescue Europe from the dangers by which it is threatened by the Russian Government. All these people were the most bitter antagonists of Herzen and the Panslavists.—*Private Letter, Oct. 1862*

pressure of present slavery." * He has in a not less striking manner, presented the field of operation as seen by the then Russian eye. He says, "They say at St. Petersburg that Europe has entered on the path of Poland."

To the Russian eye the field includes now, not Europe only, but the East also. It is no longer, therefore, inducements and attractions which the foreign field presents: but difficulties, discomfitures, and dangers.

The Starovirtze operations are not, however, to be considered as confined to the interior. The Provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia, and the Principality of Servia, together with Montenegro, a third of Bosnia, the Bulgarian inhabitants of the line of the Balkan, and the Greeks of Constantinople, and the cities of European Turkey, ARE ALL STAROVIRTZE. That is to say they belong to the ancient Eastern Church, against whom the persecutions of the Russian Church and Government have been so long directed; and who, in Russia Proper, are animated with the most profound hatred for the Russian Church and Government.

Now, let us imagine the power of Russia extending over European Turkey, and coming down to the Dardanelles and the White Sea; she would instantly lose that power of revolution against a neighbouring Empire, which she holds and employs at present solely through the ignorance in which those Christian populations are kept of her real character.

Let us suppose that the Turks were entirely removed from the field, and these countries left to their Christian inhabitants alone. We should then have five millions of Wallachians and Moldavians, six millions of Bulgarians, two millions of Servians and Bosnians, and, say, one million more of Morlacs and Montenegrins, independently of the Greeks, who are in numbers too insignificant to enumerate at all, but whom we may, perhaps, set down at one hundred thousand. The Catholics need not be enumerated, since their position of hostility to the supposed new Government of Russia is perfectly understood. The result of this extension of territory would, therefore, be simply this: That the numbers of the Starovirtze of the Russian Empire would be raised from twelve to twenty-six millions.

By the mere culture of a few literary men she can establish throughout an unimpassioned Europe the idea, that Christianity profits by her victories and incorporations. But to maintain the professors of the Greek faith, who are under the Ottoman sceptre, in the belief of a religious identity with herself, far other, and

* "Le Russe se paye de sa dégradation actuelle par l'espoir de sa domination future."

very elaborate means are required. These are the periodical transmission of plate for Church service, of embroidered priests' vestments, and of missals printed for this purpose at Moscow, and which could not be suffered to be seen in Russia. Whilst at the same time there are vast payments of minute salaries to individuals, and the continual revolutionary promptings of her agents. Yet with all this, she has utterly failed in her attempts to obtain a formal association with her Church, either in that country, Greece, which she has broken off from Turkey, or in those provinces where she has succeeded in shaking the connexion with Turkey—Wallachia and Moldavia.

That an ordinary member of the Russian Cabinet should be led into a false estimate of this position is certain. First: because it is a question on which an unbiassed judgment is not to be expected; and secondly, because of the very organisation which is employed to insurrectionise the Christian subjects of the Porte. From this mass of agents, reports must be incessantly pouring in. Each of these agents will be re-acted upon by that very delusion which their predecessors have succeeded in establishing. Even without reference to the desire of each to make himself important, he will be unconsciously deceiving his Government by detailing interviews with persons seeking to make themselves of importance with the Russian agent. The whole will be conducted to the total forgetfulness, and, it may be said, ignorance, of that mortal antagonism between the two Churches which ultimately must come into play.

It is, therefore, not more to the intellectual superiority of Count POZZO DI BORGIO than to his position of Roman Catholic and remote stranger, that that just appreciation by the Russian Cabinet of its own position, shown in the Despatch of Count NESSELRODE in 1830, to the Archduke CONSTANTINE is owing.

That estimate amounts to this, that it is essential for Russia to have the Turks at Constantinople: because, as the successor of that Empire, she could not hold the European portion against its Christian inhabitants.

Not to be able to hold European Turkey, involves something more than not getting European Turkey. It involves the closing of the Dardanelles. The Russian system is like a man who walks through the streets with a halter round his neck; so that any dog may tread upon the cord. That cord has trailed these many years without misadventure, because the dogs in the street were her friends; and the master of the house an easy-going gentleman who never stirred from home.

MONTESQUIEU said: "It is happy for the Trading Powers that God has permitted Turks and Spaniards to be in the world,

since, of all nations, they are the most proper to possess a great Empire with insignificance."

Were Constantinople in the hands of a Government having a mission—say to abolish slavery, say to extend civilisation or Christianity—one admitting that it entertained the lust of conquest, one professing to be so "virtuous"* as to desire to extend its influence, one seeking to benefit mankind by its philanthropy, or desiring to indulge the hunter passions of its subjects by sending them forth as "excursionists," then would it be seen how grave were the reasons which have, up to the present moment, influenced in secret the Russian Cabinet. Let France, or Austria, or England, or the United States occupy Constantinople, and then would be understood the dream of OMAR.† Let but one section of the Christian populations—the Greek, for instance—after a lucky insurrection against the Russian power, get hold of the Dardanelles, and then it will be seen that the Russian Empire is a mere dependency of Constantinople, from the moment it is in the hands of men with sense enough to use it for their own protection, or dishonesty enough to use it for the enslaving of others.

But the external and prospective question of the Starovirtze has an Asiatic as well as a European bearing. **THE GEORGIAN PEOPLE ARE STAROVIRTZE.**

It will be seen, then, that the SULTAN, who stands in the position of religious head to the Mussulman subjects of Russia, stands in an analagous position to a very large proportion of the nominally Christian subjects of the same Empire. There is no graver matter for consideration than the consequences that would ensue were the Porte to be driven by this continual and atrocious system of interference, to retort on Russia, the secret and insidious arms launched against herself.

Were the Porte once to apprehend the enormous power at present lying dormant in her hands, in the faculty of regulating or suspending intercourse through the Dardanelles, new dispositions would be evoked by the new thoughts: then would it apprehend also that *the simple condition of war with Russia*, without any of the military operations of war being conducted under it, would suffice, if continued for two or three years, to efface Russia from the list of nations.

It is, therefore, the first of the duties of the Russian Government, not to press upon the Porte in such a manner as to drive

* Louis Napoleon.

† This poetic allegory will be found in Von Hammer's "Ottoman Empire." It concludes by describing the city of Constantine as "a diamond between two emeralds and two sapphires, the centre stone in the ring of empire."

it either into an operation of thought, or an act of indignation. Consequently there is no demand which the Porte can make upon Russia, being at the same time resolved to enforce it, to which Russia will not yield compliance, and at once.*

No. 5. The nobles: The disaffection of this class, as it is a cause, so must it be an effect of the emancipation of the serfs. Their contingent disaffection on the occurrence of a war with England, the latter exercising the Right of Search, formed of itself a necessity for destroying them as a body; as it was still possible that in England a sovereign might assert his dignity, or a minister perform his duty. Russia in that case would lose the protection of the Declaration of Paris. But independently of the contingent danger, there was the present one of disaffection arising on internal grounds, and that disaffection common to the nobles of Russia and of Poland.

If, in regard to the four previous points, the world has been kept in ignorance or subjected to delusion, there is none here. In all the journals of Europe it has been printed that when the Emperor gave a ball at Warsaw, no lady could be found to attend: and when thereon he repaired to Moscow to recover from the blow, and commanded a theatrical representation, there, too, the ladies refused to attend. Such being the dispositions, then follows for the Poles, the new Conscription; for the Russians, the Emancipation of the Serfs.

That the Cabinet sees its way out of the chaos, and is working towards it, is indubitable. But the entrance is not in the East. The ensuing spring, summer, and winter must rise before it, with gloomiest aspect. The faintest hope of relief can only come with the following autumn, when the reaction from the disturbance of the Corn Trade in the New World will begin to bring in money. With the prospect of succeeding in a few years to this twenty millions of exportation from the United States, great efforts can be made, and much endured, because there is hope. But here, again, all is contingent on prolonging the slumbers of the Ottoman Porte. Let a firman issue declaring the free export of grain from the ports of Turkey, and all that

* When, in January, 1850, the Porte in a moment of sudden indignation on discovering the scheme of obtaining Astrabad for Russia (by the joint English and Russian Boundary Commission), by making Turkey cede Mohammarah to Persia, broke away from the English Ambassador, and required from Russia the withdrawal of her army from the Provinces of the Danube, the Russian Minister at once acceded. He asked for no delay to communicate to his Government this unexpected demand. No courier had arrived. He must therefore have acted under standing instructions, always to yield when the Porte was resolute.

Russia has gained by the civil war in America, and all the hopes she derives from it for composing her own internal dissensions will not only vanish, but the profits will pass to Turkey.

Such is the position presented now, to be contrasted with that which was presented in the year 1837. It is upon an Empire so imperilled by geography, a Cabinet so distracted with the troubles of the hour, and the dangers of the future, that the question of existence is to be brought to issue, not with any Foreign Government—for amongst that class there is not one living who would dare to look a Russian Ambassador in the face—but with a small body of private men, moved to make this stand against her solely by a will of their own. Nor can it be otherwise. Great enterprises can only be attempted or carried through by analogous sentiments. Such purposes can take their beginnings only from a few; who must also be unconnected with office, and moved solely by their own public-mindedness. If these men be really honest, and, withal, cognisant and judicious, they can strike at Russia a blow from which the subservient Cabinets of Europe cannot shield her.

Finally, it is necessary to discriminate between the Caucasus and Constantinople: two positions linked together by Lord PONSONBY, as if their value were analagous. He puts Constantinople as the first in the world, and the Caucasus as "only second;" adding, however, "But Constantinople breathes only under the shadow of the Caucasus." The distinction is, that the one is negative, and the other positive. The value of the Caucasus consists only in its being a protection against Russia; whereas, the importance of Constantinople lies in its being a means of coercion for Russia. The Emperor ALEXANDER said, "Constantinople is the key of my house."

Whilst these pages are passing through the press, the telegraphic announcements in the morning papers for the first time make mention of Circassia as one of the Powers of Europe and of Asia.* We learn at once that Russia is sending arms into Servia, and calling the Porte to account for sending arms into

* On the 21st of January, the London papers contained the following announcement:—

"TURKEY, RUSSIA, AND CIRCASSIA.

"Paris, Friday 20.

"*La France* says one of the principal points in the programme of the new Turkish Ministry is the development, in considerable proportions, of the Turkish army and fleet. It is asserted that, in view of the decided attitude of the Sultan, Russia is about to increase the army of the Caucasus, where important military events are expected to take place."

Circassia. Upon this it is announced that the new policy pursued by the Porte is of so alarming a nature that a "diplomatic intervention" is requisite to arrest it. Nor is this all. The Porte, following the lead of Europe (Russia excepted) had sent MEHEMET PASHA to get mailed vessels. Millions were to be expended thereon. MEHEMET PASHA has been recalled to become member of the new "Ministry" as CAPITAN PASHA. This functionary is said to be the warm advocate of Circassia, consequently he knows where the mail of Turkey is to be found. Scarcely has he had time to reach Constantinople when the following notice appear in the *Levant Herald*:—

"The mailed gun-boats recently ordered by the Porte, in England, have been countermanded."

It is well enough for England to case in metal her now useless ships of the line. Having surrendered her maritime power, a plaything, however costly, is cheap to cover her wounded self-love. She has millions to squander: better expend them on oxide of iron than on Canton bombardments and Mexican co-operations. She is secularly a Russian dupe, and has to go on; and so the other effigies of power stuck up in gaudy colours all over Europe, and called "Governments." But Turkey, being, as an Administration, composed individually of men more or less respectable, and bearing the brunt of the disorganising process on the part of all, which each, on its displacement, must succumb to without a struggle, has serious duties to attend to.

This cannot have occurred by the mere logical process. The Turks have not studied Aldrich. It is the alternative process which alone they could have employed. They cannot have said, "Iron ships are nonsense." That was beyond them. They have only said, but this sufficed, "The Danube need not be defended against Russian guns, since by the Dardanelles we command Russia's fate." They must have said, "If Russia threatens us on the Danube, we will protect ourselves on the Kuban."

But to escape from the contagion of folly is, in a foolish age, to attain to the profits of wisdom. They speak much of cotton wanting in Lancashire. Cotton is far more wanted at Constantinople. Here thousands of millions of pounds are needed to give our operatives bread. There some grains of that precious material for the ears of the Grand Vizier when approached by a European Dragoman are all that is requisite to give life to an Empire by which alone Europe lives.

The journals of Europe are, at the instigation of Turkish ambassadors, industriously spreading the idea of the insanity of the SULTAN, thus connecting the change at Constantinople with

the mission of the Delegates to England, and the projected chartering of a British vessel for Circassia.

The Queen of ENGLAND appears to stand in a parallel position to the SULTAN, as may be gathered from the contents of the diplomatic documents, as well as from the rumours secretly spread or openly embodied in newspaper leaders.

Concurrently with these operations we have the sudden and indecent project of surrendering the Ionian Islands to the Greek State in this its moment of senseless convulsion; which means not less than the public profession of insurrectionising and dismembering Turkey.

Now, supposing that these various measures fail in preventing the sailing of the vessel, and in frightening the SULTAN into submission, then far more important results may be achieved than those originally contemplated. Instead of completing and maintaining the defensive line of the Caucasus, there will have been called into play the active qualities and the coercive power of the Bosphorus.

The development of this power consists absolutely in the perception by the Porte, or even by a single person of station and faculties, of certain ideas, which come naturally to be evolved in such a discussion.

FIRST. THAT THE CONDITION OF WAR GIVES TO THE PORTE THE COMMAND OF RUSSIA.

SECONDLY. THAT THE FREE EXPORT OF GRAIN FROM THE TURKISH PORTS MAKES RUSSIA BANKRUPT.

If it be needful for Europe to undertake measures to prevent the realization of the schemes of Russia, it is no less necessary to take the same course to protect itself from the scarcely less terrible consequences of the failure of those schemes. Russia will not succeed for herself. But if she is allowed much longer to go on, she will unlock the gates of a Chinese cataclysm, giving to it a military direction. On the other hand, she will have aroused the old Ottoman Lion, and reconverted those warlike races, now become also disciplined, into a new source of terror for Europe.

If the "progress" of Russia has commenced to run only from the moment that some one of her Princes had said to himself, "I will conquer the world;" so is it impossible that that career should be arrested until someone of that world should have said to himself, "I will destroy Russia." As well might you expect to save one deck in a ship, with a disregarded leak in its bottom; as well secure one story in a house, with a conflagration unattended to; as well strive to save one limb of a body afflicted with an untreated deadly disease, as propose to rescue Poland, save Turkey, protect

Circassia, or India, or Germany, or England, or France, except by going to the source of the danger, alike for each, and for all. We have to strike at that Power which is the source of evil, and the mover of commotion, where it is vulnerable; that is not in its soil, and in its armies, but in its system, and its trade. Strike then, and strike to destroy. Destroy the Russian system, and emancipate the Russian people. As the blow is levelled only against two or three foreigners seated in a single Council Chamber, so it may be delivered also by a few individuals without parade or authority of state, and by means of a few words spoken in season.

This may be difficult to conceive; but the difficulty lies only there. Once conceived, the execution is facile. It is no less easy than necessary to destroy Russia.

Letters of Lord Ponsonby.

LORD PONSONBY TO THE FIRST EXPLORER OF CIRCASSIA.

Extracts.

No. 1.

July 1, 1834.

Certainly there can be no objection to your going to Trebizond. On the contrary, it must be, I think, *in the way of business*.

No. 2.

September 3, 1834.

I shall send off a messenger *very* soon. I think it of great importance that Government should be put in complete possession of the political state of the Caucasian nations, without *any delay*, and I have good reason for pressing the thing.

Will you draw up a Memoir on the subject? I will send it in a despatch. It is right you should receive the credit due to the expositor of facts, that have been hitherto only generally and superficially known.

The **WILL**, the power, derived from situation, &c., of the Caucasians to resist Russia. The difficulty and facility also attending such efforts as may be made by England to support the Caucasians, are the objects which I wish you to touch mainly. You may trust to me that I know of a *new* necessity for the speedy execution of what I propose to you to do; and also for the necessity which demands that *publicity* should be given to it. I mean that it should be done in a despatch, not in a private letter.

If we do not take care, Russia will obtain the Caucasus, and all

the power that possession will give her over Turkey and Persia, &c. I beg you to let me know if you will do this *instantly* or not?

No. 3.

September 7, 1834.

Pray tell me if, when you were at Sebastopol, the ships of war there were without their topmasts?

No. 4.

September 8, 1834.

Let us send our fleets here with the consent of the SULTAN, and then treat both with Russia and with MEHEMET ALI. We shall then be strong enough to say to both, You shall neither of you do that which has a tendency to disturb the European balance of power, and injuriously to affect the great interests of England and France. I can see no other solution of the question. I do not hope that it will be resorted to. I am well convinced that these are days of talk, not deeds. I therefore expect that the forelock presented to us by fortune will not be seized; that in disdain of our impotency she will turn her bald back (of her head be it understood) to us, and fly where more vigour will be found to force her favours.

No. 5.

September, 1834.

The Russians have begun to prepare the creation of a large naval force in the Black Sea, but it will require three or four years to complete their work. This fact alone speaks volumes, both as to their ultimate objects, and the fear that now restrains their movements; and I think the work they have undertaken may be the delay, as well as the final cause, of the ruin of the Caucasians.

Your visit has been the occasion of great emotions. I will not keep your secret any longer.

No. 6.

November 15, 1834.

Now for some news. The Russian fleet is in ordinary at Sebastopol, but still may be got ready in a couple of days. The troops are gone, or going, into cantonments *out* of the Crimea, in consequence of the distress and poverty created by failure of the crops in the former year, which distress is increasing by the very scanty crops of the present year.

The fortifications at Sebastopol are not completed, and the works on them are suspended on account of the difficulties above-

mentioned. The necessary buildings are making at Nicolaiff for fulfilling the contracts for ships of the line, &c.

You see we have now time to do much. The Russian troops cannot fly back to their late position; and some weeks, at all events, must elapse before they could be ready, and the fleet also, to act *here*. What an opportunity the present hour affords for striking a fatal blow against Russian power, if there could anywhere be found the vigour and energy of an angry mouse.

No. 7.

November 20, 1834.

What can I say, but that curs will bark, and rogues lie, and fools believe, and time show the cowardice of the one, the falsehood of the other, and vary the folly of the last.

[This was called forth by letters from the Foreign Minister, requiring the removal from Constantinople of the gentleman who had visited Circassia, because he was endangering the peace of Europe.]

I have given to-day Baron STURMER my mind in full respecting the designs of Russia, and the disgrace that will fall on Prince METTERNICH, if he should permit them to be effected after having been warned as he has been of their existence. I told the Baron, METTERNICH would be not only disgraced but hanged, if thereafter Russia should carry her points, for the World would know that he had been well informed on the situation of things; that he knew as well as ROUSSIN and myself the state of things, and that what we knew would be known by all the world.

Let people talk at home, we must succeed, for truth is with us; and honesty and resolution, and your activity.

No. 8.

December 8, 1834.

The Circassian question is that which will demand your greatest exertions, and it will be the most difficult. I have forced the Porte into a corner about the free passage of British ships through the Bosphorus—if free passage be granted to Russian ships. I think you will reckon my note a good one, when you see it in London. It is dated December 4, you may be sure I had Circassia in view.

Courage and perseverance, you are engaged in a noble work. The enterprise itself is glory. To fail in it is something more than to succeed in less undertakings.

AFTER THE RUSSO-TURKISH WAR OF 1853.

No. 1.

November 17, 1853.

Will France and England combine to *force* the SULTAN to forego the *use* of the advantages he may have obtained by the valour of his troops, and skill of his generals, and devotion of his subjects? Will France and England force him whom they call Ally to reinstate his enemy in the possession of those territorial possessions which have been so lately notoriously used to favour attack upon him? Will France and England, under the disguise of love for peace, replace in the hands of Russia territories which will facilitate a renewal of attempts at conquest, and, therefore, be a constant excitement to that very thing, war, which France and England profess to hinder? Supposing that Ottoman armies should be able to drive the Russians from Bessarabia, would France and England forbid the SULTAN from repossessing himself of that frontier which formerly fortified his Empire, and which later events have proved to be almost necessary for its safety? Will France and England force the SULTAN to break the Treaties he has now made with the Circassians and other people in and about the Caucasus? Will France and England force the Ottomans not to use the fleet which by their skill and forethought they have created to supply the loss which England inflicted upon them at Navarino; and forbid the employment of that arm where, if used, it may be found superior to the fleet of Russia (their mortal enemy)? Will France and England insist upon the re-establishment of the prohibition of the passage of the Bosphorus to ships of war, by which the Black Sea was made a sort of peculium for Russia? And, to conclude, I will ask, will France and England again believe in the faithful performance of treaties by the Russians? The world will not credit such a thing. The world will think that the Governments of France and England have in view other ends than the one that is asserted to be theirs—*Peace*.

No. 2.

December 24, 1853.

The plan, as it is developed in the proceeding of the Mediatorial Conferences, and published under date 5th December, is in substance the preservation to Russia of all those territories which Russia held in virtue of treaties, which treaties are now abrogated by the existence of war between Russia and Turkey. It is a plan to

accept a state of vassalage, to break faith with his allies in Asia, to disgust all his most faithful subjects, and to deprive himself of a chance of future resistance to the will of Russia.

I am certain that had we not been resisted by the common sense of the Turks, we should have made the ruin of their Empire inevitable. I am sorry that the Turks have yielded, as I am told they now have done, to any proposition made by us for negotiation. I think that if they, the Turks, are drawn in to trust England, they will ultimately be ruined.

Let the Allies, as they call themselves, withdraw their fleet. Let them leave to Turkey and to Russia to fight the battle out: the Turks will gain. They will not be defeated by Russia. They will not be forced to restore the treaties through which Russia has obtained the advantages against Turkey, which have been so mischievous; but it would be better for Turkey to undergo any defeat than to submit to English diplomacy.

The dispute between Russia and the Porte is, whether, or not the Russians should be masters of the best part of the world. I look at the condition of things in this light, and I am convinced that the policy adopted by the Allies is the straight way to the establishment of Russia in that position.

I think that England is the country that will be the greatest loser in power, and that what we all know of the Russian means and ends in Asia fully shows the fact.

I am certain that English Ministers, and the French also, as it appears, are ready to assume the right to dictate the terms of peace, and what those terms will be is to me indubitable—that is, the real effectual dependence of Turkey upon the will of Russia.

I have no faith in, or respect for the conduct of the Allies. I have seen them support the robber in the work of attacking the weaker person, of whom those Allies were the self-elected guards. Like a false trustee, they have permitted the robbery of the man whose possession of the estate they were bound to defend.

The Circassian War as Viewed from St. Petersburg.

On three of the least credible statements in this exposition, confirmation is offered in the news published on one morning in one London journal. Extracts are subjoined.

St. Petersburg, December 27, 1862.

Grand-Duke MICHAEL has been sent to the Caucasus to supersede Prince BARJATINSKI, and reconquer the vast provinces recently lost. For seven months nothing but continued misfortune has attended the Russian eagles. In the former haunts of Schamyl, the natives seem to have made but little progress against the overwhelming numbers and superior artillery of the Emperor; but in the west, the entire space between the great tramroad and the Black Sea has been reoccupied by the original possessors, rendering it a matter of considerable difficulty for the Russians to push their reinforcements to the southern side of the hills, and resulting in the destruction of many of the fortresses which had been destined to coerce and overawe the mountaineers. While the fact of this humiliating defeat is generally admitted in Russia, it is yet impossible to ascertain the cause of the catastrophe: Making all allowance for the *mutinous disposition of the Polish soldiers*, who are chiefly employed in fighting the Circassians, it is yet improbable in the highest degree that the success of the aborigines can have arisen from anything short of actual treason and wilful surrender. Another way to account for the overthrow of the Russian arms would be to assume an enormous exaggeration of former victories in the reports of Generals BARJATINSKI and PHILIPSON. The news officially communicated at the time of SCHAMYL'S capture did not seem to admit of another successful rising of the mountaineers. It is a fact, at any rate, that the Russian authorities in the Caucasus are composed of rogues, robbers, and house-breakers, from the presiding judges down to the meanest usher in the Imperial courts. Imagine all the villany of the Russian system let loose upon a conquered dependency, and you will perhaps realise a distant idea of the order and quiet which prevail at Tiflis.

CHINA.

The news from China announce that Russia intends helping Prince KONG to triumph over the Taepings. This resolution can

surprise nobody, Russia being particularly interested in what is passing in the Celestial Empire. But people would rather have expected a mysterious line of policy directed against England and France *than one in the sense adopted by those two Powers.* (!) Not having been able to seize the whole of the cake for herself, Russia has, in all probability, decided upon asking for her share. (!)

POLAND.

Warsaw, December 29.

It is no longer the Government, but the central revolutionary committee, that strains every nerve to check insurrection. It is no more the Central Committee, but the Government, which uses every means in its power to instigate an armed rising. Incredible as it appears, you may rely on the authenticity of this piece of intelligence. The fact is undoubted, that a hint has been given, both by the Polish revolutionary and Russian military committees, to defer the outbreak to a more favourable time, and prevent useless bloodshed for the present. The period fixed upon by the secret powers, we can easily infer from this stratagem, is no other than the time of the peasantry movement which is expected to occur in Russia in the course of the ensuing summer. Government, at that dreaded moment, will be compelled to scatter the troops in every direction, and be in a worse position than now to bring great power and attention to bear upon one individual point of its vast dominions. The same reason accounting for the pacific disposition of the people equally explains the increasing severity and reckless oppression on the part of the rulers. Wavering though the Poles may have been on the very brink of rebellion, they are not likely to oblige the Russians by an actual outbreak, even were their dearest wishes to be gratified by the contemplated act. The only apprehension entertained by the Polish patriots of a premature rising refers to the atrocious cruelties of the conscription business. To suffer this provocation quietly will be a severe trial for the self-command and political discretion of this turbulent race. Among the documents recently abstracted from the recruiting-office, are also instructions of the Central Government to the provincial authorities, in which the politically excited elements are pointed out to the special attention of the kidnapping patrols. The publicity of such an order, and the abstraction of the original lists, in consequence of which the levy will be left to the discretion of sergeants and privates, naturally contributes to heat the public mind beyond its usual degree of irritation; yet as a very large portion—people say a third or a

half—of the persons originally marked for the service have already absconded from the country, the hope for the preservation of order and quiet during the winter is, perhaps, as well founded as the committees would have it.

Arrests continue unabated in all parts of the country, from a desire to cause an insurrection and quell it in the bud of an entire district, say the patriots; to whom the Government papers reply, by way of refutation, that arms, money, and compromising documents, have been discovered on landed estates, and are known to be stowed away in a variety of places not yet searched by the police. In my opinion both are right. The prisoners are all placed before secret courts, and packed off to Siberia.—*Daily Telegraph, Saturday, Jan. 3, 1863.*

LIABILITY OF THE MINISTER IN CASE OF
THE ILLEGAL SEIZURE OF A BRITISH
VESSEL.—(See p. 76.)

IN 1829, Russia tried to obtain from the English Government the surreptitious acknowledgment of an obstruction to neutral trade by Lord ABERDEEN, who refused on the ground of his own legal liability. The only record of the transaction is in a Russian despatch. The words, as quoted below, establish the liability of the Minister in the event of the seizure of the vessel about to be sent to Circassia, and will also show the stride made by Russia between June, 1829, and October, 1831, when the "Regulation" for the Coast of Circassia was accepted by Mr. MANDEVILLE.

"We insisted, nevertheless, upon the demand that we were charged to sustain, observing to Lord ABERDEEN that a publication in the *London Gazette*, appeared to be useless, and that he would be considered as asking from us the extension which Russia did give to the blockade of the Dardanelles, and that then we would officially reply to him, that Russia confined the blockade to the Gulf of Saros and Enos, and that that declaration would contribute to give confidence to commerce in respect to the blockade of Smyrna or other ports of the Levant, and that instead of publishing this declaration in the *London Gazette*, it would suffice to cause this reply to be circulated amongst the merchants of the capital, because then they could not use the pretext of ignorance.

"Lord ABERDEEN replied to us, that the English tribunals would not admit of this middle term; that the law was positive, and that without the official publication in the *London Gazette*, the Government would be condemned to the payment of costs and interest to the injured parties (AND HIS STATEMENT IS CORRECT)."—Despatch from Prince LIEVEN and Count MATUSZEVICH, to Count NESSELRODE. London, 1st (13th) June, 1829.

SUPPLY OF COTTON AND SILK FROM CIRCASSIA.

At a recent meeting of the Circassian Committee, held at the Ship Hotel, Charing Cross, Mr. E. BEALES in the chair, the resources of the countries composing the Caucasus, or bordering on it, were investigated, and a mass of the most interesting information elicited from persons who had visited these countries, as also from a Prince of Daghestan, lately arrived in this country on a similar mission to that of the Circassian Deputies. It thence appears that the plains and uplands of Georgia produce a cotton which may be estimated as of the most valuable staple of that class which the East affords, and that it may be supplied in almost unlimited quantities—seeing that this region, running north-west and south-east, traverses an extreme length equal to the distance from Marseilles to Rouen, on an average width of a hundred miles; so that the surface available for the production of cotton is equal to that of North and South Carolina. The eastern portion of this territory is at present devoted to the more lucrative product—silk, which is the staple of Daghestan. It was stated that three French merchants, having penetrated into that country with a view to the exportation of silk, had disappeared under the suspicion of foul play; and that when the French Government complained to the Russian authorities, six of the peasants were arrested and hung, and the French Government informed that the murderers had been discovered and justice done. It is to be presumed that the success of the project of the Committee, undertaken on political grounds, of sending a vessel out to open the commerce and navigation of the Black Sea, under the Treaty of Paris, might collaterally obtain great alleviation of the sufferings of our people, whilst opening a new and important traffic with the central portions of Asia. There was a large attendance of the Committee, comprising moving men from the City.—*Liverpool Albion, December, 1862.*

CIRCASSIAN COMMITTEE.

EDMOND BEALES, Esq., Chairman, 4, Stone Buildings,
Lincoln's Inn.

OBJECTS.

1. To obtain the observance of Articles XI., XII., XIII., and XIV. of the Treaty of Paris, which open trade with Circassia across the Black Sea.
2. To charter an English vessel to convey the Circassian Deputies back to their homes without danger from the Russian cruisers.
3. To take such other measures as may appear desirable for assisting a heroic and friendly people, and for protecting from aggression their commerce with Great Britain.
4. To raise a fund for the several above purposes.

Subscriptions may be forwarded to the Chairman.