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PROGRESS

AND

PRESENT POSITION

OF

RUSSIA

IN THE EAST.

SECOND EDITION.

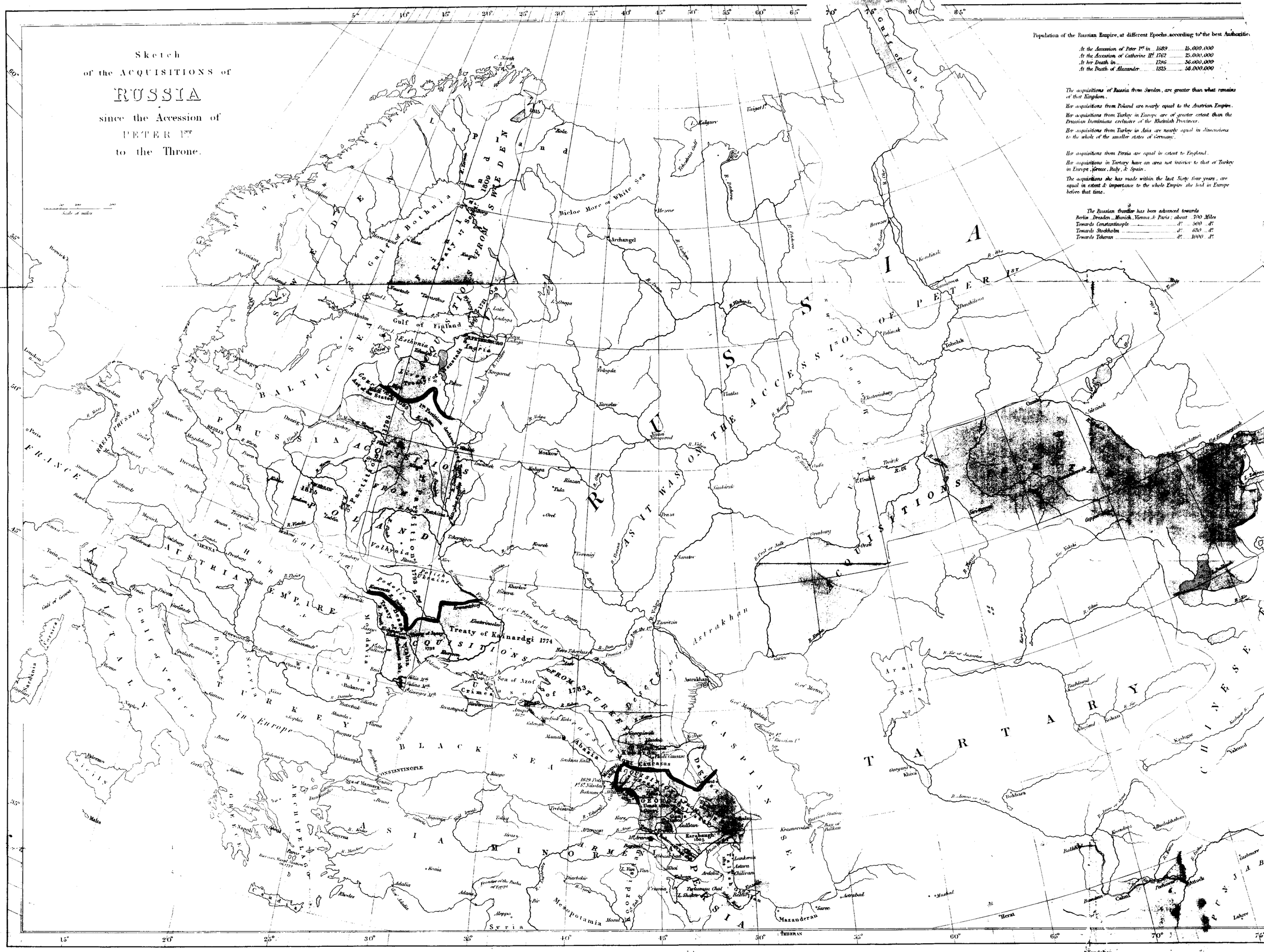
LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

MDCCCXXXVIII.

POSITION OF RUSSIA

IN THE EAST.


Sketch
of the ACQUISITIONS of
RUSSIA
since the Accession of
PETER Ier
to the Throne.
Population of the Russian Empire, at different Epochs, according to the best Authorities.
At the Accession of Peter Ier in 1689 15.000.000
At the Accession of Catherine IIe 1762 25.000.000
At her Death in 1796 36.000.000
At the Death of Alexander 1825 58.000.000
The acquisitions of Russia from Sweden, are greater than what remains of that Kingdom.
Her acquisitions from Poland are nearly equal to the Austrian Empire.
Her acquisitions from Turkey in Europe are of greater extent than the Prussian Dominions exclusive of the Rhenish Provinces.
Her acquisitions from Turkey in Asia are nearly equal in dimensions to the whole of the smaller states of Germany.
Her acquisitions from Persia are equal in extent to England.
Her acquisitions in Tartary have an area not inferior to that of Turkey in Europe, Greece, Italy, & Spain.
The acquisitions she has made within the last Sixty four years, are equal in extent & importance to the whole Empire she had in Europe before that time.
The Russian frontier has been advanced towards
Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Vienna & Paris; about 700 Miles
Towards Constantinople 400 500 do
Towards Stockholm 400 650 do
Towards Teheran 400 1000 do
Scale of miles
Treaty of Kainardgi 1774
Treaty of Adrianople 1829
Treaty of Gulistan 1813
Treaty of Turkmanchai 1828
Treaty of Aigun 1858
Treaty of Nankin 1842
Treaty of Pekin 1860
Treaty of Tilsit 1807
Treaty of Vienna 1815
Treaty of Stockholm 1809
Treaty of Nystad 1721
Treaty of Teschen 1779
Treaty of Jassy 1792
Treaty of Bucharest 1812
Treaty of Kiakhta 1727
Treaty of Nerchinsk 1689
Treaty of Paris 1856
Treaty of Berlin 1878
Treaty of Peter the 1st
Frontier of Czar Peter the 1st
Frontier of Czar Peter the 1st
Frontier of the Pachas of Egypt
Russian Station
Russian Fort
Russian Naval Station
Russian Fortress
Russian Port
Russian Fortified Port
Russian Fortified Port
Russian Fortified

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PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE object of this Pamphlet, when first published two years ago, was to awaken and direct the public attention of this country to the dangerously ambitious projects of Russia, and the alarming position she even then occupied in the East in regard to the empire of Great Britain in India, and her general interests in Central Asia; and the proof, both of the correctness of its reasoning and the truth of its predictions, may be found complete in the events that have marked the short period since its publication.

To whatever quarter we look, whether in Europe or in Asia, the influence and power of Russia is seen upon the increase. Ill-fated Poland points to the atrocious Ukases which, constantly emanating from St. Petersburg, send her sons to Siberia, or to die on the banks of the Kuban,—her daughters to the Russian camp; transplant whole families

from Poland to Russia for the purposes of population; give the estates of her former nobles to the instruments of Russian tyranny, and are gradually blotting her out from even the memory of Europe. A British representative is excluded from the little state of Cracow, the existence and freedom of which, though guaranteed by the great European Powers, is about to be extinguished, while itself is to be absorbed into the mass of the Russian dominions. The veteran pilot of the Austrian monarchy, divided between his fears of liberalism and of the encroaching spirit of his formidable northern neighbour, looks on, irresolute and inactive, hoping that the blow may not fall in his day—that the *status quo* may last his time.

The great moral change which has been gradually but surely wrought in Turkey by the operation of Russian agents, may be less obvious and palpable than it is real and essential; but those who possess the best means of judging, know well how tightly the bonds of her fatal *protector* have within that time been drawn—how absolutely every act of the Sultan's government, both foreign and domestic, is controlled by the Minister of Russia, and how the confidence once felt in former friends and allies has been lost, and their counsels and representations

remain almost disregarded. Europe has seen his Highness compelled to the suicidal act of severing the last link of connexion that remained between his person and the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia—to annihilate the last semblance of *suzerainetè* he possessed over these former provinces of the Turkish empire; and by delivering them bound hand and foot into the arms of Russia, by his own firmaun, to give the *coup de grace* to the nascent liberties of these states, who earnestly longed to enter the family of European nations as free and independent members. It has witnessed the agent of Russia dissolving, by an act of coercion, the representative assemblies which his own government (the *Cour Protectrice!*) had but a few years ago made a parade of bestowing on these principalities —violating and trampling on the *Reglement Organique*, or code of laws, which had been framed for them on the same occasion—threatening the sturdy opponents of these outrages with the vengeance of the Emperor—lording it despotically over both princes and nobles, and converting the former, together with the executive of both states, into base and passive instruments of Russian purposes. The troops, meanwhile assembled in Bessarabia, are ready to pour in, at the first fitting moment, and to turn both

principalities into that which they already are in fact, avowed provinces of Russia—even while raising their dying voice in vain appeals to the justice and sympathy of civilized and Christian Europe.

Less obvious, but not less certain, are the intrigues by which dissension has been sown and maintained in the Sultan's dominions, his revenues diminished, and his resources crippled by treachery and rebellion. Nothing can be more grateful to Russia than to witness the growth of Mahommed Ali's power, which if once more directed against his master would give the signal for a second, and probably a more permanent occupation of the Bosphorus by a Russian fleet, and of Anatolia, or part of it, by Russian troops. Nor could a more unwelcome measure to Russia have been perpetrated, than the ratification by the Sultan of a commercial treaty with England and France; a treaty which, if acted on, must, by annihilating monopolies, strike at the root of the power of the Viceroy of Egypt, as at present administered. The fact of this treaty having been carried through the councils of His Highness, in spite of Russian opposition and intrigue, significantly demonstrates how perfectly sensible the Government of St. Peters-

power of Great Britain, when directed with energy to the attainment of a just and equitable object.

Unhappily, the Euxine and its shores afford a proof that Russia has sagacity enough to discern when perseverance in her objects may be safe, and determination to pursue them with undeviating pertinacity, though fortunately not always with success. The repeated and extensive armaments, the Imperial Ukases, and the Imperial visits, indicate sufficiently the high value which the Government of St. Petersburg continue to attach to the subjugation of the Caucasian tribes. Yet the brave Circassians still hold out; and the whitening bones of the Russian soldiers, and the stranded wrecks of their navy, attest both the desperate character of the Circassian resistance, and the inefficacy of a Russian blockade.

Yet the world has heard that the British flag has been outraged by the seizure of not less than three British merchant-vessels by Russian ships of war; one of these, for the alleged breach of sanatory and custom-house regulations, on a shore where no right of establishing such on the part of Russia exists, has been condemned as a seizure, almost without enquiry, certainly without proof; while British merchants have found themselves prohibited from trading with a free people, desirous of such commercial inter-

course, by an interminable blockade, which has never been recognized by our authorities, and which Russia has no right to impose. And now the iniquitous and avowedly exterminating war against this free people is made a pretext for military preparations on a gigantic scale, which may with ease, and probably will, be applied to purposes subversive of the British interests in Central Asia.

But it is in quarters further removed from public observation that the progress of Russia has been most rapid and alarming, because more securely carried on. Few and indifferent are the regards bestowed by most European statesmen on the countries eastward of the Caspian, or even on the more known and less savage realms of Persia; yet it is there, notwithstanding, that the danger to British interests is greatest and most imminent. Not four years since, the aid of England, in money and in countenance, placed the present Shah of Persia on his throne. Accompanied by the Envoy of that power, with the detachment of British Officers, and by the Ambassador of Russia, who gave no assistance beyond the assent implied by his presence—for none other indeed was required on the part of his master—the young monarch made his bloodless progress from Tabreez to the capital, where he was

seated in peace upon the throne of his grandfather—and great and unbounded were the professions of his gratitude. The Russian boundary was then the Arras, and the influence of Russia was decidedly inferior to that of England in the councils of the Shah. Since then, we have seen that monarch, who thus owed his crown to England, in defiance of the councils and remonstrances of the British Minister, but listening to the voice of encouragement from the Ambassador of Russia, exhausting the resources, and forestalling the revenues, of his still unsettled country, in support of a war of aggression against the vital interests of England. We have seen the English Minister insulted, his demands for redress unheeded, forced to retire before the prevailing influence of the Russian Envoy from the Court of the Shah, where heretofore he had been paramount, and that monarch avowedly abandoning himself to the guidance of the latter—acting in all respects by his advice—making treaties under his guarantee, and receiving in return promises of the most substantial aid, in prosecuting his designs against the very points and people which it is our interest and object to protect.

We have seen the Chiefs of Affghanistan, who but a short while since coveted and solicited our alliance

as their best safeguard, disappointed in their hopes of assistance from England against either Sikhs or Persians, dismissing the empty-handed English agents, and admitting those of Russia, who lavish the promises of aid and protection which England withholds; and entering into treaties with the Persian monarch, under guarantee of the Russian agent; probably too, with the Emperor himself, against their own brethren of Herât. We hear of the Russian Envoy intimating the intention of the Emperor his master, to send an army of 10,000 Russians to subjugate the rulers of Khyvah and Bockara, and, that done, to fix with Persia the limits of their eastern frontiers. In short, we see Russian influence, instead of being limited as formerly to the line of the Arras, prevailing now, not at Herât alone, but at Caubul—nay, even to the banks of the Indus.

Nor is the rapidity of this progress less alarming and astounding than its unerring certainty. Sixty-four years, that is, from 1772 till 1835-6, were required to advance the southern frontier of the Czars a distance of 700 miles, namely, from the line of posts established by Peter the Great, between the Don and the Volga (*vide* page 1 of Pamphlet), to the Arras; within these two last years the

Emperor Nicholas has advanced his influence, if not his troops, from the Arras to Caubul, a stride of more than 2000 miles. It signifies little to object that the Russian troops are not yet even at Herât: the time may not be ripe for the last decided step of military occupation; but it is fast approaching, and all is prepared to take advantage of the proper moment; and, if England remains as indifferent to the present and the future as she has been to the past, that consummation will speedily be witnessed. The English mission and detachment once got rid of, a popular tumult, the revolt of a province or a chief, events which the ingenuity of a Russian agent can at any time readily bring about, may form a pretext for introducing a force that shall hold the north in awe, and whose advanced posts may be at Herât, or yet further east; for, the moral courage and independence of the Shah once thoroughly subdued by a sense of his own helplessness, no obstacle whatever will exist to the military occupation of the country, and its resources will amply maintain the requisite troops which have of late been mustering to the north of the Caucasus.

Persia once prostrated, and Affghanistan overawed, or *protected*, who will again venture to smile or to sneer at the once supposed impracticability of a Rus-

sian invasion of India? With proofs before the Indian world so convincing of the superior power of Russia to that of England, in the rapid approach of the former in despite of the latter, towards her Indian frontier, what is to become of that talisman of opinion which has so long sustained our Asiatic empire, or of the revenues and resources we derive from it? Will Runjeet Sing then continue our faithful ally, with the promises of Russia in his ear, and the fear of her bayonets before his eyes?

Is it asked what has brought on this alarming condition of things—this rapid decay of British influence and power? The question is easily and simply answered,—it is the irresolution, the timidity, or the false economy, of English policy and measures, which, losing sight of the national best interests and power, and enamoured of peace—peace, at any rate—have paralysed the vigour of her councils, and induced her government rather to concede and conciliate than to stand firm and resent the smallest aggression on her interests; which has stripped her foreign Envoys of power and means, when these should rather have been increased, to match the agents of a power that never spares money, or scruples at measures which are to further her ultimate ends. How could the Shah of Persia, or the Chiefs of Affgha-

nistan, resist the promises, or brave the threats of Russia, which experience had proved to be no empty words, in order to cling to England, the Envoys of which could neither promise efficient protection nor threaten with effectual punishment?

But, again, it may be asked, "Is the case, then, desperate? is the game so totally lost as to preclude hope?" God forbid. The statement of facts and anticipations here set forth are meant to rouse, not to depress. The facts, indeed, are certain; the condition of affairs in those countries is exactly stated; nor is it particularly cheering to reflect that the mischief is entirely owing to our own supineness or timidity—that a fitting support of our agents, and duly redeeming the pledges they felt it expedient to give, and an earlier and more efficient demonstration of resolution in the proper quarters, would have saved the whole loss. But the remedy is fortunately still, even at the eleventh hour, in our hands; firmness and decision will yet retrieve the game. The attitude assumed in Persia by Russia, or at least by her agent, is unquestionably hostile; but, with the art which governs all her policy, a loop-hole has been left in case of need. She may disavow the acts of her Envoy; and if need be she will do so. Already, if report deserves credit, she has taken the

first precautionary step: her Ambassador at the Shah's Court has been removed, it is said, and is to be replaced by another, well known in Egyptian politics.

Should England assume a tone inconveniently high, this step can at once be appealed to as a proof of her conciliatory dispositions and innocence of intention. If not, the former able agent at the Court of Mahommed Ali will not be a less efficient instrument at that of the Shah, while the ex-Ambassador, who volunteered to lead a regiment to the attack of Herât, will make an admirable commander to replace, with other Russian officers, the British detachment discarded through Russian influence—perhaps His Excellency may be sent to organize the troops of Dost Mahommed Khan at Caubul.

But *is* Russia yet in circumstances to brave and to wage a war with England?—that is the question. We think not, even were she to have England single-handed for her antagonist. The proof of this may be found in the conduct of Russia herself. The day is gone by when doubts might have been entertained of her projects of conquest and territorial aggrandizement; every assertion she has made of moderation and self-denial has been belied by her acts. But she knows when, where, and how to make her approaches,

and carefully avoids all attempts at encroachment, whether political or territorial, where there is danger of coming too fully under the public eye. To England she has been especially lavish of conciliatory assurances and pacific declarations: were she prepared for a rupture, would this be the case? Would she, but for dread of consequences, so long defer seizing on the prizes which otherwise are within her grasp, and which have been the object of her solicitude for years? No: England may be assured that Russia dreads her; but presuming on the obvious reluctance of the English nation to risk a disturbance of the peace of Europe, and admirably skilled in judging how far she may press upon that reluctance, she does and will continue to advance, step by step, until patience is worn out, and indignation is roused. Then, and not till then, will Russia recede; and she will continue so to do while pressed, until driven to a position which justice and the common voice of Europe may warrant her in maintaining.

In the concluding words of the pamphlet, "*The integrity and independence of Persia is necessary to the security of India and of Europe; and any attempt to subvert the one is a blow struck at the other—an unequivocal act of hostility to England.*" This act has now been perpetrated, and that point

in the progress of Russia, when resistance to her dangerous ambition becomes imperative, has surely been reached. 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.

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PROGRESS AND PRESENT POSITION

OF

RUSSIA IN THE EAST.

CHAPTER I.

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

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

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

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

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

small vessels built at Voronege, and floated down the Don to the sea, constituted the first naval effort of the Czar.

His journey into Europe opened to him other views; and teaching him the value of European as well as Oriental commerce, led him to desire an establishment on the Baltic. Even at this period he seems to have contemplated the acquisition of Livonia, to which Russia pretended to have some antiquated claim. His successes against the Swedes put him in possession of a port on that northern sea; and when the victory of Pultava had relieved him from all apprehension of the military power of Charles the Twelfth, and established the reputation of his own army, he turned towards Turkey, whose power was even then supposed to be tottering, whose Christian subjects were believed to be ripe for revolt, and on whose ruins it was not doubted that the conqueror of Charles could exalt his own power.

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

The disastrous campaign of 1711 dispelled for a time the delusion as to the weakness and speedy dissolution of the Ottoman empire, as well as the belief in the discontent of her Christian subjects;

and the treaty of *Falksen**, which stipulated the surrender of Taganrog and Asoph, annihilated the commercial projects of Peter on that sea. But stability of purpose was one of the elements of his power, and the intention to establish an Oriental commerce never deserted him. Neither his successes in the north, nor his defeat in Turkey, diverted or deterred him from pursuing the scheme. Having failed to turn one extremity of the Caucasus, he directed his attention to the other, and abandoned the sea of Asoph to occupy himself more intently on the Caspian. Such was his avidity to accomplish this favourite object, that all regard to faith and honour seemed to abandon him when a respect for either appeared to impede its execution. The man, who, when he was in the most perilous position, declared he would rather surrender to the Turks a large portion of his dominions than tarnish his honour by delivering up the rebel Cantemir to his master, was not induced to fulfil the stipulations of the treaty which saved him from destruction, till a threat of war and the intervention of foreign powers forced him at length, after nearly two years of evasion, to put the Porte in possession of Asoph and Taganrog.

In 1717 he sent Prince Alexander Bekevitch on an embassy to the Khan of Khiva; and providing

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

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

The following year he sent an embassy to Persia, the object of which was the improvement of his commercial relations with that country, and the establishment of a trade with India. An arrangement was entered into, by which the whole of the silk exported from Persia was to be sent to Russia; but the attempt to open a communication with India was unsuccessful, though, forty years before this time, a Russian agent had penetrated to the court of Aurungzebe: and in the early part of the reign of Peter, Russian traders were settled in India.

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

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

In Mahomedan countries, generally, the crown and the people have for the most part been allied to a certain extent against the local governors and the executive officers of the state. The sovereign trusts to the mass of the people for the means to check the ambition of the nobles; and the people look to the

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

Such was the state of Shah Sultan Hoossein's empire, which extended from Derbend to Kandahar. Turkey taking advantage of the weakness of Persia, had seized all her western provinces from the base of the Caucasus to the banks of the Passitigris, and occupied the country as far as Hamadan and Ardebil. As early as 1712 twenty thousand Lesguees had descended from the eastern extremity of the Caucasian mountains to ravage the plains of Sheerwan, and exact from its peaceful inhabitants an indemnification for the yearly donations with which the Shah had been in the habit of purchasing their forbearance, but of which the indigence of the sovereign or the corruption of his servants had for some time deprived them. These savage mountaineers laid waste the country with fire and sword, slaughtering indiscriminately all who opposed them. The inhabitants of Shamakhi, amongst whom were three hundred Russian subjects, were massacred; and Russian

property, amounting, it is pretended*, to four millions of silver roubles, became the booty of their murderers. The Afghans, a few years after these events, rose in the south-eastern extremity of the empire, and, led by Meer Weis, marched from Kandahar to besiege the Shah in Ispahan.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Having prepared a great armament at Astrachan, he published on the 15th of June, 1722, a manifesto, the terms of which are strangely contrasted with his real design. It is altogether a remarkable document—full of professions of attachment to the Shah whose territories he was about to seize, and whose inability to afford him redress against the Lesguees he acknowledges. He calls him his "old good friend, the Shah"—his "great friend and neighbour,"—his "dear friend:" promises to the subjects of Persia and Turkey security and protection if they afford no assistance to the Lesguees, and remain in their houses—but threatens them with plunder and death, fire and sword, if they desert their habitations; and profanely adds, "You, and you alone, will be to blame for this, and will have to answer for it at the second coming of the Lord our God." So

early did this nation begin to cloak its most questionable acts with appeals to Heaven.

In the course of the next month he set out on his expedition to Persia, accompanied by the Empress and an army of above fifty thousand men. Twenty-two thousand infantry, and three thousand sailors, trained to act on shore, crossed the Caspian in four hundred and forty-two vessels; the cavalry proceeded by land. The enterprise was not without some appearance of danger; the passes were narrow and easily defensible, "mais dans l'anarchie ou était la Perse on pouvait tout tenter*." An attack from a detached tribe of the Lesguees was easily repulsed, and the echoes of the Caucasian straits resounded for the first time the thunder of Russian cannon and the victorious shouts of her armies. Derbend was occupied without opposition, and the silver keys † of the town and citadel delivered to the Czar, who returned to Astrachan in October, having first established the siege of Bakoo. On his arrival in the Volga he sent a force to occupy the province of Gheelan, which produces the chief part of the silk of Persia: there his troops entrenched themselves, and successfully resisted all the attempts of the Persians

* Voltaire.

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

to expel them. "Pierre ne put alors," says his historian, "pousser plus loin ses conquetes*." In January, 1723, he entered Moscow in triumph, and gave, as was his wont, to the Vice-Czar an account of his expedition, and of the provinces he had conquered from his "dear friend the Shah."

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

The Shah had in the mean time sent a man named Ismael Bĕg on an embassy to the court of Russia,

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

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

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

tensive cessions, Peter engaged to march an army into Persia, to aid the Shah against the rebels who had dethroned his father.

It is obvious that Russia could establish no claim to the territory ceded on these conditions, unless she fulfilled them. Peter afforded no assistance to the Shah, and, by withholding that assistance, forfeited all right to the territory of which, according to the treaty, it was to be the price. But there are other circumstances which give to this whole transaction a character equally discreditable to the Persian ambassador and to the emperor.

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

That the Shah should have instructed his ambassador to cede to Russia the only portion of his kingdom that remained to him, is altogether incredible; and the question is put beyond all doubt by the fact, that he not only disavowed the treaty of Ismael Beg, but then, for the first time, perceiving the designs of his dangerous ally, sent troops to oppose the Russians, at a time when all his force was hardly sufficient to maintain the struggle with the Afghans. That Ismael Beg was induced to betray the trust reposed in him, there can, therefore, be no doubt; and that the treaty was void by the Shah's disavowal of the act of his ambassador, is unquestionable; yet Peter ever after continued to act as if it had been in full force. He not only maintained his position in Daghistan and Ghilan, but sent troops to occupy Sallian, the Delta of the Kur; and the first detachment having been cut off by the inhabitants of the island, a second was despatched with orders to fortify itself. Negotiations were opened with the Porte for the purpose of dividing the spoils of Persia; and Peter, founding his claims on the disavowed treaty of Ismael Beg, demanded that the frontiers of Turkey and Russia in Persia should be defined.

Before the termination of these negotiations Peter died in January, 1725.

In the following year, under the auspices of Catherine the First, the treaty with the Porte was concluded, by which, without reference to the rights of Persia—without the knowledge of her rulers*—

* M. de Voltaire, concluding, no doubt, from the circumstances

without her being in anywise a party to the transaction, the frontiers of the three kingdoms were accurately defined, in such a manner as to leave to Russia all the provinces to which she would have had a claim, had the treaty of Ismael Beg been ratified, and had she fulfilled the engagements she therein contracted.

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

of the case, that Persia, must have been a party to a treaty which fixed her limits, has assumed the fact that she was a party: but this is a mistake. The Persian government had no share in the transaction; and, as soon as he was informed of it, the Shah not only remonstrated against, but successfully opposed the execution of the treaty.

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

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

Having collected about him a body of military adventurers, and possessed himself of several strongholds, he was already master of a great part of Khorassan, when the fugitive Shah Tamasb was induced to accept his assistance and join his camp. After a short struggle for supremacy in the councils of the weak monarch, the influence of Nadir prevailed; and having put to death the Kajar chief, who was his only formidable rival, he found himself at liberty to pursue his own schemes without restraint or control. The presence of the Shah, in whose

name he acted, gave an air of legitimate authority to his proceedings, and secured to him the support of a great body of the people. Having subdued his native province, he advanced against the rebels and the foreign invaders of the kingdom, to retrieve the military character of his country and redeem her lost territory. With troops inferior in discipline, he defeated the Afghans in five well-contested battles; and following up every blow with an energy and perseverance almost unexampled in Asiatic warfare, drove them in one long campaign, protracted through a winter of intense severity, from one extremity of the kingdom to the other, a distance of above a thousand miles, and forced them to make a precipitate and disastrous retreat across the deserts to their own country. Then turning his arms against the Turks, by a succession of victories, interrupted by only one defeat, he expelled them from all their conquests in Persia.

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

mon boundary of these empires. Turkey therefore relinquished all claim to the sovereignty of Georgia, as well as to the other adjoining provinces, which were by this treaty restored to Persia.

The evacuation of the Persian territories occupied by the Russian troops was effected without the necessity of resorting to force, and was probably the result of a previous negotiation. The right of the sovereign of Persia to the whole of her ancient possessions was acknowledged, and Russia abandoned all claim to any portion of territory south of the Caucasus. Nadir was not only recognised as the rightful sovereign of Persia, including Georgia, Daghistan, and Shamachi, but his mediation in this capacity was accepted by Russia in her negotiations with the Porte, and contributed to the conclusion of the treaty of Belgrade in 1739. By this treaty the two Kabardas were declared independent, and Russia engaged to maintain no navy on the sea of Asoph.

Russia had thus failed in accomplishing any one of the objects for which she had sacrificed every pretension to honour and good faith. The defeat of her attempt on Khiva had shut her out from the countries to the east of the Caspian. The war which was waged in the intervening nations had rendered impracticable the intercourse with India, which had been the primary object of her ambition; and the licentiousness of her soldiers, the oppressions and corrupt conduct of her officers, their total disregard of the feelings and religious sentiments of the Persian people, and more than all, perhaps, the brutality of

their personal manners and habits, had stirred up the inhabitants of Ghilan and Salian to a resistance, which effectually deprived the nation of that commerce which it had hoped to render doubly advantageous by the appropriation of the countries that produced the article on which it chiefly depended. Silk ceased to be cultivated in the very districts which had hitherto supplied the Russian market, or the quantity was so small as to be quite inadequate to the ordinary demand. It had become a monopoly in the hands of the Russian officers, and the peasant no longer laboured to produce what he was forced to part with at an arbitrary price fixed by the purchaser. Accustomed to regard peasants as slaves, the Russians seem incapable of learning to govern free men.

The troops were wasted by sickness; and drawing their stores and principal supplies from the Volga, were maintained at a great expense, for which there was no return.

There was therefore no inducement to attempt the defence of a position, which the whole resources of Russia might have been found inadequate to maintain against the power of Nadir.

Even the maritime force of Russia on the Caspian was inferior to that of the Persian. Mr. Elton* and

* Mr. Elton, a man of great genius and enterprise, but of a fickle character and lax principles, was one of the persons employed by the English Company formed for the purpose of carrying on an Oriental commerce through Russia. The Empress Elizabeth granted to this company especial privileges, which were withdrawn, partly because of the jealousy of the Russians and

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

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

partly in consequence of the conduct of Elton. A full account of its proceedings was published by Mr. Jonas Hanway, its principle agent in Persia, and one of the most intelligent travellers who has visited that country.

CHAPTER II.

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

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

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

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

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

Partially interspersed with the Tcherkess, but for the most part forming distinct communities, were the Nogais and Kalmuks of Mongolian origin and

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

features, who had migrated from the east, while the banks of the southern Volga were not yet subject to Russia, and the Mongolian principalities of Kazan and Astrachan were still in existence.

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

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

Placed in the vicinity of a nation so powerful as Russia had become, and inhabiting a country which presented no natural barrier—no frontier but an imaginary line—where the flow of the rivers facilitated the stream of conquest, and no mountains arose to arrest its progress, that they should feel her influence was inevitable. The court of St. Petersburgh, by the share it took in the internal and family dissensions, to which pastoral people are so prone, and by supporting the weak against the strong, the unpopular against the more acceptable candidate for superiority in the tribe, gradually established an authority, sanctioned by the engagements which the rivals had successively incurred as the price of her assistance, too strong to be resisted, and from which they could escape only by an emigration into distant countries. This is a resource which, even to a

Nomade people, is generally ruinous. The weaker divisions of the tribe submitted to the protection of Russia, and by her aid became the stronger; but they found too late that they had been twining bonds for themselves; and though all of them, on various occasions, made gallant and even heroic attempts to emancipate themselves from the yoke to which they had unconsciously submitted, the power with which they had to contend was too strong, too vigilant, wily, and pertinacious, to let them elude her grasp. The Tcherkessians alone, finding security in the mountains, which overlooked or intersected their territories, successfully resisted the frequent efforts that were made to enslave them, and sometimes swearing allegiance to Russia, sometimes uniting with Turkey against her, preserved a wild independence.

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

The Kalmuks at a later period (1771), unable any longer to endure the oppressions and insults to which they were subjected, adopted the wonderful resolution of returning to the Chinese territories,

from which they had originally emigrated and exhibited the extraordinary spectacle of half a million of human beings fleeing from the tyranny of a European government, and fighting their way through hostile tribes, from the heart of Russia, to seek freedom and safety under the milder and more paternal rule of the celestial empire*.

In 1742, some devout ecclesiastics made to the Russian government a proposition to convert the pagan Ossetians or Ossetinians, a tribe of Caucasian mountaineers, to Christianity; and, as if the piety of the court required an additional stimulus, it was informed that they were "a people abounding in gold and silver," and "subject to no master." Missionaries were accordingly sent (1745) amongst them, who, however slow may have been their progress in converting them to Christianity, were at least successful in inducing a large division of the tribe to declare themselves subjects of Russia. This connexion with the Ossetians facilitated the intercourse with Georgia, which had hitherto been irregular and uncertain, and paved the way to the ultimate subjugation of that portion of the Persian empire.

Georgia had for several generations been depen-

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

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

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

After the death of Nadir, Persia continued for many years to be torn by contending factions; and the Wallees of Georgia, harassed by frequent attacks from the Lesguees and other mountaineers

whom they were unable to control, made a simultaneous application (1752) to Russia for assistance, which, if not afforded, was at least promised. This may be considered the first step towards the separation of Georgia from Persia; for Russia from this time forward pressed with persevering activity her intercourse with these Persian dependencies.

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

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

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

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

This war, disastrous to the Turks, was terminated by the treaty of Kuchuk Kainardgi (1774), by which Russia secured the free navigation of the Euxine, and all the Ottoman seas, with the passage of the Dardanelles, on condition that she should not have more than one ship of war in the seas of Constantinople,—acquired the long-coveted Asoph and

Taganrog, with Kerch and Kinburn,—advanced her frontier to the Bogue,—prepared the way for the subjugation of the Krimea by establishing its independence, and obtained the sovereignty of the two Kabardas.

These advantages, however great, were nevertheless not such as she had proposed to herself, or her successes might apparently have enabled her to exact; but many circumstances combined to render a termination of the war necessary to Russia. Her finances began to fail—pestilence was depopulating her provinces, her camps, and her fleet—the migration of the Kalmuks had left an unoccupied waste where the country had formerly been flourishing, a famine prevailed in some of the provinces; and more than all, a spirit of revolt had manifested itself, which put in peril the existence of the empire. Kazan, Astrachan, and Orenbourg were in rebellion; and the ecclesiastics and fanatics of Russia, favouring the movement, had produced a general feeling of discontent amongst the lower classes, which the frequent forcible levies of recruits for the army in Turkey had aggravated, and the successes of the rebel impostor Pugacheff* for some time threatened to direct against the government with formidable effect.

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

It was no moderation that limited the demands of Russia, but the necessities of her own position; and she had no sooner overcome the internal embarrassments which impeded for a time the gratification of her ambition, than she proceeded without even assigning a pretext, to appropriate, at the hazard of another war, all and more than all the advantages that she had appeared to relinquish.

The shock which Turkey had received, the destruction of the power of the Krimean Khans, and the general ascendancy of Russia on that frontier, stifled the hopes of successful resistance which the tribes of the Terik, Kuban, Kabarda, and the Caucasus, had hitherto entertained. Russia, ever on the watch to extend her limits and her power, seized the moment of their depression to strengthen herself amongst them; and two years after (1776) the conclusion of the war, had erected lines, including nearly thirty fortresses, from the Black Sea to the Caspian. These lines, and the increased number of the troops that occupied them, kept the hostile Caucasians in check; and the frequent revolts of every tribe without exception that had submitted to the sovereignty or acknowledged the protection of Russia, while they attested the evils of her system, afforded pretexts for enforcing it with greater rigour.

A peaceful expedition was sent into the Caucasus (1781), to communicate with the mountaineers, to explore the roads, construct maps, and prepare the way for further advances to the south. A treaty of

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

"The fleet maintained in the Caspian by Catharine," says a writer who had excellent sources of information, "was constructed of oaks from Kazan; and consisted of three frigates, five corvettes, and a bomb-boat. These vessels were continually cruising along the coasts of Persia, and burnt all the ships, and even all the floats of timber* which they happened to meet. Their commanders had, besides,

* So jealous was Russia lest the Persians should have ships on the Caspian, that when the Governor of Ghilan, in 1774, built three vessels at Anzelee, the Russian government immediately pro-

positive orders to sow discord between the several khans, and always to support the weaker against the more strong: a method which the Empress had found too successful, both in Poland and in the Krimea, to admit of her neglecting it in behalf of the Persians.

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

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

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

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

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

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

"After having merrily spent the day, and testified great friendship for the Russians, the Khan engaged them in return to come and take a dinner at one of

his country seats among the mountains. Thither they repaired the succeeding day; but they had no sooner entered his house, than Aga-Mahmed caused them to be put in irons, at the same time threatening Voinovitch to have his head cut off, and to serve all his officers in the same manner, unless the fortress was immediately razed to the ground.

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

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

* Hadayut Khan.

residing at Sinsili*, they betrayed Ghedahed-khan, and delivered him to Aga-Mahmed, who caused him to be beheaded†, and became once more the quiet possessor of Ghilan.

"In the meantime, the Russians affected publicly to take no part in these quarrels. Some time after the death of Ghedahed-khan, Prince Potemkin commissioned one of his officers to go and compliment Aga-Mahmed, who was then at Riatsch‡, the capital of the Ghilan: recommending him at the same time to study the character of the Khan, and to sound his intentions with regard to Russia. The officer repaired to Riatsch, and easily obtained an audience of Aga-Mahmed; but, on conversing with him, he perceived him to look gloomy and thoughtful, which caused him to suspect some sinister design. Upon this, he artfully observed, that although he was in the service of Russia, he was born an Englishman, and that his nation was strongly attached to the Persians, with whom it carried on an extensive commerce in the gulph of Bassora. Suddenly the Khan assumed a smiling air, spoke to the envoy in a gentle tone, and dismissed him with presents §.

* Anzelee.

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

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

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

CHAPTER III.

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

The Krimea had been declared independent, but Russia had assumed the protection of the sovereignty she had created or renewed; and surrounding the Khan with her creatures, exercised a real authority over the nation. The minor chiefs and the people clung to the connexion with Turkey more eagerly as their acquaintance with the Russians increased.

But the Empress, not content with the indirect control she had acquired, was determined to possess the country. Pursuing the same course which had been found so successful in Poland, she fomented internal dissensions; and profiting by the experience of that unhappy kingdom, declared the sovereignty of the Krimea to be elective*.

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

Potemkin covered the line of the Caucasus with troops—Suvaroff conducted an army to the Kuban,

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

and overran that country—the whole south-western frontier of Russia was teeming with her soldiers—the banks of the Danube swarmed with the armies of the Emperor, and its stream was covered with his convoys. But the Empress seemed still to desire some pretext for the occupation of the Krimea; a revolution was accomplished; and the Khan, who was expelled, fled to Russia for protection. Still there was no contest in the peninsula, and a new expedient was resorted to. The Tartars were called upon to elect a monarch. The usurper resigned his pretensions, and the assembled nation unanimously chose Schaghin Geray in the room of their former chief. But it was the possession, not the tranquillity of the Krimea, that Russia desired; and fearing the resistance of the people, she sought and found a pretext for marching an army into the country without opposition. A Turkish Pasha had occupied the Island of Taman on the opposite side of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, and the Russians succeeded in persuading Schaghin Geray to demand its evacuation. The fierce Turk put the messenger to death, and Russia called loudly for vengeance. The Khan, irritated by this barbarous insult, acceded to the proposal of his friends to entrust to them the punishment of the Pasha; and a Russian army entered the Krimea, for the purpose of driving the Ottomans from the opposite island; but when it had penetrated to the coast it suddenly fell back, occupied the whole peninsula, seized by stratagem or force

all the strong-holds, and at the point of the bayonet forced the Imams and the people to take the oath of allegiance to the Empress. Specious promises of advantage were held out to all, but the Tartars nevertheless prepared to resist; and Field-marshal Potemkin, informed of their intentions, ordered the principal persons concerned to be put to death. The officer to whom his command was first addressed indignantly refused to execute it; but General Paul Potemkin, a relation of the field-marshal, was a more obsequious instrument; and "thirty thousand Tartars, of either sex and every age, were slaughtered in cold blood." Thus, in the midst of peace, did Russia win the Krimea. The Khan* received in return for his kingdom a pension and a property in Russia, and retired to Moscow.

Meanwhile the negotiations with Georgia, Immeretia, and Mingrelia had been hastened to a success-

* The fate of Schaghin Geray was tragical. Wearied and disgusted with his residence in Russia, and despising himself, the Empress occasionally made a show of treating him with consideration: and at one time sent him the decoration of a Russian order of knighthood. He could not, he said, being a Mahomedan, wear the cross. It was converted into a crescent. He declined wearing what was no longer an order, but a trinket tied to a ribbon. At length he received permission to leave Russia, where he had latterly lingered in obscurity and poverty, and went into Turkey. After residing or some time in Moldavia, dejected and unhappy, he proceeded to Constantinople, and was ordered to retire to Rhodes. He was there strangled in the house of the French consul, where he had sought an asylum: but whether by the spontaneous act of a fanatical rabble, or by order of the Porte, has not been ascertained.

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

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

The Porte, incensed and alarmed by the usurpations of Russia, and the accumulation of troops on her whole European frontier, was in no condition to resent the infraction of the treaty of Kainardgi. It prepared for war, but determined to negotiate; and, by the mediation of France, a compromise was effected, and a convention signed (1784) at Constantinople, by which the dominion of Russia over the Krimea, the Isle of Taman, and a great part of the Kuban, was recognised. All these territories

* 24th July, 1783.

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

had already been subdued and occupied by the troops of the Empress, who had entered them without provocation. Even in the manifesto* which she published on annexing the Krimea to the Russian empire, the principal pretexts assigned are, her desire to preserve its tranquillity, and to improve the condition of the people; her right to avail herself of the power which she possessed, but had not used at the close of the last war, to retain it as a conquest, and the justice of her claim to retain it as an indemnity for the expenses she had incurred in subduing it.

These differences with the Porte were no sooner amicably adjusted, than the Empress again turned her attention to Georgia. Fully appreciating the importance of having secured, by negotiation, a passage through a barrier which she might in vain have attempted to force, she lost no time in opening a passage for her troops to the dependencies beyond the Caucasus, which she had recently acquired. General Paul Potemkin carried to Tiflis (1785) the ratification of the treaty with Heraclius, and was directed to construct a causeway across the mountains, which was speedily completed. A pension of sixty thousand silver roubles (about 10,000*l.*) was bestowed on the King of Khartli, as he was styled, to maintain an army, and to defray such expenses as he might be called upon to make *under the directions of the Russian commandant.*

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

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

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

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

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

After a lapse of three years (1787), she was again in arms. On this occasion, however, Turkey was the first to declare war. The triumphal journey of the Empress to the Krimea—the movements of troops which accompanied it—the conferences with the King of Poland, and more than all, the secret communications with the Emperor of Germany, which were understood to have for their object the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, the appropriation of their territories, and the establishment of a Greek empire under the Grand Duke Constantine, who had avowedly been educated expressly with this view, though no treaty was actually infringed by these proceedings, and it might not then have been possible to substantiate the truth of the presumed inten-

tion, still appeared to the Porte, in conjunction with the previous policy of Russia, to threaten its very existence. The consuls and agents of the Empress had tampered with the subjects of the Porte in all its dependencies—they had connected themselves with the disaffected in Wallachia and Moldavia, and had even procured the escape of a contumacious Vaivode of the former province—they had prepared the Greeks for revolt, and proposed to the Mamelukes of Egypt to guarantee to each his possessions under the protection of Russia. Joseph the Second had hastened from Vienna to meet the Empress at Kherson, and appeared disposed to accede to all her views.

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

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

The extent of the preparations that Russia had made in impatient anticipation of the hostilities which had at length spread joy and exultation at St. Petersburgh—the supposed success of her endeavours to represent the contest in which she was

engaged as a crusade against the enemies of the Christian faith—the indifference with which Europe had submitted to the partition of Poland—the readiness with which the Emperor was disposed to forward her objects, and the effective resistance which eighty thousand Austrians were capable of rendering—the disturbances which the agents of Russia had excited in the dependencies of Turkey on every side, and the ardour and confidence with which her armies engaged in the war, seemed almost to justify the exalted hopes of Catharine.

But the jealousy of the other powers of Europe had been roused; Sweden concluded a treaty with Turkey, and attacked Russia; Great Britain threw various obstacles in the way of the Russian naval arrangements, and favoured the Porte; France regarded the alliance of Austria and Russia with apprehension, and trembled for her commerce in the Levant; Prussia maintained a sullen silence for a time, and then marched an army into Poland, where her influence had greatly increased; and a great naval armament was fitted out in England, and destined for the Baltic*. The Turks, though frequently defeated, had not lost courage. At length Prussia concluded a treaty with the Porte, and the convention of Reichenbach with the Emperor. Austria withdrew from the contest, and the Polish

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

provinces of Russia were in danger. Peace became necessary to Catharine, and too proud to sue for it herself, the preliminaries were arranged with the courts of London, Berlin, and the Hague, by Bernsdorf, the Danish minister. A definitive treaty was concluded at Yassy (1792), by which Russia advanced her frontier to the Dniester, and thus opened the Black Sea to her Polish provinces. The Porte guaranteed to her the kingdoms of Georgia and the adjacent countries, promised that it would strive to do the same in the Caucasus, confirmed the ancient rights and privileges of the principal towns of Wallachia and Moldavia, and declared the stipulations of previous treaties to be in force. Thus had the firm attitude assumed by England and Prussia, and their preparations for war, not only obliged Austria to desist from prosecuting her views on Turkey, but forced the Empress of Russia to abandon the fruits of a contest that had cost her two hundred thousand men, and her ally half that number. A just appreciation of their own position, and an accurate knowledge of the affairs with which they had to deal, would have led them to exact more rigorous terms from Russia, who could not have resisted a determination on their part to adhere to their original proposition, which was a return to the state established by the treaty of Kainardji*. Sweden alone had taken up arms in behalf of Turkey; but

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

her power was neutralized, after a few efforts, by the discontents which divided her population, and connected a large part of her most influential nobles with Russia. Gustavus had found it necessary to abandon Turkey, and to conclude a separate peace with the Empress, nearly two years before the termination of the war in which the Porte was engaged. The opposition of France had yielded to the address of Potemkin. Spain had recovered from her alarm, lest Russia should seize an island in the Mediterranean, and seemed to regard with indifference her establishment on the Bosphorus, if indifference may be presumed from her taking no steps to prevent it. The preservation of Turkey was ultimately due to her own courage in adversity, and to the final determination of England and Prussia to interfere in her behalf. Their intentions were no sooner known than the contest was decided.

It was on this occasion that the idea of disturbing the British empire in India was first suggested to the cabinet of St. Petersburgh, as a check on the aggressive power which the maritime superiority of England enabled her to exert against Russia. The Prince Nassau Siegen presented to Catharine a project for marching an army through Bokhara and Cashmere to Bengal, to drive the English out of India. The plan had been drawn up by a Frenchman, and the first step was to be a manifesto, declaring the intention of the Empress to re-establish the Great Mogul on the throne of India. This it was supposed would secure the concurrence of inter-

mediate states, and attract to the standard of Russia all the discontented spirits in Hindostan. The scheme, though derided by Potemkin, was favourably received by the Empress, and has never been forgotten in Russia.

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

the historical sketch which it is the object of these observations to present in a connected form, it is necessary briefly to point out the most prominent features of the relations between Russia and Turkey since the reign of Catherine.

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

CHAPTER IV.

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

tained 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 unauthorized acts of deputed authorities, nor betrayed into a position from which she could not recede. Every step in advance has been the deliberate act of her government—the mature result of long preparation. For a hundred years have her successive sovereigns *per fas et nefas* steadily pursued the same object, varying the means, but never relinquishing the purpose.

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

In 1795 he assembled a considerable army at Tehran, and moving rapidly into Georgia, defeated Heraclius near Teflis, and entered that city before General Goodovich, who commanded the Russian

troops in the line of the Caucasus, could arrive to oppose him*.

His desire to intimidate the Georgians, by making a fearful example of their capital, induced him to abandon it to the rapine of his soldiers; while the religious enthusiasm he had excited in his army, and the natural ferocity of his troops, prepared them to take ample advantage of the license he had given.

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

Aga-Mahommed Khan was at this time employed in Khorassan, and on hearing of Zuboff's successes, hastily returned to oppose him; but before he could

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

reach the scene of action, the Russians had already abandoned almost all their conquests*.

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

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

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

The short reign of Goorgeen was disturbed by the rebellion of his brother Alexander, who, with an army of Lesguees, endeavoured to possess himself of

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

the kingdom. With the aid of the Russians he was, however, defeated and forced to fly; but the mountaineers continued their depredations from time to time, and Alexander repeated his attempts, till at length, after having wandered long a fugitive in the Caucasus, and encountered a series of romantic adventures, he effected his escape through Turkey into Persia.

With a view, as was said, to compose the differences which had arisen in the kingdom, the Emperor Paul (1800) published an ucase, incorporating* Georgia with the Russian Empire. Catherine had guaranteed the crown of Georgia to Heraclius and his heirs for ever; but that was an act of the Empress which an ucase of the Emperor sufficed to annul. In the following year Goorgeen, who unhappily for himself had been born with the proud spirit of a Georgian Prince, degraded in the sight of his countrymen by the indignity with which he was treated, became an object of contempt or pity to every Georgian; and having vainly sought to escape in dissipation from the sorrows which he had not strength of mind enough to endure, despairing, and broken-hearted, died at Tiflis†; and about the same time Paul was put to death at St. Petersburgh.

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

† The widow of Goorgeen, a haughty woman, of a fierce and masculine spirit, having made her presence at Tiflis disagreeable to the Russian government, was ordered to be sent to St. Peters-

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

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

burgh. She refused to comply; and General Lasaraf having been sent to enforce obedience, and having it is said seized her for the purpose of dragging her from her house, she drew a dagger and stabbed him.

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

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

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

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

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

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

and the power and influence she exercised in Europe remained unappreciated.

The Shah finding himself unable to cope with Russia addressed a letter to Napoleon, then (1805) in the zenith of his glory, desiring to form an alliance with France. So little at that time was Persia known in Europe, that the Court of Paris was even ignorant whether the person who had addressed these letters was entitled to the rank he assumed, and M. Jaubert was sent to Tehran to ascertain the condition of the country and the quality of the individual. On his return, a person named Mirza Reza, a man of no note, but the only individual of education and intelligence who could be induced to undertake the journey, was deputed by the Persian government on a mission to Napoleon, whom he accompanied to Tilsit, and with whom he concluded a treaty which was ratified at Fénkenstein in May, 1807.

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

The possessions of Great Britain in India had become so important, that it was believed her power in Europe might be affected by an attack on her eastern dominions; and Napoleon therefore turning his attention to Asia, gladly seized the opportunity afforded him to establish a connexion with Persia, which he justly considered a necessary preliminary

step to any designs he might entertain against India. Of such consequence did this object appear to him, and to those with whom he consulted, that the embassy to the East was at one time destined for the ablest and most distinguished of his brothers*; but ultimately General Gardanne was entrusted with the embassy to the Court of the Shah, and it is but justice to him and to the gentlemen who accompanied him, to say, that in circumstances of great embarrassment and difficulty, they extorted the respect even of those who then were their enemies.

The failure of the application which had been made to India for assistance, the fame of Napoleon, the readiness with which he had entered on the alliance, and the promises he made, combined to secure to the General a distinguished reception. Officers who had accompanied the embassy for that purpose were employed to introduce, for the first time, European discipline into the Persian army. French engineers built the first regular fortifications that had ever been raised in Persia, and there, as everywhere else, displayed the military genius, and the personal intelligence and zeal for which the French nation has in all times been distinguished.

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

* Lucien Bonaparte.

the hands of him who was most worthy to possess them.

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

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

Sir John Malcolm, whose reputation had been established by his previous mission, was selected by the Government of India to retrieve the position which had been lost at the Court of Tehran; but such was the influence which the French embassy had acquired, that with all the high talents and profuse liberality which distinguished the personal character of Sir John Malcolm, and all the regard

which he had previously conciliated from the Shah and the nation, he was unable to procure access to the Court; and after exhausting every diplomatic means of success, he returned to India for the purpose of collecting an army to enforce the views of his Government.

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

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

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

who had been seen in London for nearly two centuries*.

On the return of Sir Harford Jones (1811), Sir Gore Ousely proceeded to Persia with the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary from the King of England. A definitive treaty was concluded on the basis of the preliminary engagements, but on terms more advantageous to Persia. British officers had replaced the French in the armies of the Shah, and taught them to combat, on several occasions with success, the battalions of the Czar. In the meantime the memorable war between France and Russia, which terminated in the signal discomfiture of Napoleon, had commenced; and the amicable relations, which had been established between Great Britain and Russia in consequence of these two countries finding themselves engaged as allies in the deliverance of Europe, led the British ambassador in Persia to promote an arrangement of the differences between the Courts of Tehran and St. Petersburgh. The formal mediation of England was rejected by Russia; but the good offices of the ambassador were employed, and a treaty of peace was at length (1814) concluded at Goolistan in Karabaugh, by which Persia ceded to Russia all her acquisitions south of the Caucasus, and engaged to maintain no navy on the Caspian.

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

The basis on which this treaty was negotiated, was that each party should retain the territory of which it was in possession when hostilities ceased; and Russia, by this arrangement, from her having a garrison in Lankeran, would have become entitled to a considerable portion of the khanat or lordship of Talish. But as this district bordered on Gheelan, which the Russians had three times attacked, twice occupied, and always evinced an extreme anxiety to possess, the Persian Plenipotentiary declined to accept the basis unless Talish should be excluded. General Ritescheff, then Governor General and Commander in Chief in Georgia, and Plenipotentiary, on this occasion objected, that his instructions made the adoption of that basis a *sine quâ non*, but solemnly pledged himself, if the Persian ambassador would accept it, to procure from his Court the restitution of Talish as an act of grace from the Emperor; and deliberately held out the hope that other provinces also would be restored. The British ambassador, cognizant of these transactions, and satisfied of the sincerity of Ritescheff, felt himself justified in confirming the confidence of the Persians, and undertaking that the good offices of his Government should be exerted at the Court of St. Petersburgh to procure an adjustment of the stipulation respecting the territory, which might fulfil not only the positive promises of General Ritescheff, but the larger hopes he had held out.

The Persian government, accustomed to place the most implicit reliance on the honour of Europeans

and not ignorant of the liberal assistance which England had extended to Russia in the hour of her humiliation and distress, never for a moment doubted either the faith of Ritescheff or the gratitude of Alexander.

The Ambassador who was sent to St. Petersburgh with the ratified treaty was instructed to arrange with the Russian government the evacuation of Talish, and to avail himself of the good offices of the British ambassador at that court in his negotiations for the retrocession of the other portions of territory ceded by the treaty, for which the Russian plenipotentiary had induced the Shah and his ministers to hope. Lord Cathcart, then at the court of Russia, was authorized by his government to aid the negotiation; but all his good offices, urged by the whole weight of his public and personal influence, and all the solicitations of the Persian embassy, *were unable to procure from the Emperor the relinquishment of one foot of ground;* and the final answer was, that General Yermoloff, then appointed ambassador to Persia, and Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in Georgia, would discuss the matter with the Persian ministers on his arrival at Tehran. When General Yermoloff arrived in Persia, he would restore nothing; and thus all the acquisitions of Russia remained in her possession.

CHAPTER V.

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

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

Shah to conciliate by forbearance and liberality the men on whose fidelity he chiefly depended for the protection of his dominions.

Russia largely profited by this state of things. In the confusion which followed the death of Nadir Shah, the Khans of the northern provinces had been left undisturbed, and enjoyed an actual independence. When Aga Mahommed Khan had established his authority in the other portions of the kingdom, he turned his attention to Georgia and the adjoining country, and systematically proceeded to reduce them to obedience. The interference of Russia in the affairs of Georgia had raised up a formidable opponent to the Shah, and many of the chiefs, hoping to secure their independence by inviting her to support them against the power they then most feared, vainly imagined that they could rid themselves of the Russians when they should have succeeded by their means in emancipating themselves from the control of Persia. Like all Asiatics, they readily incurred every hazard of a distant evil, to rid themselves of a present annoyance, and they shared the fate of almost all people who seek foreign aid against a domestic enemy. They saw too late the error they had committed, and deprived, by the very independence they had coveted, of every bond of union or mutual confidence, instead of presenting a combined resistance, and a compact mass of opposition, they fell one by one an easy and almost unresisting prey to the power, whose views and means of coercion they had so inaccurately esti-

mated, and from whose bonds they could never again hope to escape.

These chiefs having submitted, were for some time treated with consideration by their new superiors. They retained as much of their hereditary influence and authority as was likely to prove beneficial to the government, or even perhaps to their followers; they enjoyed a revenue sufficient to maintain them respectably, if not splendidly, and Russian military rank, and decorations of Christian orders were liberally bestowed upon them. But after the new government was firmly established the system gradually changed—they were now subjected to the mortification of finding their power undermined by the Russian officers, who offended their dignity, and not unfrequently insulted their persons—intrigues were resorted to, and plots concerted, perhaps without the knowledge of the government, to drive some to rebellion, and induce others to fly from the punishments denounced against them for imaginary crimes*, till at length *all* the Mahommedan chiefs

* The history of one of these transactions will serve as a specimen. "Mehdee Koolee Khan, hereditary chief of Karabaugh, retained the possessions of his father; and as the only means of securing to himself the quiet enjoyment of them during his life, he adopted General Madatoff (the Russian commander of the province), and declared him to be his heir, to the prejudice of his brother and other relations; but the Khan continued to live longer than, from his irregular habits and bad constitution, had been anticipated, and a plot was accordingly devised for getting rid of him. A feud had for some time existed between Mehdee Koolee Khan and Jaffer Koolee Khan, another noble of Karabaugh. The latter, while travelling at night, was fired upon by some men concealed in a thicket by the road-side, and

were driven from their possessions to seek shelter in Persia.

Still the peasantry had perhaps lost little by the change; and under a more just and judicious government, the absence of the chiefs might have been made productive of benefit to the lower classes; even the difference of religious belief, prejudice, and observance, might have been overlooked in the enjoyment of superior worldly advantages. But Russia, with all her boasted religious toleration, is a bigoted superior, and with all her pretensions to moderation in her government, is a most harsh mistress. Her civil servants, of the lower grades at least, are generally corrupt and ignorant, because they are drawn from classes of society in which they are not likely to acquire enlightened views or elevated principles—their authorised emoluments are slender, their power to do evil is often great, and the temptations too often irresistible. The civil service is considered degrading, and all respect is reserved for the military. On the other hand, the officers in the army of Georgia, excepting those of the higher ranks, are for the most part persons of mean birth and no education—for to serve in that army is considered a punishment to men of any pretensions—

wounded in the hand. Mehdee Koolee Khan was charged with an attempt to make away with Jaffer Koolee; and though he protested his innocence, and offered his aid in apprehending the ruffians, his mind, naturally weak, was so successfully worked upon by his *disinterested* heir, that *by his advice* he fled into Persia. Circumstances have since occurred, which seem fully to establish Mehdee Koolee Khan's innocence."

and they are proportionally obdurate, insolent, and overbearing. With subordinate officers of so unpromising a character, what government can be popular or well administered? what people, under a government administered by such agents, can be secure or contented?

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

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

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

females in the frippery of Moscow milliners, and have them taught to waltz with the Russian officers.

The defects in the civil administration might possibly, however, have been tolerated, and the rising generation, knowing no better times, and goaded by no recollections of past splendour or exhausted influence, might have grown up in habitual submission to the authority which had been offensive to their fathers, but there was another evil of greater magnitude, or which at least was more galling. In most of the provinces the Mahommedans had been the rulers and the Christians their subjects. When the power of Russia was consolidated, the Christians naturally became the favoured people, and domineered over their former masters with senseless insolence, scoffed at their religious rites, and were even known to interrupt their most sacred ceremonies. The Musselman saw a mosque converted into a stable and another into a tavern, and was taunted by the Armenians with the premeditated insult they had offered to his faith.

"The moollahs had lost much of their importance, and with it their revenues had declined. The form of government was opposed to their interests, and they became opposed to the government. No effective measures were adopted to soothe or to restrain them, and, as the only means they possessed of recovering their power or preserving what remained to them, they endeavoured to rekindle religious feelings in their flocks. In doing so, it was impossible to avoid casting some degree of odium on the government, which they considered infidel, and consc-

quently infamous. The shame of submitting to the yoke of unbelieving foreigners became a favourite theme for declamation. Every outrage, and even every incidental disregard of Mahommedan feeling or prejudice, was represented to be a part of a systematic attack on their faith, and there is reason to believe that the conduct of the Russian officers, and of the troops under their command, nay, even of the government itself, was not always well calculated to controvert such an interpretation of their designs. The pilgrims from those countries who resorted to the tombs at Kerbelaee and Nujjif carried thither exaggerated accounts of the evils and dangers to which the disciples of *Islam* were exposed under the Russian yoke, and roused the fears of the spiritual chief of the *Sheeahs*. The almost total extirpation of Mahommedanism from the Crimea became a familiar illustration of their fears, and an evidence that they were well founded."

While this was the state of the provinces south of the Caucasus, war was from time to time kindled in the mountains, and every war was to the Mahommedan mountaineers a religious contest. Hostilities were carried on by both parties with unmitigated barbarity. If a Russian soldier wandered from his lines he was assassinated and his body mangled or mutilated—small parties were overwhelmed and cut to pieces. The Russian General*, hoping to appal the insurgents, retaliated by the indiscriminate slaughter of every man, woman, and child in the

villages whose inhabitants were suspected of the crime. Religious enthusiasts, who had preached "war in the name of the faith," when taken prisoners, were cut open or hung up by the feet and left to die. But these barbarities inflamed instead of quenching the spirit of resistance in the mountaineers, while they excited the disgust of all classes and the sympathy of the whole body of Mahommedans. Individuals devoted themselves to certain destruction if they could but revenge their slaughtered brethren, and the Russian general, Lessanowitch, was assassinated, with several officers of his staff, in the midst of his guards, by a devotee from the mountains, who, having effected his purpose, seemed to glory in the honour of martyrdom. The Russian parties, on penetrating into the mountains, found themselves successfully opposed in the defiles even by the women of the Chechenses, and the fortified posts on the line of the Caucasus were occasionally surprised and their garrisons destroyed by that tribe or the Kabardan Circassians. The road from Stavaropol to Teflis, the principal line of communication, was not passable without artillery, and that from Bakoo to Kizlar open only to an army. The borders of the Black Sea, from the frontiers of Mingrelia to the Cimmerian Bosphorus, were in revolt, and the western Circassians had never laid down their arms. Kizlar, at the mouth of the Terik, was sacked by the Sesguis, and the vineyards of Kakhetia, on the southern face of the Caucasus, were not secure from their depredations. Such, twenty-five

years after the incorporation of Georgia with that empire, was the success of the Russian system in "composing the differences" which distracted and devastated the Caucasus and the neighbouring provinces.

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

These disputes gave rise to angry discussions, conducted on the one side with the bitterness of wounded pride, and on the other with the insolence of conscious power. Various lines of frontier were successively proposed by one party, and rejected by the other. Commissioners met and parted, without having advanced one step towards the adjustment of the points in dispute; and agents were sent by the Prince Royal to Teflis, and instructions transmitted to the Russian chargé d'affaires at Tabreez, without any progress being made towards the accomplishment of this object.

"At length all appeared to be arranged, and a proposal made by the Russian chargé d'affaires was

accepted by the Prince Royal, who was charged with the affairs of the frontier. But the Russian agent had exceeded his instructions, and General Yermoloff refused to ratify the engagements which M. Mozarovich had contracted.

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

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

"One of these portions of land was an uninhabited strip called Gokcheh, which borders on the lake of Gokcheh or Sevan, and which had been in the undisputed possession of Persia ever since the conclusion of the peace. Russian piquets had been placed there some years before, to prevent the desertion of the wandering tribes who pastured their flocks in summer in its vicinity, and in winter had been regularly withdrawn. To the remonstrance of the Prince Royal against the military occupation of this part of

the Persian territory, General Yermoloff had replied by admitting the justice of the Prince's remarks, but excused himself on the plea that the measure he had adopted was mutually advantageous; and concluded, by offering to withdraw the detachment, if his Royal Highness should continue to think it necessary.

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

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

"These lands of Kapan had been, from the conclusion of the peace, in the possession of Persia; but within a few years a claim, supported by some weighty arguments, had been set up by Russia, and it remained one of those points which it would have been the duty of commissioners to decide upon. The

claims of Persia were at least as well supported as those of Russia; and some of the Russian official maps had marked Kapan as belonging to Persia. It was therefore an obvious injustice to seize an undisputed possession of Persia, and demand as the price of its evacuation, the abandonment of claims, which were probably just, to another portion of territory.

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

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

"The court of Tehran had begun to believe that Russia was firm in her purpose to act with a total disregard to justice, and to consider only her own convenience and advantage in the settlement of the frontier. All its recent representations had been treated with neglect, or replied to in an arrogant and insulting tone by the government of Georgia. Opprobrious terms had been applied to the Prince

Royal, in letters to his servants, and everything seemed to indicate a determination on the part of General Yermoloff, if not of the Emperor, to drive Persia to extremity. At the same time it was whispered that the tranquillity of the Russian empire had been disturbed; that a civil war was carried on in St. Petersburgh; and that the whole tribes of the Caucasus had risen in a mass to assert their independence.

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

"In the midst of this ferment, Prince Menzikoff arrived in the royal camp. He was treated with

honour, and even with distinction, and a calm and temperate negotiation was opened, with a sincere desire on the part of the Shah to see it terminate in an amicable adjustment of all the matters in dispute. Sanguine hopes were entertained that every thing would be satisfactorily arranged; and if there were some who for private ends wished to hurry Persia into a war, there were many of the most influential of her councillors who anxiously desired to avoid it. The King himself was of this number; and though he had been induced to give a solemn pledge to the Moollahs, that if Gokcheh was not restored, he would agree to make war upon Russia, because he would then be justified in doing so, still this pledge, which had been exacted from him by the influence of the Moollahs, on his inability to withstand their demands, was given under a moral conviction that the envoy of the Emperor would rather relinquish a worthless spot to which his Government had no just claim, than allow the dispute to be decided by the sword.

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

fication of the unfortunate unratified treaty of Futteh Allee Khan.

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

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

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

Yet if the Persian armies had been led by a skilful general, and if even an ordinary share of energy had been put forth by the government during the latter

years of the war, when Russia was struggling for her existence with the armies of France in the heart of her dominions, it cannot be doubted that Persia might have redeemed some of her original possessions. But the Prince Royal, who commanded in the field, was a very young man; and a total want of combination in the councils of Persia, or efficient energy in her proceedings, was the necessary consequence of the struggles for personal aggrandizement which were unceasingly carried on by the numerous princes and the members of her government. This opportunity was lost; and when Russia had risen, emboldened by her successful opposition to the most powerful enemy the world could have sent to invade her, it became necessary for the Shah, who was now maintaining the struggle alone, to accede to any terms which she might be induced to grant him.

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

Russia seemed to have adopted this opinion, and to have made it her policy to push herself by imperceptible advances into the exercise of an habitual influence over the councils of the Prince Royal, trusting that her aid might be necessary to establish

him on the throne; and that in this event she would be left in the uncontrolled exercise of an absolute authority in his government. But the harsh, intemperate, and unjust conduct of the government of Georgia to that province and to Persia, had driven both to desperation, and Russia owed it to her character for justice and moderation (if she desired to establish such a character), to investigate calmly and impartially the occurrences on her southern frontier, and if she found them unworthy, to discountenance and disavow them. On the contrary, however, all redress was denied, and when the Emperor was appealed to, he had no ear for complaints. His envoy arrived, and declared that he had no instructions on the most important point at issue between them, and which had been a subject of angry altercation for above a year. The distant representatives of a government, it is true, are almost always more jealous and intemperate than the government itself; and, entering into discussions with all the warmth and virulence of personal feelings, and with all the pride of power, they are continually goading and harassing the weaker neighbours with whom they may have occasion to communicate. But here the injustice was so obvious, the aggression so palpable, the negotiations had endured so long, and the representations of the suffering party had been so urgent, that it is impossible to suppose the Imperial government was ignorant of the facts; and if it was not ignorant, it cannot be acquitted of participation in the hostile views of the Governor General of Georgia.

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

by humbling beforehand the only Asiatic power whose common interests and common dangers might have led it to make common cause with Turkey, and the coffers of the Shah contained enough to defray the expense of the contest.

CHAPTER VI.

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

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

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

This war, like all those in which she had previously been engaged with Russia since the days of Peter I., had been disastrous to Turkey. Her fortresses had been taken; her provinces overrun; her fleet destroyed. Servia had taken an active part in the hostilities against the Sultan, and the turbulent spirit of the Janissaries breaking out into revolt, had shaken the foundation of the empire. Still Turkey had never ceased to combat with courage, though not with success, and displayed an obstinacy of resistance against victorious enemies, and a power of cohesion in the midst of domestic commotions, such as perhaps no other state under similar circumstances has ever exhibited. Nevertheless the interposition of Napoleon in her behalf probably saved her on this occasion from the incorporation of the provinces beyond the Danube with the Russian empire, as the threatened intervention of England and Prussia had protected her from greater evils in the previous war.

The peace which Napoleon obtained for Turkey at Tilsit was of short duration. In 1808 hostilities recommenced, and after several years of active operations, in which all the military advantage was ultimately on the side of Russia, that power found it necessary, in consequence of the invasion of her territories by Napoleon in 1812, to conclude a treaty of peace at Bucharest; by which, however, she advanced her frontier to the Pruth, secured the navigation of the Danube to her merchant ships, and obtained for her ships of war the right of ascending

that river as high as the mouth of the Pruth, procured an amnesty for the Servians who had taken part with her in the war,—stipulated for the demolition of the fortresses recently erected by the Turks in Servia, and engaged the Porte to mediate a peace between Russia and Persia. The Emperor, on his part, agreed to surrender Anapa, and certain other fortified places on the Asiatic coast of the Black Sea, which had been captured during the war; but the stipulation was not fulfilled, and the bad faith displayed in evading it became one of the causes of dissension which in the end led to another contest.

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

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

Europe, weary of the wars she had so long been

waging, and sighing for repose, sought, by the Congress of Vienna, to establish on a permanent footing the relations of her various Governments, to restore the ancient limits of some nations, to re-establish the independence of others, and to unite all in an alliance with a view to permanent tranquillity, which was the first desire of all. France had been the common enemy, and hostility to her, or rather to her ruler, had been the bond which united the other nations. To strip her of the acquisitions she had made by aggressions on her neighbours and by an abuse of her strength, was considered indispensable, not in prudence only, but in justice; but the justice of the victors did not extend to a restitution of their own unjust acquisitions, nor to the re-establishment of the independent kingdoms they had themselves overthrown and divided. France was divested of her conquests, and England restored foreign colonies in both hemispheres, but Russia restored nothing,—Finland, Poland, and all her conquests in Turkey and Persia were confirmed to her, or remained annexed to her crown, and the proposition to re-unite the broken fragments of the Polish kingdom was met by a declaration from the partitioning powers that a million of men were ready to oppose it. Turkey took no part in these negotiations, and gained no advantage in the arrangements; but the desire for peace was universal, and Russia required some years to recruit after the exhausting triumph she had achieved. So great was the wholesome desire to preserve peace which continued to

pervade the councils of every cabinet in Europe, that no one power could have taken up arms without finding itself opposed by the moral influence, if not by the forces, of the European community; and Turkey, though no party to the alliance, which had charged itself with preserving tranquillity, yet profited by the moral feeling which would have condemned the first infraction of peace as a crime. Nations were invited to submit their differences to the decision of the conservators of repose, and congresses from time to time assembled in different parts of Europe to adjust the various questions that might have arisen between nations, and amicably to terminate their disputes.

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

Russia had on several occasions fomented rebellions in Greece, and in the other Christian provinces of Turkey, for the advancement of her own objects. She had at all times evinced a desire to preserve her intercourse with the Greeks, and on this occasion the first movement was produced by officers in her

a rebellion in Turkey. Her government had been the most active in organizing the alliance intended to preserve the peace of Europe, then necessary to her. After having facilitated, if not excited, the revolt in Greece, she affected to act up to the principles she had professed, and offered to aid the Porte in suppressing the rebellion which that cabinet attributed exclusively to her agency. The proposition was at once rejected by the Sultan, and the Russian ambassador at Constantinople resorted to every means to bring about a rupture with Turkey, because she persevered in her attempts to suppress the rebellion which Russia had offered her aid to put down.

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

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

concluded a treaty at London, on the 6th of July, 1827, by which they mutually engaged to enforce, by hostilities if necessary, the adjustment of the differences between the Porte and the Greeks, on terms to be prescribed to both parties. This arrangement still reserved to the Sultan the suzerainetė of Greece, and a yearly tribute from that country.

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

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

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

Turkey regarded that note as amounting to a declaration of war, if she declined to accept an alternative which she considered unjust and injurious. The Sultan immediately prepared for defence: he collected an army at Constantinople, strengthened the batteries of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, reinforced the garrison of Tenedos, and diligently occupied himself in improving the discipline of his troops. Repeated attempts were made by the ambassadors of the Powers most friendly to the Porte, to induce it to give way, but it firmly or obstinately maintained its resolution to sanction no foreign intervention in the internal affairs of the empire. Yet it is obvious that it expected to be attacked by the Allied Powers: the preparations it was making, and the language it held, leave no doubt on this subject. On the 10th September the Reis Effendi, in answer to questions from the British Dragoman, intended to elicit the intentions of his Government, replied "God and my

right,—such is the motto of England,—what other motto ought we to choose, *when you intend to attack us?*"

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

The measures by which Russia proposed to give effect to the Treaty of London showed the results she wished to obtain from it. She proposed "to occupy Moldavia and Wallachia in the name of the three Powers," and even to march an army into Turkey, for the purpose of "dictating peace under the walls of the seraglio." Having failed to obtain the consent of the other Powers to these violent measures, or to engage them in avowed hostilities with the Porte, she declared that "in the manner of executing that act (the Treaty of London), she will consult only her own interests and convenience;" but this declaration she was obliged to retract.

In September of the same year, the Emperor ordered a fresh levy of recruits, amounting to one in

every five hundred inhabitants, (for the first time including the Jews in the conscription,) and thus prepared for the war he contemplated.

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

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

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

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

The object of Russia, in securing this position, is sufficiently obvious. The Arras is fordable, at short intervals, from the vicinity of Julfa (near the great

road between Erivan and Tabreez) to a ford called Yeddee Bolook; but below that point it is never fordable. By retaining Talish and Moghan, she has secured to herself possessions beyond the Arras, extending southward to the frontier of Gheelan, from the point where the river ceases to be fordable to its mouth on the Caspian Sea, and has thus laid open one of the most valuable parts of Persia to an attack at any season of the year, and placed herself in a position from which she can occupy Gheelan with most facility. That she retains her views on this rich province is sufficiently proved by the fact that she threatened, only two years ago, to occupy it as a security for the payment of five hundred thousand tomans of indemnity still due to her by Persia.

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

In the province of Nukhchivan ceded to Russia, and on the left bank of the Araxes, is the fortress of Abbasabad, constructed by a French engineer, in the service of the late Abbas Mirza. Russia, not content with the fortress, demanded possession of an unfinished work intended for a *tête du pont*, on the

opposite bank, which she represented as a part of the fortress, though no bridge had ever been constructed; and having obtained this unfinished and untenable outwork founded on the concession another demand. The intended *tête du pont* to an imaginary bridge required an esplanade, and a segment of a circle, with a radius of two miles, was assigned to her for this purpose.

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

By the treaty of Turcomanchai, Persia was again bound to maintain no navy on the Caspian; this stipulation was now made to rest on the prescriptive right of Russia, on the exclusive privilege of having

a navy on that sea, which the treaty declares she had enjoyed "*ab antiquo.*"—This, however, was an antiquity of only thirteen years, for she acquired the exclusive right by the treaty of Goolistan, which was concluded in 1814.

Meanwhile Turkey, believing herself to be in immediate danger of an attack from the three Powers which had signed the Treaty of London, continued her preparations for war, and Russia, on the other hand, having triumphantly terminated her contest with Persia, and received about two millions sterling in gold and silver from the Shah, did not conceal her intention to come to a rupture with the Porte. She had vainly endeavoured to engage her allies in avowed hostilities with the Ottoman empire, and they had forced her to abandon the intention she had announced, to act independently of them. At Verona she had consented to regard the Greek question as one which belonged exclusively to the internal affairs of Turkey, and in which no foreign power had a right to interfere. She had proceeded to the last extremities of arrogance and insolence, in the hope of provoking the Sultan to resent the indignities she heaped upon him. She had changed her views and her tactics, and assumed every possible shape, and having failed in every endeavour to accomplish her object, she determined, after the termination of the war with Persia, to produce a war with Turkey at whatever price. Her intentions had long been obvious, but the motive was not then appreciated. It has now been revealed. It was neither

a sympathy with her co-religionists in Greece, whom she had so often excited to revolt, and so often abandoned to their fate; neither was it a sudden glow of liberality which had made her enamoured of popular liberty, and had rendered her the friend and prop of liberal institutions. It was a steady and undeviating perseverance in the policy of Peter, to raise himself on the ruins of Turkey. The reforms of the Sultan had been successful beyond the hopes of his friends, or the fears of his enemies, and Russia became alarmed lest her prey should escape her; lest the internal amelioration of a neighbouring kingdom, and the sympathy which that amelioration had excited in Europe, should in time make it dangerous for Russia to attack Turkey, and impossible for her to subdue it.

The rashness of the Sultan, who after the battle of Navarino, the departure of the ambassadors, and the preparations of Russia, did not doubt that he was at war with that power, furnished her with the pretext for which she panted. The Porte, surrounded by enemies, addressed a letter to the Pashas of the provinces, appealing to the patriotism of the Turks, and calling upon them to arm in defence of their country and religion. At the same time it informed them, not that it had been deceived by Russia, which was the truth, but that it had deceived Russia, and signed the Convention of Akerman, for the purpose of gaining time.

As soon, however, as the Porte had any reason to suppose that a war could be avoided, it addressed

the Russian cabinet through the Reis Effendi, endeavouring to explain away the offensive part of the letter, and expressing a desire to renew friendly relations with the Czar. But the opportunity had long been sought, and now that it was found, his Imperial Majesty was not disposed to throw it away. The answer to the Turkish functionary's conciliatory address was transmitted to his Government along with the declaration of war; and Count Nesselrode, in that letter to the Reis Effendi, clearly restricts the causes of quarrel to acts subsequent to the departure of the ambassadors from Constantinople: for it declares the *friendly intentions and feelings of Russia up to that time.* But subsequently to the departure of the ambassadors, the proceedings of the Turkish government towards Russia and her subjects, although pressing more severely on Russian interests, were in no respect different in form from those adopted towards the other powers and their subjects. Russia had therefore no separate ground of complaint, except the declaration of the Porte contained in the letter to the Pashas, that it had concluded the Convention of Akerman only to gain time: a declaration which the Turkish government evinced a distinct inclination to retract: and which, if even it had been unexplained, was not more inexcusable than the mental reservation of Russia in concluding the same convention on the express condition that she should not interfere in the Greek question,—an engagement which she contracted without any intention to fulfil it, whereas the Porte had adopted that

convention sincerely, and in good faith, though it afterwards falsely accused itself of an insincerity it had not felt.

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

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

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

* Otherwise written *Akhaltzik*, and Akhalhaliki.

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

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

Greece was finally separated from Turkey, and

Capo d'Istria, who had been a Russian minister, was named president.

In the course of her hostilities with Turkey in Asia, Russia had developed new and extensive projects of future conquest. The Turkish Pashalic of Bagdad had for many years been in the hands of a body of Georgians, who, like the Mamelukes in Egypt, had usurped almost the whole power of the government, and left the Porte no alternative but to sanction and legitimize the authority which some one of the number from time to time had usurped. The Pasha of Bagdad, when the Russians invaded Turkish Armenia, was a Georgian of the name of Daud or David, a man of much energy and ambition, who aimed at establishing his own independence. A brother of the Pasha, who had continued to reside in his native country, and was now therefore a Russian subject, carried on a petty trade between Tiflis and Bagdad, and became the medium of communication between his masters and his brother. Almost all the offices of trust in the Pashalic were held by Georgians, and they all had connexions in their native country,—many of their nearest relatives were in the Russian service. The influence of the government of Georgia in Bagdad began to be felt, and when General Paskevitch found himself at Erzeroom, on the banks of a branch of the Euphrates, and not far from the stream of the Tigris, he conceived the project of descending these rivers, and occupying the modern capital of Assyria and Mesopotamia. But the successes of General Die-

bitch on the Balkan had placed Russia in so advantageous a position, with means so inadequate to maintain it, that it was considered imprudent to hazard a failure on the side of Asia, and the Emperor therefore abandoned the enterprise, for a time.

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

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

She had no sooner been relieved by the treaty of Adrianople from the war in Turkey, than she concerted measures with the Persian government for the reduction of the principality of Khiva, on the eastern coast of the Caspian Sea, and had collected

troops at Orenbourg for this purpose, when the revolution in Poland made it necessary to march them in another direction.

The struggle in Poland, and the popular movements in Europe, for a time diverted her attention from the East, but they were followed by a revolution in a portion of the Ottoman dominions, which recalled her armies to Turkey. The Pasha of Egypt had rebelled, and overrun Syria and part of Asia Minor: the throne of the Ottomans was shaken, and the Sultan was forced to seek foreign aid against his victorious vassal; Russia not only offered her assistance, but repeatedly and urgently pressed the Sultan to accept it. He had too much reason, however, to doubt her good faith, and he preferred applying for succour to England and France. But the unwise penuriousness of our policy had reduced our fleet to a scale inadequate to the protection of the national interests at any time, and still less in the midst of the troubles and commotions with which we were then surrounded. One portion of our meagre navy was employed in Portugal, another on the coast of Holland, and when the existence of Turkey was at stake we had only a few frigates in the Mediterranean. France was almost equally powerless, and the Sultan urged his suit in vain to Governments which had not the means of granting it. Left without any other alternative, he accepted the proffered aid of Russia, and a fleet and army, prepared with almost incredible speed, found themselves for the first time in the Bosphorus Determined that Constanti-

nople, the Dardanelles, and the Bosphorus should be the prey of no other spoiler, Russia announced her determination to defend them; but far from taking care of the strength or future security of the sovereign to whom she extended her protection, she left to the other Powers, who now found themselves forced to interpose, the task of prescribing limits to the victorious Pasha of Egypt, and of imposing upon him terms which he considered injurious; and while she forbade him to seize the portion she considered her own, she left him at liberty to appropriate as much of the rest as his power would enable him to retain. When the danger was removed, her fleets and armies retired, and a manifesto of the Emperor proclaimed to Europe and Asia the singular moderation and magnanimity which had induced him to refrain from seizing the capital of a friendly sovereign who had sought his aid, and who would have found in every nation in Europe an ally to resent the treachery, had it been attempted!

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

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

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

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

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

But there is another point of view in which this treaty is not less important. The process by which Russia has effected the subjugation of almost all the countries she has conquered since the reign of Peter I. has been to take them under her protection.

then to foment internal dissensions, and at last to annex them to her own empire, under pretence of putting an end to disturbances she had herself created or permitted. The treaty of Unkiar Skellessee constitutes Russia the virtual protector of Turkey.

Notwithstanding the opposition of other powers Russia has steadily and successfully pressed forward towards the ultimate subversion of the Ottoman empire, and the possession of Constantinople, the Dardanelles, and the Bosphorus. She has conquered from it extensive provinces; has endeavoured to detach from it the valuable principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Servia; and has promoted the abstraction of Egypt and Syria from the Sultan's authority. But still the two powers stood opposed to each other, and so long as they stood so opposed, every step towards the subjugation of the weaker was necessarily an act of violence. Continual aggressions cannot be made without a sacrifice of character; they attract attention, and afford other nations an opportunity to interfere. There is a point, however, in the progress of subjugation at which resistance ceases and protection begins; a point beyond which force and violence are no longer necessary, and where the absence of collision presents no occasion for third parties to interpose. To a power which has to dread opposition in its career of conquest, the step which enables it to pass this point is the most important in the whole series, and Russia, from frequent experience, well knew its value. There were two ways

in which she might effect her purpose; a perseverance in hostility would have afforded the other powers an opportunity to interpose, of which they had often availed themselves with effect, because Turkey would still have been with them; a more insidious and effectual mode of subjugation was that which, by placing the Porte under the protection of Russia, and enabling her to force it into collision with all her enemies, and its own friends, would put its resources at her disposal and exclude all interposition of other powers, because all collision would be avoided. This was the result that Russia sought to obtain from the treaty of Unkiar Skellessee. This was the price she demanded for her magnanimous and disinterested aid; and confident that she had effected her object, she withdrew in triumph from what she believed to be the bloodless conquest of an empire.

But the jealousy of Europe was at length awakened; the treaty had transpired, and England and France protested against the fraud. Russia, while maintaining the haughty and imperious bearing which she assumes when she cannot justify her acts, still felt that the just resentment of other powers must be appeased by some real or apparent sacrifice; and having sufficiently, for her present purpose, detached Moldavia and Wallachia from the Porte, offered to withdraw her troops from these provinces, having previously stipulated that the troops of Turkey should never again enter them, and that no Mahommedan should reside therein.

In consideration of additional cessions of territory in Asia, demanded for the purpose of obtaining "a line of demarcation between the two empires in the East, such as may prevent every species of dispute and discussion*, and completely put an end to the depredations which the neighbouring tribes have been in the habit of committing," that is, a line of demarcation which would give Russia the command of the passes. For these considerations his Imperial Majesty consented to renounce his claim to one-third of the indemnity (or nearly one million sterling) which he had promised to relinquish when the treaty of Unkiar Skellessee was negotiated, without then requiring additional cessions of territory. The remainder of the indemnity was to be paid in smaller instalments; and Silistria, which Russia held in pledge for the whole amount, to remain therefore so much longer in her hands. Russia thus occupies positions beyond the Araxes in Persia, and beyond the Danube in Turkey; has claims for indemnities in both; has the exclusive possession of the Caspian, and the command of the Black Sea; controls the mouths of the Kur on the one, and of the Danube on the other; and desires to be the protector of the Sultan, and to guarantee the throne to the heir of the Shah,—for the obvious or avowed purpose of appropriating both empires.

While the position occupied by Russia in European Turkey menaces Constantinople and the Dardanelles,

* This was precisely the same language she had held to Persia. See page 98.

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

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

The interests we have at stake are numberless, and we acknowledge their importance, by declaring that we shall preserve the independence of Turkey. But to enable us to preserve that independence, the value of which we acknowledge, we must not only obtain securities from the only European power by which it is threatened, but must contribute, as far as in us lies, to the amelioration of the internal condition of Turkey and to the augmentation of her strength and resources. Peace in Europe can be preserved

only so long as Turkey is preserved. If the Ottoman Empire should indeed "crumble to pieces," as some have supposed it is crumbling, the distribution of the fragments would not be effected without bloodshed.—The only chance of maintaining peace is to maintain the integrity of Turkey. Those who would persuade us that she is "crumbling to pieces," form a very different estimate of the consequences and effects of recent changes in her system from that which has been formed by those who have observed her most nearly, and who have the greatest interest in discovering that her days are already numbered. While in England Turkey is supposed to be mouldering in decay, Russia found in her growing strength a motive for attacking her. It was because the strength of Turkey was unknown, and her means unappreciated, that the revolt of the Pacha of Egypt was so long unopposed by the powers most interested in her preservation: and it is only by facilitating the re-union of the parts dissevered by that virtual dismemberment, that the effects of so great a misfortune can be remedied. Every thing that tends to weaken Turkey is favourable to Russia and injurious to the rest of Europe. The erection of Egypt and Syria into a hostile power is the greatest blow the Ottoman Empire has yet received; it was one which was aimed at it by Russia in 1772, and which was rendered ineffectual only by the arrogance of Alexis Orloff, who demanded that the Ali Pacha of that day should acknowledge himself to be a subject of the Empress Catherine. What, from this

cause alone, Russia failed to effect in those times, was accomplished in 1833; and no one seemed to remember that it had, for more than half a century, been one of her projects.

The present Pacha of Egypt is a dependant of the Sultan, not an independent Sovereign. What power in Europe has an interest in promoting his disobedience, or in facilitating his aggressions? Surely no one of those who desire the integrity, the independence, and the strength of Turkey; for those purposes his obedience to his sovereign should be enforced, and his power to weaken the empire, which it is the interest of Europe to preserve, should be controlled. If Mahommed Ali, whether by concert with Russia, or solely in pursuit of his own objects, is rendering the Ottoman Empire less capable of defending itself against Russia, he is doing that which is inconsistent with the future tranquillity of the world; and if his efforts should be so far successful as to render Turkey incapable of being defended, he is the enemy not of Turkey alone but of all Europe. But fortunately there is no one of the maritime powers of this quarter of the globe which is not of itself able to check and to punish his ambition. The resources of Egypt, already in a great measure exhausted by the barbarous cruelty of his system, are even now the only sinews of his strength. Syria, disabused of the errors which led to its subjugation by his son, longs to return to the milder system of the Sultan, and is yet but a doubtful ally, or a disaffected servant of Egypt. The

resources of Egypt are available only so long as its external commerce is undisturbed, and the possession of Syria is secure only while the ships of the Pacha can hover on its coasts and preserve its communications with Alexandria. A few frigates would suffice to blockade the ports of the Pacha and annihilate his revenue. If he has a fleet at sea, the power to destroy that fleet, without which he could not defend himself, even against the unaided efforts of the Sultan, would be the best pledge for his obedience to his master.—If his fleet should be in the harbour of Alexandria, it cannot issue forth from thence in a state fit for sea, or capable of resistance, and it would no longer be available to him. The power to control him is, therefore, so great, that a knowledge of its existence will prevent his ever exposing himself to the necessity of having it employed against him, if he feels assured that, when the gives an occasion, it will be so employed.

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

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

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

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

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

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

CHAPTER VII.

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

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

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

conquered country, before her authority could be fully established; at the same time, it could hardly fail to excite the alarm of other Governments, and perhaps arouse them to active opposition. She has therefore pursued a wiser course.

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

It is, therefore, her policy to maintain the existing Governments, but to prevent them from acquiring strength; and to press her influence upon their weakness, till it becomes authoritative and paramount. She seeks to govern the nations through their natural rulers, till the time shall have arrived for annexing them more formally to her own dominions. No violence is thus called for —no collision need take place; and *if there is no collision there is no opportunity for other powers to interpose.* No apparent change will be made in the institutions to which the people have been accustomed; and the resources of the countries, unbroken and undisturbed, will be more completely at her disposal than if the forcible conquest of the kingdoms had already been effected. This is no speculative

opinion. It is the precise course by which she became possessed of other countries; it is the course she has pursued almost to the verge of consummation in Turkey—it is the course she has adopted in Persia. There, as in Turkey, her system is to solve every question, political or commercial, not with reference to its own merits, or to justice, but by an appeal to the clemency of the Emperor, or the threat of his displeasure. The domineering spirit of Russia is evinced in every discussion, small or great, in which she has a part, and the humiliation of the Persian government is studiously exhibited to its subjects.

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

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

The interest which Great Britain has in the

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

It is not necessary here, to enter on an examination of the consequences that would result to England from the subjugation of Turkey by Russia, the repeated declarations of the Sovereign of England that he will watch over the preservation of her independence, sufficiently prove the importance attached to it; but it may be right to say a few words respecting Persia.

We have a commercial interest of large and increasing importance at stake in Persia, where Russia is our rival for the supply of the market. For the last two years the annual amount of British manufactures imported into Persia has exceeded the value of one and a half million sterling, and during the

last year it has approached very nearly two millions. This trade has grown up without even the protection of a treaty, because it was free from all burthensome restrictions, but as it has increased, the trade of Russia has declined; and if Russia should acquire the power to control it, our commerce with Persia could not long be maintained.

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

Fifty thousand Persian infantry, composed of what are perhaps the finest materials in the world for service in those countries, and disciplined by Russian officers, with about fifty guns of Persian artillery, in

a high state of efficiency, and an almost unlimited number of irregular horse, could be put in motion by Russia, in any direction, within twelve months after the resources of the kingdom were at her disposal; and the acquisition of such an influence as would enable her, in the event of a war with England, to induce Persia to take part with her against us, would at once give her a complete control of the military resources of that country.

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

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

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

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

The power which Great Britain has to destroy the commerce of Russia, and with it the wealth of her

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

nobility and the tranquillity of her government, enabled England to force Russia into an opposition to France, which the Emperor Alexander was desirous to avoid. The clamours of his nobles, who found their revenues annihilated by the obstruction of their commerce with England; and the remembrance of the fate his father had incurred by persevering in the course on which he had engaged to enter, forced him to yield, though the concession exposed him to the vengeance of the despot of France.

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

It has been said that the loss of India would be no very serious evil to Great Britain, and that we are therefore not called upon to make any great exertion to preserve it; but supposing for a moment, that the premises were capable of being demonstrated, the inference would not be just. We have conquered

India, and as a necessary consequence of that conquest, have taken upon ourselves the government of the country, and supplanted almost all the native instruments of government that we found there; by doing so we have incurred the responsibility of protecting those who have submitted to our rule from external violence as well as from internal discord. This is a sacred duty, and we are bound by every moral obligation that connects a government with its subjects, to neglect no honourable means of enabling ourselves to discharge it. Were we to abandon India, we would not leave her as we found her. Were we to evacuate the country to-morrow, it would not only be placed in circumstances much more unfavourable than those in which we found it, but it would be left in a condition more deplorable than ever a country was left in the world. And if it could be proved, which it cannot, that the possession of India is of no value to England, the moral obligation to defend it, until it can be made capable of governing itself, would still remain entire.

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

The independence of Persia, therefore, is the

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

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

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

Does history afford any example of the sudden or speedy dissolution of an empire from this cause? The fall of the great empires hastily erected by military leaders, such as Alexander in ancient and Nader in modern times, was but a division of the spoil when he who maintained the discipline of the camp had been removed, and has no connexion with the present question. But, it is said, the extension of the Roman empire caused its fall: it would be easy to show that such is not the fact; but supposing that the assertion were correct, let us ask how many centuries this cause

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

There is good reason to believe that this desirable object may still be effected.

One great cause of the weakness of Persia during the last reign, was the system adopted by the late Shah of entrusting the government of the provinces only to his sons. In the commencement of his reign, dreading revolution more than invasion, his first object was to collect the whole power of the country into the hands of his own family, and thus to supplant or destroy the influence of the nobles, whom he considered dangerous—to replace, in fact, the ancient aristocracy of the country by his own sons. In this he was successful, and the result he expected was obtained; but he had overlooked remoter consequences. As the princes grew up, they took advantage of their connexion with the sovereign to disregard the authority of his ministers; and feeling that

took to produce the result. Are we prepared to wait as long for the dissolution of Russia, and to abide all the intermediate consequences of her aggrandizement?

the Shah could not lower their dignity before the nation, without in some degree affecting his own, they presumed on the impunity which their position secured to them, evaded their responsibility of servants of the state, and found in the overstrained fondness of the father a refuge from the justice of the monarch. The people, who were subjected to their command, wanted courage to complain of the misgovernment of a prince: and even the ministers of the Shah rarely ventured to denounce to the father the profligate abuses of his sons. Thus each prince became in effect an irresponsible ruler in his own province, and as all of them affected sovereign state and magnificence, and almost all had inherited the love of accumulation and of luxury, which were the vices of the late Shah's character, the country w s burdened with a most costly government; while the princes, partly from natural disposition or from a proneness to imitate their father's habits, partly with a view to prepare for the struggle which was to be expected at his death, and partly from a feeling of the insecurity of the tenure by which they held their advantages, sought to amass wealth as well as to live in splendour. The peasantry were oppressed by exorbitant exactions: the military establishments were reduced to the lowest scale in each province, and such of the troops as were occasionally brought together, were defrauded of half their dues, while the full amount was charged to the Shah. The revenues that ought to have been paid into the royal treasury, were on various pretexts allowed to

fall into arrear, and were ultimately withheld in whole or in part. The income of the Shah was thus so much reduced, that for the last seven years of his life it was never sufficient to meet the expenses of the small number of troops he continued to pay from the treasury, and of the enormous domestic establishment with which he had burdened himself.

All classes, therefore, were discontented; and the military frequently took occasion to resent the treatment they had experienced, by abandoning in the field those who, in their eyes, had divested themselves of all claim to their gratitude or their services. But this was not all. Each of the princes had his pretensions to the throne (which in Persia has long been the reward of the strongest), and was hardly more desirous of his own advancement, than of the degradation of his rivals,—that is, of all his brothers. Any success obtained by one of them, even against a foreign enemy, was disagreeable to the others, because it increased his reputation; and influenced by this jealousy, they betrayed one another in the field with as little compunction as if no national interest had been at stake.

Persia therefore, instead of being an integral kingdom, had degenerated into a loose confederation of petty principalities, incapable of acting in union, or even of co-operating efficiently or honestly for their mutual defence.

In the last war with Russia, the late Prince Royal, after a few months, was left alone with little else than the resources of the single province of

Azerbijan to oppose the undivided power of the whole Russian empire, and he had as much to fear from the intrigues of his brothers behind him, as from the force of the enemy in his front. That in such circumstances Russia should have succeeded can excite little wonder, and affords no just estimate of the power of resistance which Persia, in a better state of things, might call forth. The only wonder is, that Russia should have so nearly failed. When the war broke out, Russia was engaged in no other contest. The flower of her troops, the most distinguished of her generals, the choice of her staff, were collected in Georgia with the greatest alacrity: all the aggressive means she could bring to bear upon Persia were employed. Yet the contest endured nearly two years, and continued to be doubtful, till the treacherous surrender of Tabreez decided it. This looks like an enigma, and yet the solution is very simple. The power of Russia is great, but her power to attack Persia is comparatively small, because it is limited by the resources of Georgia, from which country must be drawn the means of feeding and transporting the army which may be employed south of the Caucasus; and so completely were the efforts of Russia restricted by this necessity, that during the whole course of the war with Persia she never was able to collect ten thousand men in one body, nor to keep together for a month above half that number. Here we have an accurate measure of the force that Russia, in the present state of her Georgian provinces, can apply

to the subjugation of Persia; but we have no means of ascertaining what resistance Persia, if united, is capable of offering. Those who might have been supposed to have the most obvious interest in defending her proved her worst enemies, and she fell under the effects of an internal disease, which took away all power to resist the assaults of her enemy. Though she escaped from this contest without actual subjugation, the elements of discord and the causes of disorganization were still accumulating within her. The government had been weakened, and humbled to the dust; its authority had become more imperfect and precarious. England effected a change in her treaty, which was supposed to evince a desire to disencumber herself of a falling ally. The heir to the throne had been forced to conciliate the forbearance and to seek the countenance and support of the power he had vainly endeavoured to withstand; and while it was admitted by all men that nothing could save the nation but a change of government, which should unite it, its best friends could not conceal from themselves that even this change threatened it with subjugation. The probability that the death of the Shah would be the signal for a civil war, and that Russia would be called in to decide the contest, and to bestow the crown, obscured the only prospect of amendment; and an opinion began to prevail that Persia was already lost.

The hope that she could be preserved was retained by few; but a few still hoped that Abbas Meerza might yet be induced to rely on his own resources,

and upon such aid as England could be persuaded to afford him. The confidence inspired by his successes in Yezd, Kirman, and Khorassan, was not destroyed even by his death. The prompt recognition by the British government of the claims of the young prince, the opportune arrival of the officers and non-commissioned officers from India, the firm tone which England was known to have held to Russia in relation to Persia, and the pecuniary aid which she promised and eventually gave, convinced Mahommed Meerza that England was indeed interested in his success, and led him under that conviction to rely on his own resources and on her assistance, from which he had nothing to fear, rather than peril his independence and place himself in opposition to the nation, by seeking the more effective, but much more dangerous aid of Russia.

We have thus the most satisfactory evidence that Persia is true to herself; that she is not indifferent to her independence; and, that confidence in the support of England is all that is necessary to induce her to assert it. But had not the language of England to Russia been such as to give Persia assurance, that she was not left alone to deal with the power, before the weight of whose influence she was declining; had she not been convinced that England would not permit Russia to occupy her territory as a guarantee for the payment of the arrear of indemnity, and would not sanction the conversion of this demand into a means of dismemberment; in short, had she not felt that the British government, by its mea-

sures, acknowledged the interest it had in preserving the independence of Persia, we cannot doubt that her independence would have been lost.

So long as there was a probability that the death of the Shah would afford Russia an opportunity to interfere in the adjustment of the succession to the throne, there was an obvious reason why Great Britain should be reluctant to incur any considerable expense or responsibility for the purpose of ameliorating the condition of a country which there was much reason to fear might be irretrievably lost to us, so soon as the demise of the Shah, and the disputed succession, which every one anticipated, should have afforded Russia an occasion to march her armies into Persia. But now, that this crisis is past, that the succession has been placed on the recognised footing of hereditary right, the time appears to be favourable for the introduction of such a system in the internal government, as well as the foreign policy of Persia, as may give to her institutions and her independence more stability and security than has hitherto characterized them.

The present Shah will find it indispensable to his own security to remove from their governments almost all his uncles, and to replace them by responsible servants. The available resources of the empire will thus be accumulated in his own hands; while, at the same time, his power to protect the peasants from arbitrary and unjust exactions will be amply adequate to that purpose. A new settlement of the provincial governments will afford an oppor-

tunity to give the peasant the most valuable boon that could be offered him, in a fixed assessment of the revenues, without which it is impossible to attach the people to their rulers, and give to the government security in peace or strength in war.

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

If the present rulers of Persia were disposed to look only to their personal interests, without any regard to the present feelings or future circumstances of the nation, there can be little doubt that it might be made worth their while to abandon all

idea of resisting Russia. It is only a sense of the duty they owe to the nation and their religion, and a feeling of patriotism, that has hitherto prevented them from pursuing this course; and if there be no calculable chance of successful resistance, it may be questioned whether that sense of duty and those feelings may not permit them rather to make advantageous terms while they yet may with the power which is ultimately (as they would then believe) to rule over them, than to protract a hopeless struggle for independence.

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

Persia naturally enough believes Russia to be the strongest and most formidable of all the nations of Europe; and she has been confirmed in that opinion by the knowledge that the successes of Russia in Turkey, and the Treaty of Protection of the 8th July, 1833, were all disagreeable to England and

to France; that both these powers remonstrated against the treaty, and that Russia has maintained her ground.

The whole Persian court drew from these facts the conclusion that England and France together did not feel themselves a match for Russia, and lamented it as an indication of the helplessness of their own position.

At the same time the state of the countries between Persia and India should not be neglected. The whole Mahommedan population of Central Asia dreads the power of Russia, and looks for countenance from England. It is while the first line of defence is entire, not under the fire of the enemy's guns, that we can prepare a second. Our commercial relations are hourly extending* in all that continent, and good will and kind feeling towards Great Britain are growing warmer and more general as that intercourse improves. It is known that our object is to defend not to attack—to preserve not to overturn; but if Persia should be lost to us, all spirit of resistance to Russia will be subdued, and the means which the resources of Persia would furnish, wielded with the skill and intelligence which would then direct them, would suffice for the final subjugation of Central Asia, from the Caspian to the Oxus and the Indus. The great point to decide is whether these resources are to be used for our benefit or our injury—whether we shall determine to abandon

* Central Asia now consumes the value of three millions and a half sterling of our manufactures annually.

them to our enemies with the certainty of having to expend millions annually in providing a substitute of most doubtful efficacy, or whether we shall purchase at the cost of a few thousands annually what will make the expenditure of the millions, for many years at least, unnecessary. Surely this cannot seriously be regarded as a question requiring decision!

CONCLUSION.

A REFERENCE to the map will show that Russia has advanced her frontier in every direction; and even the Caspian Sea, which appeared to present an impediment to her progress, she has turned to advantage by appropriating it to herself. It will be seen that the plains of Tartary have excited her cupidity, while the civilized states of Europe and Asia have been dismembered to augment her dominions. Not content with this, she has crossed into America, and there disputes, in direct violation of her engagements to England, the right of our merchants to navigate the rivers that debouche on its western coast. It will be seen that the acquisitions she has made from Sweden are greater than what remains of that ancient kingdom; that her acquisitions from Poland are as large as the whole Austrian empire; that the territory she has wrested from Turkey in Europe is equal to the dominions of Prussia, exclusive of her Rhenish provinces; and that her acquisitions from Turkey in Asia are equal in extent to all the smaller states of Germany, the Rhenish provinces of Prussia, Belgium, and Holland taken together; that the country she has conquered from Persia is about the size of England;

that her acquisitions in Tartary have an area equal to Turkey in Europe, Greece, Italy, and Spain; and that the territory she has acquired within the last sixty-four years (since 1772) is greater in extent and importance than the whole empire she had in Europe before that time.

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

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

The power and resources of Russia lie in the countries to the west of the Volga, not in the wilds of Siberia; and her empire in Europe has been nearly doubled in little more than half a century. In sixty-four years she has advanced her frontier eight hundred and fifty miles towards Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, and Paris; she has approached four hundred and fifty miles nearer to Constantinople; she has possessed herself of the capital of Poland, and

has advanced to within a few miles of the capital of Sweden*, from which, when Peter the First mounted the throne, her frontier was distant three hundred miles. Since that time she has stretched herself forward about one thousand miles towards India, and the same distance towards the capital of Persia. The regiment that is now stationed at her furthest frontier post on the western shore of the Caspian, has as great a distance to march back to Moscow as onward to Attock on the Indus, and is actually further from St. Petersburgh than from Lahore, the capital of the Seiks. The battalions of the Russian Imperial Guard that invaded Persia, found, at the termination of the war, that they were as near to Herat as to the banks of the Don; that they had already accomplished half the distance from their capital to Delhi; and that therefore, from their camp in Persia, they had as great a distance to march back to St. Peterburgh as onward to the capital of Hindostan. Meanwhile the "Moscow Gazette" threatens to dictate at Calcutta the next peace with England, and Russia never ceases to urge the Persian Government to accept from it, free of all cost, officers to discipline its troops, and arms and artillery for its soldiers, at the same time that her own battalions are ready to march into Persia whenever the Shah, to whom their services are freely offered, can be induced to require their assistance.

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

Thus, while she accuses the more popular governments of Europe of a desire to subvert existing institutions, Russia is herself undermining every throne within her reach; that of Poland she has pulled down. Since the battle of Narva she has never ceased, by intrigues and by force, to distract and encroach upon Sweden; since the battle of Poltawa she has continually sought the subversion of Turkey; since the peace of Neustadt, she has perseveringly pursued her conquests in Persia. Her intrigues in Germany, and her ambitious projects, are a source of continual alarm to Austria. France was threatened with invasion, in order to force upon it a government it had rejected. Greece is taught to believe that its tranquillity can be secured only when it shall be a Russian province; Prussia purchases forbearance by acquiescence in the views and even the caprices of the Emperor; hostile restrictions are directed against the commerce of England, and her empire in the East is openly threatened with attack. In the wilds of Tartary, on the east and on the west of the Caspian, on the north and on the south of the Black Sea, in the centre of Europe, on the Baltic,—everywhere we find her a successful and persevering aggressor. With a larger extent of territory than ever before was subject to one crown, she thirsts insatiably for more, and studiously directs all energies, not to the means of improvement, but to further acquisition.

When the sovereigns of Europe twice demanded and twice enforced the abdication of the throne of

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

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

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

and if it disavows them, it should show, by acts, and not by words only, that its policy is changed. Such is the position of Russia in relation to all her neighbours—such are her views and her objects.

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

If Russia should refuse to afford them the guarantees for the future, which the course of her policy and a regard to their own security entitle them to demand, it will be obvious that she has not only determined to persevere in her designs, but that she is utterly regardless of the peace of Europe which she affects to have a sincere desire to maintain. If the other powers display a sensitive jealousy of all her proceedings, she must remember that her own

acts and the position she occupies justify such sentiments. If her protestations of moderation should be received with distrust, she must feel that the use she has made of them has already destroyed their value, and that acts, not words, must henceforward be the only admissible evidence of her views. The only nation in Europe that attempts to aggrandize itself at the expense of its neighbours is Russia. The only state whose preponderance and ambition threatens to disturb the general tranquillity is Russia. The only power that seeks to put down an existing government is Russia. All nations except Russia wish to maintain the independence of other countries —to preserve things as they are, and to build up rather than pull down—Russia alone threatens to overturn thrones, to subvert empires, and subdue nations hitherto independent. It is for her, therefore, to secure the tranquillity of the world, by retiring from the menacing position she has occupied, and thus to afford the guarantees for that confidence in her future intentions which will permit Europe to repose in safety.

The treaty of Unkiar Skellessee, the prolonged occupation of Silistria, the command of the mouths of the Danube, and the position she occupies in Moldavia and Wallachia, are so many pledges of her determination to pursue the policy from which she has not deviated for a hundred years.

If protests have no views of aggrandizement in Persia—if she seeks no portion of its territory, no exclusive influence in its councils, let her evince

her sincerity by redeeming the pledges of General Ritescheff, and by restoring the districts beyond the Araxes to Persia; let her relinquish the command of the passage of that river at Abbas Abad, which is not necessary, or even useful, for her defence, and can be available only for attack;—let her abandon her right to the exclusive navigation of the Caspian, and permit Persia to use the waters of her own coast—to have the means of observation on her own frontier.

Let these things be done, not as the price of more important concessions, but as a pledge, however small, of the sincerity of her professions of moderation. If she will *do* nothing to produce a feeling of security, and only renews her protestations, how is it possible to believe them?

Great Britain has no interest in Turkey or Persia except to defend their independence and integrity. It does not there prepare the means of aggression; it only seeks to repel the aggressions of Russia.

If Russia had never crossed the Caucasus, the intercourse of England with Persia would now have been purely commercial; it is the ambition of Russia that forces upon us the necessity of endeavouring to preserve that which is obviously necessary to our own protection. If she will not give us security for the future, she can have no right to complain if we should take all practicable measures to impede and obstruct the course she has so perseveringly pursued. If she attempts to justify her own aggressions, on what principle can she complain of

measures of defence, however extensive? The integrity and independence of Persia is necessary to the security of India and of Europe; and any attempt to subvert the one is a blow struck at the other—an unequivocal act of hostility to England.

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