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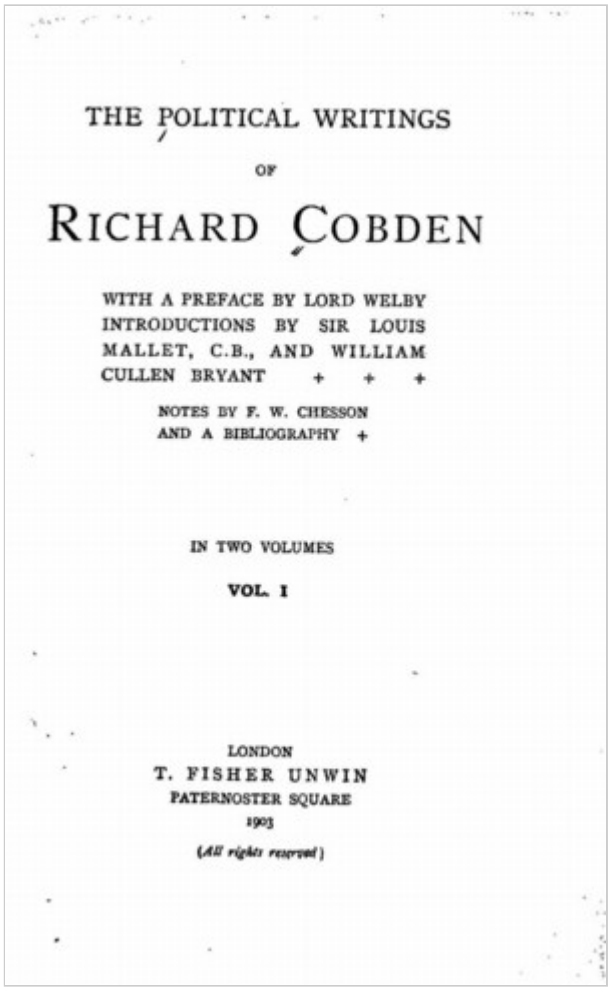

THE POLITICAL WRITINGS

OF

RICHARD COBDEN

WITH A PREFACE BY LORD WELBY
INTRODUCTIONS BY SIR LOUIS
MALLET, C.B., AND WILLIAM
CULLEN BRYANT + + +

NOTES BY F. W. CHESSON
AND A BIBLIOGRAPHY +

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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Introduction: Sir Louis Mallet
Introduction: William Cullen Bryant

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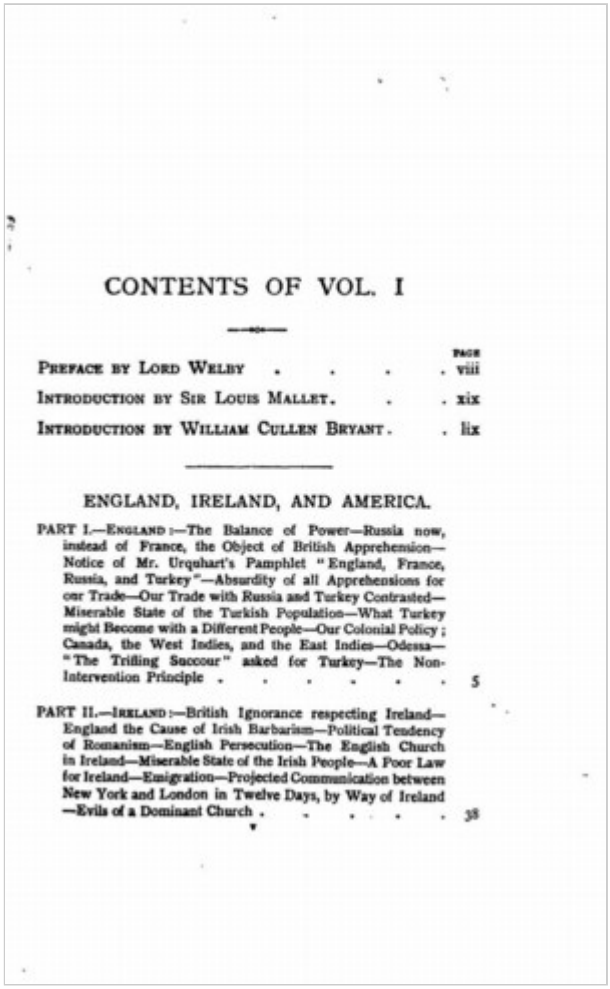

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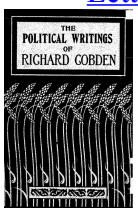
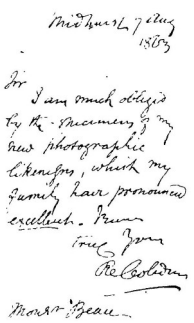


R. Cobden



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PREFACE

The State is severe mother. She demands from her noblest sons their intellects, their energies, and, if need be, their lives; but she is not ungrateful. The men who have guided her destinies live in grateful memory and in memory the more honoured, if to great service and lofty aims they have added disregard of self, directness of purpose, and simplicity of character. Such men become household words of the nation. They create the standard by which the nation measures itself, and by which it is measured. They strike the keynote of national character. Such a man was Richard Cobden, a type of a great Englishman to Englishmen of all times, a type in his truthfulness, in his simplicity, and in his devotion to the welfare of his countrymen.

It is nearly forty years since he passed away, and in the interval much has happened. During his youth and the prime of his manhood the people were suffering under the results of the Great War. Excessive taxation weighed upon all classes, but more especially upon the wage-earning and poorer classes. The progress of the nation was hampered by bad laws and unwise restrictions. The condition of the poor was miserable, for employment was scarce, wages were low, and food was dear. Education was neglected, and little had been done to make the mass of the people fit for the citizenship of a great and free country. This was the condition of the nation as Cobden knew it. He saw that improvement was impossible as long as the labouring classes were ill-fed and often unemployed, and he threw himself with all his soul into the fight for free trade and cheap food. The tale of the fight is admirably told in Morley's life of him. As one reads it, one is struck by the tact, the resource, the vigour and statesmanship of the man. Protection ruled in trade and agriculture, and the protected interests were to a man against him. But his chief foe was the agricultural interest. The great landowners were arrayed against him. The fight was long and severe, but Free Trade triumphed in the end and Cobden was the leader of the victorious party. There is no passage in the records of Parliamentary debate more striking than the oft-quoted tribute which in the hour of his triumph Sir Robert Peel paid to him.

“The name which ought to be associated with the success of our measures of commercial policy is not the name of the noble lord the organ of the party of which he is the leader, nor is it mine. The name which ought to be, and will be, associated with the success of those measures is the name of one who, acting, I believe, from pure and disinterested motives, has, with untiring energy, made appeals to our reason, and has enforced those appeals with an eloquence the more to be admired because it was unaffected and unadorned: the name which ought to be chiefly associated with the success of those measures is the name of Richard Cobden.”

The verdict of posterity has confirmed the judgment of Sir Robert Peel. It has associated inseparably and for ever the name of Cobden with the great Act of 1846. Many men and many interests then contested and now contest the policy of that Act, but generous opponents have never questioned the power, the energy, and the singlemindedness with which he fought the fight. Six years after the repeal of the

Corn Laws an event took place which fittingly crowned his labours. In December, 1852, the Tory party, after depriving Peel of office, after opposing for six long years his policy as ruinous to the nation, and after appealing to the country to reverse that policy, hauled down their colours, and the Tory Ministers of the Crown, and the bulk of their party followed the Liberals into the lobby in order to affirm a resolution that the policy of Cobden, which they had condemned, was sound and successful, and ought to be maintained. On that occasion a follower of Peel, pointing to the Treasury Bench, exclaimed, "If you want humiliation, look there." Cobden cared little for the humiliation. It was enough for him that, an insignificant minority of some fifty excepted, both parties in the House of Commons combined to affirm the great principle of which he was the champion.

It has been said that Cobden and Bright were demagogues. They were certainly leaders of the people; but a demagogue is generally supposed to secure and maintain his power with the people by flattering and cajoling them. A simple test will show whether Cobden and Bright were demagogues in this sense. In 1854 the Russian war broke out. The nation has always a warlike tendency, and when its leaders tell it that war is necessary, it accepts their judgment but too readily, throwing itself into the struggle with vigorous and earnest resolution. In that mood neither the upper classes nor the working classes are tolerant of opposition, and statesmen, however honest and capable, if they question the passion of the hour, are heard with impatience, their warnings and remonstrances are brushed aside, and, when opportunities offer, the constituencies are not slow to punish them; for the masses are unable to appreciate motives which appear to them unpatriotic. The result is intelligible, though not always creditable to the common sense of the nation. No demagogue, anxious to secure popularity and power, would oppose in such circumstances the dominant mood. Cobden and Bright thought that the Government and the people were in error, and that the war was unnecessary. Careless of popularity when conscience was concerned, they boldly expressed their views in and out of Parliament, and as a consequence they lost their popularity, and when, a year or two later, they denounced the war with China arising out of the miserable affair of the lorcha *Arrow*, they lost their seats. Who will say now that it was not good for the nation that the warning voice should have been raised, and that honour is not due to the men who dared to raise if? Who will say in the light of experience that they were wrong in either case? There are few of us who lived in those days, and shared the prevailing opinion, but have more than a doubt whether in the Crimean war our money was not wasted, and, what is worse, gallant lives lost in a bad cause. We know at least that one great Tory leader, lately, alas! taken from us, held that we put our money on the wrong horse. But be that as it may, happy is the country which has such demagogues as Cobden and Bright. Demagogues in the ordinary sense they were not. The title would fit better those who in war time use their passing popularity to inflame the national passion, and to crush opponents who do not share their views.

The could of distress which so long hung over the nation had begun to lift some years before Cobden died. He lived indeed to see the commencement of that national prosperity which marked the last third of the nineteenth century. When he commenced his campaign against Protection the value of British produce exported was rather more than £50,000,000. In 1864 it had risen to £160,000,000. In the year

1902 it had risen to £283,000,000. In 1841 one in every eleven persons of the population was in receipt of poor relief; in 1864 one in twenty; in 1902 only one in forty. In 1841 the deposits in Savings Banks were £24,500,000. In 1864 they had risen to £44,500,000; in 1900 to more than £207,000,000, besides £59,000,000 invested in Building and Provident Societies. In 1843 the total annual value of the property and profits assessed to income tax were, including an estimate for Ireland, £270,000,000. In 1864 it had risen to £370,000,000, and in 1900 to £758,000,000. Thus, in the quarter of a century from the formation of the Anti-Corn Law League, Cobden saw the result of that great movement in an increase of 200 per cent. in the export of our goods, in the diminution of pauperism by nearly a half, in the savings of the poor nearly doubled, and in the increase by 37 per cent. of the income of the well-to-do classes. Truly he might feel that, thanks in the main to the labours of himself and Bright, to the policy of which he had been the champion, the country had entered on a period of progress and prosperity. What would he have thought if his life could have been spared to the beginning of the twentieth century, and seen continued progress in our export trade, pauperism again decreased by a half, the savings of the poor increased by near 400 per cent., and the incomes of the well-to-do more than doubled?

Two facts characterise the national mood in the latter part of the century which would have grieved Cobden to the heart—the growth of military and naval expenditure and the development of warlike spirit in the people. He thought in 1850 an expenditure on army and navy of £16,000,000 excessive, and in 1864 he thought an expenditure on those services of £26,000,000 still more excessive. On this point he and Bright were not singular. Many men not of the Manchester school shared their views, and in 1862 the Liberal party in Parliament insisted on reduction of expenditure, supporting Gladstone in the Cabinet against Palmerston, and Palmerston had to yield. But if Cobden thought the expenditure of 1850 and 1864 excessive, what would he have thought of a military and naval expenditure of between £70,000,000 and £80,000,000 in 1903—a year of peace? And how would it have added to his sorrow to learn that this enormous expenditure is tolerated, one might say approved, by a democracy! When Cobden died the country was ruled by the middle classes, the house-holder of £10 and upwards. He was earnestly in favour of a wide extension of the suffrage. Within a few years of his death house-hold suffrage was established, and the franchise was extended to the agricultural labourers. Thus a middle-class Government was converted into a democracy. The middle-class constituencies had been economical to a certain extent, though not nearly so economical as Cobden would have wished. The democracy has been, and is, lavishly extravagant. A great Tory statesman, deploring the increase of public expenditure, could only say plaintively, “Who are we that we should stem the tide?”—an expression of despair, perhaps, hardly worthy of the leader of a great party, but indicative of the reality, I might say the popularity, of the evil, and of the difficulty of coping with it. Cobden acted consistently on principle, and we may rest assured that he would have granted the extension of the suffrage, even if he could have foreseen that the democracy would use it to their own disadvantage. He would have held that the people had a right to govern themselves, whether they used their power well or ill, but it would have sorely disappointed him to see the democracy, the working classes, whose true interest lies in public economy and low taxation, as eager as ever were the upper classes, and much more eager than the middle classes, for military glory, expansion of territory, and lavish expenditure.

The great work of Free Trade which Cobden accomplished is now wantonly assailed, and it is well that at the present crisis a new edition of his chief writings should be issued in order that men may read for themselves, and at first hand, the opinions which he held, and may learn from himself his conception of the true interests of the nation of which he was so eminently a type. “I would rather live in a country where the feeling in favour of individual liberty is jealously cherished, than be without it in the enjoyment of all the principles of the French constituted assembly.” Thus spoke the true Englishman. His speeches and writings are ransacked to find prophecies and anticipations which have not been fulfilled, in the hope of shaking faith in the soundness of the practical policy which he did so much to establish. Let him speak for himself. I care not whether his generous belief in the virtue of mankind, in their capacity for learning the lesson of enlightened self-interest and national morality led him into hopes which have not been justified by facts. Have the predictions of other great statesmen always been fulfilled? Shortly before the Peace of Amiens, Pitt thought that he could find the means for another year of war, and that England would then be exhausted, yet England found the means for carrying on the war until 1815, though unhappily she suffered under this strain on her resources for many a long year. Was Canning correct in his bombastic prophecy that he had called into existence a new world to correct the balance of the old? Has Palmerston's belief in the future of Turkey, which led him into the Crimean War, been justified? Or, to take a more modern instance, what shall we say of the foresight of our modern statesmen, who shut their eyes to the warnings of their expert advisers, and went totally unprepared into a great war, confident that it would last a few months and cost £10,000,000? It lasted nearly three years and cost £250,000,000. These were grave miscalculations of the future. In three of them they were especially grave, because they concerned immediate policy, but Cobden's hopes as to the spread of Free Trade in foreign countries, and the growth of desire for peace, did not affect his practical policy. He advocated Free Trade, as essential to the welfare and progress of the nation, irrespective of foreign tariffs or the warlike tendencies of nations. The higher foreigners built their tariff wall with a view to exclude our goods, the more resolute would he have been to demolish the wall, which a long period of Protectionist government had been erecting on this side the Channel. He wanted to give our working classes cheap food, and our manufacturers untaxed raw materials, and the incitement to skill and industry which competition affords, in order that we might continue to hold our pre-eminence in trade.

But the new Protectionists argue that circumstances have changed since 1846, and that the policy of 1 846 is no longer suited to the needs of the nation. Mr. Balfour, in his recent manifesto, lays it down that we ought “to accept provisionally the view that the character of our fiscal policy should vary with varying circumstances,” and he proposes to give effect to his axiom by a total revolution in our fiscal policy, which certainly cannot be described as provisional. In face, however, of so radical a change, it is not sufficient to say merely that circumstances have changed. The burthen of proof lies with the Government. The Prime Minister must show by facts that circumstances have changed to the detriment of the nation and to an extend which justifies the revolution. Is the prosperity of the nation declining? Let us take Mr. Balfour's evidence. “Judged by all available tests, both the total wealth and the diffused well-being of the country are greater than they ever have been. We are not

only rich and prosperous in appearance, but also, I believe, in reality. I can find no evidence that we are living on our capital." So far, therefore, and on the evidence of the chief opponent of Free Trade, circumstances have not changed to the detriment of the nation. Under Free Trade the country, since 1846, has steadily advanced in prosperity. What, then, is the Prime Minister's reason for the revolution? According to him a "close" examination of our export returns show signs of diminution, and he appends figures in support of his view, but his test is faulty. His argument applies to the volume of our exports, and his figures to their declared value. But the value is based on the prices of the years, which vary from year to year, and are therefore a faulty basis of comparison. Hence upon a superficial examination he formed a vague apprehension, and he offers this as a sufficient reason for a return to a system of retaliation so long tried, and so decidedly condemned by that most cautious and prudent of statesmen, Sir Robert Peel. It Cobden's policy is brought to trial upon this indictment only, his followers need not fear the verdict.

But Cobden's forecasts were not confined to the spread of Free Trade, or the growth of desire for peace. Let us note in his writings how sound were his views, how just his prescience on most of the important questions of the day. In "England, Ireland, and America," published in 1835, and in "Russia," published in 1836, he pleaded for non-intervention, not only as in accordance with moral law, but as a policy essential to the true interests of this country. He saw that the great change which had been silently taking place in the development of manufactures and in the growth of our town population made it necessary to review the principles of our domestic policy in order to adapt the Government to the changing condition of the people, and to alter "the maxim by which its foreign relations have in past times been regulated." He said that the policy of making food dear in order to protect the interest of one class of producers was not only unjust, but impossible. The larger part of the working classes, ill-fed and ill-paid, would not suffer for long their food to be made artificially dear by class legislation, that discontent and class war must be the result. He saw also—saw justly and saw first—"that it is from the silent and peaceful rivalry of American commerce, the growth of its manufactures, its rapid progress in internal improvement, the superior education of the people and their economical and pacific Government—that it is from these, and not from the barbarous or the impoverishing armaments of Russia that the grandeur of our commercial and national prosperity is endangered." He added, indeed, that in less than twenty years this would be the sentiment of the people of England generally. His prophecy was somewhat too sanguine, but sixty years at all events have taught us the justice of his views as to the United States. He showed us also how to face our great antagonist, viz., by removing all obstacles to trade. The United States have a thriving and intelligent population of 80,000,000 nearly double that of the United Kingdom. They are lightly taxed, very little indebted, and incur insignificant charge for military and naval service. Yearly a large proportion of the people goes into the towns and engages in manufacturing industries, and it is at this moment, when their competition with us becomes daily more intense, that it is gravely proposed that we should fetter and impede our manufacturing and consuming powers by preferential and retaliatory duties, that we should tie up a man's leg in order to help him in running a race.

Take, again, Cobden's views as to Ireland. How, after a powerful picture of Ireland's condition, he traces the evils which produced such results to the ignorance of England on Irish questions. How he condemns the statesmen “who have averted their faces from this diseased member of the body politic.” Listen to the following words written in 1851: “Hitherto in Ireland the sole reliance has been on bayonets and patching. The feudal system presses upon that country in a way which, as a rule, only foreigners can understand, for we have an ingrained feudal spirit in our English character. I never spoke to a French or Italian economist who did not at once put his finger on the fact that great masses of landed property were held by the descendants of a conquering race, who were living abroad, and thus in a double manner perpetuating the remembrance of conquest and oppression, while the natives were at the same time precluded from possessing themselves of landed property, and thus becoming interested in the peace of the country. . . . How are we to get out of this dilemma with the present House of Commons, and our representative system as it is, is the problem.” The problem was not to be solved by that House of Commons or the limited representative system that then existed. The Home Rule Bill of Mr. Gladstone may be open to criticism, but impartial history will recognise that he, with all the earnestness of his nature, forced the English nation much against its will to face the Irish questions—the question of the Irish Church, Irish self-government, and Irish land tenure. In this year of grace a Conservative Government is completing, with large aid from the British Exchequer, the revolution in the tenure of Irish land begun in1881, and Mr. Wyndham's measure, which aims at ending this “feudal system” of land tenure, confirms and justifies the foresight of Cobden and the policy of Gladstone. “In Russia,” published in 1836, and in “What Next and Next?” published during the Crimean War, Cobden reproved the spirit of Russo-phobia then rampant, and rampant long afterwards; but there are signs that thinking minds are beginning to share the views of Cobden on that the fear of Russia, which has so long haunted the nation, which plunged us into the Crimean War, the Afghanistan War, and which more recently led the Government to take a course in China which has not enhanced our reputation.

In his letter to Mr. Ashworth (Aril 10, 1862) Cobden urged that all private property should in time of war be exempt from capture at sea, that neutral ships ought to be exempt from search or visitation, and that the commercial ports of an enemy ought to be exempt from blockade. Cobden advocated these changes in international law, after his wont, because they would be of special advantage to this country. Many people are at present exercised as to the ensuring a supply of food for this country in time of war. They are discussing clumsy and expensive remedies against this contingency. They would do well to consider Cobden's able argument in support of his proposal. This country could not under any circumstances provide the food required for its immense population, and it must be dependent on foreign countries for the raw material of its manufacturers. No country, therefore, is more interested in modifications of international law which would ensure the supply of these necessaries. It is possible that those modifications might not be respected by belligerent nations under the stress of war, but their acceptance by the Powers would impose an obligation on belligerents, which could not be repudiated without risk and without dishonour. The “Three Panics” is a powerfully-written pamphlet, both in style and matter. It is an excellent example of the manner in which Cobden seizes the weak

points of a policy to which he is opposed, of the clearness and conciseness with which the exposes them, and of the skill and power with which he drives homes his conclusions.

In these writings Cobden may have overrated anticipated advantages and underrated difficulties. He may have been to sanguine in some directions, he may have relied too much on the wisdom of this and other nations, and not have been sufficiently alive to the ambition of statesmen and to international jealousies; but no fair person can fail to by struck by the general soundness of his argument, the morality of his statesmanship, and the correctness in the main of his foresight, as evidenced by the manner in which national opinion has veered in his direction. His opinion on national expenditure will be chiefly criticised. Probably he, like other persons, taught by the experience of the last forty years, would admit the necessity of a navy, sufficiently powerful according to our present knowledge, for our defence. It must indeed be remembered that he accepted the principle of that policy, though he did not accept even the standard of efficiency accepted by the statesmen of that day. On the whole, however, how just was his opinion of the national interest in public economy! True Liberals, true Free Traders, must endorse his principles as strongly now as then, nay, more strongly, for the evil of extravagance becomes daily more evident. Conservatives, such as Lord Salisbury and Sir M. Hicks-Beach, deplore it, but have been powerless to check it. We have lost their services, and their places are occupied by the advocates of extravagance and Protection. Liberals know that if a nation is to be strong and contented the mass of the population must be sufficiently fed. The extravagance of peace expenditure in the last few years has necessitated a reversal of the wise policy which ruled from 1842 for forty years. The tea duty has been raised until it is nearly 100 percent. on the value of the article. A duty has been placed upon sugar equivalent to 50 per cent. upon its value, apart from our quixotic anxiety to lose a bounty worth to us probably another 50 per cent. The supposed necessity for lavish expenditure has made it necessary to seek new sources of revenue, and high financial authority has pleaded that the basis of taxation must be widened. That is to say, duties must be imposed on articles of consumption, and the poorest classes must be taxed in order to meet the ever-increasing demand for military expenditure—a singular device for improving the physical strength and consequently the power of the nation. Mr. Chamberlain goes a step further, and would “widen the basis of taxation” in furtherance of a new life of policy. He wishes to tax the bread of the poor as a tribute to our prosperous fellow subjects in the self-governing Colonies, and in the hope that this contribution from the working classes at home may induce the Colonies to enter into closer confederation with us. Thus economy in public expenditure in which Cobden insisted with such earnestness is absolutely abandoned, and the Liberal learns the value of that article in his creed, when he sees the result. Military experts, policy-mongers, interested trades have only to ask in order to receive. The tub of the Danaids is a water-tight vessel compared with the exchequer. The burthen of this extravagance weighs upon all classes, but most upon the poor.

The Free Trader, on his side, sees that extravagance in public expenditure, by making new taxation necessary, has given the Protectionists an opportunity of which they are not slow to avail themselves, and it is only too likely that, if the nation does not speak out, Protection in aggravated form will be a plank in the Conservative platform. Thus

the lesson which Cobden taught is brought home to Liberal and Free Trader alike, and the wisdom of the teaching is made only too clear.

Students of English may learn much form Cobden's writings. They are like his speech—clear, fearless, vigorous, but persuasive. The style was the man, the result of conviction based upon close observation and careful thought. The purity of his style is the more remarkable, since he had no advantage from education in the formation of it; but his keen sense of beauty, his innate power of understanding excellence in art, bestowed upon him a power of appreciation such as men usually acquire by long study. How genuine, in his Italian diary, is his admiration of the great works of antiquity, and how well he expresses his admiration of them!

The two great twin brethren of Free Trade were singularly fitted for co-operation in the conduct of a crusade against vested interests and deep-rooted prejudices. Both were outspoken, both put clearly and pointedly their argument to the public, and neither of them was a respecter of persons. Bright, however, was bold and somewhat aggressive, while Cobden was bold and persuasive. Cobden, therefore, aroused less personal antagonism; but the English mind is conservative, and people in comfortable circumstances regard with distrust the man who attacks established interests and the existing order of things. Hence Cobden, though perhaps in a less degree than Bright, was for years misunderstood by the upper classes. A lady of conservative principles, but generous sympathies, who is gifted with a power, rare in women, of appreciating a political opponent, was an intimate friend of Cobden. She knew the pleasure which works of art gave him, and she proposed that they should visit together a well-known collection. She asked her friend, the owner of the pictures, for permission. The lady replied that they might come and lunch, but that she herself could not meet Mr. Cobden. To thinking minds such prejudice is astonishing, but there is little doubt that had his life been spared he would have lived it down as Bright lived it down, and possibly more easily than Bright.

May a new edition of Cobden's writings in this hour of crisis for Free Trade find readers in every part of the kingdom. His pamphlets have lost nothing of their intrinsic value, though they were written seventy, fifty, forty years ago, and though the circumstances of the nation, and the temper of the nation, have changed greatly in the interval. The principles they inculcate, the lessons they teach, are as good and as sound now as they were then. Thoughtful readers will realise how Cobden's policy has removed causes of discontent, has promoted good understanding throughout the community, and tended to weld rich and poor into one nation. They will realize how just, and therefore how conservative, were his views, and how sound in the main was his judgment, even tried during half a century by the hard test of experience. We who are free Traders have absolute confidence in our principle, and our belief in the great leader of the Free Trade movement is unabated.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION
By Sir Louis Mallet, C.B.

THE POLITICAL OPINIONS OF RICHARD COBDEN.
PREFACE.

The following paper was written for the *North British Review* in 1867, and has been reprinted, with a few alterations, by permission of the editor, at the request of the Committee of the Cobden Club.

I originally wrote it with reluctance, because I was conscious of my inability to do justice to its subject, but I though that, as a contribution towards a better understanding of Cobden's, political character, it might serve a useful purpose; and in the same hope I have consented to reprint it now.

I have done so the more readily, because it is impossible not to feel that Cobden's principles are even now constantly misrepresented; and are, in some directions, losing their hold on the public mind of England.

Is it in ignorance, or in irony, that the charge of aiming at nothing more than mere material prosperity is so often brought against the one statesman who vindicated with a peculiar wisdom the morality of Economic Science; in other words, the veiled but eternal harmony between material progress and the highest civilisation of our race?

Is it in deeper ignorance, or in more subtle irony, that one whose whole life was an unceasing protest against a narrow and selfish patriotism, and who will take his place in history as the “International Man,” has been identified with the policy which, under the name of “non-intervention,” confounds in a coarse and common condemnation, political meddling and international co-operation?

I have said that Cobden's principles are in some directions losing their hold on the public mind. This is especially the case with respect to what we call “Free Trade;” which, between its so-called friends and its enemies, is drifting more and more into irretrievable confusion as a principle of imperial policy.

In its domestic aspect “Free Trade,” or rather “Free Exchange,” has been forgotten in the chorus of congratulation at the downfall of protection in its grossest form; and in our Foreign policy, while discarding reciprocity of restrictions, we have failed to appreciate the importance of the reciprocity of freedom.

We have obtained enough Free Trade to enable our upper and middle classes and acquire more wealth than, with their present education, they can either employ wisely or spend innocently, and to stimulate unproductive consumption in vulgar luxury and wasteful charity; but we have not obtained enough Free Trade to feed and clothe and house our people, or to inspire confidence in other countries, and to establish those

international relations without which all hope of internal progress is a foolish and idle dream.

It is painful to perceive the inferiority of the political utterances of our day on social and economic questions, to those of the Anti-Corn-Law League, in grasp of principles, in command of facts, and, above all, in moral feeling.

The men who took part in the labours of the League dwell naturally more on that which they have done, than on that which we have to do; and a generation has succeeded to a large share in our political life, which consults for the solution of our social problems far other oracles than those which inspired Cobden.

The sinister reaction set in motion by the Crimean War, fostered by the wars in China, and culminating in the Parliament of 1857, has gone far to neutralise the impulse given to our productive forces by the partial liberation of our trade, and left us with increased wealth indeed, but with a distribution of it more unequal and more unnatural than before, and with a large population, whose chronic wretchedness and degradation is a standing reproach to our civilisation, and a sullen protest against our laws. And while the cry of suffering multitudes is the morning and the evening sacrifice of our proudest cities, our Government and our people alike are calling on each other helplessly in turn for a policy a deliverance.

Can we wonder, then, that those who have been taught to believe that they are living under a Free Trade dispensation, and who have never taken the pains to compare the doctrines of its apostles with the practice of our lawgivers, should accuse it of disastrous failure; and that while on one hand we are advised to desist from further action till, by the free play of consciousness, we have discovered an intelligible law of things; on the other, we are urged to tamper with the laws, and assail the rights of labour and of property, and to revive discarded systems which are only innocent so long as they are impossible?

But before accusing Economic Science and Free Exchange, I would ask whether, with our present laws as they affect our land, our currency, our fiscal and colonial systems, our foreign relations, and our military and naval administration, we may not rather trace our failure in civilisation to a systematic and deliberate violation of their most imperious precepts? Whether the success of what is called practical statesmanship is such as to justify its cynical contempt of principles? and whether it is wise to condemn and discredit as ineffectual a policy which has never yet been tried?

It is because I believe that the work of Governments lies in providing for the full and undistributed action of the forces of freedom, instead of interfering themselves with their operation; and that our social disorders can only be remedied by pressing along the lines of progress, laid for us by Cobden and the League; that I view with pain and fear the morbid craving of our time after other agencies, in most of which may be detected, disguise it as we may, the germ of Communism, a fatal poison, tainting at their common source two of the most sacred springs of social life, personal liberty and personal responsibility.

June, 1869.

L. M.

THE POLITICAL OPINIONS OF RICHARD COBDEN.

The time has not yet arrived for writing Cobden's life.

The great political struggles in which he engaged are still too fresh in the memory of the present generation, to admit of a faithful record of his political career, without including much which affects too closely the characters of public men still on the scene, or but recently removed from it; and of the last great achievement of his life, and his solitary official act, the Commercial Treaty with France, it is impossible yet to speak freely.

But it is on this account only the more important—and especially at a time when upon the conduct and intelligence of the Liberal party in this country it depends, whether the years before us are to bring with them a repetition of the inconsistencies and hesitations which have too often deformed and paralysed our recent course, or are to be a fruitful and brilliant period of rational and consistent progress—that the policy of which Cobden was the foremost representative, should at least be thoroughly understood and widely known.

It is therefore with a peculiar satisfaction that we hail the work before us, and we trust it may be shortly followed by a republication of his principal speeches, both in and out of Parliament, so far as these can be collected, and if possible by a selection of his letters, on the great practical questions of the day.

In bringing together, in a connected form, these political essays written on various subjects, on different occasions, and at wide intervals of time, but unsurpassed in cogency of reasoning, and in their truthful and temperate spirit, Mrs. Cobden has rendered a great service both to her husband's memory and to the rising generation of Englishmen.

Presented originally to the public in the ephemeral form of pamphlets, thrown out in sharp opposition to the prevailing passions and prejudices of the hour, and systematically depreciated as they were by the organs of public opinion which guide the majority of our upper classes, we suspect that they are well-nigh forgotten by the elder, and little known to the younger men among us. Yet do these scattered records of Mr. Cobden's thoughts contain a body of political doctrine more original, more profound, and more consistent, than is to be found in the spoken or written utterances of any other English statesman of our time, and we commend them to the earnest study and consideration of all who aspire to exert an influence on the future government of our country.

Whatever may be thought of his political character, it will be admitted that no man has made a deeper impression on the policy of this country during the last thirty years than Richard Cobden.

This will, we believe, be acknowledged by many of his countrymen, who would be slow to allow that the impression thus made had been for good, and who still regard him with open aversion or concealed suspicion, as one of the foremost and most powerful advocates of changes in our system of government, designed, as they believe and fear, to affect the security of vested interests, which they have been in the habit of identifying with the greatness and welfare of the State. But it cannot, we think, be denied even now that, in spite of the resistance of class interests, and of the avowed or tacit opposition of the great political parties, our national policy has been gravitating more and more in the direction of his views, and that, so far at least, whatever progress has been made in the national prosperity has been principally due to the steps which have been taken in fulfillment of his principles.

The false judgment so commonly passed upon this statesman is to be traced, we believe, in a great measure to that which constitutes his great and his distinguished merit, viz., his steady adherence to general principles, and his consequent freedom from class and party views, and his indifference to the popular clamour of the hour, which in turn brought him into collision with all classes and with all parties, and, on some memorable occasions, with the body of the people themselves.

It is thus that he has been constantly charged with narrowness, and with hostility to the institutions of his country, too often confounded with its conservative forces, and cherished as such by many who are entitled to our respect, as well as by the ignorant and selfish; but it will be found that the charge is usually brought on the part of some class whose special interests he denounced or thwarted, or on the part of the nation at large, when the assumed national interest has been opposed to the larger interest of humanity. He has been accused of want of patriotism and indifference to the national honour and greatness, when, on the contrary, a deeper examination of his views will show, we think, that he was one of the few leading statesmen of our time who have exhibited a real practical faith in the future of England.

The public estimate, however, of this political leader has undergone, and is undergoing, a very remarkable change; and it is in the hope of aiding in a better understanding of principles which, from their soundness and close logical coherence, appear to us to afford the only consistent and intelligible ground for the policy of the Liberal party, that the following pages are written.

Mr. Cobden's political character was the result of a rare and fortunate combination of personal qualities and of external circumstances.

Sprung from the agricultural class, and bred up (to use his own expression) “amidst the pastoral charms of Southern England,” imbued with so strong an attachment to the pursuits of his forefathers, that, as he says himself, in the volumes before us, “had we the casting of the *rôle* of all the actors on this world's stage, we do not think that we should suffer a cotton-mill or manufactory to have a place in it;” trained in a large commercial house in London, and subsequently conducting on his own account a print manufactory in Lancashire, Mr. Cobden possessed the peculiar advantage of a thorough acquaintance and sympathy with the three great forms of industrial life in

England. Nor were the experiences of his public career less rich and varied than those of his private life.

The first great political question in which he bore a conspicuous part, the Anti-Corn-Law agitation, and his consequent connection with the powerful producing class, which, by the fortunate coincidence of interest with that of the people at large, originated and led this great and successful struggle, gave him a thorough insight into this important element of our body-politic, in all its strength and in all its weakness; his knowledge of other countries—the result of keen personal observation, and much travel both in Europe and America, his intimate relations with some of their best and most enlightened men, as well as with their leading politicians, and the moderating and restraining influences of twenty years of Parliamentary life, during which he conciliated the respect and esteem even of his strongest opponents, combined with the entire absence in his case of all sectarian influences and prejudices—gave to his opinions a comprehensive and catholic character, which is perhaps the rarest of all the attributes of English statesmanship.

Mr. Cobden entered Parliament, not, as is the fate of most of our public men, to support a party, to play, for office, or to educate himself for professional statesmanship, still less to gratify personal vanity or to acquire social importance, but as the representative of distinct principles, and of a great cause.

Mr. Cobden belonged to the school of political thinkers who believe in the perfect harmony of moral and economical laws, and that in proportion as these are recognised, understood, and obeyed by nations, will be their advance in all that constitutes civilisation.

He believed that the interests of the individual, the interests of the nation, and the interests of all nations are identical; and that these several interests are all in entire and necessary concordance with the highest interests of morality. With this belief, an economic truth acquired with him the dignity and vitality of a moral law, and, instead of remaining a barren doctrine of the intellect, became a living force, to move the hearts and consciences of men. It is to a want of a clear conception of this great harmony between the moral and economic law, or to a disbelief in its existence, that are to be traced some of the most pernicious errors of modern times, and the lamentable condition of Europe at the present moment.

We believe that the main cause of the hopeless failure of the great French Revolution, in the creation and consolidation of free institutions in Europe, was the absence, on the part of its leading spirits, of all sound knowledge of the order of facts upon which economic science rests, and the prevalence of false ideas of government, derived from classical antiquity.

Rousseau, who exercised a greater influence in bringing about the Revolution than any other man, and after him Mirabeau and Robespierre, the two great figures which represent and personify that mighty upheaval of society, were all fundamentally wrong in their conception of the right of property. This, instead of regarding as a right preceding all law, and lying at the root of all social existence, they considered simply

as a creation of the law, which itself again derived its rights from a social compact, opposed in many respects to the natural rights of man. Society was thus made to rest upon the quicksand of human invention, instead of being fixed on the rock of God's providence; and law was made the source, instead of the guardian, of personal liberty and of private property.

Hence the disastrous shipwreck of a great cause, the follies and the crimes, the wild theories, the barren experiments, and the inevitable reaction. The principle invoked, the State, was stronger than those who appealed to it, and swallowed them up in a military despotism.

This false direction of ideas survived the Restoration, and when, after 1830, the intellect of France again addressed itself to social questions, it was with the same result. Saint Simon, Fourrier, Louis Blanc, and Proudhon are there to attest the deep-rooted perversion of thought which has hitherto made all free government impossible in France, and brought upon her again, for the second time, the stern hand of a military ruler, who, wiser than his uncle, while setting aside for a time other forms of liberty in France, has had the sagacity to perceive that, by entering upon even a partial and tentative course of material reform, he could evoke forces which have hitherto been strong enough to maintain him on his vantage-ground, against all the political parties opposed to him, dynastic and socialist, whose common hatred to him has been rendered impotent by the only other common bond between them, viz., their still deeper hatred of some of the most sacred rights of the human race—the rights of labour and of property. And even to this day what do we see? In spite of the terrible experience of nearly a hundred years of failure, French so-called Liberal leaders still ranged on the side of industrial monopoly and commercial privilege, and while clamouring for constitutional freedom, proving in the same breath their incapacity for using it, by denouncing that in which, at all events, the Emperor is entitled to the sympathy of the friends of progress—his commercial policy. Until the bourgeois class in Europe has learnt that no country can be free until the rights of its people are secured by free exchange, they will have to choose between the rival alternations of autocratic and socialistic misrule.

The great founder of the English school of political economy, who had witnessed himself in France the disorders which preceded the Revolution, and speculated on their causes, viewed them from another side. He instinctively perceived that, as all human society must rest upon a material foundation, it was to the laws of material progress that inquiry must be first directed, and that, before and beneath all systems of government and all schemes of public morality, there must lie the science of the "wealth of nations." To the investigation of this science Adam smith devoted those years of patient and conscientious thought, to which we owe the treatise which has made his name immortal, and which, in spite of much that has been added and much that has been taken from it since, remains as a great storehouse of knowledge to the students of economic laws.

It is easy, however, to trace the habitual connection in the mind of smith, between the dry facts of science and the great social laws which alone give them life and meaning,

and a belief in the steady natural gravitation of all the interests of our race towards order and moral progress.

The school of English economists who succeeded him appear to us to have too much lost sight of this necessary connection, and to have dwelt too exclusively on the phenomena of economic facts, as distinct and separate from their correlative moral consequences. To this cause, as well as to their partial and often inaccurate observation of those phenomena, we attribute the absence of adequate political results which has attended their teaching, the repugnance which their doctrines have too often excited in generous and ardent natures, and the consequent discredit of a science indispensable to the progress and prosperity of nations, and destined, perhaps more than any other branch of human knowledge, to reconcile the ways of God to man.

The mission of man in this world is to possess the earth and subdue it, and for this purpose to summon to his aid, and bring under his control, the external forces of nature. This task, hard and ungrateful at first, become lighter as it proceeds. Every natural force successively subdued to man's uses adds to the stock of gratuitous services which are the common possession of the race, and when the rights of property and labour are thoroughly established by universal freedom, and the services of man have thus secured their just remuneration, the inequalities which prevail in the conditions of human life, so far as they are the result of artificial, and not of natural, causes, will diminish and disappear more an more, till even the lowest classes in the social scale will be raised to a level of well-being hitherto unknown and unimagined.

The first great law of humanity is labour. “By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread.” From this there is no escape. The burden will be lightened, and reduced to a minimum, inconceivable to us at present, as the forces of nature are brought by science and industry more under the control of man; and it may be shifted, as it is, from the whole to a part of society, but the law remains.

It is this law, then, the law of labour, which lies at the root of all human life. Upon this foundation rests the whole fabric of society, religion, morals, science, art, literature — all that adorns or exalts existence. But if the law of labour is thus paramount and sovereign, it follows that its rights are sacred, and that there can be no permanent security for any society in which these are not protected. The rights of labour involve and comprehend the right of personal liberty, and the right of property. The first implies the free use of each man's powers and faculties; the second, an inalienable title to the products of his labour, in use or in exchange.

It is to the violation of the rights of labour and of property, thus identified, in all the various forms of human oppression and injustice, by force or by fraud, in defiance of law or in the name of law, that is to be traced the greatest part of the disorders and sufferings which have desolated humanity, and the unnecessary and unnatural inequalities in the condition of men.

It is to the assertion of these rights, and to the gradual ascendency of the opposing and equalising principles of justice and freedom, that the coming generations alone can look for a future which shall be better than the past.

"Il n'y a que deux moyens," says Bastiat, "de se procurer less choses nécessaires à l'embellissement, et au perfectionnement de la vie—la production et la spoliation." And again, "Propriété et spoliation, sœurs nées du même pére, Génie du Bien, et Génie du Mal, Salut et Fléau de la Société, Puissances qui se disputent depuis le commencement, l'empire et les destinées du monde."

These truths are of comparatively recent acceptance even in theory among us, and in practice still are far indeed from being applied. Such, moreover, is the confusion of thought, engendered by historical association, political prejudice, and class interest, that many of the forms of spoliation are hardly recognized when disguised in the garb of a British institution, a party principle, or a vested right; in which artificial costume they still impose on the credulity of many of our countrymen.

It is true that war is generally admitted to be an evil, and slavery to be a wrong; that the Reformation has dealt a heavy blow at theocracy, and Free Trade at monopoly.

But the spirit of war is still fostered and stimulated, by false ideas of national honour, patriotism, and policy, and to the art of war we still devote our mightest efforts, and consecrate our costliest sacrifices. The grosser forms of slavery have indeed disappeared, but its taint is still to be traced in some of our institutions, and in our feeling towards subject races; while our Reformed Church, with its temporalities, and its exclusive pretensions and privileges, is still too often the enemy of the foundation of all freedom, liberty of thought.

The last, and perhaps the most insidious, of the leading forms of "spoliation," commercial monopoly, though driven from its strongholds, and expelled from our national creed, is still regarded by many among us with secret favour, and by most of us rather as a political error than as a moral wrong.

It was to struggle with this last great evil that Cobden devoted his life, and it is with the most decisive victory ever achieved in this field of conflict that his name and fame will be always identified; but it is significant and interesting to know that, in selecting his work in life, it was to "Education," and not to "Free Trade," that his thoughts were first directed.

Two reasons decided him to prefer the latter as the object of his efforts:— *Firstly,* his conviction (referred to above) that the material prosperity of nations is the only foundation of all progress, and that if this were once secured the rest would follow. *Secondly,* his consciousness that no direct attempt to obtain a system of national education which deserved the name, could lead to any clear result in the life of his own generation, and that, measured with those at his command, imposing as were the forces of resistance arrayed against him on the question of Free Trade, they were less formidable than those which would be brought to bear against a measure which united in a common hostility the Established and the Dissenting Churches.

It was Cobden's fate or fortune to find himself, in taking up the cause of Free Trade, in the presence of one of the worst laws which the selfishness or folly of Governments have ever imposed on the weakness or ignorance of a people.

When the soil of a country is appropriated, the only means whereby an increasing population can limit the encroachments of the proprietors, is by working for foreign markets. Such a population has only its labour to give in exchange for its requirements, and, if this labour is constantly increasing, while the produce of the soil is stationary, more of the first will steadily and progressively be demanded, for less of the last.

This will be manifested by a fall of wages, which is, as has been well observed, the greatest of misfortunes when it is due to natural causes — the greatest of crimes when it is caused by the law.

The Corn Law was the fitting sequel to the French war. The ruling classes in England had seized on the reaction of feeling created by the excesses of the French Revolution, to conceal the meaning of that event, and to discredit the principles of popular sovereignty which it asserted. They had before them a people impoverished and degraded by the waste of blood and treasure in which years of war had involved their country; and seeing the prospect before them, which the peace had opened, of a fall in the prices of agricultural produce, under the beneficent operation of the great laws of exchange, they resorted to the device of prolonging by Act of Parliament the artificial scarcity created by the war, and of thus preserving to the landed interest the profits which had been gained at the expense of the nation.

It is thus that, as the forces of progress are invariably found to act and reach on each other, the forces of resistance and of evil will ever be side by side, and that as protection, which means the isolation of nations, tends both by its direct and indirect effects to war, so war again engenders and perpetuates the spirit of protection. Free Trade, or as Cobden called it, the International Law of the Almighty, which means the interdependence of nations, must bring with it the surest guarantee of peace, and peace inevitably leads to freer and freer commercial intercourse; and therefore, while there is no sadder page in the modern history of England than that which records the adoption of this law by the British Parliament, there is, to our minds, none more bright with the promise of future good than that on which was written, after thirty years of unjust and unnecessary suffering, its unconditional repeal.

But as the intellect and conscience of the country had failed so long to recognize the widespread evils of this pernicious law, and the fatal principles which lay at its roots, so did they now most dimly and imperfectly apprehend the scope and consequences of its abolition.

It was called the repeal of a law; admitted to be the removal of an intolerable wrong; but we doubt whether in this country, except by a few gifted and far-seeing leaders of this great campaign, it was foreseen that it was an act which involved, in its certain results, a reversal of the whole policy of England.

This was, however, clear enough to enlightened observers in other countries. By one of those rare coincidents which sometimes exercise so powerful an influence of human affairs, it happened, that while Cobden in England was bringing to bear on the great practical questions of his time and country the principles of high morality and

sound economy which had been hitherto too little considered in connection with each other, Frederic Bastiat was conceiving and maturing in France the system of political philosophy which has since been given to the world, and which still remains the best and most complete exposition of the views of which Cobden was the great representative.

It appears to us that these two men were necessary to each other. Without Cobden, Bastiat would have lost the powerful stimulant of practical example, and the wide range of facts which the movement in England supplied, and from which he drew much of his inspiration. Without Bastiat, Cobden's policy would not have been elaborated into a system, and, beyond his own immediate coadjutors and disciples, would probably have been most imperfectly understood on the Continent of Europe.

More than this, who can say what may not have been the effect on the minds of both these men, of the interchange of thoughts and opinions which freely passed between them?

In his brilliant history of the Anti-Corn-Law Leaugue, “Cobden et la Ligue,” Bastiat thus describes the movement of which England was the theatre during that memorable struggle:—

“I have endeavoured to state with all exactness the question which is being agitated in England. I have described the field of battle, the greatness of the interests which are there being discussed, the opposing forces, and the consequences of victory. I have shown, I believe, that though the heat of contest may seem to be concentrated on questions of taxation, of custom-houses, of cereals, of sugar, it is, in point of fact, a question between monopoly and liberty, aristocracy and democracy — a question of equality or inequality in the distribution of the general well-being. The question at issue is to know whether legislative power and political influence shall remain in the hands of the men of rapine, or in those of the men of toil; that is, whether they shall continue to embroil the world in troubles and deeds of violence, or sow the seeds of concord, of union, of justice, and of peace.

“What would be the thought of the historian who could believe that armed Europe, at the beginning of this century, performed, under the leadership of the most able generals, so many feats of strategy for the sole purpose of determining who should possess the narrow fields that were the scenes of the battles of Austerlitz or of Wagram? The fate of dynasties and empires depend on those struggles. But the triumphs of force may be ephemeral; it is not so with the triumphs of opinion. And when we see the whole of a great people, whose influence on the world is undoubted, impregnate itself with the doctrines of justice and truth; when we see it repel the false ideas of supremacy which have so long rendered it dangerous to nations; when we see it ready to seize the political ascendant from the hands of a greedy and turbulent oligarchy—let us beware of believing, even when its first efforts seem to bear upon economic questions, that greater and nobler interests are not engaged in the struggle. For if, in the midst of many lessons of iniquity, many instances of national perversity, England, this imperceptible point of our globe, has seen so many great and useful ideas take root upon her soil —if she was the cradle of the press, of trial by jury, of a

representative system, of the abolition of slavery, in spite of the opposition of a powerful and pitiless oligarchy— what may not the world expect from this same England when all her moral, social, and political power shall have passed, by a slow and difficult revolution, into the hands of democracy— a revolution peacefully accomplished in the minds of men under the leadership of an association which embraces in its bosom so many men whose high intellectual power and unblemished character shed so much glory on their country, and on the century in which they live? Such a revolution is no simple event, no accident, no catastrophe due to an irresistible but evanescent enthusiasm. It is, if I may use the expression, a slow social cataclysm, changing all the conditions of life and of society, the sphere in which it lives and breathes. It is justice possessing herself of power; good sense of authority. It is the general weal, the weal of the people, of the masses, of the small and of the great, of the strong and of the weak, becoming the law of political action. It is the disappearance behind the scene of privilege, abuse, and caste-feeling, not by a palace-revolution or a street-rising, but by the progressive and general appreciation of the rights and duties of man. In a word, it is the triumph of human liberty; it is the death of monopoly, that Proteus of a thousand forms, now conqueror, now slave-owner; at one time lover of theocracy and feudalism, at another time assuming an industrial, a commercial, a financial, and even a philanthropic shape. Whatever disguise it might borrow, it could no longer bear the eye of public opinion, which has learned to detect it under the scarlet uniform or under the black gown, under the planter's jacket and the noble peer's embroidered robe. Liberty for all! for everyman a just and natural remuneration for his labour! for every man a just and natural avenue to equality in proportion to his energy, his intelligence, his prudence, and his morality! Free Trade with all the world! Peace with all the world! No more subjugation of new colonies, no more army, no more navy, than is necessary for the maintenance of national independence! A radical distinction between that which is and that which is not the mission of government and law; political association reduced to guarantee each man his liberty and safety against all unjust aggressions, whether from without or from within; equal taxation, for the purpose of properly paying the men charged with this mission, and not to serve as a mask under the name of outlets for trade *(débouchés),* for outward usurpation, and, under the name of *protection,* for the mutual robbery of classes. Such is the real issue in England, though the field of battle may be confined to a custom-house question. But this question involves slavery in its modern form; for as Mr.Gibson, a member of the League, has said in Parliament, ‘To get possession of men that we may make them work for our own profit, or to take possession of the fruits of their labour, is equally and always slavery; there is no difference but in the degree.’”

This passage, all due allowance made for the tendency to brilliant generalisation which Bastiat shared with so many of his gifted countrymen, remains on the whole a most powerful, condensed, and accurate analysis of the great principles involved in the political conflict then passing in England, and is a testimony to the rare insight and sagacity of the writer. It is affords a striking illustration of the power which a clear and firm grasp of principles gives to the political student, in guiding his speculations on the most complicated problems which society presents.

The system of which the Corn Laws were the corner-stone, traced to its source, rested on the principle of spoliation, and on the foundation of force.

That which was inaugurated by the overthrow of that law, rested on the principle of freedom, and on the foundation of justice.

Monopoly of trade, involving, as it must, the violation of rights of property and of labour, both in the internal and external relations of a State, and implying, when carried to its logical consequences, national isolation, contains within itself the germs of inevitable stagnation and decay. To avoid these results, it is necessary that a Government which maintains it should resort to all the expedients of force and fraud — to conquest, colonial aggrandisement, maritime supremacy, foreign alliances, reciprocity treaties, and communism in the shape of poor-laws — and should perpetually appeal to the worst and most contemptible passions of its people, its national pride, to false patriotism, to jealousy, to fear and to selfishness, in order to keep alive its prestige and to conceal its rottenness.

We are far from imputing the marvellous skill which the ruling classes in England displayed in the use of these expedients to a conscious and deliberate policy. We know that good and able men, and an honest though misguided patriotism, have been too often the blind instruments of the retributive justice which always avenges the violation of moral principles; but there was a point beyond which even these expedients would not suffice to arrest the national decay, and with a debt of £800,000,000, an impoverished starving people, the universal distrust, and the avowed or concealed hostility of foreign nations, who had imitated our policy too closely, while growing communities of our own blood, with boundless material resources and free institutions, were outstripping us in the race of progress, and making the future competition of force impossible, a state of things had been engendered which called for prompt and vigorous remedy.

To Cobden, and his colleagues of the League, belongs the merit of having traced the disease to its source, of having stayed the progress of the poison which was slowly, but surely, undermining our national greatness, and of changing the current of English policy.

Mr. Bright has recently told us the occasion, and the manner, of Cobden's invitation to him to join him in this beneficent work.

At a moment of supreme domestic calamity, Cobden called on him and said, “Do not allow this grief, great as it is, to weigh you down too much. There are at this moment, in thousands of homes of this country, wives and children who are dying in hunger, of hunger made by the laws; if you will come along with me, we will never rest until we have got rid of the Corn Laws.” The appeal was not made in vain, and we know with what results.

But the repeal of the Corn Laws, the false idea of isolated progress was for ever dispelled, our foreign trade became a condition of our existence, and the great law of

international co-operation assumed its rightful place as the animating principle of our future course.

But though the edifice of protection was shaken at the base, and the fabric irrevocally doomed to destruction, the work was only begun: the ideas which the system had created had taken too deep root in the minds of the governing classes, and the forces of reaction were still too powerful to allow of speedy or logical progress.

The gradual breaking-up of the protective system after the repeal of the Corn Laws was a work which must in any case have proceeded, under the pressure of the irresistible force of circumstances; but we think that justice has never been done to the Government of Lord John Russell, and his colleagues Lord Grey and Mr.Labouchere, in this respect.

The equalisation of the Sugar Duties, the repeal of the Navigation Laws, the reform of our “Colonial System,” were all accomplished by this administration, and few indeed have been the Governments of England which can point to such substantial services as these in the cause of progress. This course of useful domestic reform was, however, rudely interrupted by one of those events which ought to teach us the hopelessness of all permanent progress by isolated action, and the absolute necessity of always considering our position as a member of the comity of nations. The Crimean War brought once more into life and activity all the elements of the national character, the most opposed to the silent and beneficent forces of moral and material progress, fatally arrested the agencies of peace which the Anti-Corn-League had set in motion, and has gone far to deprive us of the fruits of the great reforms which those agencies had affected. In looking back, it is impossible not to feel how different might have been our recent history, but for the mysterious dispensation, under which one great Minister died too soon, while another ruled too long, and which removed from us, at a time when his influence was too much needed, the wise Prince who had, we believe, learned to value Cobden, as Cobden had learned, we know, to respect and appreciate him.

We all remember the long parliamentary duel between Peel and Cobden, by which the great struggle of the two contending principles of privilege and freedom was brought to a final issue; the impressive advocacy and the imposing fallacies of the powerful Minister; “the unadorned eloquence” and the pitiless logic of the tribune of the people; and some of us remember how Cobden, as he watched night after night his great antagonist, writhing under his unanswerable arguments, saw by the workings of his face, long before his public avowal, that reason and conscience had done their work, and that the victory was won.

But there was a moment when, unnerved by Drummond's tragic death, and stung by the intention which he attributed to Cobden of wishing to fasten upon him individually the responsibility of further resistance, he referred to some expressions in speeches at conferences of the League in a way which made a deep impression at the time, and which Cobden could not easily forget. He lived, indeed, to make a full reparation, by the generous tribute which he paid to Cobden's services, in his

memorable speech on quitting office for ever, in words which have often been repeated, and which it is well again to repeat—

"I said before, and I said truly, that, in proposing our measures of commercial policy, I had no wish to deprive others of the credit justly due to them. I must say with reference to honourable gentlemen opposite, as I say with reference to ourselves, that neither of us is the party which is justly entitled to the credit of them. There has been a combination of parties, generally opposed to each other, and that combination, and the influence of Government, have led to their ultimate success; but the name which ought to be associated with the success of those measures is not the name of the noble lord, the organ of the party of which he is the leader, nor is it mine. The name which ought to be, and will be, associated with the success of those measures, is the name of one who, acting, I believe, from pure and disinterested motives, and with untiring energy, made appeals to our reason, and has enforced those appeals with an eloquence the more to be admired because it was unaffected and unadorned — the name which ought to be chiefly associated with the success of those measures is the name of Richard Cobden."

It was, however, we believe, the fact that, in spite of this public testimony, no private intercourse took place at that time between them, and the Peel retired from office, with the execration of his party, and the gratitude of his country, and Cobden entered on his international work, in mutual silence.

But later, when Cobden had returned to the House of Commons, and was standing one day behind the Speaker's chair, Peel rose from his seat, and came towards him, and said to him, holding out his hand, "Mr.Cobden, the time has come, I think, for you and me to be friends."

And still later, amidst the throng of anxious inquirers, who, in those long days of June, besieged Whitehall, and lingered round the doors of the dying statesman, there was no sincerer sorrower than the leader of the League.

The Royal Commission which, under Prince Albert's auspices, organised the first great Exhibition, had brought together at last, in a common and international work, the three men who seem to us to have been eminently designed to co-operate for the public good, and we cannot doubt that, if the lives of Prince and Minister had been spared a few years longer, and Peel had returned to office in 1852, he would have received the cordial support of Cobden, either in or out of office. But this was not to be; and in 1846, on the occasion of the repeal, to make Cobden Minister would have been an act of political justice and wisdom for which the times were not ripe, while to accept the subordinate office which was offered him, from men who had so recently, and so reluctantly, espoused his views on Free Trade, and who so imperfectly apprehended or accepted its ulterior consequences, would have fatally compromised his future usefulness.

He knew that there were several necessary measures which the general intelligence of the Liberal party would immediately force upon the Parliament, and his work at this moment lay in another direction. He had been the chief instrument in giving the

death-blow to a mighty monopoly, in redressing a grievous wrong, and in giving food to suffering millions at home. His services as an Englishman being thus far accomplished, he entered upon his mission as an “international man.”

He knew, and had measured accurately, the obstacles presented by the laws of other countries, often the too faithful reflection of our own, to the fulfillment of the grand aim of his life, the binding together of the nations of the earth by the material bonds which are the necessary and only preparation for their moral union. These laws has raised around us innumerable barriers to intercourse, and as many stumbling-blocks in the way of peace.

In a tour through Europe, which often resembled a triumphal progress, he was everywhere received with interest and attention; but the sudden recantation of a policy, bound up with all the traditions of England, was open to too much suspicion to inspire confidence, and he was obliged to be content with sowing the seeds of much which has since borne fruit, and with inspiring new zeal and hope in the minds of the good and enlightened men who, in each center which he visited, were labouring in the cause.

No stronger proof can be afforded of the fundamental misconception of Cobden's political character which had prevailed in England than the judgments and criticisms which it was the custom to pass upon him with reference to the class of questions to which he addressed himself on his return to public life at home.

It seems to have been expected that he would exclusively devoted himself to commercial questions, and when it was found that he proceeded to attack systematically our foreign policy, our system of government in India, our national expenditure, our military and naval administration, and our maritime laws, he was accused of going beyond his province, and discredited as an enthusiast incapable of dealing with the great mysteries of statecraft.

Those who used this language either knew too well, or not at all, that Cobden aimed at something very different and very much deeper than mere commercial reforms.

In each and all of these he took, as was natural, a sincere and consistent interest, but he knew, unless aided and consolidated by collateral measures, that incalculable as would be the results to the wealth and prosperity of the country, they would not suffice to raise the lower classes of this country from their condition of moral and material degradation, and thus to rescue England from the reproach of failure in the highest ends of civilisation, and to assure for her a permanent place in the front rank of nations.

It was, therefore, that, instead of entangling himself in the snares of office, and devoting his time to the details of practical legislation, he undertook the harder and more ungrateful, but far nobler office, of endeavouring to open the eyes of his countrymen to the necessity under which they lay of preparing for fundamental changes in many of the essential principles upon which our national policy had

previously been conducted, in its three great divisions— Foreign, Colonial, and Domestic.

Cobden saw clearly that, unless our system of government, in all its branches, were adapted to the altered conditions of our national existence, not only would our commercial reforms be shorn of their most valuable and complete results in the elevation of the masses of the people, but that we should also incur the risk of very serious dangers. Nothing is so fatal to success in the life of individuals or of nations as a confusion of principles in action.

Under the system of monopoly, it was logical enough to keep alive the chimæra of the balance of power, to seek, in foreign alliances and artificial combinations of force, the security which we could not hope to derive from legitimate and natural causes. In the government of our foreign possessions, it was logical to annex provinces and extend our empire, and by the display of force and the arts of diplomacy to coerce and despoil; and for both these purposes, it was necessary to maintain costly and imposing forces by sea and land, and to cast on the people the burden of the proportionate taxation.

By means such as these we might have prolonged, for two or three generations, a false and hollow supremacy, and warded off for a while the inevitable doom which awaits all false principles.

But with a policy of free exchange, these things are not only inconsistent, they are dangerous.

They are inconsistent, because a policy of Free Trade rests on the principle that the interests of all nations lie in union and not in opposition; that co-operation and not competition, international interdependence and not national independence, are the highest end and object of civilisation, and that, therefore, peace, and not war, is the natural and normal condition of civilized communities in their relation to each other.

They are dangerous, because a country which is unable to feed its own population without its foreign trade, and of whose prosperity, and even existence, peace is thus a necessary condition, cannot afford, without tremendous risks, to encounter the hazards of war with powerful enemies. If such a country trusts to the law of force, by that law will it be judged, and the result must by crushing failure, disaster, and ultimate defeat. There were those who clearly foresaw and apprehended this, and deprecated the repeal of the Corn Law accordingly, but who did not perceive that the alternative was an inadequate supply of food for a third our population.

From this point of view, the “balance of power” can only be sought in the free development of the natural forces, whether of morality, intelligence, or material wealth, residing in the different countries of the earth, and the balance will always be held (to use the expression of William III., in his address to parliament, quoted by Mr.Cobden in his paper on “Russia”), so far as any one State can pretend to do so, by the country which, in proportion to its powers, has economised its material resources to the highest point, and acquired the highest degree of moral ascendancy by an

honest and consistent allegiance to the laws of morality in its domestic policy and in its foreign relations.

The acquisition of colonies and territories, formerly required to afford new fields for monopoly, and defended on the plea that outlets were necessary for our trade, while our ports were closed to our nearest and richest neighbours, appeared in its true light as a waste of national influence, and a costly and useless perversion of national wealth, when all the countries of the earth became our customers, and England the metropolitan *entrepôt* of the world.

Large standing armies and navies, with their necessary accompaniment of heavy, and because heavy, unequal, and indirect taxation, are only rational in countries which are constantly liable to war, and cannot therefore be equally required under a system which relies on moral influence and on international justice, as under one which depends on force and monopoly.

To summon into existence a principle, which in all human relations shall assert the right of property, in mind and in matter, in thought and in labour, and to secure this right on its true foundation— the universal rule of justice and freedom— is to evoke a force which is destined to root up and destroy the seeds of discord and division among men; to bind up the nations of the earth in a vast federation of interests; and to bring the disorders of conflicting passions of society under the domain of law.

To promote all the agencies through which this force can act, and to repress all those which oppose its progress and neutralise its operation, and for this purpose to analyse and expose to view these several agencies, both in their causes and in their effects eternally acting and reacting on each other, was the task which Cobden set himself to accomplish.

It was inevitable, with these objects in view, that Cobden was often obliged to raise discussion upon questions which, to ordinary minds, appear somewhat chimerical and to propose measures which were in the nature of things premature; that he should give to many the impression of wasting his strength on matters which could not be brought to an immediate practical issue, and in the agitation of which he could not hope for direct success.

It will be found, however, that although there often existed no possibility of realising or applying his projects at the time of their enunciation, these were always themselves of an essentially practical character, and inseparably connected with each other; and that, although presented as occasion served, from time to time, and as the nature of his mission required, in a fragmentary and separate form, they each and all formed the component parts of a policy coherent and complete, and destined, we trust, to a gradual but ultimate fulfilment.

In characterising this policy as complete, one exception must be made.

There was one branch of the national economy on which Cobden's views were not, at least, in his earlier years, in accordance with what appears to us sound scientific doctrine. We refer to the laws for the regulation of a paper currency.

In his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons on Banks of Issue, 1840, he virtually adheres to the main principle of the Bank Act of 1844, and advocates the limitation of all paper issues unrepresented by a corresponding amount of gold to a fixed amount issuable on securities. This view arises, we think, from our imperfect apprehension of the nature and functions of credit, and of the law of value. We cannot but think, therefore, that if Cobden retained it in his later years it must be attributed to the absorbing character of his practical labours, which precluded the possibility of a deeper and more scientific investigation of a subject confessedly among the most complex problems in the range of economic speculation.

The Programme which Cobden appears to have set before him in the construction of a policy embraced the following objects:—

1. Complete freedom of trade throughout the British Empire with all the world, exclusive for the present (as a practical necessity) of restrictions indispensably requisite for fiscal purposes.
2. The final and unqualified abandonment of a policy of conquest and territorial aggrandisement in every quarter of the world.
3. The adoption of the general principles of *non-intervention* and arbitration in our foreign policy, publicity in all the transactions of diplomacy, and the renunciation of all ideas of national preponderance and supremacy.
4. The reduction of military and naval forces by international cooperation.
5. A large reduction of taxation.
6. A reform in the laws affecting land.
7. Freedom of the press from all taxes, happily stigmatized by Mr. Milner Gibson as taxes on knowledge.
8. A reform of maritime law.

We do not include in this programme the two great measures of National Education and Parliamentary Reform because, although essential to the progress and security of government, and as much of course enlisting Cobden's sympathy, they are, after all, the means and not the end of good government; and we are disposed to think that he felt that his peculiar powers could be more usefully devoted to the assertion of the principles on which governments should be conducted than to the construction of the machinery out of which they should be elaborated. We will endeavour to give briefly an outline of what appear to have been Cobden's views on the leading divisions of national policy which the foregoing programme was designed to affect. We have said that the central idea of the national policy represented by Cobden was “Free Exchange” in the most comprehensive meaning of that term as the necessary complement of personal freedom, and the full assertion of the rights of property and labour. The realisation of this idea logically involves all the consequences which Cobden aimed at promoting by direct or indirect efforts.

Foreign Policy.— In the field of foreign policy these consequences were immediate and obvious. The principles of foreign policy under a system of monopoly is national independence — in other words, "isolation;" under that of free exchange it is international interdependence. We have already observed upon the bearing of this latter principle on the doctrine of the balance of power, and pointed out the fundamental difference between a policy which proceeds on principles of international morality, and appeals to the common interests of all nations of the earth, and one which rests on ideas of national supremacy and rivalry. But in the practical application of the Free Trade foreign policy, there has been so much misunderstanding of Cobden's views, and, as we think, so much confusion of thought even among advanced Liberals that a few further remarks may be useful. This policy is ordinarily characterised by the name of *non-intervention.* In some respects this designation has been an unfortunate one. It has given colour to the idea that what was desired was a blind and selfish indifference to the affairs of other countries, and a sort of moral isolation, as foreign to the principle of international interdependence as it is impossible in connection with increased material intercourse.

Cobden never, so far as we are aware, advanced or held the opinion that wars other than those undertaken for self-defence were in all cases wrong or inexpedient.

The question, as we apprehend it, was with him one of relative duties. It is clear that the duty and wisdom of entering upon a war, even in defence of the most righteous cause, must be measured by our knowledge and by our power; but, even where our knowledge is complete and our power sufficient, it is necessary that, in undertaking such a war, we should be satisfied that, in doing so, we are not neglecting and putting it out of our reach, to fulfil more sacred and more imperative duties.

The cases are rare in the quarrels of other nations, still rarer in their internal dissensions, in which our knowledge of their causes and conditions, and our power of enforcing the right, and assuring its success, in any degree justifies us in armed interference—the last resort in the failure of human justice.

But even if these difficult conditions of our justification in such a war were satisfied, the cases must be rare indeed in which, with a population of which so large a part is barely receiving the means of decent existence, and another part is supported by public charity at the expense of the rest, and at a charge of nearly £10,000,000 per annum, this country would be justified in imposing on our labouring classes (on whom, be it remembered, the burden must chiefly fall) the cost of obtaining for another people a degree of freedom or a measure of justice which they have so imperfectly secured for themselves.

Such a course is certainly not defensible unless the people have a far larger share in the government of their country than they possessed during Cobden's life in England.

When we add to these considerations the singular inaptitude of the governing classes of this country to comprehend foreign affairs, the extraordinary errors which are usually to be observed in their judgments, and opinions on foreign questions, and the dangerous liability to abuse in the hands of any government, of the doctrine of "Blood

and Iron," even if it be sometimes invoked in a just cause, we shall, we think (without asserting that it must be inflexibly enforced), acknowledge the sober wisdom of Cobden's opinion, that, for all practical purposes, at least for this generation, the principle of non-intervention should be made, as far as general principles can be applied to such questions, the rule of our foreign policy.

Let those who sneer at what they consider a sordid and ungenerous view, reflect on the history of the past, and ask themselves what is to be the hope of humanity if the motives which have hitherto regulated the policy of our country are in future to determine the intercourse of nations.

Let them look back upon the great French war, not as it is interpreted by Cobden in his most instructive paper in the work before us, but read by the light of those teachers of history who see in it a proud record of England's glory and power in vindicating the liberties of mankind, and satisfy their conscience, if they can, of the righteousness of a cause which required the aid of Holy Alliances, the legions of despots, and a campaign which terminated in the Congress of Vienna, and which ended in the suffocation of popular rights for half a century, the enactment of the English Corn Law and all that it represents, and a condition of Europe which even now almost precludes the hope of real civilisation.

Colonial Policy.—There is no branch of the national economy in which the neglect of Cobden's principles has led to more glaring and lamentable results than in that between the mother country and what are called its 'foreign possessions." The inability even of the Government which was borne to power on the shoulders of the AntiCorn-Law League to apprehend the scope and importance of Free Trade is in no direction more strikingly manifested than in the colonial policy.

Would it not have been possible, when the right of self-government was conferred upon our colonial possessions, to have stipulated, as a necessary condition, and as a great and fundamental rule of imperial policy, the complete absence of protection throughout the dominions of the Crown?

Instead of this, the most confused idea prevailed, and still prevails, as to the limits of colonial self-government in adopting a commercial policy, opposed to the principles and interests of the mother country.

The colonies have been allowed to impose protective duties on British manufactures, and of those of foreign countries; but they are not allowed to discriminate between the two. They are allowed to protect: would they be allowed to prohibit? for it must be remembered that protection, so far as it restricts a trade, is nothing more nor less than prohibition to that extent; and if not to prohibit, where is the line to be drawn, at duties at 20, or 30, or 50, or 100 per cent.?

Again, the colonies are allowed to tax and restrict our trade, but are compelled to give perfect freedom to our ships, both in their foreign and coasting trades, and then, as if to destroy and efface all trace and remnant of principle in our policy, they are compelled to admit foreign ships in their foreign trade, but allowed to exclude them

from their coasting trade (thus violating the rule of equality between British and foreign trade laid down with respect to goods), but are not allowed to admit them to that trade on less favourable terms than British ships: in other words, they are allowed to inflict the greater, but not the less, injustice!

Can any conceivable confusion be more hopelessly confounded?

Does self-government apply to trade and not to shipping? Does it apply to a coast trade and not to a foreign trade? And is it not out of place to talk of self-government at all, as a principle, when every Colonial Act must be sanctioned by the Crown before it becomes law?

The truth is that we have here another instance of the evil effects of a displacement or dislocation of responsibility.

It is clear that the right of absolute self-government involves the corresponding duty of self-support and self-defence; and as the colonies are far from having undertaken the latter, it is surely not too much to call them to admit such a degree of interference with their self-government as imperial interests require.

It is estimated that the military and naval expenses borne for the colonies by the mother country amount to £6,000,000 a year—more than the revenue derived from our sugar duties! If such sacrifices as these are imposed on the British taxpayer, has he not a right to be allowed to trade on equal terms with his colonial fellow-subjects? Cobden never lost an opportunity of protesting against this last misappropriation of the money of the old country, and of exposing the secret connection of this feature in our policy, which the perpetuation of pretexts for increased armaments.

But to return to our commercial policy. Has a colonial Minister ever asked himself what is the difference between entering into a compact with a foreign Government for the regulation of international trade, and entering into a similar compact with a colonial government? Does the fact that the first would probably be recorded in a treaty and the second in an Act of Parliament affect the essence of the agreement, and render the one a legitimate and the other an illegitimate form of international action? If so, it would be better that our colonies should become in reality, as well as in name, "foreign possessions," so that we might than be allowed to treat with them.

It is painful to think of the contrast between our present position and prospects as a nation, and that which it might have presented, had the foundations of our colonial empire been laid broad and deep in commercial freedom. Is it yet too late? Is no effort yet possible towards such a consummation?

Eastern Policy.—The British rule in India was to Cobden a subject of the deepest anxiety and apprehension. His paper in the present volumes entitled, "How Wars are got up in India," is an honest and indignant criticism upon an episode in our Indian history which has only too many parallels, and gives expression to one of his strongest convictions, viz., the retribution which one day awaits the lust of power and of territorial aggrandizement, and the utter disregard of morality so often exhibited in

our dealings with the races of this great dependency. But in our Eastern policy much progress has been made since Cobden's time, and we have seen, we trust, the dawn of a better day in the administration of Lord Lawrence in India, and in the policy of Sir F.Bruce at Pekin.

Reduction of Military and Naval Expenditure.—The changes advocated by Cobden in our foreign and colonial policy necessarily involved a large reduction in our military and naval establishments, and to this object his most strenuous efforts were constantly directed; but here the difficulties which he had to encounter were enormous, and the Crimean War and its results throughout Europe have rendered all attempts at reform in this branch of our national economy hitherto unavailing.

In attacking our "Services" he not only had to content against powerful interests connected with almost all the families of the upper and middle classes of the country, but also against many honest, though mistaken, opinions, as to the causes of national greatness and the sources of our power. It was the widespread prevalence of such opinions, combined with the selfish influence of the worst element in British commerce, which led, on the occasion of the Chinese War in 1857, to the rejection of Cobden by the West Riding, and of Bright and Gibson by Manchester. The class of ideas symbolised by the "British Lion," the "Sceptre of Britannia," and the "Civis Romanus," irrational and vulgar as they are, have nevertheless a side which is not altogether ignoble, and are of a nature which it requires more than one generation to eradicate.

Cobden approached this question of reduction by two different roads. He endeavoured to bring to bear upon it international action, by arrangements for a general limitation of armaments, in which, as regards France, there appeared more than once some possibility of success, and in which he was cordially supported by Bastiat in the years succeeding the repeal of the Corn Laws; he also sought, be every means in his power, to urge it on his countrymen, by appeals to their good sense and self-respect. He exposed, firstly, our policy; and secondly, our administration; and showed, with irresistible arguments, that, while the one was unsound, the other was extravagant; and that thus the British people were condemned, not only to provide for what was useless and even dangerous, but at the same time to pay an excessive price for it.

He tells us in his article on Russia, vol. i. p. 309—

"If that which constitutes cowardice in individuals, viz., the taking excessive precautions against danger, merits the same designation when practised by communities, then England certainly must rank as the greatest poltroon among nations."

It is incontestable that the extent of our precautions against danger should be proportioned to the degree of that danger, and it cannot, we think, be denied, even those who are the most disposed to connect the greatness and security of England with the constant display of physical force, that as our liability to war has diminished, our preparations for it should also diminish; and that it is as irrational to devote to our "Services" in a period of "Free Trade," colonial self-government, and non-

intervention, the sums which were wrung from our industry in an epoch of monopoly, of colonial servitude, and of a "spirited foreign policy," as it would be to pay the same insurance on a healthy as on a diseased life.

For what are the causes (under here own control) which render a country liable to war?

They may, for present purposes, be classed under the following heads:—

1. The disposition to engage in wars of conquest or aggression.
2. The necessity of maintaining, for the purpose of repressing liberty at home, large standing armies, which a Government may be compelled to employ in foreign wars, either to gratify the military spirit engendered by the existence of a powerful service, or to divert public attention from domestic reforms.
3. The habitual violation of the rights of labour and property in international relations, by prohibitive and protective laws of trade.
4. The policy of providing outlets for trade, and of introducing what are called the agencies of civilisation, by means of consuls and missionaries, supported by gunboats and breech-loaders.
5. The pretension of holding the balance of power, and of interfering, with this object, in the affairs of other nations, with its result, the theory of armed diplomacy, which aims, by a display of force, at securing for a country what is assumed to be its due influence in foreign affairs.

All these motives would be absolutely removed under a system of government such as that which Cobden advocated, and even now, they are, we believe, very generally discredited, with the exception, perhaps, of the last, which must, however, be so cut down and modified in order to be a pretext for military armaments, as to lose its general character, and to require re-statement. The doctrine of the "balance of power" is, we hope, consigned to the limbo of exploded fallacies, with the "balance of trade," and we refer any remaining believers in the balancing system to the history and analysis of this phenomenon, in the essay on Russia in the work before us, as we think it cannot fail to dispel any lingering faith in this delusion.

With the rejection of the doctrines of the "balance of power," a fruitful source of dangerous meddling in the affairs of foreign countries has been cut away. There only remains, therefore, the limited form of armed interference in foreign affairs to which we have already adverted, and which it is still thought by many among us, and even by a large section of the Liberal party we should be prepared to exert in certain events, and for which, if the principle be admitted, some allowance must be made in estimating the extent of our military and naval requirements.

We refer to the supposed duty of England to resort to war in possible cases for the purpose of defending the principles of free government or international law, or of protecting a foreign country from wanton or unjust aggression. On this subject we have already stated what we believe to have been Cobden's view; but, whatever margin may be left for this consideration, it must be admitted by candid reasoners,

that the liability of the country to war under a policy such as that of which the general outlines have been traced, would be reduced within narrow proportions.

Cobden was often blamed for not devoting more time and labour to the task of minute resistance to the "Estimates" in the House of Commons. This was the result of his perfect conviction, after years of experience and observation, that such a course was absolutely useless, and that no private member, however able or courageous, could cope in detail with the resources at the disposal of Government in evading exposure and resisting reductions. He therefore always insisted that the only course was to strike at the root of the evil, by diminishing the revenue and the expenditure in the gross.

Taxation.—This brings us to our next topic, which is inextricably bound up with the last, viz., the reduction of the national expenditure, and the consequent diminution of taxation, objects the importance of which is becoming yearly more vital. Cobden knew that no material reform in our financial system could be effected (for all that has been hitherto done has been to shift the burden, and not to diminish it) until our external policy was changed, and hence his incessant efforts in this direction; but he also knew that the surest method of accomplishing the latter object was to diminish the resources at the disposal of Government for military and naval purposes.

The first object in financial reform was, therefore, in Cobden's opinion, the gradual remission of indirect taxation.

In a letter to the "Liverpool Association" he made use of the remarkable expression that he considered them to be *the only body of men in the country who appeared to have any faith in the future of humanity.*

His objects were threefold, and they are to our mind conclusive:—

> 1."1. The dangerous facilities which they afford for extravagant and excessive expenditure, by reason of their imperceptibility in collection, and of the consequent readiness of the people to submit to them, and also of the impossibility of insuring a close and honest adaptation of the revenue to the expenditure.
> 2."2. Their interference with the great law of free exchange, one of the rights of property, and (so far as customs duties are concerned) the violation of international equity which they involve; for it is obvious that the conditions of international trade are essentially affected by taxes on imports and exports, and it is impossible to apportion them so as to insure that each country shall pay neither more nor less than its own due share.
> 3."3. The enhancement of the cost of the taxed article to the consumer, over and above the amount of the tax."

The root of the evil may again be traced to the infringement in the case of indirect taxes, of the great law of "free exchange of services, freely debated." A tax is nothing more than a service contributed to the State by the people, in return for a corresponding service rendered to the people by the State. The great object, therefore,

in imposing a tax should be to connect it as closely as possible with the service for which it is required, and to facilitate as far as possible a close comparison between the two. The superiority of a direct tax, like the income-tax and the poor-rate, over taxes on consumption and on trade, from this point of view, is apparent; but such is the distorted view of large classes in the country on this subject, that they consider what we have characterised as the great vice of indirect taxation, as its chief and distinguishing merit, and that the supreme art of government consists in extracting from the pockets of the people, by a sort of "hocus pocus," the largest possible amount of money without their knowing it.

Do those who with so much *naïveté* repeat this argument whenever this question is discussed, ever reflect, that to drug the taxpayer before he pays his money will in no degree diminish the evil to a country, of excessive taxation, and that ignorance and irresponsibility are not the best securities for an efficient and conscientious administration of our public affairs?

If it be objected that indirect taxation is the only method by which the masses of the people can be made to contribute their share to the revenues of the State, we replay, that if the condition of the masses of the people in any country is such as to place them beyond the reach of direct taxation, it is the surest proof that the whole national economy is out of joint, and that, in some form or other, resort will be had to "communism." In England we have too clear and disastrous evidence of this in our Poor Law system, and in our reckless and prodigal almsgiving. In withholding from our children the bread of justice, we have given them the stone of enforced and sapless charity.

We hail, therefore, with pleasure the movement which is beginning in Germany and Belgium, in favour of a gradual abolition of all customs duties; and are convinced that there is none, perhaps, among all the articles of the Liberal creed which, both in its direct and indirect effects, contains the promise of so much future good.

The fulfilment of this policy should, we think, be rigorously exacted from every Liberal Government, till no tax of customs or excise remain upon the statute-book, save those on tobacco and spirits, which our heritage of debt has placed it beyond the pale of hope to remove by any scheme of practical and proximate reform.

Land.—Cobden held that the growing accumulation, in the hands of fewer and fewer proprietors, of the soil of the country, was a great political, social, and economical evil, and as this tendency is unquestionably stimulated by the system of our government, and some of our laws, which give it an artificial value, he foresaw that one of the principal tasks of the generation which succeeded him, must be to liberate the land from all the unnecessary obstacles which impede its acquisition and natural distribution, and to place it under the undisturbed control of the economic law.

We cannot here attempt to enter upon a due examination of the causes which in this country neutralise and subvert this law in the case of landed property, but the general principle involved may be very shortly suggested.

The more abundant the supply of land in a country, the cheaper, *caeteris paribus,* will it be, the larger will be the return to the capital and labour expended on it, and the greater the profits to be divided between them.

It is obvious that laws which keep land out of the market—laws of entail, laws of settlement, difficulties of transfer, as well as a system of government which gives to the possession of land an artificial value, for social or political purposes, over and above its natural commercial value—must have the inevitable effect of restricting the quantity, of enhancing the price, and of diminishing the product to be obtained. Land thus acquires a monopoly price, small capitals are deterred from this form of investment, competition is restricted, production is diminished, and the condition of those who live by the land, as well as of those who exchange the produce of their labour for the produce of the land, is necessarily impaired.

To illustrate our meaning by an extreme case: let us suppose that the State were to connect with property in land the highest titles and privileges, on the condition that it was entirely diverted from all productive uses, and kept solely for purposes of ornament and sport, and that the honours and advantages so conferred were sufficiently tempting to induce many persons to accept these conditions. It must follow that the stock of available land in such a country would be diminished to whatever extent it was so appropriated, and its material resources proportionately reduced.

In a less degree, who can deny that these causes are operating among us, and are a source of incalculable loss and waste of the national wealth? The suggestion last year that our coal-beds would be exhausted in one hundred years, almost startled Parliament from its propriety. Yet we acquiesce year after year, without a murmur, in a curtailment of our supply of land, and those who warn us of our danger are denounced as the agents of revolution.

In his speech at Rochdale, in November, 1864, which was his last public utterance, Cobden especially left this task as a legacy to the younger men among us, and told them that they could do more for their country in liberating the land than had been achieved for it in the liberation of its trade.

Maritime Laws.—On the question of "Maritime law," it is well known that he advocated the largest extension of the rights of neutrals, and the greatest possible limitation of the rights of belligerents, as a necessary and logical accompaniment of a Free Trade policy.

His views on this subject will be seen from a letter addressed to Mr. H. Ashworth, in 1862, in which he recommends the following three reforms:—

> 1. Exemption of private property from capture at sea during war by armed vessels of every kind.
> 2. Blockades to be restricted to naval arsenals, and to towns besieged at the same time by land, except as regards contraband of war.

> 3. The merchant ships of neutrals on the high seas to be inviolable to the visitation of alien Government vessels in time of war as in time of peace.

In this letter he observes—

"Free trade, in the widest definition of the term, means only the division of labour by which the productive powers of the whole earth are brought into mutual co-operation. If this scheme of universal independence is to be liable to sudden dislocation whenever two Governments choose to go to war, it converts a manufacturing industry such as ours into a lottery, in which the lives and fortunes of multitudes of men are at stake. I do not comprehend how any British statesman who consults the interests of his country and understands the revolution which Free Trade is effecting in the relations of the world, can advocate the maintenance of commercial blockades. If I shared their views I should shrink from promoting the indefinite growth of a population whose means of subsistence would be liable to be cut off at any moment by a belligerent power, against whom we should have no right of resistance, or even of complaint.

"It must be in mere irony that the advocates of such a policy as this ask—Of what use would our navy be in case of war if commercial blockades were abolished. Surely, for a nation that has no access to the rest of the world but by sea, and a large part of whose population is dependent for food on foreign countries, the chief use of a navy should be to keep open its communications, not to close them!

"I will only add that I regard these changes as the necessary corollary of the repeal of the Navigation Laws, the abolition of the Corn Laws, and the abandonment of our colonial monopoly. We have thrown away the sceptre of force, to confide in the principles of freedom—uncovenanted, unconditional freedom. Under the new *régime* our national fortunes have prospered beyond all precedent. During the last fourteen years the increase in our commerce has exceeded its entire growth during the previous thousand years of reliance on force, cunning, and monopoly. This should encourage us to go forward in the full faith that every fresh impediment removed from the path of commerce, whether by sea or land, and whether in peace or war, will augment our prosperity, at the same time that it will promote the general interests of humanity."

In most of the foregoing questions, Cobden, as we have said, was contented to preach sound doctrine, and to prepare the way for the ultimate adoption of principles of policy and government, which in his time he could not hope to see prevail.

But he was destined, before the close of his career, once more to engage in a great practical work, and to identify his name with an accomplished success, scarcely inferior in its scope and results to the repeal of the English Corn Law.

This was the Commercial Treaty with France.

As the Corn Law was the great stronghold of monopoly in England, so was the prohibitive system in France the key-stone of protection in Europe, and Cobden selected these accordingly, with the unerring instinct of real statesmanship, as the first

points for attack, and fastened upon them with a tenacity and resolution which insured success.

Fifteen years had elapsed since England has renounced, in principle at least, the false system of commercial monopoly, and, in Cobden's words quoted above, “throw away the sceptre of force, to confide in freedom.”

She had trusted to the teaching of her example, and to the experience of hear extraordinary success, in leading the countries of Europe to answer to her appeal for co-operation in liberating trade, and vindicating the rights of labour; but she had met with slight response.

Our conversion was perhaps too recent, our course still too inconsistent, and our motives too much open to suspicion, to make this surprising, and, so far as France was concerned, we had unfortunately contrived in all our reforms to retain in our tariff restrictions upon the staple articles of French production, wine and silk.

The time had come when, unless some new impulse could be given to international intercourse, the forces of reaction might have again acquired the ascendency, and European progress have been thrown back for years.

Our relations with France were those of chronic distrust and rivalry. The cry of *Perfide Albion* in France too often resounded in our ears; and the bugbear of French invasion was successively invoked on this side of the Channel no less than three times in the period we are considering.

This was a state of things fraught with danger. Monopoly had borne as usual its deadly fruits, in alienating two great nations destined by nature for the closest relations of friendship and mutual dependence, and in fostering in both the spirit of war.

It was under circumstances such as these that Cobden set his hand to the great work of co-operation which led to the Commercial Treaty.

Bastiat, who would have hailed with delight this tardy reparation of the defects in our reformed commercial system which he always deplored, was no longer alive to aid the cause; but to one of the most distinguished of modern French economists, Michel Chevalier, is due, in concert with Cobden, the merit of the scheme with the Governments of England and France were induced to adopt, which has opened to us the prospect of a new era of progress, in the gradual union of the nations of Europe in a great commercial confederation, and in laying the foundations of a civilisation, which may yet keep pace with that now dawning on our race in the Anglo-Saxon republics of the Western world.

It was pleasant to see how his old friends rallied around him on this occasion, and how many, who had been often unable to comprehend or follow him in his political career, rejoiced to see him once again in the field, against his old enemy, Protection. But, on the other hand, he was assailed by an influential class among us with a bitter

animosity, which all but made his task impossible, and which revealed too clearly the strength and vitality of the reactionary forces still at work in our midst.

As Cobden saw in his beneficent work the hope of a new era of peace, and of liberal progress in Europe, as its certain fruit, so did his opponents instinctively perceive that his success would carry with it the doom of the traditions of hatred and of fear, which the Governments of Europe had too often successfully invoked, to plunge the people into wars of which they are the invariable victims, and to keep alive the rumours of war, which have deprived them of the solid fruits of peace.

So long as the political condition of Europe is such as to render necessary or possible the large armaments, which are a reproach to our age and boasted civilisation, while 4,000,000 men, in the flower of their age, are taken from productive industry, and supported by the labour of the rest of the population, no real and permanent progress can be made in the emancipation of the people, and in the establishment of free institutions.

At the time of which we are speaking, even still more than at present, all direct attempts to mitigate this monster evil appeared hopeless; and although Cobden never ceased to urge, both in England and France, the wisdom of a mutual understanding, with a view to reduced armaments, he knew that the only certain and available method of undermining this fatal system, and preparing for its ultimate over throw, was to assist in every way the counter-agencies of peace.

It was in the consciousness that by breaking down the barriers to commercial intercourse between England and France, a greater impulse would be given than by any other event to the forces of progress in Europe, that the men who in both countries undertook and completed this international work entered upon their task. We have said that the time has not arrived when it is possible to speak freely of this episode in Cobden's life, but it is necessary to vindicate his policy from charges, which, although forgotten and overwhelmed in its extraordinary success, were brought against it too commonly, and from quarters whence it ought least to have been expected, at the time.

In France he was reproached by many of his earlier friends, whose sympathies were bound up with the Orleanist or Republican *régimes,* and who viewed with a natural aversion the Second Empire, for contributing to a work which, if successful, might do more than anything else to consolidate the Imperial reign. He replied, that what the immediate effect might be he neither knew nor cared, but that all the forces of freedom were 'solidaires," and that the ruler who gave "Free Trade" to the nation, whether King, President, or Emperor, was doing that which, more than anything else, would assure the future liberties of France.

The same causes operated in many quarters to make the Treaty unpopular in England; but he was also assailed in a more insidious form. He was accused of having forgotten or forsaken the sound doctrines of political economy, of which he had in his earlier life been the uncompromising advocate, and of having revived the discarded policy of "reciprocity treaties."

It would perhaps be unnecessary to revert to this charge, were it not that a suspicion of unsoundness still lurks in many minds as to the principles of the French, and subsequent, Treaties of Commerce. It may be well, therefore, to say that, so far as this charge was honest, and something more than a convenient method of discrediting a measure which it was desired to obstruct, it proceeded on a very imperfect knowledge of the policy of the Treaty, and on an erroneous and confused idea of the principles of Free Trade itself.

The system of reciprocity treaties and tariff bargains was one of the natural but most pernicious developments of the doctrine of protection. The most notorious of such treaties in our history is, perhaps, the famous Methuen Treaty, from the effects of which we are still suffering in England, in the shape of adulterated wine. These arrangements aimed at the extension of the limits of monopoly, by securing for our products protection in a foreign country, against the competition of all other countries, and always proceeded on the supposed interest of the producer, to the injury of the consumer. They were logical, when it was believed or professed that the reduction of a duty was a sacrifice on the part of the country making it to the country in whose favour it was made. From this point of view, it was natural, in making such reductions, to demand what were thought to be equivalent concessions from the country with which we were treating, and the supreme art of negotiating was held to consist in framing what had the appearance of a "nicely adjusted balance of equivalents," but in which each country secretly desired, and sought to obtain, the maximum of reductions from the other, against the minimum of its own.

But from the Free Trade point of view, in which all reductions of duties, at least so far as productive duties are concerned, are an admitted and positive gain to the country making them, it becomes absurd and impossible to use them as the ground of a claim on a foreign country for compensating or equivalent remissions.

The French Treaty had no affinity, except in form, to treaties such as these.

Instead of a bargain in which each party sought to give as little and to get as much as possible, it was a great work of co-operation, in which the Governments of England and of France were resolved, on both sides, to remove, within the limits of their power, the artificial obstacles to their commercial intercourse presented by fiscal and protective laws.

England had already spontaneously advanced much further than France in this direction, and hence alone, if for no other reason, all idea of "equivalent" concessions was out of the question, She contributed her share to the work, by sweeping from her tariff, with some trifling exceptions, all trace and remnant of protection, and by reducing her fiscal duties upon wine and brandy.

France, unable at one stroke to destroy the whole fabric of monopoly, nevertheless made a deadly breach in the edifice, by substituting moderate duties for prohibition, in the case of the chief British exports.

If these reforms had been made exclusively in each other's favour, they might have been justly open to the charge of unsoundness, but they were made equally for the commerce of all the world, on the side of England immediately, on the side of France prospectively, and thus, instead of reverting to a system of monopoly, the prohibitive and differential policy of France was annihilated, and the equal system of England maintained and consolidated.

There were, however, two objections made to the treaty of a more plausible kind, and which we will, therefore, briefly notice:—

First, that a work of this description need not assume the form of a treaty, which tends to disguise its real character, but should be left to the independent legislation of each country.

Secondly, that, although it might be well to abolish protective duties by this method, it was impolitic to fetter ourselves by treaty with respect to fiscal duties.

As regards the first objection, it is sufficient to reply, that at the time we are considering, for political reasons, a treaty was the only form in which such a measure could be carried in France; but a more permanent justification is to be found in the fact that a treaty is nothing more than an international statute-law, and that, in a matter of international concern, it is necessary that there should exist an international guarantee of permanence. Without such a security, what would be the condition of trade?

The second objection is more subtle, but has no better foundation. A tax which, from whatever cause, dries up an important source of national wealth, and thus takes from the fund available for taxation more than the amount gained by the revenue, is a bad tax, and ought never, if possible, to be imposed or maintained.

The tax on French wine and spirits had the effect of restricting most injuriously one of the most important branches of our foreign trade, and would, if maintained, have deprived us, by preventing the conclusion of the Treaty, of an addition of at least £20,000,000 sterling per annum, to the value of our general exchanges with France. No wise legislation could retain such a tax in the face of such consequences. There is probably no other form of tax to which it could not have been preferable to resort, rather than to maintain these obstacles to our trade with France.

But the consequences of the Treaty with France were not confined to that country and to England. It was an act which, both by its moral effect and its direct and necessary influence on the legislation of the other Continental countries, has set on foot a movement which grows from year to year, and will not cease till all protective duties have been erased from the commercial codes of Europe.

It was thus the rare privilege of the man who had been the foremost in giving the death-blow to monopoly in England, to be also among the first to storm the citadel of protection on the Continent, and to give to the work which he commenced at home, a

decisive international impulse, destined to afford new securities for the most sacred of human rights—the right of labour, and to add "new realms to the empire of freedom."

Cobden had yet another success awaiting him, to our mind the most signal triumph of his life. He lived to see the great moral and economic laws, which he had enforced through years of opposition and obloquy, asserting their control over the forces of reaction, and moulding our foreign policy.

It must have been with a superb and heartfelt satisfaction that Cobden watched the conflict of public opinion at the time of the Danish War.

The diplomatic intervention of the Government had brought us to the verge of war, and made it more than usually difficult to retreat.

The old instincts of the ruling classes of the nation were thoroughly aroused, and, unless they had been neutralised and overpowered by stronger and deeper forces, we should, under a fancied idea of chivalry and honour (if anything can deserve these names which is opposed to reason and duty), have squandered once more the hard-earned heritage of English labour, in a war of which the causes and the merits were for the most part unknown among us, and could never have been made intelligible to the nation, and in which our success, if possible, might have thrown back all liberal progress for years, both in England and on the Continent.

But it soon became manifest that a nobler and larger morality had been gaining ground in the heart of the nation, had at last found its expression in the Councils of the State, and had enforced its control over those who still believed that the mission of England is to hold by force the balance of power in Europe.

The memorable debate which decided the course of our policy in this critical moment decided far greater issues; and the principle of "non-intervention," as it has been explained above, the only hope for the moral union of nations and the progress of freedom, became the predominating rule of our foreign policy, and, with different limitations and qualifications, a cardinal point in the Liberal creed.

We must here close a hasty and imperfect sketch of Cobden's political life and principles, in the hope that the outline which we have traced may be filled up by other hands. Our object will have been attained, if we have succeeded in leading some of our readers to suspect the erroneous and superficial nature of the prevalent opinion of Cobden, in the upper ranks of English society, and to believe that the verdict of history will rather confirm the judgment of his humbler countrymen, with whom his name has become a household word.

In reviewing the political programme given in the preceding pages, we shall see that while much has been done, far more remains to do; and that, although there is great cause for hope, there is also much ground for fear.

Of all the dreams in which easy-going and half-hearted politicians indulge, the idlest appears to be that in which it is fondly imagined that the days of party strife are over, and that no questions lie before us, on which the majority of moderate and honest men

are not agreed. It is useless to shut over eyes to the fact that, before the future greatness and prosperity of our country can be assured, great issues must be raised, and fierce political struggles traversed. We have a firm and confident belief that the forces on the side of progress are sufficient to achieve what is required for this consummation, by peaceful and constitutional reforms; but the cause will not be won without stenuous efforts.

It will not be won without the aid of men who, in the measure of their gifts, will bring to bear upon the task the qualities of which in Cobden's life we have such enduring proofs: pure morality, keen intelligence, perfect disinterestedness, undaunted courage, indomitable tenacity of purpose, high patriotism, and an immovable faith in the predestined triumph of good over evil.

That the principles of public morality which Cobden devoted his life to enforce will ultimately prevail in the government of the world, we think that no one who believes in God or man can doubt. Whether it be in store for our country first to achieve by their adoption the last triumphs of civilisation, and to hold her place in the van of human progress, or whether to other races, and to other communities, will be confided this great mission, it is not for us to determine.

But those who trust that this may yet be England's destiny, who, in spite of much which they deplore, delight to look upon her past with pride, and her future with hope, will ever revere the memory of Cobden, as of one whose lifelong aim it was to lay the foundations of her empire in her moral greatness, in the supremacy of reason, and in the majesty of law—and will feel with us that the “international man” was also, and still more, an Englishman.

[NOTE—The late Sir Louis Mallet was Mr. Cobden's assistant in the negotiations of the Treaty of Commerce with France in 1860, and was at the Board of Trade in succeeding years, charged with the negotiations of similar treaties with other European powers, which did so much for the extension of free trade ideas and effected a general reduction of tariffs which has not even yet lost its effect.. He was brought much into contact with Mr. Cobden in official and private life, and in later years one of his friends wrote to him as follows: “You are not only a Cobdenite *pur sang* but unless I am much mistaken, you have realised more perfectly and completely than Cobden did himself, the higher and more ideal side of the Cobdenic creed.” Sir Louis Mallet, in reply, denied that this was the case, saying that he “had done little more than put into a connected shape ideas which his friends had heard from him again and again.”

No apology is therefore needed for the reprinting of the essay which forms the introduction to this volume, for until the publication of Cobden's Life by Mr. John Morley, who had the advantage of Sir L. Mallet's assistance and advice, it was the only authoritative comment upon the great free trade statesman's work.]

INTRODUCTION TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.
By William Cullen Bryant.

On the evening of the 18th of June, 1845, Covent Garden Theatre, in London, was crowded with men and women assembled at the call of the Anti-Corn-Law League. They had come together in order to hear addresses from some of the eminent leaders of that association. I was present, and had never seen a large assembly more respectable in appearance, or more attentive to every word that fell from the lips of the speakers—enthusiastic applause interrupting, from time to time, the profound silence, and again quickly hushed into breathless attention. This vast audience was addressed by John Bright, Richard Cobden, and W. J. Fox. Bright had then begun to distinguish himself by that manly and massive eloquence which has since given him his fame. The oratory of Fox, who spoke last, was of a more florid cast, and enlivened with sallies of humour, by which the audience was greatly entertained. But most of all was I impressed by the speech of Mr. Cobden—by his direct dealing with the subject of discussion, the manifest sincerity of his convictions, his air of invincible determination, the perspicuity of his statements, his skill in arranging and presenting his topics, and the closeness of his logic. So persuasive was his address, that I saw at once why so high a place had been assigned him in the agitation for the repeal of the Corn Laws. Here was one who knew how to appeal to the general mind of his countrymen, and having won their assent to the merits of a great public cause, was able to infuse into them his own resolute spirit in carrying forward that cause to its final triumph.

When I left the building I remember saying to a friend that I did not see how the Corn Laws could survive the attacks to which they were exposed, and that I perceived, or thought I perceived, in the meeting I had just attended, the proofs of a public opinion too powerful for the landowners much longer to resist. The hour of triumph for the League was, in fact, even nearer than I anticipated. In the next year's session of Parliament, the British Ministry, with Sir Robert Peel at its head, came forward with a Bill for removing the old restrictions on the trade in grain, and wresting from the landed proprietors the monopoly on which they had relied as one of the main sources of their prosperity. The Bill became a law; the long and vehement struggle was closed by the defeat of the aristocracy; Peel, now the object of their displeasure, though thanked by the nation, withdrew from the Ministry; but he, like Mr. Cobden, found his reward in the appreciation of his countrymen.

More to be valued than mere success in procuring this change to be made by Parliament was the triumph of the principles on which the change was founded. Mr. Cobden and his associates in the agitation for free trade in corn had always insisted that the agriculture of the country would suffer no prejudice from the repeal of the Corn Laws, and the result showed the truth of this assertion. The people were sensibly relieved, and the landowners suffered no loss; the manufacturing population had cheap bread, and the agricultural population were not deprived of employment. The cultivator found himself obliged to resort to more skilful methods of tillage, and was rewarded with richer harvests. I believe I am not mistaken when I say that among the landowners of Great Britain there is now no fear or jealousy of foreign rivalry.

This success of an association organised under popular leaders against a powerful aristocracy has made Mr. Cobden's an historical name. In discussing the justice and expediency of what were called the Corn Laws of England, he was led to investigate the principles which all measures regulating the intercourse between one nation and another should recognise. All his writings refer to these principles, and have a value which lifts them out of the sphere of local and temporary interests, and which no lapse of years can impair. They are practical illustrations of the philosophy of commercial legislation: documents from which the history of the world's commerce is to be written. At present, while the policy of most governments in regard to their intercourse with each other is far from being fully and finally settled, they form a storehouse of arguments and illustrations in the controversies continually arising.

There are two classes of politicians—statesmen the world generally agrees in calling them, though that title, in its proper and nobler sense, belongs to but one of them. One class keeps studiously in sight the rules of justice and humanity, as the principles of legislation and government upon which it conscientiously supposes the welfare of the community to depend. The other class, which is found in all countries and in all political parties, aims at securing and promoting certain minor interests upon one specious pretext or another, which is taken up or laid aside as it may serve or fail to serve the occasion. I need not say that Mr. Cobden belonged to the former of these classes, and was a statesman in the highest sense of the term. In all the public measures which he discussed, he regarded mainly their consequences to the people at large, or, in other words, the good of the human race. In the most civilised part of the globe, he saw how often the subjects of the different governments were slaughtered and stripped of their substance to carry on wars in which they had no manner of interest, and the sole motive of which was the aggrandisement or caprice of those who ruled them. Moreover, to refer a dispute between nations to the arbitrament of war is in no way to obtain a just decision, and Mr. Cobden saw no reason why, for this brutal method, the custom of nations should not substitute that which, in every society, even of the loosest organisation, determines controversies between individuals, namely, the obvious expedient of referring them to third persons presumed to be impartial as between the disputants. He wrote, therefore, in favour of referring to arbitrators all differences between nations which could not be settled by negotiation. It is certain that this method is coming more and more into favour, as the intercourse between nations becomes more intimate, although various causes still prevent it from being generally adopted. At some time, when mankind shall be more generally enlightened, and those who administer the governments of the world shall be forced to pay more regard to the interests of the people whose affairs they have in charge, the folly of going to war may be deemed as great as that of settling a question of law by a boxing match. The hope that the world may grow wiser, and therefore more peaceful, as it grows older, is not so absurd that it has not been cherished by the friends of the human race from an early period; and whether it be a philanthropic dream, or, as I believe, the expectation of a wise foresight, it has in all ages inspired the prayers of good men, who look for the time when the sword shall be beaten into the pruning hook, and nations shall learn war no more.

Mr. Cobden never hesitated to raise his voice against any war undertaken by the British Government, for causes which, in his view, did not justify a resort to arms. In

1857, he led the majority which, in the House of Commons, censured Lord Palmerston for the war with China. It is most natural in a time of war for the large majority of every nation to take part with its own government, and to maintain the justice of its quarrel. It was a great triumph for the cause of impartial justice in Great Britain, when the popular branch of its legislature was persuaded so far to forego this natural prejudice as to declare that a war in which the British ministry had involved the nation was neither just nor necessary.

There could scarcely be a higher testimony to the statesmanship of Mr. Cobden, the justness and safety of his views of commercial questions, and his capacity for fulfilling an important public trust, than was given by the British Government, when, a few years since, on his suggestion that an opportunity had presented itself for placing the trade between Great Britain and France on a better and more liberal footing, it entrusted him with full powers for that purpose. The expected arrangements were made through his agency; a treaty was negotiated, and the result was an enormous increase in the trade of the two countries, and a corresponding development of friendly intercourse between the one people and the other.

In the later years of his life, Mr. Cobden took a deep interest in the controversy which the leading men of the Southern States of this Republic forced upon the people of the North, when, renouncing their allegiance to the Federal Government, and breaking away from the Union, they invited an appeal to the sword. He was convinced of the absolute necessity of the effort we were making to preserve the Union unimpaired, as indispensable to the future peace and prosperity of the country. He rejoiced with good men all over the world when our government repealed the law of bondage in the Rebel States. He was one of those enlightened Englishmen who zealously took our part against the governing class of their own country, maintained the justice of the cause, and predicted for it a certain and glorious triumph. He lived, if not to see his prediction fulfilled, yet to behold the sure signs of its near accomplishment.

I now leave the American reader to the perusal of the writings included in this collection. He will find in them the utterances of a true friend of the human race, whose sole aim was so to modify existing institutions, by proper and equitable methods, that all who live under the same government may be equal partakers in its benefits, and to bring all the blessings of life within the reach of the largest number. This great end he kept steadily in view, never intimidated from pursuing it by the danger of unpopularity, nor seduced to abandon it by the love of distinction and the praises of the great. His indignation at the oppression of the weak and helpless was never disguised, and his whole political life was made up of manly labours in the cause of justice. From the writings of this illustrious teacher the wisest statesman may be instructed in the practical application of the maxims of a comprehensive, humane, and generous political philosophy.

New York,

November, 1866.

? It has been thought that Mr. Bryant's Introduction would be as interesting to the English as to the American reader, and it is therefore added to the present edition.

THE POLITICAL WRITINGS OF RICHARD COBDEN.

ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND AMERICA.
1835.

"The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connection as possible."—*Washington's farewell address to the American people*.

NOTE TO "ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND AMERICA."

As the first of Mr. Cobden's literary productions—written and published in the spring of 1835, when he was unknown to fame, and a simple "Manchester Manufacturer"—the following pamphlet is invested with an interest peculiarly its own. Like the succeeding work on "Russia," it has for many years been out of print; and although, during the intervening period, it has been constantly alluded to and frequently criticised, probably few of those who wrote and still fewer of those who read the strictures of the press upon it, had an opportunity of reading either of the editions which were published thirty years ago. It may be interesting to state that both pamphlets were in the first instance published by Mr. Ridgway, of Piccadilly, and subsequently reproduced in a cheap form by the late Mr. William Tait, of Edinburgh, in whose hands "England, Ireland, and America" passed through, at least, six editions. It will be seen that at that early period Mr.Cobden foresaw the importance to Ireland of Trans-Atlantic steam-packet stations at suitable points on her coast, as well as of the more general cultivation of flax, the great staple of Irish manufactures, on soil suitable for the purpose. He dealt with the questions of the national debt and of the military and naval establishments of the United States as he then found them. No one could at that time foresee that the institution of negro slavery would entail upon the American nation so terrible a retribution as that with which they have since been visited, although Mr. Cobden was careful to point out that the existence of this "indelible stain upon their religion and government" would "serve to teach mankind that no deed of guilt or oppression can be perpetrated with impunity, even by the most powerful." This pamphlet also contains Mr. Cobden's earliest published contribution to the literature of free trade. It may further be remarked that almost immediately after he had seen these pages through the press, he paid his first visit to the United States. He landed in New York on Sunday, June 7th, 1835, and—reckoning the sea voyages—was absent exactly three months. The impressions which he had previously formed of the illimitable resources of the great Republic, of the ingenious and industrious character of the people, of the wide diffusion among them of the blessings of education, and of the boundless spirit of enterprise by which they were animated, were fully confirmed by what he saw with his own eyes: and on his return to England he found nothing in his pamphlet that required to be omitted or modified in the subsequent editions.

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Part I.

England.

To maintain what is denominated the true balance of European power has been the fruitful source of wars from the earliest time; and it would be instructive, if the proposed limits of this work permitted it, to bring into review all the opposite struggles into which England has plunged for the purpose of adjusting, from time to time, according to the ever-varying theories of her rulers, this national equilibrium. Let it suffice to say, that history exhibits us, at different periods, in the act of casting our sword into the scale of every European State. In the meantime, events have proclaimed, but in vain, how futile must be our attempts to usurp the scepter of the Fates. Empires have arisen unbidden by us; others have departed, despite our utmost efforts to preserve them. All have undergone a change so complete that, were the writers who only a century ago lauded the then existing state of the balance of Europe to reappear, they would be startled to find, in the present relations of the Continent, no vestige of that perfect adjustment which had been purchased at the price of so much blood. And yet we have able writers and statesmen of the present day, who would advocate a war to prevent a derangement of what we now choose to pronounce the just equipoise of the power of Europe.

For a period of six hundred years, the French and English people had never ceased to regard each other as natural enemies. Scarcely a generation passed over its allotted section of this vast interval of time without sacrificing its victims to the spirit of national hate. It was reserved for our own day to witness the close of a feud, the bloodiest, the longest, and yet, in its consequences, the most nugatory of any that is to be found in the annals of the world. Scarcely has we time to indulge the first emotions of pity and amazement at the folly of past ages, when, as if to justify to the letter the sarcasm of Hume, when alluding to another subject,? we, the English people, are preparing, through the vehicles of opinion, the public press, to enter upon a hostile career with Russia.

Russia, and no longer France, is the chimera that now haunts us in our apprehension for the safety of Europe: whilst Turkey, for the first time, appears to claim our sympathy and protection against the encroachments of her neighbours; and, strange as it may appear to the politicians of a future age, such is the prevailing sentiment of hostility towards to Russian government at this time in the public mind, that, with but few additional provocatives administered to it by a judicious minister through the public prints, a conflict with that Christian power, in defence of a Mahomedan people, more than a thousand miles distant from our shores, might be made palatable, nay, popular, with the British nation. It would not be difficult to find a cause for this antipathy: the impulse, as usual with large masses of human beings, is a generous one, and arises, in great part, from emotions of pity for the gallant Polish people, and of indignation at the conduct of their oppressors—sentiments in which we cordially and zealously concur: and if it were the province of Great Britain to administer justice to

all the people of the earth—in other words, if God has given us, as a nation, the authority and the power, together with the wisdom and the goodness, sufficient to qualify us to deal forth His vengeance—then should we be called upon in this case to rescue the weak from the hands of their spoilers. But do we possess these favoured endowments? Are we armed with the powers of Omnipotence: or, on the contrary, can we discover another people rising into strength with a rapidity that threatens inevitably to overshadow us? Again, do we find ourselves to possess the virtue and the wisdom essential to the possession of supreme power; or, on the other hand, have we not at our side, in the wrongs of a portion of our own people, a proof that we can justly lay claim to neither?

Ireland and the United States of America ought to be the subjects of our inquiry at this period, when we are, apparently, preparing ourselves to engage as parties to question involving countries with which we are but remotely, and in comparison, very little interested. Before entering upon some reflections under each of these heads, we shall call the consideration of our readers to the affairs of Russia and Turkey; and we shall use as the text of our remarks a pamphlet that has recently made its appearance under the title of "England, France, Russia, and Turkey," to which our attention was first attracted by the favourable comments bestowed upon it by the influential portion of the daily press.

The writer? appears to be versed in the diplomatic mysteries of the courts of St. Petersburg and Constantinople: indeed, he hints that he has been himself a party to the negotiations carried on with the Sublime Porte. He says, p. 77—"The details into which we have already entered may probably contain internal evidence of our opinion not having been formed in a closet, remote from the subject we are treating." And the concluding words of the pamphlet are calculated to lead to a similar infence; and they are, moreover, curious, as illustrating the tone of feeling with which the author regards the Russian government:—"Our words have been fewer than our thoughts; and, while we have to regret abler hands have not wielded our arms, we owe it to our subject to state, that others, unproduced, prudence forbade to draw until the *hour of retribution arrives*."

After a preliminary appeal to the sympathies of his readers in favour of Poland, he proceeds to ask, "Is the substance of Turkey to be added to the growth of Russia? Is the mammoth of the Sarmatian plains to become the leviathan of the Hesperian seas? Is another victim to be sacrificed within so short a time on the same alter, and because the same trifling succour is again withheld? Are the remains of Turkey to be laid upon the tomb of Poland, to exclude every ray of hope, and render its doom irrevocable?"

To what extent this trifling succour is meant to go will be explained in the writer's own words by-and-by. But we propose, in this place, to inquire what are the motives that England can have to desire to preserve the Ottoman Empire at the risk of a war, however trifling? In entering on this question we shall, of course, premise, that no government has the right to plunge its people into hostilities, except in defence of their own national honour or interest. Unless this principle be made the rule of all, there can be no guarantee for the peace of any one country, so long as there may be found a people, whose grievances may attract the sympathy or invite the interference

of another State. How, then, do we find our honour or interests concerned in defending the Turkish territory against the encroachments of its Christian neighbour? It is not alleged that we have an alliance with the Ottoman Porte, which binds us to preserve its empire intact; nor does there exist, with regard to this country, a treaty between Russia and Great Britain (as was the case with respect to Poland) by which we became jointly guarantees for its separate national existence. The writer we are quoting puts the motive for our interference in a singular point of view; he says, "This obligation is imposed upon us as members of the European community by the approaching annihilation of another of our compeers. It is imposed upon us by the necessity of maintaining the consideration due to ourselves—the first element of political power and influence." From this it would appear to be the opinion of our author, that our being one of the nations of Europe imposes on us, besides the defence of our own territory, the task of upholding the rights and perpetuating the existence of all the other powers of the Continent, a sentiment common, we fear, to a very large portion of the English public. In truth, Great Britain has, in contempt of the dictates of prudence and self-interest, an insatiable thirst to become the peace-maker abroad, or if that benevolent task fail her, to assume the office of gensdarme, and keep in order, gratuitously, all the refractory nations of Europe. Hence does it arise, that, with an invulnerable island for our territory, more secure against foreign molestation than is any part of the coast of North America, we magnanimously disdain to avail ourselves of the privileges which nature offers to us, but cross the ocean, in quest of quadripartite treaties or quintuple alliances, and, probably, to leave our own good name in pledge for the debts of the poorer members of such confederacies. To the same spirit of overweening national importance may in great part be traced the ruinous was, and yet more ruinous subsidies, of our past history. Who does not now see that, to have shut ourselves in our own ocean fastness, and to have guarded its shores and its commerce by our fleets, was the line of policy we ought never to have departed from—and who is there that is not now *feeling*, in the burthen of our taxation, the dismal errors of our departure from this rule during the last war? How little wisdom we have gathered along with these bitter fruits of experience, let the subject of our present inquiry determine!

Judging from another passage in this pamphlet, it would appear that England and France are now to be the sole dictators of the international relations of all Europe. The following passage is dictated by the pure spirit of English vanity whish has already proved so expensive an appendage to our character; and which, unless allayed by increased knowledge among the people, or fairly crushed out of us by our financial burthens, will, we fear, carry us still deeper into the vortex of debt:—"The squadrons of England and France anchored in the Bosphorus, they dictate their own terms to Turkey; to Russia they proclaim, that from that day they intend to arbitrate supremely between the nations of the earth."

We know of but one way in which the honour of this country may be involved in the defence and preservation of the Turkish empire; and that is, through the indiscreet meddling in the intrigues of the seraglio, on the part of our diplomatists. After a few flourishes of the pen, in the style and spirit of the above quotations, shall have passed between the gentlemen of the rival embassies of St. James's and St. Petersburg, who knows but the English nation may, some day, be surprised by the discovery that it is

compromised in a quarrel from which there is no honourable escape but by the disastrous course of a long and ruinous war.

If our honour be not committed in this case, still less shall we find, by examining a little more at length, that our *interests* are involved in the preservation of Turkey. To quote again from the pamphlet before us:—"Suffice it to say, that the countries consuming to the yearly value of thirty millions? of our exports, would be placed under the immediate control of the coalition (Russia, Prussia, and Austria), and, of course, under the regulations of the Russian tariff, not as it is to-day, but such as it would be when the mask is wholly dropped. What would be the effect on the internal state of England, if a considerable diminution of exportation occurred? But it is not only the direct effects of the tariffs of the coalition that are to be apprehended: would it not command the tariffs of Northern and Southern America?" Passing over, as too chimerical for comment, the allusion to the New World, we here have the argument which has, immediately or remotely, decided us to undertake almost every war in which Great Britain has been involved—viz., *the defence of our commerce*. And yet it has, over and over again, been proved to the world, that violence and force can never prevail against the natural wants and wishes of mankind: in other words, that despotic laws against freedom of trade never can be executed. "Trade cannot, will not, be forced; let other nations prohibit by what severity they please, interest will prevail: they may embarrass their own trade, but cannot hurt a nation whose trade is free, so much as themselves." So said a writer? a century ago, whilst experience down to our day has done nothing but confirm the truth of his maxims; and yet people would frighten us into war, to prevent the forcible annihilation of our trade! Can any proofs be offered how visionary are such fears, more conclusive than are to be found in the history of Napoleon's celebrated war against English commerce? Let us briefly stare a few particulars of this famous struggle. The subject, though familiar to everybody, is one the moral of which cannot be too frequently enforced.

The British Islands were, in 1807, declared by Bonaparte in a state of blockade, by those decrees which aimed at the total destruction of the trade of Great Britain. The Berlin and Milan edicts declared—

1. The British Isles were in a state of blockade. 2. All commerce and correspondence were forbidden. All English letters were to be seized in the post-houses. 3. Every Englishman, of whatever rank of Quality, found in France, or the countries allied with her, was declared a prisoner of war. 4. All merchandise or property, of whatever kind, belonging to English subjects, was declared lawful prize. 5. All articles of English manufacture, and articles produced in her colonies, were, in like manner, declared contraband, and lawful prize.

France, Russia, Austria, Prussia, Holland, Italy, and the States of Germany, joined in this conspiracy against the commerce of England. To enforce more effectually these prohibitions, commissioners of rank were appointed to each of the principal seaports of the Continent. Now, let us mark well the result of this great confederation, which was formed for the avowed purpose of annihilating us as a trading people. The following is an account of the declared value of our exports of British products for each of the years mentioned, ending 5th of January:—

1804 . . . . . £36,100,000
1805 37,100,000
1806 37,200,000
1807 39,700,000
1808 36,400,000
1809 36,300,000

It must be borne in mind that the proclamation of war against our trade, above-mentioned, was dated in 1807. It appears, then, by the preceding tabular view, that our commerce sustained a loss to the extent of about 7¼ per cent. in 1808 and 1809, as compared with 1806 and 1807; whilst the amount of exports in the year 1808, or 1809, if compared with the mean or average amount of the above six years, shows a diminution only of about two per cent. And all this took place, be it remembered, when two-thirds of our foreign trade was confined to Europe.?

It is singular to observe that, by the following table, the declared value of our exports, during the last six years, has remained nearly stationary, at a point varying from the average of the former series of year only by a fraction.

Below is a table of the exports of the products of British industry for six years, ending 1833:—

1828 . . . . . £36,400,000
1829 36,200,000
1830 35,200,000
1831 37,700,000
1832 36,600,000
1833 36,000,000

But it must be borne in view, that, as the price of the raw materials of manufactures, such as wool, cotton, silk, iron, &c., together with the price of grain, has undergone a vast depreciation since the former periods, of course the actual exchangeable value of the money amounts in the second table is very much greater than in the first.

In fact, the official value of our exports appears to have doubled, whilst the real or declared value has remained stationary. Bearing all this in mind, still, if we take into consideration the great increase of our exports, since 1809, to the Americas, and to Asia—the quarters where our commerce has been principally increasing—and if we also recollect the higher rate of profits at the earlier periods, it becomes a question if our trade with Europe, notwithstanding its rapid increase in population and wealth, has been benefited by the peace. It is exceedingly doubtful whether, whilst we were engaged in a war for the avowed emancipation of our commence, our merchants were not, all the while, carrying on a more gainful traffic with the Continent than they now do, when its people have become our bloodless rivals at the loom and the spinning frame.

Where, then, is the wisdom of our fighting European battles in defence of a commerce which knows so well of itself how to elude all its assailants? And what have we to show as a per-contra for the four hundred millions of debt incurred in our last continental wars?

We have dwelt at greater length upon this point, because the advocates of an intermeddling policy always hold up the alluring prospect of benefiting commerce; and we think we have said enough to prove that Russian violence cannot destroy, or even sensibly injure, our trade.

But it here becomes proper to ask, Are we warranted in the presumption that Russia is less inclined than other nations for trading with us? Our author, indeed, says, p. 90, "Is it for England to allow an empire, a principle of whose existence is freedom of commerce, to be swallowed up by the most restrictive power on the face of the earth? Is it for England to allow the first commercial position in the world to be occupied by such a power? Is it for England to allow freedom of commerce to be extinguished in the only portion of Europe where it exists?"

We are at a loss to account for the ignorance that exists with reference to the comparative importance of out trade with Russia and with Turkey. The following tables exhibit the amounts of our exports to each of the two countries, at the dates mentioned:—

EXPORTS TO RUSSIA.	EXPORTS TO TURKEY.
A.D. £	A.D £
1700 . 60,000	1700 . 220,000
1750 . 100,000	1750 . 135,000
1790 . 400,000	1790. 120,000
1800 . 1,300,000	1800 . 165,000
1820 . 2,300,000	1820 . 800,000[?]

[?] M'Culloch's Dict., 2nd Edit., p. 671.

By which it will be seen that, whilst Turkey has, in more than a century, quadrupled the amount of her purchases, Russia has, in the same interval of time, increased her consumption of our goods nearly forty-fold. Our exports since the year 1700 have increased in a more rapid ratio to Russia than to any other country in Europe.

The rise of the commerce of St. Petersburg is unparalleled by anything we meet with in Europe, out of England. This city founded in 1703; in 1714 only sixteen ships entered the port, whilst in 1833 twelve hundred and thirty-eight vessels arrived, and of which no less a proportion than six hundred and ninety-four were British.

Nor must it be forgotten, in drawing a comparison between the value of our trade with Russia and that with Turkey, that, whilst the former has, until very recently, possessed but little sea-coast, with but one good port, and that closed by ice one half of the year, the latter had, down to the date at which we have purposely brought the comparison (when the Greek Islands still formed a portion of the Turkish empire), more than

double the extent of maritime territory of any power in Europe, situated in latitudes, too, the most favourable for commerce, including not only the best harbours in the world, but the largest river in Europe.

Neither must it be forgotten that the natural products of the Russian empire are restricted to corn, hemp, tallow, timber, and hides, with a few minor commodities; and that of these, the two important articles of corn and timber are subjected to restrictive, or we might almost say, prohibitive, duties at our hands; whilst Turkey contains the soil and climate adapted for producing almost every article of commerce, with the exception probably only of sugar and tea. We need only mention corn, timber, cotton-wool, sheep's-wool, wood and drugs for dyeing, wine and spirits, tobacco, silk, tallow, hides and skins, coffee, spices, and bullion—to exhibit the natural fertility of a country which is now rendered sterile by the brutalising rule of Mahomedanism. Nor can it be said that commerce is wholly free in Turkey, since the exportation of silk is burthened with a duty, and it is prohibited to export grain,? or any other article of necessity, including the product of the mines.

It is true that this otherwise barbarous government has set an example to more civilised countries, by its moderate import duties on foreign productions; and this, we suspect, is the secret of that surprising tenacity of life which exists in the Ottoman empire, notwithstanding the thousand organic diseases that are consuming its body politic. But what avails to throw open the ports of a country to our ships, if the population will not labour to obtain the produce wherewith to purchase our commodities?

Plains, which Dr. Clarke compares to the fairest portions of Kent, capable of yielding the best silk and cotton, abound in Syria; but despotic violence has triumphed even over nature; and this province, which once boasted of Damascus and Antioch, of Tyre, Sidon, and Aleppo, has, by the oppressive exactions of successive pachas, become little better than a deserted waste.

“Everywhere,” says Volney, speaking of Asiatic Turkey, “everywhere I saw only tyranny and misery, robbery and devastation. I found daily on my route abandoned fields, deserted villages, cities in ruins. Frequently I discovered antique monuments, remains of temples, of palaces, and of fortresses; pillars, aqueducts, and tombs. This spectacle led my mind to meditate on past item, and excited in my heart profound and serious thought. I recalled those ancient ages when twenty famous nations existed in these countries; I painted to myself the Assyrian on the banks of the Tigris, the Chaldean of those of the Euphrates, the Persian reigning from the Indus to the Mediterranean. I numbered the kingdoms of Damascus and Indumea, of Jerusalem and Samaria, the warlike States of the Philistines, and the commercial republics of Phœnicia. This Syria, said I, now almost unpeopled, could then count a hundred powerful cities; its fields were covered with towns, villages, and hamlets. Everywhere appeared cultivated fields, frequented roads, crowded habitations. What, alas! has become of those ages of abundance and of life? What of so many brilliant creations of the hand of man? Where are the ramparts of Nineveh, he walls of Babylon, the palaces of Persepolis, the temples of Baalbec and Jerusalem? Where are the fleets of Tyre, the docks of Arad, the looms of Sidon, and that multitude of sailors, of pilots, of

merchants, of soldiers? Where are those labourers, those harvests, those flocks, and that crowd of living beings that then covered the face of the earth? Alas! I have surveyed this ravaged land—I have visited the places which were the theatre of so much splendour—and have seen only solitude and desertion. The temples are crumbled down; the palaces are overthrown; the ports are filled up; the cities are destroyed; the earth, stripped of its inhabitants, is only a desolate place of tombs."

No less hideous is the picture gives to us by another eloquent eye-witness of the desolation of this once flourishing region.

"A few paltry shops expose nothing but wretchedness to view, and even these are frequently shut, from apprehension of the passage of a Cadi.

"Not a creature is to be seen in the streets, not a creature at the gates, except now and then a peasant gliding through the gloom, concealing under his garments the fruits of his labour, lest he should be robbed of his hard earnings by the rapacious soldier. The only noise heard from time to time is the galloping of the steed of the desert; it is the janissary, who brings the head of the Bedouin, or returns from plundering the unhappy fellah."?

A still more recent traveller, and one of our own countrymen, has these emphatic words, when speaking of the Turkish territory: "Wherever the Osmanli has trod devastation and ruin mark his steps, civilisation and the arts have fled, and made room for barbarism and the silence of the desert and the tomb."†

But why need we seek for foreign testimony of the withering and destroying influences of Mahomedanism? The turks themselves have a proverb, which says, "Where the sultan's hourse has trod, there no grass grows."

> "And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,
> The verdure flies the bloody sod,"
>
> Byron.

Our limits do not allow us to dwell on this portion of our task; suffice it to say, that, beneath the sway of Ottoman violence, the pursuits of agriculture and commerce are equally neglected, in regions that once comprised the mart and granary of the world. *No ship was ever seen to leave a Turkish port, manned with Turkish sailors, upon the peaceful errand of foreign mercantile traffic*. On the ocean, as upon land, this fierce people have always been the scourge of humanity, and a barrier to the progress of commerce and civilisation. In their hands, Smyrna, which was termed by the ancients the ornament of Asia, and Constantinople, chosen for the unrivalled seat of empire by one who possessed the sovereignty of the world—these two cities, adapted by nature to become the centres of a vast trade, are now, through the barbarism and indolence of their rulers, little better than nurseries of the plague!

What shall we say more to prove that England can have no interest in perpetuating the commercial bondage of such a land as we have been describing?

Before quitting the consideration of this part of our subject, we will, for a moment, give way to our imagination, and picture the results that would follow, supposing that the population of the United States of America could be moved from their present position on the earth's surface, and in a moment be substituted in the place of the inhabitants of Turkey. Very little difference of latitude opposes itself to the further supposition that the several pachalics, being transformed into free states, should be populated by the natives of such districts of the New World as gave the fittest adaptation to their previous habits of labour. Now, let us picture this empire, after it had been for fifty years only subject to the laws, the religion, and the industry of such a people.

Constantinople, outrivalling New York, may be painted, with a million of free citizens, as the focus of all the trade of eastern Europe. Let us conjure up the thousands of miles of railroads, carrying to the very extremities of this empire—not the sanguinary satrap, but—the merchandise and the busy traders of a free state; conveying—not the firman of a ferocious sultan, armed with death to the trembling slave, but—the millions of newspapers and letter, which stimulate the enterprice and excite the patriotism of an enlightened people. Let us imagine the Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmora swarming with steamboats, connecting the Europeans the Asiatic continents by hourly departures and arrivals; or issuing from the Dardanelles, to reanimate once more with life and fertility the hundred islands of the Archipelago; or, conceive the rich shores of the Black Sea in the power of the New Englander, and the Danube pouring down its produce from the plains of Moldavia and Wallachia, now subject to the plough of the hardy Kentuckian. Let us picture the Carolinians, the Virginians, and the Georgians, transplanted to the coasts of Asia Minor, and behold its hundreds of cities again bursting from the tomb of ages, to recall religion and civilisation to the spot from whence they first issued forth upon the world. Alas! that this should be only an illusion of the fancy!

There remains another argument in favour of an interposition on our part in defence of Turkey for us to notice; and it points to the danger our colonies might be in, from any movements which Russia should make eastward. “Our Indian possessions,” says the pamphlet before quoted: “shall we fight for them on the Dnieper, as directing the whole Mussulman nation, or shall we fight for them on the Indus, at Bagdad, or in Persia, single-handed; close to the insurrection she will raise in her rear, and when she is in possession of Turkey?”

We might have passed over this point as too chimerical for comment, were it not that it involves a question upon which, we believe, there is greater misapprehension than upon any other subject that engages the attention of our countrymen. Supposing Russia or Austria to be in possession of the Turkish dominions, would she not find her attention and resources far too abundantly occupied in *retaining* the sovereignty over fifteen millions of fierce and turbulent subjects, animated with warlike hatred to their conquerors, and goaded into rebellion by the all-powerful impulse of a haughty and intolerant religion, to contemplate adding still further to her embarrassments by declaring war with England, and giving the word of march to Hindostan? Who does not perceive that it could not, for ages at least, add to the *external power* of either of these states, if she were to get possession of Turkey be force of arms? Is Russia

stronger abroad by her recent perfidious incorporation of Polish territory? Would Holland increase her power if she were to reconquer her Belgic provinces to-morrow? Or, to come to our own doors, for example, was Great Britain more powerful whilst, for centuries, she held Ireland in disaffected subjection to her rule; or was she not rather weakened, by offering, in the sister island, a vulnerable point of attack to her continental enemies?

But supposing merely be way of argument, the Russia, meditated hostile views towards our eastern colonies.

Constantinople is about three thousand miles distant from Calcutta: are our Indian possessions of such value to he British people that we must guard them with operations is extended and so costly as would be necessary if the shores of the Bosphorus are to be made the outpost for our armies of the Ganges? Surely it becomes a momentous question, to the already over-burdened people of England, to ascertain what advantages are to be reaped from enterprises like this, which, whatever other results they may chance to involve, are certain to entail increased taxation on themselves.

Nothing, we believe, presents so fair a field for economical analysis, even in this age of new lights, as the subject of colonisation. We can, of course, only briefly allude to the question; but, in doing so, we suggest it as one that claims the investigation of independent public writers, and of all those members of the legislature who are of and for the people, distinct from selfish views or aristocratic tendencies.

Spain lies, at this moment, a miserable spectacle of a nation whose own natural greatness has been immolated on the shrine of Trans-Atlantic ambition. May not some future historian possibly be found recording a similar epitaph on the tomb of Britain?

In truth, we have been planting, and supporting, and governing countries upon all degrees of habitable, and some that are not habitable, latitudes of the earth's surface; and so grateful to our national pride has been the spectacle, that we have never, for once, paused to inquire if our interests were advanced by so much nominal greatness. Three hundred millions of permanent debt have been accumulated—millions of direct taxation are annually levied—restrictions and prohibitions are imposed upon our trade in all quarters of the world, for the acquisition or maintenance of colonial possessions; and all for what? That we may repeat the fatal Spanish proverb— “The sun never sets on the King of England's dominions.” For we believe that no candid investigator of our colonial policy will draw the conclusion that we have derived, or shall derive, from it advantages that can compensate for these formidable sacrifices.

But we are upon he verge of a novel combination of commercial *necessities* that will altogether change the relations in which we have hitherto stood with our colonies. We call them necessities, because they will be forced upon us, not from conviction of the wisdom of such changes, but by the irresistible march of events. The New World is destined to become the arbiter of the commercial policy of the Old. We will see in what manner this is in operation.

At the passing of the Negro Emancipation Act, an effort was made by the merchants of Liverpool, trading to South America, to prevail on the Legislature to abolish the discriminating duties on West India sugar, which operated so severely on the trade with the Brazils. It was finally decided that the bounty in favour of the importation of our colonial productions should be continued for ten years. At the end of this period, *if not long before*, therefore, the monstrous impolicy of sacrificing our trade with a new continent, of almost boundless extent of rich territory, in favour of a few small islands, with comparatively exhausted soils, will cease to be sanctioned by the law. What will then follow? If we no longer offer the exclusive privileges of our market to the West Indians, we shall cease, as a matter of justice and necessity, to compel them to purchase exclusively from us. They will be at liberty, in short, to buy wherever they can buy goods cheapest, and to sell in the dearest market. They must be placed in the very same predicament as if they were not a part of his Majesty's dominons. Where, then, will be the semblance of a plea for putting ourselves to the expense of governing and defending such countries? Let us apply the same test to our other colonies.

It is no longer a debateable question, amongst enlightened and disinterested minds, that the privileges which we give to the Canadian exporters of timber to Britain, and by which alone we command a monopoly of that market for our manufactures, are founded on gross injustice to the people of this country, and are calculated to give a forced misdirection, as all such bounties are, to the natural industry of these colonies, by causing the investment of capital in the preparing and shipping of inferior timber, which would otherwise seek its legitimate employment in the pursuit of agriculture. This monopoly must yield to the claims of the United States and Baltic trades. Nor have we been contented with sacrificing our own interests to the promotion of a fictitious prosperity in our colonies, but we destroy the interests of one of these, in he vain hope of benefiting another. Thus, in the same spirit of withering protection, we have awarded to the West Indies a monopoly of the trade to Canada, whilst, to the latter, we give the privilege of exclusively supplying the former with corn and timber:? and all this whilst, at the same time, these islands lie within half the distance of the shores of the United States, whose maritime districts possess all the identical exchangeable products with Canada, and teem with a population of industrious and enterprising people, eager for a commerce with these prohibited people.

True, the Government of the United States has lately compelled us, in *self-defence*, to relax from this system; and every one now sees that the same motive prescribes that the commerce of the West Indies be wholly, and without restriction, thrown open to the people of the neighbouring continent, from which it has hitherto been shut out only by means of unnatural prohibitions.

We have said that the new World is the arbiter of the commercial policy of the Old; and we will now see in what way this is the fact in the case of our East Indian trade. Hitherto it has been the custom to impose discriminating duties in favour of the products of these colonies; and this, and this only, has given us the right to compel these dependencies, in return, to restrict themselves to the purchase of our manufactures. We have seen that this restrictive policy must be abandoned in the case of the West Indies and Canada, and still less shall we find it practicable to uphold it in the East, our leading imports from this quarter must be cotton-wool, silk, indigo, and

sugar. The last of these articles, as we have already shown in speaking of the West Indies, the Brazils have, by its successful culture, forced us to remove from the list of protected commodities; whilst the three first, being raw products, in the supply and manufacture of which we are so closely checkmated by the competition of the United States or of European countries, it would be madness to think of subjecting the fabrication of them to restrictive duties, however trifling.

We shall then be under the necessity of levying the same duties on the cotton, sugar, &c., imported from the East Indies, as on similar products coming from North or South America; and it will follow, of course, that, as we offer no privileges in our markets to the planters of Hindostan, we can claim none for our manufacturers in theirs. In other words, they must be left at liberty to buy wherever they can purchase cheapest, and to sell where they can do so at the dearest rate; they will, in all respects, be, commercially and fiscally speaking, the same to us as though they did not form a part of his Majesty's dominions. Where then will be the plea for subjecting ourselves to the heavy taxation required to maintain armies and navies for the defence of these colonies?

Provided our manufactures be cheaper than those of our rivals, we shall command the custom of these colonies by the same motives of self-interest which being the Peruvians, the Brazilians, or the natives of North America, to clothe themselves with the products of our industry; and, on the other hand, they will gladly sell to us their commodities through the same all-powerful impulse, provided we offer for them a more tempting price than they will command in other markets.

We have thus hastily and incidentally glanced at a subject which we predict will speedily force itself upon the attention of our politicians; and we know of nothing that would be so likely to conduce to a diminution of our burdens, by reducing the charges of the army, navy, and ordnance (amounting to fourteen millions annually), as a proper understanding of our relative position with respect to our colonial possessions.? We are aware that no power was ever yet known, voluntarily, to give up the dominion over a part of its territory. But if it could be made manifest to the trading and industrious portions of this nation, who have no honours or interested ambition of any kind at stake in the matter, that whilst our dependencies are supported at an expense to them, in direct taxation, of more than five millions annually, they serve but as gorgeous and ponderous appendages to swell our ostensible grandeur, but in reality to complicate and magnify our government expenditure, without improving our balance of trade—surely under such circumstances, it would become at least a question for anxious inquiry with a people so overwhelmed with debt, whether those colonies should not be suffered to support and defend themselves as separate and independent existences.

Adam Smith, more than sixty years ago, promulgated his doubts of the wisdom and profitableness of our colonial policy—at a time, be it remembered, when we were excluded, by the mother countries, from the South American markets, and when our West Indian possessions appeared to superficial minds an indispensable source of vast wealth to the British empire. Had he lived to our day, to behold the United States of America, after freeing themselves from the dominion of the mother country, become

our largest and most friendly commercial connection—had he live also to behold the free states of South America only prevented from outstripping in magnitude all our other customers by the fetters which an absurd law of exclusive dealing with those very West Indian Colonies has imposed on our commerce—how fully must his opinions have coincided with all that we have urged on this subject!

Here, let us observe, that it is worthy of surprise how little progress has been made in the study of that science of which Adam Smith was, more than half a century ago, the great luminary. We regret that no society has been formed for the purpose of disseminating a knowledge of the just principles of trade. Whilst agriculture can boast almost as many associations as there are British counties; whilst every city in the kingdom contains its botanical, phrenological, or mechanical institutions, and these again possess their periodical journals (and not merely these, for even *war* sends forth its *United Service Magazine*), we possess no association of traders, united together for the common object of enlightening the world upon a question so little understood, and so loaded with obloquy, as free trade.

We have our Banksian, our Linnæan, our Hunterian Societies; and why should not at least our greatest commercial and manufacturing towns posses their Smithian Societies, devoted to the purpose of promulgating the beneficent truths of the "Wealth of Nations?" Such institutions, by promoting a correspondence with similar societies that would probably be organised abroad (for it is our example, in questions affecting commerce, that strangers follow), might contribute to the spread of liberal and just views of political science, and thus tend to ameliorate the restrictive policy of foreign governments, through the legitimate influence of the opinions of their people.

Nor would such societies be fruitless at home. Prizes might be offered for the best essays on the corn question; or lecturers might be sent to enlighten the agriculturists, and to invite discussion upon a subject so difficult and of such paramount interest to all.

The question of the policy or justice of prohibiting the export of machinery might be brought to the test of public discussion; these, and a thousand other question might, with usefulness, engage the attention of such associations.

But to return to the consideration of the subject more immediately before us.

It will be seen from the arguments and facts we have urged, and are about to lay before our readers, that we entertain no fears that our interests would be likely to suffer from the aggrandisement of a Christian power at the expense of Turkey, even should that power be Russia. On the contrary, we have no hesitation in avowing it as our deliberate conviction, that not merely great Britain, but the entire civilised world, will have reason to congratulate itself, the moment when that territory again falls beneath the sceptre of any other European power whatever. Ages must elapse before its favoured region will become, as it is by nature destined to become, the seat and centre of commerce, civilisation and true religion; but the first step towards this consummation must be to convert Constantinople again into that which every lover of humanity and peace longs to behold it—the capital of a Christian people. Nor let it be

objected by more enlightened believers, that the Russians would plant that corrupted branch of our religion, the Greek Church, on the spot where the first Christian monarch erected a temple to the true faith of the Apostles. We are no advocates of that Church, with its idolatrous worship and pantomimic ceremonials, fit only to delude the most degraded and ignorant minds; but we answer—put into a people's hands the Bible in lieu of the Koran—let the religion of Mahoment give place to that of Jesus Christ; and human reason, aided by the printing press and the commerce of the world, will not fail to erase the errors which time, barbarism, or the cunning of its priesthood, may have engrafted upon it.

But to descent from these higher motives to the question of our own interests, to which, probably, as politicians, we ought to confine our consideration.

Nothing, we confess, appears so opposed to the facts of experience, as the belief which has been so industriously propagated in this country, that Russia, if she held the keys of the Dardanelles, would exclude all trade from the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmora. The writer so often quoted, says— "On the occupation of the Dardanelles disappears the importance of our possessions in the Levant. They were only valuable because the Turks held these Straits. When Russia is there, they are valueless, and will soon be untenable." It might be a sufficient reply to these assertions, unsupported by facts or reasoning, to demand of what use will these maritime possessions be to Russia, or any other power, unless for the purposes of trade? Why did the government of St. Petersburg, for nearly a century, bend a steady and longing eye on the ports of the Euxine, but for the facilities which the possession of one of them would give to the traffic between the interior provinces of Russia and the Mediterranean?

We write, however, with no motive but to disabuse the public mind on an important question; and as we prefer in all cases to appeal to facts, we shall here give a few particulars of the rise and progress of the only commercial port of consequence as yet established in the Black Sea.

The first stone of the town of Odessa was laid, by order of Catherine, in 1792.

Previously to this, the Euxine was so little visited by our mariners, that every kind of absurd story was advanced and credited respecting the danger of its navigation: the very name was held to be only synonymous with the black and dismal character of its storms, or the perilous mists that it was imagined constantly shrouded its surface. The Danube was, in a like spirit of credulity, suspected to pour from its channel so vast a deposit of mud as to fill the Black Sea with shoals, that threatened, in the course of a few ages, to convert its waters into dry land; whilst this river, the nobles in Europe, sealed by Turkish jealousy, thus blotting our, as it were, from commercial existence, that vast pastoral district through which it flowed—this stream, whose course lay almost in the centre of Christendom, was as little knows as the great yellow river of China.

Odessa has fully equalled the rapid commercial rise of St. Petersburg, to which only in importance it is now the second in the Russian empire. These two ports, which we are taught to believe belong to the most anti-commercial people, present, singularly

enough, the two most astonishing instances in Europe of quick advances in wealth, trade, and population.

This town has latterly been declared a free port, with exemptions from taxes; and, therefore, we cannot but anticipate for it a much more rapid career in the time to come.

The population of Odessa is estimated at 40,000 souls. The exportation of tallow has increased in two years twenty-fold, thus civilising and enriching extensive districts which must have remained in comparative barbarism, had not this outlet been found for their product. During the same time the breed of sheep has been much improved in these vast southern regions of the Russian territory by the introduction of the merinoes, and the consequent increase of the export of wool has been very considerable.

The amount of imports is stated at 30,000,000 roubles.

We subjoin a statement of the movement or Russian and British shipping at this port, to show that here, as at St. Petersburg and elsewhere, the commerce of England finds a proportionate extension with the trade of other countries.

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Already have its merchants appeared as our customers on the Exchange of Manchester; and it only requires that we remove our suicidal restrictions on the import of corn, to render Odessa ultimately one of the chief contributors to the trade of Liverpool.

The influence of Russia, since she has gained a settlement on the shores of the Euxine, has been successfully exercised in throwing open the navigation of its waters, with those of the Danube, to the world, and this noble river has at length been subjected to the dominion of steam, which will, beyond all other agents, tend most rapidly to bring the population of its banks within the pale of civilisation. A Danube Steam Navigation Joint Stock Company has been projected, and will, in all probability, be in operation next summer; and, as this will give the route from the west of Europe to Turkey, by the way of Vienna, the preference, there is no reason to doubt that eventually this river will enjoy a considerable traffic both of passengers and merchandise.

We have probably said sufficient to prove, from facts, that Russia is not an anti-commercial nation.

We have endeavoured likewise to show that alarms for the safety of our eastern possessions ought not to induce us to go to war to check a movement three thousand miles removed from their capital; and to those who are inspired with fear for our European commerce, from the aggrandisement of Russia, we have answered by

showing that Napoleon, when he had all Europe at his feet, could not diminish our trade eight per cent.

What then remains to be urged in favour of the policy of this Government putting its over-taxed people to the cost of making warlike demonstrations in favour of Turkey? At the moment when we write a British fleet is wintering in the Gulf of Vourla, the cost of which, at a low estimate, probably exceeds two millions, to say nothing of living *materiel*; and this is put in requisition in behalf of a country with which we carry on a commerce less in annual amount than is turned over by either of two trading concerns that we could name in the city of London!

But we are to await a regeneration of this Mahometan empire. Our arms, we are told, are not only to defend its territory, but to reorganize or reconstruct the whole Turkish government, and to bestow upon its subjects improved political institutions. Let us note what the pamphlet before us says upon this subject, and let it be borne in mind that the writer's sentiments have been applauded by some of our influential journals— "It is the policy of England which alone can save her: it is therefore no trivial or idle investigation which we have undertaken, since it is her political elements that we have to embody into a new political instrument." —P. 54. Again— "In the capital, in the meanest villages, in the centre of communications, on the furthest frontiers, a feeling of vague but intense expectation is spread, which will not be satisfied with less *at our hands* than internal reorganisation and external independence." P. 62. Again— "Unless anticipated by visible intervention on the part of England, which will relieve them from the permanent menace of the occupation of the capital, and which *will impose on the Government*(!) the necessity of a change of measures, a catastrophe is inevitable," —P. 63. And again— "An empire which in extent, in resources, in population, in position, and in individual qualities and courage— in all, in fact, save instruction— is one of the greatest on the face of the earth, is brought to look with ardent expectation for the arrival of a foreign squadron, and a body of auxiliaries in its capital, and to expect from their presence *the reformation of internal abuses* (!) and the restoration of its political independence." —P. 73.

To protect Turkey against her neighbour, Russia— to defend the Turks against their own government — to force on the latter a constitution, we suppose— to redress all internal grievances in a state where there is no law but despotism ! Here, then, in a word, is the *"trifling succour"* (p. 2) which we are called on to render our ancient ally; and if the people of Great Britain desired to add another couple of hundreds of millions to their debt, we think a scheme is discovered by which they may be gratified, without seeking for quarrels in any other quarter.

If such propositions as these are, however, to be received gravely it might be suggested to inquire, would Russia, would Austria, remain passive, whilst another power sent her squadrone and her armies from ports a thousand miles distant to take possession of the capital and supersede the government of their adjoining neighbour? Would there be no such thing as Russian or Austrian jealousy of British aggrandisement, and might not our Quixotic labours in behalf of Mahometan regeneration be possibly perplexed by the co-operation of those Powers? These questions present to us the full extent of the dilemma in which we must be placed, if

we ever attempt an internal interference with the Ottoman territory. *Without* the consent and assistance of Russia and Austria, we should not be allowed to land an army in that country. We might, it is true, blockade the Dardanelles, and thus at any time annihilate the trade of Constantinople and the Black sea. But our interests would suffer by such a step; and the object of intermeddling at all is, of course, to benefit, and not destroy our trade. We must, then, if we would remodel Turkey, act in conjunction with Russia, Austria, and France. Would the two former of these powers be likely to lend a very sincere and disinterested co-operation, or must we prepare for a game of intrigues and protocols??

These are the probable consequences of our interposing in the case of Turkey; and, from the danger of which, the only alternative lies in a strict neutrality. We are aware that it would be a novel case for England to remain passive, whilst a struggle was going on between two European powers; and we know, also, that there is a predilection for continental politics amongst the majority of our countrymen, that would render it extremely difficult for any administration to preserve peace under such circumstances. Public opinion must undergo a change; our ministers must no longer be held responsible for the every-day political quarrels all over Europe; nor, when an opposition member of Parliament, or an opposition journalist,? wishes to assail a foreign secretary, must he be suffered to taunt him with neglect of the honour of Great Britain, if he should prudently abstain from involving her in the dissensions that afflict distant communities.

There is no remedy for this but in the wholesome exercise of the people's opinion in behalf of their own interests. The middle and industrious classes of England can have no interest apart from the preservation of peace. The honours, the fame, the emoluments of war belong not to them; the battle-plain is the harvest-field of the aristocracy, watered with the blood of the people.

We know of no means by which a body of members in the reformed House of Commons could so fairly achieve for itself the patriotic title of a national party, as by associating for the common object of deprecating all intervention on our part in continental politics. Such a party might well comprise every representative of our manufacturing and commercial districts, and would, we doubt not, very soon embrace the majority of a powerful House of Commons. At some future election, we may probably see the test of "*no foreign politics* "applied to those who offer to become the representatives of free constituencies. Happy would it have been for us, and well for our posterity, had such a feeling predominated in this country fifty years ago! But although, since the peace, we have profited so little by the bitter experience of the revolutionary wars as to seek a participation in all the subsequent continental squabbles, and though we are bound by treaties, or involved in guarantees, with almost every state of Europe; still the coming moment is only the more proper for adopting the true path of national policy, which always lies open to us.

We say the coming moment is only the more fit for withdrawing ourselves from foreign politics; and surely there are signs in Europe that fully justify the sentiment. With France, still in the throes of her last revolution, containing a generation of young and ardent spirits, without the resources of commerce, and therefore burning for the

excitement and employment of war; with Germany, Prussia, Hungary, Austria,? and Italy, all dependent for tranquillity upon the fragile bond of attachment of their subjects to a couple of aged paternal monarchs; with Holland and Belgium, each sword in hand; and with Turkey, not so much yielding to the pressure of Russia, as sinking beneath an inevitable religious and political destiny— surely, with such elements of discord as these fermenting all over Europe, it becomes more than ever our duty to take natural shelter from a storm, from entering into which we could hope for no benefits, but might justly dread renewed sacrifices.

Nor do we think it would tend less to promote the ulterior benefit of our continental neighbours than our own, were Great Britain to refrain from participating in the conflicts that may arise around her. An onward movement of constitutional liberty must continue to be made by the less advanced nations of Europe, so long as one of its greatest families holds out the example of liberal and enlightened freedom. England, by calmly directing her undivided energies to the purifying of her own internal institutions, to the emancipation of her commerce —above all, to the unfettering of her press from its excise bonds— would, by thus serving as it were for the beacon of other nations, aid more effectually the cause of political progression all over the continent than she could possibly do by plunging herself into the strife of European wars.

For, let it never be forgotten, that it is not by means of war that states are rendered fit for the enjoyment of constitutional freedom; on the contrary, whilst terror and bloodshed reign in the land, involving men's minds in the extremities of hopes and fears, there can be no process of thought, no education going on, by which alone can a people be prepared for the enjoyment of rational liberty. Hence, after a struggle of twenty year, *begun in behalf of freedom*, no sooner had the wars of the French revolution terminated, than all the nations of the continent fell back again into their previous state of political servitude, and from which they have, ever since the peace, been *qualifying* to rescue themselves, by the gradual process of intellectual advancement. Those who, from an eager desire to aid civilization, wish that Great Britain should interpose in the dissensions of neighbouring states, would do wisely to study, in the history of their own country, how well a people can, by the force and virtue of native elements, and without external assistance of any kind, work out their own political regeneration: they might learn too, by their own annals, that it is only when at peace with other states that a nation finds the leisure for looking within itself, and discovering the means to accomplish great domestic ameliorations.

To those generous spirits we would urge, that, in the present day, commerce is the grand panacea, which, like a beneficent medical discovery, will serve to inoculate with the healthy and saving taste for civilisation all the nations of the world. Not a bale of merchandise leaves our shores, but it bears the seeds of intelligence and fruitful thought to the members of some less enlightened community; not a merchant visits our seats of manufacturing industry, but he returns to his own country the missionary of freedom, peace, and good government— whilst our steamboats, that now visit every port of Europe, and our miraculous railroads, that are the talk of all nations, are the advertisements and vouchers for the value of our enlightened institutions.

In closing this part of our task, we shall only add, that, whatever other plea may in future be allowed to induce us to embark in a continental conflict, we trust we have proved, that so far as our commerce is concerned, it can neither be sustained nor greatly injured abroad by force or violence. The foreign customers who visit our markets are not brought hither through fear of the power or the influence of British diplomatists: they are not captured by our fleets and armies: and as little are they attracted by feelings of love for us; for that "there is no friendship in trade" is a maxim equally applicable to nations and to individuals. It is solely from the promptings of self-interest that the merchants of Europe, as of the rest of the world, send their ships to our ports to be freighted with the products of our labour. The self-same impulse drew all nations, at different periods of history, to Tyre, to Venice, and to Amsterdam; and if, in the revolution of time and events, a country should be found (which is probable) whose cottons and woollens shall be cheaper than those of England and the rest of the world, then to that spot— even should it, by supposition, be buried in the remotest nook of the globe— will all the traders of the earth flock; and no human power, no fleets or armies, will prevent Manchester, Liverpool, and Leeds, from sharing the fate of their once proud predecessors in Holland, Italy, and Phœnicia.? .

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Part II.

Ireland.

Whilst within the last twenty years our sympathies have gone forth over the whole of Europe in quest of nations suffering from, or rising up against the injustice of their rulers; whilst Italy, Greece, Spain, France, Portugal, Turkey, Belgium, and Poland, have successively filled the newspapers with tales of their domestic wrongs; and whilst our diplomatists, fleets, and armies have been put in motion at enormous cost, to carry our counsel, or, if needful, our arms, to the assistance of the people of these remote regions; it is an unquestionable fact, that the population of a great portion of our own empire has, at the same time, presented a grosser spectacle of moral and physical debasement than is to be met with in the whole civilised world.

If an intelligent foreigner, after having travelled through England, Scotland, and Wales, and enjoyed the exhibition of wealth, industry, and happiness, afforded everywhere by the population of these realms, were, when upon the eve of departing for the shores of Ireland, to be warned of the scenes of wretchedness and want that awaited him in that country, he would naturally assume the cause in some such question as this:— "The people are no doubt indolent, and destitute of the energy that belongs to the English character?" If it were answered, that, so far from such being the case, the Irish are the hardiest labourers on earth; that the docks and canals of England, and the railroads of America are the produce of their toil; in short, that they are the hewers of wood and the drawers of water for other nations—then the next inquiry from this stranger would probably be in some such form as this:—"But their soil no doubt is barren, and their climate inhospitable: nature has besides, probably, denied to them the rivers and harbours which are essential to commerce?" What would be his surprise to be answered, that, in natural fertility, and in the advantages of navigable streams, lakes, and harbours, Ireland is more favoured than England, Scotland, or Wales.?

Where, then, shall we seek for the causes of the poverty and barbarism that afflict this land? How shall we be able to account for the fact, that commerce and civilisation, which have from the earliest ages journeyed westward, and in their course have even stayed to enrich the marshes of the Adriatic and the fens of Holland, should have passed over in their flight to the New World a spot more calculated by nature than almost any other besides, to be the seat of a great internal and external trade?

We do not profess to be able to disclose all the precise causes of the depressed fate of Ireland; still less do we pretend to offer a panacea for all the ills that afflict her. Our object in introducing the subject here is, to show the absurdity and injustice of that policy which leads us to seek amongst other nations for objects of compassion and care, and to neglect the urgent demands that are made upon us at our very door.

The strongest ground of grievance that we have ever heard alleged against us by intelligent Irishmen, unimbued with party feelings, is the total neglect and ignorance of their country that prevail amongst the people of England. To the middle classes of this country, as to an impartial tribunal, untainted by the venom of their political and religious factions, a large portion of the Irish people look for the probable regeneration of their unhappy country. Without this tardy effort of justice at our hands, they will never be able to escape from the vortex of their social distractions. This patriotic party, including so much of the intelligence and industry of Ireland, claim from their fellow-subjects on this side of the Channel (and they have a right to claim it), such a consideration of their country, its population and resources, its history, institutions, and geography—in fact, just such a study of Ireland as shall give them a knowledge of its anomalous physical and moral state.

It is almost incredible how little is known of this, one of the largest both in area and population, of the four divisions of the kingdom. Let any one of our readers take a person of average intelligence, and ask him which is the finest river of the United Kingdom; he will answer, probably, the Thames, the Humber, or the Severn; it is ten to one against his naming the Shannon.

We will venture to say that there are as many individuals in England conversant with the city of New York and the course of the Hudson, as there are who are acquainted with the topography of Limerick, and the banks of the largest river in the British Empire.

The past fate of Ireland, like the present condition of its people—present to our view an anomaly that has no parallel in the history of nations. During all that period of time which has sufficed to bring the other states in Europe to emerge from barbarism—some to attain their zenith of glory, and again decay, others to continue at the summit of prosperity—Ireland has never enjoyed one age of perfect security or peace. She has, consequently, unlike every other nation, no era of literature, commerce, or the arts to boast of; nay, she does no exhibit, in her annals, an instance in which she has put forth in war a combined force to merit even the savage honours of military or naval fame.

Poets have feigned a golden age for this, as for every other country; but it never existed except in the pages of romance. Ireland never was, at any known period of her history, more tranquil or happy than at this day. She has from the first been the incessant prey of discord, bloodshed, and famine.

We, who are fond of digging deep into the foundations of causes, incline to assign as one reason of the adverse condition of this island, the circumstance of the Romans never having colonised it. That people, by deposing the petty chiefs, and gathering and compressing their septs into one communion—by inoculating the natives with a love of discipline—by depositing amongst them the seeds of the arts, and imparting a taste for civilisation—would probably have given to them that unity and consistency, as one people, the want of which has been the principal source of all their weakness and misfortune. Had the Romans occupied for three centuries such a country as this,

they would perhaps have left it, on their departure from Britain, more advanced in all respects than it proved to be in the sixteenth century.

But whatever were the causes of the early degradation of this country, there can be no doubt that England has, during the last two centuries, by discouraging the commerce of Ireland—thus striking at the very root of civilization—rendered herself responsible for much of the barbarism that at the present day afflicts it.

However much the conduct of England towards the sister island, in this particular, may have been dwelt upon for party purposes, it is so bad as scarcely to admit of exaggeration.

The first restrictions put upon the Irish trade were in the reign of Charles II.; and from that time down to the era when the United Volunteers of Ireland stepped forward to rescue their country from its oppressors (the only incident, by the way, in the chronicles of Ireland, deserving the name of a really national effort), our policy was directed incessantly to the destruction of the foreign trade of that country. Every attempt at manufacturing industry, with one exception, was likewise mercilessly nipped in the bud. Her natural capabilities might, for example, have led the people to the making of glass; it was enacted that no glass should be allowed to be exported from Ireland, and its importation, except from England, was also prohibited. Her soil calculated for the pasturing of sheep, would have yielded wool equal to the best English qualities; an absolute prohibition was laid on its exportation, and king William, in addressing the British Parliament, declared that he would “do everything in his power to discourage the woollen manufacture of Ireland.” Down to the year 1779, we find that the export of woollen goods from that island remained wholly interdicted.

Not only was her commerce with the different ports of Europe fettered by the imposition of restrictions upon every valuable product that could interfere with the prosperity of England; not only was all trade with Asia and the east of Europe excluded by the charters which were granted to the companies of London; but her ports were actually sealed against the trade of the American colonies. Although Ireland presented to the ships of North America the nearest and the noblest havens in Europe, and appeared to be the natural landing-place for the products of the New World, her people were deprived of all benefit—nay, they were actually made to suffer loss and inconvenience from their favoured position; laws were passed, prohibiting the importation of American commodities into Ireland, without first landing them in some port of England or Wales, whilst the export of Irish products to the colonies, excepting through some British port, was also interdicted.

If we add to this, that a law was enacted, preventing beef or live cattle from being exported to England, some idea may be formed of the commercial policy of this country towards Ireland—a policy savouring more of the mean and sordid tyranny of the individual huckster over his poorer rival, than of any nobler oppression that is wont to characterize the acts of victorious nations.

Need we wonder that at this moment the entire foreign commerce of Ireland does not much exceed the trade of one second-rate port of Scotland??

There are those who think the Irish genius is unsuited to that eager and persevering pursuit of business which distinguishes the English people; and they argue that, but for this, the natives of a region in all respects so favourable to commerce must have triumphed over the obstacles that clogged their industry.

There is, we believe, one cause existing, less connected with the injustice of England, and to which we are about to allude, why Ireland is below us, and other protestant nations, in the scale of civilisation; yet, if we look to the prosperity of her staple manufacture—the only industry that was tolerated by the Government of this country—it warrants the presumption that, under similar favouring circumstances, her woollens, or, indeed, her cottons, might, equally with her linens, have survived a competition with the fabrics of Great Britain.

But there exists, apart from all intolerant or party feelings on the question, a cause, and we believe a primary one, of the retrograde position, as compared with England and Scotland, in which we find Ireland at the present day, in the circumstance of the Roman Catholic religion being the faith of its people. Let us not be misunderstood—our business does not lie in polemics, and far be it from us to presume to decide which mode of worship may be most acceptable to the great Author of our being. We wish to speak only of the tendency, which, judging from facts that are before us, this church has to retard the *secular* prosperity of nations.

Probably there is no country in which the effects of the Catholic and Reformed religions upon the temporal career of communities may be more fairly tested than in Switzerland. Of twenty-two cantons, ten are, in the majority of the population, Catholic; eight Protestant; and the remaining four are mixed, in nearly equal proportions, of Protestants and Catholics. Those cantons in which the Catholic faith prevails are wholly pastoral in their pursuits, possessing no commerce or manufacturing industry beyond the rude products of domestic labour. Of the mixed cantons, three? are engaged in the manufacture of cotton; and it is a remarkable feature in the industry of these, that the Catholic portion of their population is wholly addicted to agricultural, and the Protestant section to commercial pursuits. All the eight Protestant cantons are, more or less, engaged in manufactures.

Nor must we omit to add, which every traveller in Switzerland will have seen, that, in the education of the people, the cleanliness of the towns, the commodiousness of the inns, and the quality of the roads, the Protestant cantons possess a great superiority over their Catholic neighbours; whilst such is the difference in the value of land, that an estate in Friburg, a Catholic canton, possessing a richer soil than that a Berne, from which it is divided only by a rivulet, is worth one-third less than the same extent of property in the latter Protestant district.

Such are the circumstances, as we find them in comparing one portion of the Swiss territory with another. The facts are still more striking if we view them in relation to the States immediately around them.

Switzerland, being an inland district far removed from the sea, is compelled to resort to Havre, Genoa, or Frankfort for the supply of the raw materials of her industry, which are transported by land three, four, or five hundred miles, *through Catholic States,* for the purpose of fabrication; and the goods are afterwards reconveyed to the same ports for exportation to America or the Levant, where, notwithstanding this heavy expense of transit, and although Switzerland possesses no mineral advantages, they sustain a prosperous competition with their more favoured, but less industrious, neighbours and rivals.

If we refer to France, we shall find that a large depôt of manufacturing industry has been formed upon the extreme inland frontier of her territory on the Rhine, where her best cottons are fabricated and printed, and conveyed to the metropolis, about three hundred miles off, for sale. Alsace, the Protestant district we allude to, contains no local advantages, no iron or coals; it is upwards of four hundred miles distant from the port through which the raw materials of its manufactures are obtained, and whence they are conveyed, entirely by land, passing through Paris, to which city the goods are destined to be again returned. Thus are these commodities transported, overland, more than seven hundred miles, for no other assignable reason, except that they may be subjected to the labour of Protestant hands.

Germany gives us additional facts to the same purport. If we divide this empire into north and south, we shall find the former, containing Prussia, Saxony, &c., to be chiefly Protestant, and to comprise nearly all the manufacturing and commercial interests of the country; whilst the latter are principally Catholic, and almost wholly addicted to agriculture. Education, likewise, follows the same law here as in Switzerland; for, whilst the Catholics amount to about twenty millions, and possess but five universities, the Protestants support thirteen, with only a population of fourteen millions.

If we turn to Catholic Italy, where there is very little manufacturing of any kind, we yet find that the commerce of the country is principally in the hands of foreigners. The merchants of Genoa, Naples, Trieste, &c., are chiefly British, Swiss, or Germans, whose houses, again, have their own agents in the principal interior cities; so that the trade of the Italian States is in great part transacted by Protestants. We need scarcely add to these statements the fact, which all are acquainted with, that, in Ireland, the staple manufacture is almost wholly confined to the Protestant province.

We shall probably be reminded of the former commercial grandeur of Spain and the Italian republics. This was, however, to a great extent, the effect of monopolies, which must, from their nature, be of transient benefit to nations, and, moreover, they flourished prior to the complete triumph of the Reformation; and our object is merely to exhibit a comparison between Protestant and Catholic communities of the same period. Besides, Spain and Italy have left no evidences of the enlightened industry of their people— such as are to be seen, for example, to attest the energy of the Dutch, in the canals and dykes of Holland.

We have thus briefly glanced at the comparative conditions of the Catholic and Protestant interests in Europe; and, disclaiming, as we do, any theological purpose, we

trust we may demand for our argument, what is not often accorded to this invidious topic, the candid attention of our readers. The above facts, then, go far to prove that, in human affairs at least, the Reformed faith conduces more than Catholicism to the prosperity of nations.

We shall not argue that the welfare of States, any more than of individuals, affords proofs of spiritual superiority; we will admit that it does not; but, if it can be proved from facts (as we think even our intelligent and ingenuous Roman Catholic readers will agree we have done) that the Protestant is, more than the Catholic faith, conducive to the growth of national riches and intelligence, then there must be acknowledged to exist a cause, independent of misgovernment, for the present state of Ireland, as compared with that of Great Britain, for which England cannot be held altogether responsible.

The deficient education of a people is, no doubt, a circumstance that must tend, in these days, when the physical sciences and the arts are so intimately blended with manufacturing industry, and when commerce itself has become a branch of philosophy, to keep them in the rear rank of civilised nations; but we think the abhorrence of change that characterises Catholic States, and which we shall find not merely to affect religious observances, but to pervade all the habits of social life, has even a more powerful influence over their destinies.

In proof of this, if we take the pages of Cervantes and Le Sage, and compare the portraits and scenes they have depicted, with the characters, costumes, and customs of the present day, we shall find that the Spanish people are, after the lapse of so many ages, in even the minutest observances, wholly unchanged. On the other hand, if we look into Shakespeare, or examine the canvas of Teniers, we shall find that, during the same interval of time, the populations of Holland and England have been revolutionised in all the modes of life, so as scarcely to leave one national feature of those ages for recognition in our day.

Ireland has clung tenaciously to her characteristics of ancient days.

“There is a great use among the Irish,” says Spenser, writing more than two hundred years ago, “to make great assemblies together upon a rath or hill, there to parley, as they say, about matters and wrongs between township and township, or one private person and another.”—Vol. viii. p. 399. Now, no person could, by possibility, pass six months in the south of Ireland, during the present year, but he would be certain to witness some gatherings of this nature. But who, that has travelled in that island, can have failed to be struck with that universal feature in the dress of the people—the great-coat? “He maketh his mantle,” says Spenser, speaking of the Irish peasant of his time, “his house; and under it covereth himself from the wrath of heaven, from the offence of the earth, and from the sight of men. When it raineth it is his pent-house; when it bloweth, it is his tent; when it freezeth, it is his tabernacle. In summer, he can wear it loose; in winter, he can wrap it close; at all times, he can use it; never heavy, never cumbersome.”—P. 367. We have ourselves seen the Irish of our own day, in the midst of winter, wrapping the mantle close, and we have seen them spreading it loosely in summer; we have seen the peasant, whilst at plough, obliged to quit one of

the stilts every minute for the purpose of adjusting the great-coat that was tucked clumsily round his loins; and we have beheld the labourer at work, with his mantle thrown inconveniently over his arms and shoulders; but we have never witnessed it thrown aside. In truth, it is still the mantle that "hides him from the sight of men;" for, like charity, it cloaks a multitude of defects in the garments beneath.

But it is not in mere externals that we shall find the character of Irish society unchanged. In the manifestations of the passions, in the vehement displays of natural feeling, there is, amidst the general amelioration of the surrounding world, alas! no improvement here. To quote again from the pages of Spenser, an eye-witness:— "I saw an old woman, which was his foster-mother, take up his head, whilst he was quartered, and sucked up all the bloode that runne thereoute, saying, that the earthe was not worthy to drinke it; and therewith, also steeped her face and breast, and tore her hair, crying out and shrieking most terribly."—*Ibid.* p. 381.

Let us compare the above scene, which was enacted at the execution of one of the turbulent natives of the sixteenth century, with the following incident that occurred at the late Rathcormac tithe tragedy:—

"I went up to inspect the haggart where the carnage occurred, and so awful a spectacle I never witnessed; the straw, all saturated with human gore, so that blood oozed through on the pressure of the foot; and, shocking to relate, the widow Collins was seen to kiss the blood of her sons, imprecating God's vengeance on the murderers of her children."—*Dub. Ev. Post, Dec. 23, 1834.*

Who would imagine that more than two centuries have elapsed between the dates when these parallel occurrences took place in one and the same country?

Viewing, as we confessedly do, the Roman Catholic religion to be a great operating cause against the amelioration of the state of Ireland, it becomes an interesting question, how it happens that we find its dogmas to be professed with so much zeal at the present day in that country. How does it arise, that whereas, during the last three centuries, history exhibits nation after nation yielding up its religion to those reforms which time had rendered necessary, until nearly the whole of northern and western Europe has become Protestant —Ireland, notwithstanding so much contiguous change, still clings, with greater devotion than ever, to the shattered tiara of Rome? That such is the case is proved by the evidence of a trustworthy author, whose recent travels in Ireland we shall have occasion to allude to.?

We fervently believe that persecution—perhaps honestly devised, but still persecution—has done for this Church what, under the circumstances, nothing besides could have achieved; it has enabled it to resist, not only unscathed, but actually with augmented power, the shocks of a free press, and the liberalising influence of the freest constitutional government in Europe.

We shall be told that the epithet persecution no longer applies, since all civil disabilities are removed from our Catholic fellow-subjects; but, we ask, does it not still apply as much in principle, though not in degree, to the present condition of the

Irish Church—where six millions of Catholics are forced to see the whole tithe of their soil possessed by the clergy of one million of Protestants—as it did to the persecutions of the ancient martyrs, or to the auto-da-fés of modern Spain? Is not the spirit of persecution the same, but modified to meet the spirit of the age?

If we would bring this case home to our own feelings, let us suppose that the arms of the United States of America were to achieve the conquest of Great Britain; we will further suppose that that country possessed an established church differing in faith from our own—for instance, let it be imagined to be of the Unitarian creed. Now, then, we put it to the feelings of our countrymen, would they, or would they not, regard it as persecution, if they saw the whole of the tithes of England diverted from their present uses, to be applied to the support of a faith which they abhorred? Would it not be felt as persecution to be compelled, not only to behold their cathedrals and churches in the hands of the ministers of a (by them) detested creed, but the lands and revenues which appertained to them, wrested from their present purposes, by the force of a Government on the other side of the ocean? And, seeing these things, would it not be felt and suffered as persecution, if the people of England, still clinging to a man to their national Church, were impelled by conscience to erect other temples of worship, and out of their own pockets to maintain their ejected and despised ministers?

But to come to the still more important question, we appeal to the breasts of our readers, would they, under such circumstances, be likely to become converts to the religion of their spoilers and oppressors? or would they not more probably nourish such a spirit of resentment and indignation as would render impossible a calm or impartial examination of its dogmas? And would not their children and their children's children be taught to abhor, even before they could understand, the very name of Unitarianism? But, pursuing our hypothesis, supposing all this to occur in England, and that the nation were compelled, by the presence of sufficient army, to submit—what would the probable effects of such a state of things be upon the peace and prosperity of the community? However excellent might be the laws and institutions, however liberal and enlightened the policy, in other respects,of the government set over us by the Americans, whatever commercial advantages might be derived from a complete incorporation with the United States—would the people, the church-loving people of those realms, be found to be quietly and successfully pursuing their worldly callings, forgetting the grievances of their consciences? We hope not! For the honour of our countrymen we fervently believe that all worldly pursuits and interests would be, by them, and their sons, and their sons' sons, even down to the tenth generation, abandoned; that agitation would be rife in the land, and that every county in England would put forth its O'Connell, wielding the terrible energies of combined freemen, until the time that saw such monstrous tyranny abated!

Persecution may be, as it often has been, the buttress of error; but all history proves that it can never aid the cause of truth.

What has preserved the Jews a distinct people, scattered as they have been amidst all the nations of the earth? No miracle, certainly; for they are now dissolving into the ranks of Christians before the sun of American toleration;? and our country, but especially the spot where we write, gives us a similar beneficent example in

comparison with other States. Nothing more than the universal and unintermitted series of oppressions that characterised the conduct of every Government towards that despised people, from the destruction of Jerusalem down to the last century, can be necessary to account for the fact that the Hebrew people exceed, perhaps, at this moment, in numbers, the population of Judæa at the most flourishing period of its history. Nor, if it were desired, during the eighteen centuries to come, to preserve the Jews a separate people, could the wit or the philosophy of man devise a scheme to prevent their amalgamating with the nations of the earth, other than by persevering in the same infallible course of persecution.

Let them search the annals of religious persecution (and it is the most humiliating chapter in the history of poor human nature), and we will challenge the advocates of coercive dealings in matters of conscience to produce an instance where violence, bribery, or secular power in any form, has ever aided the cause of true religion. To the honour of the immaterial portion of our being, although the body may be made to yield to these influences, the soul, disdaining all mortal fetters, owes no allegiance but to itself and its Maker.

So long, then, as the Church of England possesses the whole of the religious revenue of Ireland, there cannot be—nay, judging of the case as our own, there ought not to be—peace or prosperity for its people; and, what is of still more vital importance, there can be, judging by the same rule, no chance of the dissemination of religious truth in that country.

Let us not be met by those unthinking persons who view tithes as religion, with the cry about the destruction of the Protestant Church; we are of that Church; and we reckon it amongst the happiest circumstances of our destiny that Providence has placed us in a Protestant land. In our opinion—and we have endeavoured to prove it from the homely, but incontrovertible arguments of facts—no greater temporal misfortune can attach to a people of the present age than to profess the Roman Catholic religion; and it is in order to give the Irish an opportunity of considering with that *indifferency* which we believe with Locke is the indispensable prelude to the successful search after truth, the doctrines of our reformed faith, that we would do them the justice, in the first place, of putting them on a perfectly equal footing, as respects matters of conscience, with their Protestant fellow-subjects.

We are not visionary enough to shut our eyes to the vast impediments in the way of such a consummation as we have jumped to. These, however, do not in the least affect the question as to its justice or expediency. The obstacles lie in the House of Peers, and probably in the breast of the King. If the conscience of the latter should be affected with scruples as to the binding nature of the coronation oath, precautions might be taken to prevent a similar future obstacle on the demise of the crown. With respect to the House of Lords, difficulties of a less august nature will have to be encountered; for why should the fact be concealed, that the Church question, in whichever way agitated, is one that concerns the *interests* of the aristocracy? Hence is the difficulty: that whereas, we sincerely believe, if a canvass were made from house to house throughout Great Britain, four-fifths of the middle classes of its people would be found at once not interested in the temporalities of the Irish Church, and

willing to grant to their Catholic fellow-subjects of Ireland a complete equality of religious privileges; on the contrary, if an appeal were to be made to the votes of the House of Peers, four-fifths of that assembly would very likely oppose such a measure of justice and peace; and probably that great majority of its members would be found to be, immediately or remotely, interested in the revenues of that Church.

We would recommend the most ample concessions to be made to countervail the obstacles of self-interest. There is no present sacrifice of a pecuniary nature that will not be an ultimate gain to the middle and working classes of England, if it only tend to pacify and regenerate Ireland.

Viewing the subject as a question of pounds, shillings, and pence (and it partakes a great deal more of that character than folks are aware of), the people of England would be gainers by charging the whole amount of the Church revenue of Ireland to the Consolidated Fund, if by so doing they were only to escape the expense of supporting an enormous army? for the service of that country.

But we are, from another motive of self-interest, far more deeply concerned in the tranquillity and improvement of the sister kingdom: for it ought to be borne in view, and impressed upon the minds of the industrious classes of this country, that, unless we can succeed in laying the foundations of some plan for elevating the people of Ireland to an equality with us, they will inevitably depress us to a level with themselves. *There cannot permanently be, in a free community, two distinct castes or conditions of existence, such as are now to be found in this united empire.* Already is the process of assimilation going on; and the town in which we write furnishes, amongst others, a striking example of the way in which the contagion of Irish habits is contaminating, whilst the competition of that people is depressing, the working classes of Britain.

Manchester is supposed to contain fifty thousand Irish, or the immediate descendants of Irish. The quarter in which they congregate is, like the district of St. Giles's of London, a nursery of all the customs that belong to savage life. In the very center of our otherwise civilized and wealthy town, a colony which has acquired for its *locale* the title of Little Ireland, exhibits all the filth, depravity, and barbarism that disgrace its patronymic land. Nor is the evil confined within such limits. Its influences are felt in the adulteration of character, and the lowering of the standard of living of our artisans generally: it is a moral cancer, that, in spite of the efforts of science of philanthropy to arrest its progress, continues to spread throughout the entire mass of our labouring population.

No part of England or Scotland is exempt from its share in the natural consequences of this terrible state of degradation to which the people of Ireland are reduced. There is not a village or parish of the kingdom into which its famine impelled natives do not, at certain periods of the year, penetrate to share the scanty wages of our peasantry; thus dragging them down to their own level, and, in return, imparting to them the sad secrets of their own depraved modes of life.

But great as this evil has hitherto been, it is only a subject of astonishment to us, that the immigration of the Irish people into this portion of the empire has not been more extensive: sure we are, from the accounts we have of the present state of the southern portion of that island, that nothing short of Berkley's wall of brass can for the future save us from an overwhelming influx of its natives.

Let those who are incredulous of our opinion consult the recent work on Ireland, from which we are about to offer an extract or two for the perusal of our readers.

We look upon every writer who directs the attention of the people of England to the *facts* connected with the present state of Ireland as a benefactor of his country. Even should an author, for the sake of being read, or for party purposes, like Cobbett, throw some exaggeration into his pictures of the horrors of this land, we still view him in the useful capacity of a watchman, sounding the alarm of danger, scarcely too loud, to the indifferent minds of Great Britain. Though, like the hydro-oxygen microscope, when applied to physical objects, his descriptions magnify its social monsters, till their magnitude terrifies the beholder—still the monsters are there: they are only enlarged, and not created. In the purer elements of English society, such evils could not, through whatever exaggerating medium, be discovered.

But the traveller from whom we are about to quote gives intrinsic evidences of not only competent intelligence but strict impartiality and a sincere love of truth. We do not think that he possesses in an eminent degree the organ of causality, as the phrenologists call it; for he attributes as the ultimate cause of the miseries of Ireland the want of employment for its people, no recollecting that this evil must have its cause; but in the qualities of a careful and experienced observer of facts he is unquestionably a competent authority.

These are his words in speaking of the remuneration of labour in Ireland:— “I am quite confident that if the whole yearly earnings of the labourers of Ireland were divided by the whole number of labourers, the result would be under this sum—fourpence a day for the labourers of Ireland.”

Again, in speaking of the habitations of the peasantry of Ireland, the following is the description given by the same author:— “The only difference between the best and the worst of the mud cabins is that some are water-tight, and some are not; air-tight, I saw none; with windows, scarcely any; with chimneys—that is, with a hole in the roof for the smoke to escape through—as many perhaps with it as without it. As for furniture, there is no such thing; unless a broken stool or two and an iron pot can be called furniture. I should say that in the greater part of Leinster and Munster, and in the flat districts of Connaught, bedsteads are far from general, and bed-clothing is never sufficient.”

Let us reflect for a moment on what would be the effects upon the condition of our industrious population, if they were brought down to share one common average with these labourers; a fate which, we repeat, they are doomed to suffer, unless by imparting peace and prosperity to Ireland, we shall succeed in elevating her people to our own level.

This intelligent traveller sums up his recital of all that he witnessed during a tour of many months throughout the island (great part of which time he spent in unrestrained intercourse with the peasantry), in these words, which, along with every other portion of his volumes, do equal honour to his moral courage and philanthropy:—

"I, Henry David Inglis, acting under no superior orders, holding no government commission; with no end to serve, and no party to please; hoping for no patronage, and fearing no censure; and with no other view than the establishment of truth—having just completed a journey throughout Ireland, and having minutely examined and inquired into the condition of the people of that country—do humbly report that the destitute, infirm, and aged form a large body of the population of the cities, towns, and villages of Ireland: that, in the judgment of those best qualified to know the truth, three-fourth parts of their number die through the effects of destitution, either by the decay of nature accelerated, or through disease induced by scanty and unwholesome food, or else by the attacks of epidemics, rendered more fatal from the same causes: that the present condition of this large class is shocking for humanity to contemplate, and beyond the efforts of private beneficence to relieve, and is a reproach to any civilized and Christian country."

A christian country does he say? Posterity will doubt it! There is no such picture as this of a permanent state of national existence to be found in any authentic history, ancient or modern, Christian or pagan. We shall search the volumes of the most accredited travelers in Russia,? Turkey,† or India, and find no description of a people that is no enviable, in comparison with the state of millions of our fellow-subjects in Ireland. The natives of Moldavia and Wallachia, which provinces have been the battle-fields for Turks and Christians for centuries, are now living in happiness and plenty, when compared with the fate of the inhabitants of a country that has known no other invader but England.

We lavish our sympathies upon the serfs of Poland, and the slaves of Turkey; but who would not prefer to be one of these, to the perishing with hunger under the name of freeman? We send forth our missionaries to convert the heathen; but well might the followers of Mahomet or Zoroaster instruct us in the ways of charity to our poor Christian brethren!

Far be in from us to say, with a celebrated French writer, that we distrust the philanthropy of all those who seek in distant regions for objects of their charity; but we put it to our countrymen, whether, in lending themselves to any scheme, having benevolence for remote nations in view, whilst such a case as this stands appealing at their doors, they are not, in the emphatic words of Scripture, "taking the children's meat and casting it to the dogs."

We shall be told that the hundreds of thousands of pounds that are sent annually to remote regions are for the promotion of religion. But there cannot be religion where there is not morality; and can morals survive in the starving community such as exists in Ireland? No! and, therefore, we say, until the above proclamation of her desperate sufferings be controverted (and who will gainsay it?) a copy of it ought to be affixed to every public building, and to the doors of every church and chapel in particular of

England; and all attempts, of whatever description, to subsidise the charity of this country, in behalf of alien nations, whilst this member of our own family, in the extremity of want, supplicates for succour at our hands, should be denounced and put aside by the common sense and humanity of the nation.

If not, if for more fanciful, because more distant, projects of benevolence, we neglect our obvious duty towards these our fellow-countrymen, then will the sins and omissions of their fathers be visited upon the future generations of Englishmen; for assuredly will the accumulated ills of Ireland recoil upon their heads, until one common measure of suffering shall have been meted out to both!

But we will not forget that our object in entering upon the consideration of this subject was to illustrate the impolicy and injustice of the statesmen of this country, who have averted their faces from this diseased member of our body-politic; and, at the same time, have led us, thus maimed, into the midst of every conflict that has occurred upon the whole continent of Europe. To give one example, let us only recur to the year 1823, when the French invasion of Spain drew forth those well-known powerful appeals of Brougham? to the ever-ready-primed pugnacity of his countrymen, in which he exhausted his eloquence in the cause of war against France; declaring, amongst similar flights, that we ought to spend our last shilling in behalf of Spanish independence; whilst at the very same moment of time famine, pestilence, and insurrection were raging, even to an unparalleled extent, in Ireland, whose natives were driven to subsist on the weeds of the fields, and for whom a subscription fund amounting to more than a quarter of a million was that very year raised by the people of Great Britain.

Subsequently, as our readers know, our Government despatched an armament to the succour of Portugal. We witnessed the departure of those troops from London, and well do we remember the enthusiasm of the good citizens on that occasion. In the next meeting of Parliament it was stated that this display of our power and magnanimity towards an old ally cost upwards of a million sterling. Here was a sum that would have sufficed to employ the starving peasantry of Ireland in constructing a railroad fifty miles in length. What fruits have we to exhibit, in the present state of the Peninsula, that can be said to have grown out of this expenditure?

But the worst effects of an intermeddling policy are, that we are induced at all times to maintain an *attitude,* as it is termed, sufficiently formidable, in the face of Europe. Thus, the navy—which, after the peace was very properly reduced, so that in 1817 it comprised only 13,000 seamen and 6,000 marines—was, under the plea of the disturbed state of Europe, from time to time augmented; until, in 1831, the estimate amounted to 22,000 seamen and 10,000 marines; whilst the army, which in 1817 has been cut down to 69,000 men, was, by successive augmentations, raised to 88,000 men in 1831.

Our limits do not allow us to go further into details upon this portion of our task. But we cannot dismiss the subject altogether without a few observations upon the remedies which are proposed for the present state of Ireland. That “every quack has his nostrum for the cure of poor Erin,” is a common remark with her people; and

although we find the doctors, as usual, differ exceedingly in opinion, there are two prescriptions which have been very numerously recommended—we allude to a law against absenteeism, and a poor law.

We should hail any measure that promised the slightest relief to the wretched people of this country. But it is necessary to ask, Could these plans, through any law, be efficaciously enforced? There is, we think much raving after impracticable legislation nowadays. Let us see if these be not specimens of it.

We never yet met with a person who professed to understand how an Act of Parliament could be framed, that, without committing the most grievous injustice and cruelty, would be more than a dead letter against Irish absenteeism. Let us imagine that a law was enacted to compel every owner of an estate in Ireland to reside upon his property. Well, this would be imprisonment for life. No, is the answer: he might range over the whole island, and even reside on the sea-coast, or, for a portion of the year, in Dublin. Good: then he must have a passport, and at every move his person must be cognized; and for this purpose a police, similar to the French gensdarmerie, must be organized throughout the country. But the traders, the farmers, the professional men, the tourists, the beggars, the commercial travellers, the strangers—all these, we suppose, would be subjected to the like *surveillance?* Oh, no! must be the reply: that would be to obstruct the entire business of the country. Thus this law falls to the ground, since the landowner might elude it under any of these disguises.

But to approach the subject in another way. The enactment would not, of course, be passed without some clauses of exceptions. It would be barbarous, for example, to prohibit a man from changing his abode, if illness demanded it, or if his wife or children were in that extremity. What, then, would be the market price of a doctor's certificate, to transport a *malade imaginaire* to France or Italy? Again, if a Milesian landlord pined for a trip to London, would not a subpœna to attend some law process be a favourite resource? Or a friend might summon him before a parliamentary committee, or find him comfortable apartments in the rules of the Fleet. Fictitious conveyances, nominal divisions of property, and a thousand other expedients, might be named, for rendering nugatory this law, each one of which would, to a reasonable mind, prove the impracticability of such a measure.

Let those who think that a poor's rate, sufficient to operate as a relief to the pauper population, could be levied in the south of Ireland, peruse Inglis's description of the present state of the province of Connaught. How would the rate be agreed upon, when no one of the wretched framers would come forward to fix the amount? Or, if they did agree to a levy, who would be bold enough to collect the rate? Who would distribute it, where all are needy of its assistance? But, for the sake of contemplating the probable effects of such a law, let us suppose that these difficulties were got over. We believe that those who recommend a poor law as a remedy for Ireland are imperfectly acquainted with its desperate condition.

The poor's rate of England had, two years ago, in various districts, reached fourteen shillings in the pound; and, in one instance, it absorbed the entire rental of the land;

and this occurred in Buckinghamshire, within fifty miles of London, and where there are rich farmers and landowners.

What, then, would be the effects of any poor law in a country where parish after parish, throughout vast districts, contains not an inhabitant who tastes better food than potatoes, or knows the luxury of shoes and stockings, or other shelter than a mud cabin? We dread to contemplate the results which, in our judgment, would follow such an attempt to ameliorate the lot of this population. As soon as a competent provision for the poor were ordered—such as a Christian legislature must assign, if it touch the subject at all—the starving peasantry of Ireland, diverted from their present desperate resources of emigration or partial employment in towns, would press upon the occupiers of the soil for subsistence, with such overwhelming claims as to absorb the whole rental in less than six months. What must follow, but that every person owning a head of cattle or a piece of furniture, would fly to the cities; leaving the land to become a scramble to the pauper population, which, in turn, abandoned to its own passions, and restrained by no laws or government, would probably divide itself once more into septs, under separate chieftains (the elements of this savage state are still in existence in many parts of the south of Ireland), and commence a war of extermination with each other. The days of the Pale and all its horrors would be again revived; famine would soon, of necessity, ensue; the towns would be assailed by these barbarous and starving clans; and the British Government would once more be called on to quell this state of rapine with the sword.

Such, we conscientiously believe, would be the inevitable consequences of a measure which, to the eye of the uninformed or unreflecting philanthropist, appears to be the most eligible plan for the peace and prosperity of Ireland.

What Remedies, then, remain for this suffering country?

We shall pass by the cry for the repeal of the Union; because everybody knows that to have been only used as an engine for the purpose of acquiring a power to coerce England into other acts of justice. A Parliament in Dublin would not remedy the ills of Ireland. That has been tried, and found unsuccessful; for all may learn in her history that a more corrupt, base, and selfish public body than the domestic legislature of Ireland never existed; and the very first declaration of the United Volunteers, when, in 1781, they took the redress of her thousand wrongs into their own hands, was to the effect, that they resolved to use every effort to extirpate the corruptions that so notoriously existed in the Irish Parliament; and one of the first acts of the same patriotic body was to invest the Parliament House in Dublin, and at the point of the bayonet, to extort from those native legislators a redress of their country's grievances.

To come, next, to the scheme of emigration. All must regard with feelings of suspicion and disfavour any attempt to expatriate a large body of our fellow-countrymen; and we hold such an antidote to be only like removing the slough which has arisen from a wound, whilst the disease itself remains untouched.

But, unhappily, the maladies of Ireland have taken such deep root, that legislation cannot hope, for ages to come, effectually to eradicate them; whilst here is a mode by

which hundreds of thousands of our fellow-creatures are eager to be enabled to escape a lingering death. Surely, under such circumstances, this plan, which would leave us room to administer more effectually to the cure of her social disorders, deserves the anxious consideration of our legislature.

Here let us demand why some forty or fifty of our frigates and sloops of war, which are now at a time of peace sunning themselves in the Archipelago, or anchoring in friendly ports, or rotting in ordinary in our own harbours, should not be employed by the Government in conveying these emigrants to Canada, or some other hospitable destination? The expense of transporting an individual from Limerick to the shores of America by such a method would probably not exceed two pounds. On arrival the Government agents might probably find it necessary to be at the charge of his subsistence for a considerable time—perhaps not less than twelve months.

Altogether, however, the expense of a project of emigration, on a scale of magnitude, must be enormous. But, again, we say that any present sacrifice on the part of the people of this country, by which the Irish nation can be lifted from its state of degradation, will prove an eventual gain.

Contemporary with any plan of emigration, other projects for the future amelioration of the fate of that miserable people must be entered upon by the British Parliament; and we should strongly advocate any measure of internal improvement which, by giving more ready access to the southern portion of the island, would throw open its semi-barbarous region to the curiosity and enterprise of England. Steam navigation has already given a powerful stimulus to the industry of the eastern maritime counties; and if, by means of railroads, the same all powerful agent could be carried into the center of the kingdom, there can be no doubt the English capital and civilization would follow in its train. Every one conversant with the subject is aware how greatly the pacification and prosperity of the Scotch Highlands were promoted by carrying roads into these savage districts; and still more recently, how, by means of the steam navigation of the lakes, and the consequent influx of visitors, the people have been enriched and civilised. Similar effects would doubtless follow, if the facilities of railroad travelling were offered to Ireland, whose scenery, hardly rivalled in Europe, together with the frank and hilarious temperament of its people, could not fail to become popular and attractive with the English traveller.

We will here introduce a scheme to the notice of our readers which, whilst we gladly acknowledge with gratitude the source from whence it originated, we think deserves the notice of our Government.

In the *New York Courier and Enquirer* newspaper of December 24, 1834, appeared a letter headed “Traverse Atlantic,” which, after stating that the writer, on a recent visit to Europe, had suffered a delay of ten days in ascending the French Channel, from Finisterre to Havre, and of eight days in descending the Irish Channel, from Liverpool to Cape Clear, says, he “believes that on an average one-third or one fourth of the time is wasted upon every Trans-Atlantic voyage in getting into, or out of, the European ports now resorted to.” The writer then proceeds as follows:—

"The commerce of America chiefly centres in the ports of Hamburgh, Havre, London and Liverpool. Each of these is distant from the ocean and difficult of access. On the western coast of Ireland there are several harbours far superior in every requisite. As, for instance, the island of Valentia, which is the nearest point of land in Europe to America. Between it and the main reposes an excellent receptacle for shipping of any burden, approached by two easily practicable inlets, completely landlocked, capacious, and safe. Situated immediately on the brim of the Atlantic, a perfectly straight line can be drawn from this harbour to the port of New York, the intervening transit unobstructed by islands, rocks, or shoals. The distance being less than two thousand seven hundred miles may be traversed by steam in about eight days; and the well-known enterprise of the American merchants renders it unnecessary for me to do more than to intimate that they will avail themselves of every opening or inducement that may arise to establish the first link of intercourse by a line of packet boats. ? ? ? ?

The extent of this undertaking has been stated as beyond the means of those likely to engage in it. This seems to me incredible, when I advert to the facts that Ireland has a population of eight millions, multitudes of whom are in beggary for want of work, with wages at from fourpence to one shilling a day, and money, on the average, not worth more than three per cent.; and recollect, at the same time, that the State of South Carolina, one of the smallest in the American Confederation, with a population of three hundred thousand, wages at five shillings sterling a day, and capital at seven per cent. interest, has, unaided, and by private enterprise, constructed a railroad from Charleston to Augusta, one hundred and forty-five miles in extent, at present the longest in the world, which is travelled by locomotive engines in the course of ten hours.

The advantages to accrue to Ireland in particular by thus opening a regular communication for New York to London in twelve, and to Paris in fifteen days, are incalculable. That island would become, of necessity, the thoroughfare between the two hemispheres: and the occupation of the public mind in such an enterprise, and the constantly increasing fruits of its progress, would do more to pacify the fearful dissensions of the people, and ameliorate their most lamentable condition, than any legislation of even the best disposed Parliament."

The above project, which, in the affluence of their enterprise, our American friends have suggested for the benefit of Ireland, merits the attention of the landowners and patriots concerned for the welfare of her people.

It has long been decided by the merchants and nautical, men engaged in the intercourse between Liverpool and America, that steamboats? would be found capable of navigating the Atlantic with perfect safety; and the more sanguine amongst those interested in increasing the facilities of communication between the two countries have gone so far as to predict that, in a dozen years' time, we may hope to witness the arrival and departure of steamers twice a week between England and the United States.

As any scheme of this nature must necessarily require that the vessels should take their departure from the nearest points of approximation of the two hemispheres,

Ireland would thus become the starting-place for all Europe; and it is scarcely possible to conceive anything that would be more calculated to enrich and civilise that country than by thus irrigating it, as it were, with the constant tide of emigration to and from America.†

A railway, for the purpose here alluded to, would pass through the centres of Leinster and Munster, intersecting the counties of Kildare, Queen's County, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Limerick, Cork, and Kerry; and would pass within twenty miles of the port of Limerick, and thirty miles from that of Cork, to both of which cities, it might reasonably be expected, that branches would be carried by public subscription: thus, not only would these two great commercial havens be connected with Dublin, but by opening a direct communication with each other, it would afford a medium for traffic, by steam, between the fifteen counties that are washed by that noble steam, the Shannon, and the ports of Cork and Bristol; and, ultimately, by means of the Great Western Railway, with London.

Railroads are already begun for connecting Liverpool with Southampton, by way of Birmingham and London. The French have long been engaged in making surveys for a railway from Havre, by way of Rouen (the Manchester of France), to Paris; and although characteristic delays may arise to retard the completion of this, as of other projects of mere usefulness, with that fanciful people, yet, as it is, perhaps, the only line in all France that would prove a remunerating speculation, there can be no doubt that it will be the first that is undertaken in that country.

Presuming this to be effected, then, by means of such a plan as is here recommended, for constructing a line from Dublin to the extreme point of Munster, a traveller would be enabled to transport himself from the French metropolis, *viâ* Havre, Southampton, London, Liverpool and Dublin, to Valencia Island, or any other point of embarkation on that coast, in about sixty hours; and, as the voyage to New York would be accomplished in about eleven or twelve days, the whole distance from Paris to America, which now, upon an average, occupies forty days in the passage, would be accomplished, by the agency of steam, in about a third of that time.

That such a project, if completed, would secure the preference of voyagers to all parts of North America, not only from Britain, but from every quarter of Europe, must be apparent; that all we have recommended is perfectly practicable we have no difficulty in believing; and that a traffic, of such magnitude as is here contemplated, would have the effect of imparting wealth and civilization to the country through which it passed, all experience proves to be unquestionable.

But it is not merely the future benefit that must accrue to Ireland, from the construction of a railroad through her provinces, that we should alone regard. The presence support of her unemployed peasantry is another cogent motive for some such undertakings; for, unless a diversion of the surplus labour from the land be effected, through the employment of English capital amongst its population, no change can be attempted in the agricultural economy of Ireland. There is not, absolutely in the present densely crowded state of her rural inhabitants, elbow-room, so to speak, sufficient for readjusting their position. Yet there are reforms indispensably requisite

to the agricultural prosperity of the island. The farming implements of its people are, for example, notoriously inferior, requiring twice the labour, both of men and cattle, of our own; yet, how shall we hope to see any improvements effected in these, by which the demand for labour shall be temporarily diminished, whilst one-half of the peasantry is perishing for want of work?

Again: the farms are so minutely subdivided, to meet the desperate competition of a people who possess no resource but the land to preserve them from famine, that their occupiers are destitute altogether of capital, and aim at no other end but to secure a daily subsistence on potatoes.

Under a better system, the cultivation of flax might be extended almost indefinitely. At present, the estimated value of the annual production of this raw material of their staple manufacture is about £1,500,000, which is yielded from one hundred thousand acres of land—not one-tenth of the area of a moderate-sized country.? But how can we apply a remedy to these, or the other evils of the soil, amidst a ferocious and lawless community, that visits with fire and sword† the prædial reformer?

We confess we see no hope for the eventual prosperity of this country, except in the employment of a portion of its people, through the instrumentality of English capital, in the pursuit of manufactures or commerce. Of capital they are literally more destitute, in some parts of the west coast of the island, than are the North American Indians on the banks of the Mississippi; as an instance in proof of which, it may be state that, in a recent Government survey of that quarter, a vessel of war was the first to discover some of the finest fishing stations to be found in the British waters; and yet the natives of the neighbouring shores possess not the means of procuring boats or nets, through which to avail themselves of these treasures!

Capital, like water, tends continually to a level; and, if any great and unnatural inequality is found to exist in its distribution over the surface of a community, as is the case in this United Kingdom, the cause must, in all probability, be sought for in the errors or violence of a mistaken legislation. The dominant Church, *opposed to the national religion,* is, we conscientiously believe, in this case the primary existing cause of this discrepancy. Capitalists shrink, with all the susceptibility of the barometer in relation to the natural elements, from the storms and tempests of party passion; but now infinitely beyond all other motives must this privileged class be impelled, by the impulses of feeling and taste, to shun that atmosphere where the strife of religious discord rages with a fury unheard of in any other land!? There cannot be prosperity for Ireland, until the law, by equalizing the temporalities of Catholics and Protestants, shall have removed the foundation of this hideous contention.

To this consummation we must be ultimately driven; for nothing short of this will content the people of Ireland, because less would be short of the full measure of justice. We advocate no spoliation; let the vested rights of every individual be respected—especially let no part of the tithes fall to the merciless grasp of the landlords of Ireland, who, with many exceptions, may be regarded as the least deserving body of its people. But let the British Parliament assert the right to the

absolute disposal of the Irish Church revenues, excepting in cases of private property; and let an equal government grant be applied to the religious instruction of both faiths, *according to the numbers of each,* as is the rule in France and Belgium? at the present day.

Such a regulation, by preventing Englishmen from holding benefices in Ireland (there would be no longer the temptations of rich livings and sinecures), would lead to a beneficial influence of the Protestant ministers in that country; for what could so much tend to destroy all hope of their proselyting the poor Catholics, what in fact could be so much calculated to make those ministers "despised and rejected,"† as to send amongst them, as is now the case, and ever has been, strangers, who, whatever may be their worth (and we believe the Church of England clergy, *as a class,* to be at this moment about the best body of men in Ireland), are ignorant of the character and habits, nay, even of the very language of the people? What chance have these in competition with the Roman Catholic priesthood, who, drawn from the middle or lower ranks of their countrymen, after an appropriate education in Maynooth College (where are always four or five hundred of such students), are sent back to, perhaps, their native village, to resume the personal and familiar acquaintance of its inhabitants?

Would the spiritual interests of the Scotch people be consulted by displacing their present excellent native pastors in favour of the younger sons of English noblemen?

If it be objected that the English Establishment is involved in the fate of the Church of Ireland, we answer, that the circumstances of the two are as opposite a complexion as light is to darkness. In England , the National Church comprises within its pale a great majority of the people; whilst in Ireland we behold a State religion upheld for the exclusive benefit of one-seventh of its population. Can we on the face of the earth find another example of an established church opposed to the consciences of six-sevenths of its supporters; for although the revenues may not go directly from their pockets, *could thepresent income of the Protestant Church be raised without the Catholic population?*

What should we say if the Government of Austria, Russia, or Turkey (for each of these has a state religion, differing from ours, and from one another, and yet pronounced by the law of the land to be the only true belief), were found to be applying the whole of the religious revenues of its country to the service of the faith of one-seventh of its subjects? What should we think if the Russian Government were to bestow the entire of the property of the Greek Church upon the Catholic or Armenian fraction of its people? In every country we find the established religion in harmony with the cansciences of its people, excepting in Ireland, which, in this, as in other respects, presents to us an anomaly, which has no resemblance amongst the nations of the world.

In concluding our observations upon this portion of our task, we shall briefly ask—Does not the question of Ireland, in every point of view, offer the strongest possible argument against the national policy of this country, for the time during which we have wasted our energies and squandered our wealth upon all the nations of

the Continent: whilst a part of our own Empire, which, more than all the rest of Europe, has needed our attention, remains to this hour an appalling monument of our neglect and misgovernment? Add to this, that our efforts have been directed towards the assistance of States for whose welfare we are not responsible; whilst our oppression and neglect have fallen upon a people over whom we are endowed with the power and accountable privileges of government—and the extent of the injustice of our statesmen becomes fully disclosed.

The neglect of those duties which, in such a case devolve upon the governor, as in the instance of every infringement of moral obligations, bears within it the seeds of self-chastisement. The spectacle of Ireland, operating like a cancer in the side of England— and Poland, paralyzing one arm of the giant that oppresses her—of the two millions of Negroes in the United States, whose future disposal baffles the ingenuity of those statesmen and philanthropists who would fain wash out this indelible stain upon their religion and government:—these are amongst the lessons which, if viewed properly, serve to teach mankind that no deed of guilt or oppression can be perpetrated with impunity even by the most powerful—that early or late, the invincible cause of truth will triumph against every assault of violence or injustice.

May the middle classes of Great Britain, in whom the government of this country is now vested, profit, in the cause of Ireland, by these morals of past history!

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Part III

America.

It is a singular fact that, whilst so much of the time and attention of our statesmen is devoted to the affairs of foreigners, and whilst our debates in Parliament, and the columns of our newspapers, are so frequently engrossed with the politics of petty States, such as Portugal, Belgium, and Bavaria, little notice is taken of the country that ought, beyond all others, to engage the attention, and even to excite the apprehension of this commercial nation.

A considerable portion of our countrymen have not yet reconciled themselves to the belief that the American colonies of 1780 are now become a first-rate independent power. The more aged individuals of this party, embracing, of course, a considerable section of the House of Peers, possess a feeling of half pique and half contempt towards the United States, some-what analogous to that which the old Scotch Jacobite lady described by Burns indulged with reference to Great Britain more than half a century after it had *rebelled,* as she persisted in designating it, against the legitimate rule of the Stuarts.

We have met with persons of this very respectable and influential party who believe conscientiously that the Americans threw off the yoke of the mother country, merely with a view to escape the payment of certain sums of money due to English creditors; ? and that they have ever since been struggling after a dubious kind of subsistence by incurring fresh debts with us, and occasionally repaying our credulity in no very creditable coin. If these be told that the people of the United States constitute our largest and most valuable commercial connection—that the business we carry on with them is nearly twice as extensive as with any other people, and that our transactions are almost wholly conducted on ready money terms—they will express surprise; but then they will predict that no good will arise ultimately from trading with Yankee Republicans.

If a word be said about the well-known religious and moral character of the Americans, these worthy people with stop you with the exclamation of, “How can there be religion or morality in a country that maintains no established church?”

Offer to enter into an argument with these spirits of olden time, or to adduce evidence in reference to the present condition of the American States, and ten to one, you will find that they have read the works of no authors or travellers upon that country, with the exception of those of Moore, Mrs. Trollope, and Basil Hall. If the news-rooms and the libraries that are under the direction of this prejudiced party be consulted, the former will be found to contain no specimens of the millions of newspapers that issue, cheap as waste paper, from the press of the United States: whilst, from the shelves of the latter, all books ? calculated to give a favourable picture of the state of its flourishing community are scrupulously excluded.

Should we look into the periodical journals which are under the patronage of the same class, we shall find the United States' news but rarely admitted to their columns, unless it be of a nature that tends to depreciate the character of Republican institutions, or serves as an occasion for quizzing the social peculiarities of American society.

Yet it is to the industry, the economy, and peaceful policy of America, and not to the growth of Russia, that our statesmen and politicians, of whatever creed, ought to direct their anxious study; for it is by these, and not by the efforts of barbarian force, that the power and greatness of England are in danger of being superseded; yes, by the successful rivalry of America, shall we, in all probability, be placed second in the rank of nations.

Nor shall we retard, but rather accelerate this fate, by closing our ears, or shutting our eyes, to all that is passing in the United States. We regard it as the first duty of every British statesman, who takes an enlightened interest in the permanent grandeur of his country, however unpalatable the task may prove, to weigh, in comparison with all the features of our national policy, the proceedings in corresponding measures on the other side of the Atlantic. Possibly we may not, after all, be enabled to cope with our more fortunate rivals in the energy or wisdom of their commercial legislation, owing to the embarrassments and burdens with which we are encumbered; but still, it only the more becomes the character for high moral courage that belongs to us to strive to understand from which quarter danger is the most to be apprehended.

By danger we do not, of course, allude to warlike hostilities. England and America are bound up together in peaceful fetters by the strongest of all the ligatures that can bind two nations to each other, viz., commercial interests; and which, every succeeding year, renders *more impossible,* if the term may be used, a rupture between the two Governments. This will be sufficiently apparent when we state that a population of upwards of a million of the inhabitants of this country, supported by the various branches of the cotton industry, dependent for the supply of the raw material upon the United States, ? would be deprived of subsistence; at the same time that a capital of thirty millions sterling would for the moment be annihilated—if such a catastrophe were to occur as the suspension of the commerce between England and the United States; whilst the interests of the Americans would be scarcely less vitally affected by the same circumstance.

But we allude to the danger in which we are placed, by being overshadowed by the commercial and naval ascendancy of the United States. It has been through the peaceful victories of mercantile traffic, and not by the force of arms, that modern States have yielded to the supremacy of more successful nations. Thus the power and civilisation of maritime Italy succumbed to the enterprise of Spain and Portugal; these again were superseded by the more industrious traders of Holland; who, in their turn, sank into insignificance before the gigantic growth of the manufacturing industry of Great Britain; and the latter power now sees, in America, a competitor in every respect calculated to contend with advantage for the sceptre of naval and commercial dominion.

Whether we view the rapid advance of the United States, during the last forty years, in respect of population or wealth, it is equally unparalleled in any other age or country. The past history, however, of this country is so well known, indeed, it is compressed into so short a space of recent history, that it would be trite to dwell upon it: our object is to draw a short comparison between the future prospects of the two countries.

The population of the United States was, at the first census, taken in 1790, found to be 3,929,328; and, in 1830, the number had, according to the fifth Government return, reached 12,856,171, exhibiting an increase, during the last ten years, of thirty-three per cent.; that is, doubling itself in rather less than twenty-five years. ? In 1831, the population of the British Islands amounted to 24,271,763, being an increase of about fourteen per cent. upon the enumeration for 1821. † Looking, therefore, to the present proportionate increase of the two countries, and *considering the relative circumstances of each,* it may be predicted that, in thirty years, the numbers of the two people will be about equal; and we further find that, at the same ratio of augmentation, and making no allowance for the probable increase of emigration from Europe, the population of the United States will, in seventy years from this time—that is, during the lifetime of individuals now arrived at maturity—exceed one hundred million.

These circumstances demonstrate the rapid tendency towards a superiority, so far as numbers go; but we apprehend that, in respect to the comparison of our commercial prospects with those of America, the position of Great Britain does not, according to facts which we have to state, wear a more flattering aspect.

We find, by a table in the "American Almanack" for 1835, that the exports from the United States for the year ending the 25th September, 1833, amounted to 90,140,000 dollars, or about twenty millions sterling of our money.

The British exports for the same period were £47,000,000, of which thirty-six millions were of home commodities or manufactures, whilst the remaining eleven millions consisted of foreign and colonial produce. But it will be proper to exclude the colony trade from the question altogether, unless, in order to state the matter fairly, we agree to take into account, at the same time, the inhabitants of our dependencies, which would not improve our case.

Now, in order to institute a fair comparison between the respective trades of the two countries, it will be necessary to bear in mind that, at the above period, the population of America was about fourteen millions, whilst that of the British empire may be reckoned to have been twenty-five and one-half millions.

We arrive, then, at this result, that, whilst our population, as compared with that of the United States, is as 25 ½ to 14, ? our commerce bears the proportion from 36 to 20. Further, if we compare the mercantile navy of Britain with that of America, we find the tonnage of the former, in 1832, to have been 2,261,860; whilst that of the latter, in 1833, amounted to 1,439,450 tons; by all which it appears clear that America is, in

proportion to its population, at this moment, carrying on as extensive a commerce as England, or any other State in the world.

But we should take a very inadequate view of the comparative progress of the two nations, unless we glanced at other circumstances, which will effect very oppositely the career of England and the United States in their future race of commercial rivalry.

This Republican people presents the only example of past—as we believe it will prove of future—history, in which a nation has honourably discharged its public debt; and the greatest financial pressure its Government will in future have to contend against, singular as the fact may appear to us, is the difficulty of applying its surplus treasure impartially to the services of the separate States. The time is gone by, we believe, when people could be found to argue that a national debt is a national blessing. † Sure we are that, in our case, no person possessing sound reason will deny that we, who find it necessary to levy upwards of thirty millions annually upon the necessaries of life, must be burdened with grievous disadvantages, when brought into commercial competition with the untaxed labour of the inhabitants of America.

But it is not only the load of debt, heavy as that is, that we have to contend with; our oppressive public establishments are, throughout, modelled, *unnecessarily, we believe, for the service of the commonwealth,* upon a scale enormously disproportioned to those of our more economical rivals. We will pass by the whole of our civil expenditure, because we have not space for the detailed notice of its individual items; and we shall proceed to notice, as more connected with the design of this pamphlet, our army and navy, as compared with the military and naval forces of the United States.

We find, from a table in "Reuss's Statistics of the United States," that the number of seamen in the American mercantile navy is estimated at 86,000; whilst the States Government employs, in vessels of war, 6,000 ? men. The British merchant service, exclusive of the colonial registry, supports 140,000 sailors; and the number voted for the royal navy, in 1833, was 27,000 men. Thus, then, we arrive at the unsatisfactory result that, whilst in America the Government, as compared with the merchant service, contains in the proportion of hands rather less than one in fourteen, the number of men employed in the royal navy of Britain, in comparison with the quantity supported by the merchant service, is nearly in the ratio of one to five.

The royal navy of England actually in commission at this time (see the *United Service Magazine* for February) consists of one hundred and forty-eight vessels of war, of which there appear to be, according to the same authority, forty-six in the different harbours of Great Britain, thirty-three in the Mediterranean, thirteen on the coast of Africa, ? twenty-seven in the West Indies, and the remainder in various other destinations.

We find, in the *American Almanack* of 1835, the United States navy given as twenty-one ships of war, of the following descriptions:—One line-of-battle ship, three frigates, ten sloops, seven schooners. †

It appears, then, that our royal navy contains, as nearly as possible, seven times as many ships as are to be found in the Government service of America.

Now, whatever objections may be urged with respect to other branches of expenditure, against a comparison of our burdens with the corresponding economy on the other side of the Atlantic, we think no reasonable mind will deny that it is by reference to the commerce of a people alone that we can form a correct judgment of their policy, so far as the marine service is concerned, and judge of their ability to support permanently their naval establishments.

The disadvantageous nature of our position, in comparison with that of America, will be better understood, if we repeat in two words, as the substance of what we have proved from the foregoing figures, that, whilst the population, exports, tonnage, and mercantile seamen of Great Britain are not double those of the United States, our royal navy is about six times as great as the corresponding Government force of that country.

But, if we proceed to a comparison of the land forces, we shall find them of exhibit a yet more striking disproportion in the burdens of the two nations.

The entire military service of America comprises rather less than 7,000 men. In 1833, the Parliament of Great Britain voted 90,000 soldiers for the army of this country. Here, then, we perceive the odds are—still bearing tin mind the population, &c., of the two countries—as nearly as possible six to one against us.

If we had the space, however, to allow of our entering into a comparison of details, we should find that the proportion of our officers greatly exceeds the above ratio. It will suffice to prove this, when we add, that the number of our commissioned officers, alone, at this time, exceeds the entire amount of the army of the United States; and of these we see, by the Army List for1835, that 2,087 ar field-officers of and above the rank of major!

To render the comparison of the respective burdens of the two people more simple and complete, we shall add their expenditure under these heads.

In the budget of 1833, the army and navy estimates of Great Britain were as follows:—

Army	£7,006,496
Navy	4,505,000
Ordnance	1,634,817

making a total of £13,146,313, for these warlike purposes.

In 1832, according, to the *American Almanack* for 1835, the military service of the United States, including fortifications, arsenals, armouries, ordnance, internal improvements, &c., cost £1,134,589, whilst the navy estimate was for £817,100, making a total of £1,951,689.

Thus, it appears, that our gross expenditure, under the United States heads, is in the ratio of six and a-half to one, as compared with that of America—a country, be it repeated, whose population, trade, and registered tonnage are more than the half of our own—a country , too, whose public debt is cancelled, whilst ours amounts to nearly eight hundred millions!

But it will be said that our local position making it necessary to guard our shores with this demonstration of power, and our colonies calling for a vigilant protection, render unfair a comparison of this kingdom with the United States. We believe it might be shown that the dependencies of Great Britain are, at this moment, and in future are destined still more to be, the source of a considerable amount of taxation and pecuniary loss to the mother country; and we trust that some abler pen will be applied to the elucidation of this important question.

With respect to our proximity to the Continent, we recommend the experiment to be tried, whether that need necessarily embroil us in continental politics. Let us imagine that all our ambassadors and consuls were instructed to take no further share in the domestic concerns of European nations, but, throwing overboard the question of the balance of power—as we have long done that equally absurd bugbear of our ancestors, the balance of trade—to leave all those people to their own quarrels, and to devote their attention, exclusively after the example of the Americans, to the *commercial interests* of their country. This might prevent our diplomatists displaying their address in finessing with Metternich or Pozzo di Borgo; it might save the bones of our couriers, who now scour the continent of Europe, carrying despatches and protocols; and it might enables us to dispense with the services of one half of he establishment at the Foreign Office. But will any one who understands the subject pretend to tell us that our trade would suffer by such a change?

Or if we imagine that our army and navy were reduced one-half, in consequence of this improvement of our policy, does any person seriously apprehend that these islands would be in danger of being molested by any European power? If such there be, let him recollect that the British Empire contains a population of twenty-five millions of free people, compressed within a space of little more than three hundred miles square—probably a denser crowd of human beings than was ever found upon a similar area; and, further, let it be borne in mind, that railroads are now in progress for connecting one extremity of England with the other, in such a way, that not only any required force of men, but the entire munitions of war, may be transported, in twelve hours, from Lancashire or Yorkshire to the coast of Sussex of Kent—thus converting, as it were, the entire island into a fortified position of such wonderful strength that the genius of Vanban or Marlborough could not have conceived anything so formidable. Which is the power of the Continent that will make a descent upon a people placed in such an attitude?

But supposing even that such a scheme should be contemplated, it will be owned, we suppose, that some preparation for so mighty a conquest would be necessary, which must afford us the necessary time for preparations of defence. No one will content that a fleet and an army of sufficient magnitude to pounce upon England for its prey, could be conjured up on the scene, like the creations of harlequin's wand, without the

spectators knowing, or caring to know, that the machinery for so grand a performance had been long in contrivance.

Besides, is it not apparent that henceforth the pressure of their own domestic affairs will engross the resources, and will impair the external power of all the Governments of Europe? *Reform Bills* will be demanded by their people, but they will not be obtained without bloodshed; and all must foresee that the struggle between the antagonist principles of feudalism and constitutionalism is inevitable throughout the whole of the Continent.

But to recur to the subject of America. It might be said that the primary cause of all the prosperity and happiness of its people is to be found in the wisdom of that advice which we have prefixed for the motto of this pamphlet. Happily for that nation, this precept has been religiously obeyed; for never have the political concerns of other States been suffered for one hour to divert the United States' Legislature from the pursuit of the just interests of its own people. The results may be seen, not only in unparalleled advances in wealth and civilisation at home, but in the fact we have just demonstrated, and which, we doubt not, will surprise most of our readers, that even the foreign commerce of this people is, in proportion to population, as great, or greater, than our own, notwithstanding our battles by land and by sea, and notwithstanding those expensive fruits of our victories, the colonies, that east, west, north, and south own our dominion!

It is question of very considerable interest to us, whether America will continue her career as a manufacturing country, after the protective duties, which have professedly created her present cotton and other interests, shall have, in pursuance of the recent tariff law, been partially repealed.

It is the opinion of some writers, whose works are entitled to deference, that the United States cannot for centuries become our rivals in manufactures. They argue that, with an unlimited extent of unsettled territory to tempt the inhabitants to engage in the natural labour of agriculture, they will not be induced, unless for much higher wages than in England, to follow the more confined and irksome pursuits of the factory or workshop.

But does not the present industry of the population of the New England States tend to prove that there is a disposition, in the people of the older portions of this country, to settle down into the pursuits incident to towns at an advanced stage of society, and leave to agriculture the natives of the newer States? We shall find that the exports from Boston comprise—among other articles of domestic manufacture equally unconnected with the system of factory labour—annually, about 3,500,000 pairs of boots and shoes, 600,000 bundles of paper, together with a large quantity of cordage, nails, furniture, &c.

We are inclined, however, to view the natives of the maritime portion of the Union, but particularly the inhabitants of the New England States, as eminently commercial in their tastes and characteristics; and, as such—looking to the amount of capital at present embarked in their cotton manufacture, as well as to the circumstances of the

raw material being the produce of their own soil, and bearing in mind the prodigious increase that is taking place in the numbers of their people—we profess to see no prospect of this our own staple industry being abandoned; and, if not given up, we may expect, from the well-known and well-deserved panegyric paid by Burke to the enterprise of the New Englanders, in prosecuting the whale-fishing, that the competition on the part of such a people will be maintained with energy.

The capital employed in the various branches of the cotton manufacture in the United States is, according to a calculation for 1832, in "Reuss's Statistics of America," in amount about £11,000,000; and the consumption of raw cotton is estimated at 173,800 bales, or about one-fifth of all the growth of the country, and, as nearly as possible, a fifth of the quantity worked up, during the same year, in Great Britain.

The greater portion of all the products of this labour is consumed at home: the rest is exported in the shape principally of heavy calicoes, that have sustained a competition with our own fabrics in the Mediterranean and the East.

Some occasional shipments of low yarns have been made to this country; but these transactions have not been of considerable magnitude.

Bearing in mind that the supply of the raw material of nearly one-half of our exports is derived from a country that threatens to eclipse us by its rival greatness, we cannot, whilst viewing the relative positions of England and the United States at this moment, refrain from recurring to the somewhat parallel cases of Holland and Great Britain, before the latter became a manufacturing State, when the Dutchman purchased the wool of this country, and sold it to us again in the form of cloth. Like as the latter nation became at a subsequent period, we are now overwhelmed with debts, contracted in wars, or the acquisition of colonies, whilst America, free from all burdens, as we were at the former epoch, is prepared to take up, with far greater advantages, the fabrication of their own cotton as we did of our wool. The Americans possess a quicker mechanical genius than even ourselves (such, again, was the case with our ancestors, in comparison with the Dutch), as witness their patents, and the improvements for which we are indebted to individuals of that country in mechanics—such as spinning, engraving, &c. We gave additional speed to our ships, by improving upon the naval architecture of the Dutch; and the similitude again applies to the superiority which, in comparison with the British models, the Americans have, for all the purposes of activity and economy, imparted to their vessels.

Such are some of the analogous features that warrant the comparison we have instituted; but there are other circumstances of a totally novel character, affecting in opposite degrees the destinies of these two great existing commercial communities, which must not be lost sight of.

The internal improvement of a country is, undoubtedly, the first and most important element of its growth in commerce and civilisation. Hence our canals have been regarded by Dupin as the primary material agents of the wealth of Great Britain. But a new invention—the railway—has appeared in the annals of locomotion, which bids

fair to supersede all other known modes of land transit; and, by seizing at one, with all the energy of a young and unprejudiced people, this greatest discovery of the age, and planting, as it were, its fruits first throughout the surface of their territory, the Americans have made an important stride in the career of improvement, in advance of every nation of Europe.

The railroads of America present a spectacle of commercial enterprise, as well as of physical and moral triumph, more truly astonishing, we consider, than was ever achieved in the same period of time in any other country. Only in 1829 was the experiment first made, between Liverpool and Manchester, of applying steam to the navigation of land, so to speak, by means of iron railways, for the conveyance of passengers and merchandise: and now, in 1835, being less than seven years after the trial was first made and proved successful, the United States of America contain upwards of seventeen hundred miles of railroads in progress of construction, and of which no less than one thousand miles are complete and in actual use. ?

The enthusiasm with which this innovation upon the ancient and slower method of travelling was hailed in America—by instituting a newspaper expressly for its advocacy, and by the readiness of support which every new project of the kind encountered—evinced how well this shrewd people discovered at a glance the vast advantages that must accrue to whichever nation first effected so great a saving in that most precious ingredient of all useful commodities, time, as would be gained by the application of a discovery which trebled the speed, at the same time reducing the money-cost, of the entire intercourse of the community.

Already are all the most populous districts in the United States intersected by lines of railroads; whilst, amongst the number of unfinished, but fast advancing undertakings, is a work, now half completed, for connecting Baltimore on the Chesapeake with the Ohio river at Wheeling, a distance of more than two hundred and fifty miles.

Not content, however, with all that has been done, or is still doing, a scheme is at present favourably agitated in the public press of that country, that shall connect Washington city with New Orleans, by a series of railways, which, with those already in progress between New York and Washington, will join the Atlantic at the mouth of the Hudson and the Mexican Gulf; a project which, if completed, will enable a traveller to visit New York from New Orleans in four days—a transition of scene that may be better appreciated when it is remembered that a person might pass in winter from the frozen banks of the Hudson into the midst of the orange and sugar regions of the Mississippi in about ninety hours ! Other plans, of even a more gigantic character, are marked out as in contemplation, upon the latest map published of the United States ? —plans that nothing but the prodigies already achieved by this people prevent us from regarding as chimerical.

It demands not a moment's reflection to perceive the immense advantages that must ensue from these improvements to a country which, like America, contains within itself, though scattered over so wide a surface, all the elements of agricultural and manufacturing greatness. By subjecting this vast territory to the dominion of steam, such an approximation of the whole is attained, that the coals and iron of

Pennsylvania, the lead of Missouri, the cotton of Georgia, the sugar of Louisiana, and the havens of New York and New England, will all be brought into available connection with each other; in fact, by the almost miraculous power of this agent, the entire American continent will, for all the purposes of commercial or social intercourse, be compressed into an area not larger than that of England, supposing the latter to possess only her canals.

Nothing more strongly illustrates the disadvantages under which an old country, like Great Britain, labours in competing with her younger rival, than to glance at the contrast in the progress of railroads in the two empires.

At the same time that, in the United States, almost every day beheld a new railway company incorporated, by some one of the State's legislatures, at the cost only of a few dollars, and nearly by acclamation, the British Parliament intercepted by its votes some of the most important projects that followed in the train of the Liverpool railroad.

The London and Birmingham company, after spending upwards of forty thousand pounds, in attempting to obtain for its undertaking the sanction of the Legislature, was unsuccessful in the House of Lords. The following characteristic questions are extracted from the evidence taken before the committee :—

“Do you know the name of Lady Hastings' place?—How near to it does your line go?—Taking the look-out of the principal rooms of the house, does it run in front of the principal rooms?—How far from the house is the point where it becomes visible?—That would be about a quarter of mile?—Could the engines be heard in the house at that distance?—Is there any cutting or embankment there?—Is it in sight of the house?—Looking to the country, is it not possible that the line could be taken at a greater distance from the residence of Lady Hastings? * * * * * * *

“Was that to pass through Lords Derby and Sefton's land?—Yes, they both consented. They threw us back the first year, and we lost such a line as we could never get again. Since which they have consented to the other line going through their property. * * * Supposing that line as easy for you as the present, was there any objection arising from going through anybody's park?”

The following question, put on the same occasion, by a peer to a shopkeeper, is one that probably would not have been asked by any other person but a hereditary legislator :—

“Can it be of any great importance whether the article goes there in five or six hours, or in an hour and a half ?”

The Brighton and several other railways were abandoned, through dread of the expensive opposition that was threatened in parliament; amongst which the Great Western line was successfully opposed by the landowners, seconded by the heads of Eton College, under the plea that it would tend to impair the character of the scholars ! And a large party, headed by the Marquis of Chandos, actually met in public to

celebrate, with drinking and rejoicing, the frustration of this grand improvement. Yet this nobleman has since had the offer of a voice in the cabinet council of the king : and, but that he is as honest as he most assuredly is unenlightened and prejudiced, he might now be one of the ministers of this commercial country !

But to recur to the consideration of affairs on the other side of the Atlantic. There is another peculiarity in the present attitude of the American people, as compared with our own, that is probably more calculated than all others to accelerate their progress towards a superior rank of civilization and power. We allude to the universality of education in that country. One thirty-sixth portion of all public lands, of which there are hundreds of thousands of square miles unappropriated, is laid apart for the purposes of instruction. If knowledge be power, and if education give knowledge, then must the Americans inevitably become the most powerful people in the world.

Some writers have attempted to detract from this proud feature in the policy of the United States, by adducing, as examples, the backwoodsman and his family, and holding up their uncultivated minds, as well as their privation of Christian instruction, as proofs of the religious and moral abandonment of American society; forgetting that these frontier sections of the community are thinly spread over an inhospitable wilderness, where it must be acknowledged that no State provision for mental improvement could possibly embrace all their scattered members. When a man is placed at the distance of perhaps ten miles from his next neighbour, he is driven, as Dr. Johnson observes, to become his own carpenter, tailor, smith, and bricklayer; and it is from no fault in the laws, but owing to the like unavoidable nature of things, that the same solitary individual must also be left to act the part of teacher and pastor.

But, by referring to the last message of the Government of New York to the legislature of that state, which happens to be before us, we are able to exhibit to our readers, by a very brief quotation, the state of education in that most populous division of the union.

“In the whole range of your duties,” says this most enlightened address, “there is no subject in which the interests of the people are more deeply involved, or which calls for higher efforts of legislative wisdom, than the cause of education. The funds already provided by the state for the support of common schools is large, but not so ample as the exceedingly great importance of the object demands.” After some other details, it goes on to say— “Eight hundred and thirty-five towns and wards (the whole number in the state) have made reports for the year 1833. There are nine thousand eight hundred and sixty-five school districts; the whole number of children, between the ages of five and sixteen years, in the state, was five hundred and thirty-four thousand and two; and the number instructed in the common schools in 1833 was five hundred and thirty-one thousand two hundred and forty. * * * The whole amount expended during the year 1833, on the common schools, cannot fall short of one million two hundred thousand dollars.” ?

Bearing in mind that this refers only to one State of the Union, containing rather less than two millions of inhabitants, could we imagine a more striking contrast to the above statement than in the fact that, during the corresponding session of the British

Parliament, a sum of £20,000 was voted towards educating the people of England, whilst, in close juxtaposition to this, was a grant of £60,000 for the purpose of *partly* furnishing Buckingham palace ! †

The very genius of American legislation is opposed to ignorance in the people, as the most deadly enemy of good government. Not only are direct measures, such as we have just quoted in the case of New York, taken to instruct the poor throughout the United States—not only are all newspapers and advertisements untaxed—but care is used, by excepting from fiscal burdens the humblest ingredients of the *materiel* of printing—such as paper, rags, type, &c.— to render knowledge as cheap and accessible as possible.

The newspaper press forms a distinguishing and rapidly improving feature in the economy of the United States. In 1834, according to the *American Almanack* for 1835, the aggregate of newspapers published under different titles in America was 1,265, of which ninety were daily journals; and the entire number of copies circulated during the year is estimated at ninety millions. ?

In the British Islands three hundred and sixty-nine news-papers are published, of which seventeen only issue daily. † The annual sale of these is estimated at about thirty millions.

If , therefore, we compare the newspaper press of America and England together, allowing for the disproportion of inhabitants in the two countries, we shall be compelled to acknowledge that there is more than six times as much advertising and reading on the other side of the Atlantic as in Great Britain.

There are those who are fond of decrying newspaper reading. But we regard every scheme that is calculated to make mankind *think*— everything that, by detaching the mind from the present moment, and leading it to reflect on the past or future, rescues it from the dominion of mere sense— as calculated to exalt us in the scale of being; and whether it be a newspaper or a volume that serves this end, the instrument is worthy of honour at the hands of enlightened philanthropists.

We know of nothing that would tend more to inform the people of England, and especially of Ireland, than removing the excise fetters from our press. Independently of the facilities to commerce, and the benefits which must ensue to temperance and morals generally, a free press would, by co-operating with a good government (and henceforth it is our own fault if we have a bad one), assist essentially the efforts of those who desire to reduce the expenditure of the State, and help us to dispense with that costly voucher of our ignorance, the standing army of this country.

We have thus hastily glanced at a few of the points of comparison to be found in the prospects of Great Britain and America at this moment. To what shall we liken the relative situations of these two great commercial and naval rivals? We will venture on a simile.

Such of our readers as remember the London tradesman of thirty years ago, will be able to call to mind the powdered wig and queue, the precise shoes and buckles, and the unwrinkled silk hose and tight inexpressibles, that characterized the shopkeeper of the old school. Whenever this stately personage walked abroad on matters of trade, however pressing or important, he never forgot for a moment the dignified step of his forefathers; whilst nothing gratified his self-complacency more than to take his gold-headed cane in hand, and leaving his own shop all the while, to visit his poorer neighbours, and to show his authority by inquiring into their affairs, settling their disputes, and compelling them to be honest, and to manage their establishments according to his plan. His business was conducted throughout upon the formal mode of his ancestors. His clerks, shopmen, and porters all had their appointed costumes; and their intercourse with their chief, or with each other, was disciplined according to established laws of etiquette. Every one had his especial department of duty, and the line of demarcation at the counter was marked out and observed with all the punctilio of neighbouring but rival States. The shop of this trader of the old school retained all the peculiarities and inconveniences of former generations; its windows displayed no gaudy wares to lure the vulgar passer-by, and the panes of glass, inserted in ponderous wooden frames, were exactly constructed after the ancestral pattern. Such were some of the solemn peculiarities of the last generation of tradesmen.

The present age produced a new school of traders, whose first innovation was to cast off the wig, and cashier the barber with his pomatum-box, by which step an hour was gained in the daily toilet. Their next change was to discard the shoes and the tight unmentionables— whose complicated details of buckles and straps, and whose close adjustment occupied another half-hour— in favour of Wellingtons and pantaloons, which were whipped on in a trice, and gave freedom, though perhaps at the expense of dignity, to the personal movements during the day. Thus accoutred, these supple dealers whisked or flew, just as the momentary calls of business became more or less urgent; whilst so absorbed were they in their own interests that they scarcely knew the names of their nearest neighbours, nor cared whether they lived peaceably or not, so long as they did not come to break their windows.

Nor did the spirit of innovation end here; for the shops of this new race of dealers underwent as great a metamorphosis as their owners. Whilst the internal economy of these was reformed with a view to give the utmost facility to the labour of the establishment, by dispensing with all forms, and tacitly agreeing even to suspend the ordinary deferences due to station, lest their observance might, however slightly, impede the business in hand— externally the windows, which were constructed of plate glass, with elegant frames extending from the ground to the ceiling, were made to blaze with all the tempting finery of the day.

We all know the result that followed from this very unequal rivalry. One by one the ancient and quiet followers of the habits of their ancestors yielded before the active competition of their more alert neighbours. Some few of the less bigoted disciples of the old school adopted the new-light system, but all who tried to stem the stream were overwhelmed; for with grief we add, that the very last of these very interesting specimens of olden time that survived, joining the two generations of London tradesmen, and whose shop used to gladden the soul of every Tory pedestrian in Fleet

Street, with its unreformed windows, has at length disappeared, having lately passed into the Gazette, that Schedule A of anti-reforming traders.

That which the shopkeeper of the present day is to him of the last age, such, comparing great things with small, is the commercial position of America as contrasted with that of Great Britain at the present moment. Our debt may be called the inexpressibles or tights, which incessantly restrain us from keeping up with the nimble pace of our pantalooned rivals. The square-toed shoes ? and the polished buckles may be compared to the feudal laws and customs which, in competition with Wellington-booted brother Jonathan, impede the march of improvement and the enterprise of Englishmen. The powdered wig and queue we shall liken to our Church Establishment, which, although very ornamental and imposing in appearance, does yet engross a great share of the time and attention of our Parliament to adjust it properly, † all of which the legislature of our straight-haired competitor has been enabled to apply to the encouragement of a more prosperous trade. The untaxed newspaper of America, with their wide expanses of advertisements, contrasted ‡ with the stamped sheets of this country, are the new and old-light windows of the two generations of shop keepers. The quickened gait of the trader of to-day, and the formal step of his predecessor, are the railways of the United States in competition with our turnpikes and canals. And to complete the simile, if we would see in the conduct of the two nations a resemblance to the contrast between the policy of the dealer of the old school, who delighted to meddle in the concerns of his neighbours, and that of the reformed tradesman, who rigidly confined his attention to the duties of his own counter—let us picture England, interfering with and managing the business of almost every State in Europe, Asia, and Africa, whilst America will form no connection with any one of them, excepting as customers.

What! Shall we consign Old England, then, to ruin? Heaven forbid! Her people are made of tough materials, and he would be but a dastardly politician that despaired of them even yet. We say not, then, that this country will, like the antique establishment of the individual trader, perish at the feet of its more youthful and active competitor; but we fervently believe that our only chance of national prosperity lies in the timely remodelling of our system, so as to put it as nearly as possible upon an equality with the improved management of the Americans.

But let not be misconstrued. We do not advocate republican institutions for this country. We believe the government of the United States to be at this moment the best in the world; but then the Americans are the best ? people; and we have a theory that the government of every State is always, excepting periods of actual change, that which is the best adapted to the circumstances and wants of its inhabitants.

But they who argue in favour of a republic, in lieu of a mixed monarchy, for Great Britain, are, we suspect, ignorant of the genius of their countrymen. Democracy forms no element in the materials of English character. An Englishmen is, from his mother's womb, an aristocrat. Whatever rank or birth, whatever fortune, trade, or profession may be his fate, he is, or wishes or hopes to be, an aristocrat. The insatiable love of caste that in England, as in Hindostan, devours all hearts, is confined to no walks of society, but pervades every degree, from the highest to the lowest. ? Of what

conceivable use, then, would it be to strike down the lofty patricians that have descended to us from the days of the Normans and Plantagenets, if we of the middle class—who are more enslaved than any other to this passion—are prepared to lift up, from amongst ourselves, an aristocracy of mere wealth—not less austere, not less selfish—only less noble than that we had deposed. No! whatever changes in the course of time education may and will effect, we do not believe that England, at this moment, contains even the germs of genuine republicanism.

We do not, then, advocate the adoption of democratic institutions for such a people. But the examples held forth to us by the Americans, of strict economy, of peaceful non-interference, of universal education, and of other public improvements, may, and, indeed, must be emulated by the Government of this country, if the people are to be allowed even the chance of surviving a competition with that republican community. If it be objected, that an economical government is inconsistent with the maintenance of the monarchical and aristocratic institutions of this land, then we answer, let an unflinching economy and retrenchment be enforced—*ruat cœlum!*

Of the many lessons of unsophisticated and practical wisdom which have—as if in imitation of that arrangement of perpetual decay and reproduction that characterises all things in material nature—been sent back from the New World to instruct the Old, there are none so calculated to benefit us—because there are none so much needed—as those maxims of providence and frugality to which Franklin first gave birth, and which, gaining authority and strength from the successive advocacy and practice of Washington, Jefferson, and now of Jackson, have at length become identified with the spirit of the laws and institutions of the United States.

An attempt has been made latterly by that class of our writers ? denominated conservative, to deride this parsimony of the Franklin school as unworthy of the American character. But we are, at this present moment, writhing beneath the chastisement due to our violations of the homely proverbs of “Poor Richard;” and it is only by returning within the sober limits of our means, and rigidly husbanding our time and resources, and by renouncing all idle pomp and luxury—it is by these methods only, and not by advocating still further outrages of the laws of prudence, that this nation can be rescued from the all but irretrievable embarrassment into which its own extravagance and folly have precipitated it.

The first, and, indeed, only certain step towards a diminution of our government expenditure, must be the adoption of that line of foreign policy which the Americans have clung to, with such wisdom and pertinacity, ever since they became a people.

If ever there was a territory that was marked out by the finger of God for the possession of a distinct nation, that country is ours; whose boundary is the ocean, and within whose ramparts are to be found, in abundance, all the mineral and vegetable treasures requisite to make us a great commercial people. Discontented with these blessings, and disdaining the natural limits of our empire, in the insolence of our might, and without waiting for the assaults of envious enemies, we have sallied forth in search of conquest or rapine, and carried bloodshed into every quarter of the globe. The result proves, as it ever must, that we cannot violate the moral law with impunity.

Great Britain is conscious that she is now suffering the slow but severe punishment inflicted at her own hands—she is crushed beneath a debt so enormous that nothing but her own mighty strength could have raised the burden that is oppressing her.

Again we say (and let us be excused the repetition of this advice for we writer with no other object but to enforce it), England cannot survive its financial embarrassment, except by renouncing that policy of intervention with the affairs of other States which has been the fruitful source of nearly all our wars.

We trust that this opinion will be generated throughout the population of this country, and that the same spirit will be reflected, through its representatives in Parliament, upon the Government.

In future, it will not be sufficient that no question concerning the State policy of other nations is allowed to occupy the attention of our legislature, unless it be first shown that our own honour or our interests are involved in its consideration—it will not be enough that our fleets and armies are not permitted to take a part in the contentions of other nations; all this will not avail unless our diplomatists and foreign secretaries are jealously restrained from taking a share, either by treaties or protocols, according to the invariable wont of their predecessors, in the ever-varying squabbles of our continental neighbours. By this course of policy, and by this alone, we shall be enabled to reduce our army and navy moke nearly to a level with the corresponding burdens of our American rivals.

May we be allowed, once more, to refute the objection which will be urged, that our numerous fleets are necessary to the defence of our commerce? Then, we ask, does any one deny that the persons of American merchants, or their vessels, are as safe in every quarter of the world as our own? We have seen to how great a proportion of our tonnage the American mercantile navy now amounts; we have seen how vast an export trade they carry on; and we have seen with how small a Government force all this is protected; may not an unanswerable argument, then, be found here, in fovour of dispensing, henceforth, with a portion of our enormous naval and military establishments?

Hitherto, whenever a war has at any time been threatened between two or more European States, however remote or however insignificant, it has furnished a sufficient pretence for our statesmen to augment our armaments by sea and by land, in order to assume an imposing attitude, as it is termed—forgetting, all the while, that by maintaining a strict neutrality in these continental brawls, and by diligently pursuing our peaceful industry, whilst our neighbours, were exhausting themselves in senseless wars, we might be growing in riches, in proportion as they became poorer; and, since it is by wealth after all that the world is governed, we should, in reality, be the less in danger from the powers on the Continent, the more they indulged in hostilities with each other.

It is a common error with our statesmen to estimate the strength of a nation—as, for instance, is the case at this moment, in their appreciation of the power of Russia,

Prussia, or Austria—according to the magnitude of its armies and navies; whereas there are the signs, and, indeed, the causes, of real poverty and weakness in a people.

"Our public debt is cancelled," said Mr. Benton, a speaker at the dinner lately held at Washington to celebrate the extinction of the American debt—"our public debt is cancelled; and there is more strength in those words than in one hundred ships of the line ready for battle, or in a hundred thousand armed soldiers." And, to exemplify the truth of this sentiment, we have subsequently beheld this very people, with only a few schooners and frigates, and seven thousand troops, menacing the French Government, *steeped in debt,* at the head of its million of fighting men, and its three hundred vessels of war.

To remove, if possible for even the extravagant chimera that haunts the Government and the people of this country, of our being in danger from any possible combination of continental hostilities, let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that Russia were to invade Turkey—or that France were again to cross the Rhine, having first seized upon Holland and Belgium, and attack Prussia and Austria—or that the Spaniards should seize upon Portugal—or that the Austrian Government were to invade Naples or Sardinia—or, if such a supposition be possible, let us imagine these powers to be engaged in a battle-royal all together; now, does any sober and reasoning mind believe that Great Britain, who, we will presume, had wisely availed herself of the opportunities afforded by her insular position to remain neuter, would be selected by any one of these powers, in addition to the enemies already opposed to it, for the object of gratuitous attack? Does any rational person think that we should, under such circumstances, be in greater jeopardy than the Americans from these contentions?

Having already demonstrated that even Napoleon, with Europe at his feet, was powerless in his attacks upon our exports, we are afraid of being tedious in recurring to that subject.

Were a war once more to break forth over the Continent of Europe, and were we to stand aloof from the conflict, our commerce and manufactures, instead of receiving injury in any quarter, would be thereby benefited; for, besides the well-known facilities which a state of warfare would give to the smuggler for supplying those very belligerents themselves with the products of our labour, it would, at the same time, put an end to the competition which we now sustain, in other parts of the world, from our manufacturing rivals of Europe. Germany, France, Switzerland, and Belgium, and, indeed, almost every nation of the Continent, for whose independence and existence we fought so long and arduously, have profited by the peace, to exclude our fabrics from their markets, and, in mistaken policy, borrowed from our own restrictive code, to raise up, at great sacrifices of national wealth, a manufacturing industry for themselves.

Thus we find that, at this moment, Prussia is completing a wall of tariffs, which she has been sedulously constructing for many years, and which will, more effectually than did Napoleon, exclude us from the German market—Prussia, for whom we bled, and for whose subsidies we are still taxed! Austria, another of our costly allies, whose disasters our most renowned statesman ? would not outlive—Austria has, ever since

the peace, sealed her territory against our merchandise. Naples—that unworthy *protégé,* in behalf of whose court England's greatest hero † sullied his otherwise untarnished fame—Naples repays us with an impost of cent. per cent. upon our manufactures; whilst France has, since Napoleon's fall, been a less profitable customer to England than she was during the time of his extremest enmity towards this country.

True, at the close of the war, our ministers might have stipulated for, and might have commanded a trade with all Europe, as some indemnity for our expenditure; but the warriors and statesmen who represented us at Vienna, and who took pains to forward such measures as the military occupation of France, or the erection of fortresses in Belgium, or the binding us to become guarantee for the permanency of the union of the Netherlands, forgot to utter one word about our merchants. It was unbecoming the dignity of our gallant and noble plenipotentiaries to stipulate for the welfare of the artisans and manufacturers of Great Britain. Compare this with the results of the cheap diplomacy of the Americans.

Alas! by what numberless arts, neglects, and caprices (to say nothing of crimes) have the interests of this industrious and greatly-favoured people been victimised!

Before closing this pamphlet, we will offer a few remarks as to the course which it behoves Great Britain to pursue, for the future, upon an important question of commercial policy.

With a view to enlarge, as much as possible, the capabilities of this people to support the burden of debt and taxation with which they are destined to be permanently loaded, every possible facility must be given to the increase of population, by the expansion of our foreign trade, and which can only be accomplished by repealing the protective duties on corn.

We shall be here met with the cry, that we are desirous of converting England into one vast manufactory, that we advocate the interests of our order, and so forth. Far from nourishing any such *esprit de corps,* our predilections lean altogether in an opposite direction. We were born and bred up amidst the pastoral charms of the south of England, and we confess to so much attachment to the pursuits of our forefathers (always provided that it be separated from the rick-burnings and pauperism of modern agriculture), that, had we the casting of the *rôle* of all the actors on this world's stage, we do not think we should suffer a cotton-mill or a manufactory to have a place in it; not that they remind us of "*billyrollers,*" "*straps,*" and "*infant martyrdoms,*" for we never saw such; but we think a system which draws children from home, where they formerly worked in the company of parents, and under the wholesome restraint incident to disparity of years—nature's own moral safeguard of domestic life—to class them in factories, according to equality of age, to be productive of vice. But the factory system, which sprang from the discoveries in machinery, has been adopted in all the civilised nations of the world, and it is in vain for us to think of discountenancing its application to the necessities of this country; it only remains for us to mitigate, as far as possible, the evils that are, perhaps, not inseparably connected with this novel social element.

The present corn laws are founded on the principle of limiting, as far as possible, the growth of the population of Britain, within the means of the soil to supply it with subsistence. No candid advocate of a protective duty will deny that it must have this tendency; nor will he dispute that, to restrict the import of corn into a manufacturing nation, is to strike at the life of its foreign commerce.

It is objected by the landowners of England that, if the duty on grain were to be reduced, it would operate unfavourably upon their interests, and they claim a protection at the hands of the rest of society. Now, without entering at all into the question of the right which belongs to such pretensions, we shall content ourselves with taking our stand upon the simple ground of necessity, and declare that the people of this country are in an emergency that precludes the possibility of their ministering to the selfishness of any one class in the community.

The interest of the public debt cannot be paid except by the co-operation of our foreign commerce; and this cannot be preserved permanently, unless the price of that first element of the cost of our manufactures, *food,* be the same here as with our competitors abroad. We are surprised that the question has not before been placed in this point of view by the advocates of a free trade in corn, since it withdraws the subject altogether from that invidious position which it has hitherto held betwixt the rival contentions of agriculture and commerce, and places it under the control of inexorable State necessity.

We have been amazed (if anything could astonish us from this unintelligent party) to find that the national debt is one of the leading arguments made use of by the economists of the Sadler school, in advocating a restrictive duty on corn. A brief appeal to a very few simple facts will, we believe, not only deprive them of this argument, but, in the opinion of all unprejudiced minds, place it on the opposite side of the question.

Our public debt, funded and unfunded, amounts to about eight hundred millions. Let this sum be more fully appreciated, by bearing in mind that it exceeds the aggregate of all the debts of the whole world, including that of the East India company, amounting to one hundred and fifty millions. Here, then, we have the British Empire, with only its twenty-five millions of population—possessing a territory of only ninety thousand square geographical miles, and containing only forty-five millions of acres of cultivated land (about two-thirds of the area of France), supporting an annual burden for the interest of the national debt, equal to the taxation borne, for the same purpose, by all other States. How, then, can a country, of so confined a boundary, and with no greater population than we have named, find it possible to endure so great a disproportion of taxation? If it be asked, how does France meet her public expenses, we can answer, by pointing to the superabundant production of wine, oil, silk, tobacco, fruit, and corn, yielded throughout an expanse of territory so wide as to ensure an almost perpetual harvest to its people. If we inquire, how does Russia maintain here government burdens—the surplus timber, corn, hemp, and tallow of that country must be the reply. Would we know by the resources Italy, Spain, and America discharge their respective national encumbrances—the excess of the produce

of silk, oil, fruits, cotton, and tobacco, over and above the wants of the population of those countries, solves the mystery.

But we demand to know by what means Great Britain can sustain an annual burden, for interest of debt, exceeding that of these and all other States together. Is it out of the surplus production of its corn? Her soil has not, for the last forty years, yielded sufficient to supply the necessities of her population. It this enormous demand satisfied by the yearly excess of her wines, silk, oil, fruits), cotton, or tobacco? The sterile land and inhospitable climate of Britain are incapable of producing any one of these. Where, then, lies the secret of her wealth? Is it in her colonies? How, if we are prepared to prove that these are at this moment, and, in future, are still more destined to become, a severe burden to the people of these realms?

Our mineral riches are the means by which alone we have been enabled to incur this debt, and by whose agency only can we at this moment discharge the interest of it.

To satisfy ourselves of this, let us examine the year's return of our revenue, and we shall there discover nearly twenty millions of income under the head of customs duties. How are the commodities, on which this amount of taxation is levied, obtained from foreigners? Are they received in exchange for our agricultural produce? By looking over the list of articles exported, we shall, on the contrary, find that out of thirty-six millions of home products not one million is the unmixed growth of the soil.

These commodities are purchased by our cottons, woollens, ? hardware, and the other articles produced by the manufacturers of this country; the growth, to use the term, of the coal and iron of Great Britain—which are, we repeat, the primary sources of all her wealth and power, and the want of which alone prevents other nations of Europe from rivalling her in manufacturing greatness. Of course it is known that our agricultural labour supplies a great portion of the food of our weavers and other artizans, and, therefore, mixes with the results of their industry; but when it is recollected that the cost of food here is from fifty to one hundred and fifty per cent. dearer than in other States, it will be admitted that it is not owing to the cheap price at which the farmer supplies the corn of the manufacturer that the latter is enabled to undersell his foreign competitors.

To come to the point with those who advocate a restrictive policy on our foreign trade, by a protection, as it is called, of our agriculture, we ask, in what way do they propose ever to pay off the national debt, or permanently to discharge the interest of it, out of the indigenous wealth of these islands?

The whole area of cultivated land in this monarchy is, as we have before stated, estimated at about forty-five millions of acres: at twenty pounds per acre, the fee simple of the soil of these islands (we, of course, leave out the houses, &c.) would very little exceed the amount of our debt. There is an end, therefore, of the idea of discharging the principal out of the real property of the country; and by what means would they who obstruct a foreign commerce profess to pay the interest of the debt without the assistance of that trade? Supposing that our exports were diminished, and that, owing to the consequent falling off in our imports, our customs were sensibly

reduced, from what articles of our agricultural produce would these advocates of a Japanese policy raise the deficient revenue? In France (where the prohibitive system, which has long reigned supremely, is drawing fast to a dismal end) the customs duties amount to about one-fifth of our own, and the great bulk of the revenue is levied from the land. But provided that a reduction of our foreign trade rendered such a step necessary, we ask again and it is an important question, involving the whole gist of our argument), upon what branch of British agriculture could an augmented impost be levied? May not the recent almost fanatical outcry against the malt tax, the only burden of any magnitude borne directly by the land in this country, serve as a sufficient answer to the inquiry?

The question of the repeal of the corn laws, then, resolves itself into one of absolute state necessity; since our foreign trade, which is indispensable to the payment of the interest of the national debt, cannot be permanently preserved if we persevere in a restrictive duty against the principal article of exchange of rude, unmanufacturing people. To prohibit the import of corn, such as is actually the case at this moment, is to strangle infant commerce in its cradle; may, worse, it is to destroy it even in its month's womb.

We recommend the landowners, but especially the great proprietors who constitute the upper house of legislature, to reflect upon this view of the corn laws.

But we have remarked an inclination in a part of the landed interest to slight—to use the mildest possible term—the public creditor; a feeling that shone forth in the motion of the Marquis of Chandos to remove the malt tax—thus aiming at the insolvency of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—without caring first to inquire by what fresh imposts he should meet the engagements of his country. These unreflecting minds are, we apprehend, quite incapable of estimating the consequences that will ensue if ever we should be found unable to meet the interest of the debt—in other words, if the British nation should be declared bankrupt! Let us for one moment contemplate the results that would follow from such an event.

We find, from a statement in “Porter's Official Tables,” that there are 250,000 persons receiving dividends, of and under the amount of £200 a year. Presuming the families or dependents of them to average ? two each, then we shall have here half a million of individuals looking to the public funds for support. Moreover, we find the total amount of the deposits in all the savings' banks of the kingdom to be £13,500,000; and the number of depositors, according to the same authority, is 412,217, averaging £33 each; taking the families or dependents of these at the same average as before, and it gives three-quarters of a million more. Then there is an immense amount of the public debt owing to charities,—including insurance offices, benefit clubs, schools, &c., involving the interests of an incalculable multitude of necessitous persons. Guessing these to amount to only the same total as the last mentioned (for it is impossible to form a correct estimate on the subject), then we arrive at an aggregate of two millions of the middle and lower classes, who are, directly or indirectly, claimants on the national debt.

Now, no one capable of thinking upon such a subject at all will for a moment believe that, if we were driven to such an extremity as to rob these two millions—comprising so many of the labourers, the small traders, the orphans and widows—of their subsistence, that the pomp of the court or the wealth of the clergy, or the privileges of our nobles, would be more secure than the bread of these humble annuitants.

No rational mind can suppose that lords in waiting, grooms of the stole, gold sticks and silver sticks, would be maintained—that bishops and prebends would still be found in undisturbed possession of their stalls and revenues—or that the peers would retain their law of primogeniture, or the right of hereditary legislation, whilst desolation and misery overspread the land with horrors at terrible as any it could undergo from the ravages of half-a-million of Cossacks. †

The cleverest of our journalists has said—and the words have passed into a proverb—"Before you rob the public creditor, send your throne to the pawn-shop." And nothing can be more certain than that the national debt (which ought never to have been incurred, and the authors of which some future generation will probably deem to have been madmen) must be borne by the people of England, entire and untouched, so long as they can stand beneath its burden. If ever the day should come that sees this mighty fabric crush the nation to the dust, it will bury in its ruins the monarchy, Church, and aristocracy, with every vestige of our feudal institutions, and every ancestral precedent—leaving the state, like Mr. Courtenay's sheet of blank paper, upon which the then existing generation will have the task of inscribing a new constitution, borrowed from the freest and most flourishing community of that day, and which, in all probability, will be found on the continent of America.

From such a catastrophe there is no escape but in either honestly paying off the principal of the public debt, or in continuing to discharge the interest of it for ever. The ravings after an equitable adjustment, and other like expedients, are but the impracticable schemes of those who would wish to precipitate such a calamity as we have been describing.

If ever house in England were converted into a Court of Chancery, and if all the men between twenty and sixty were constituted Lord Chancellors, there would not then be a sufficient quantity of equity courts and equity judges to effect such an equitable adjustment of the national debt as is meant, during the life-time of an entire generation.

The national debt, then, is inviolable; and this recalls us to the inquiry of how it is to be permanently supported; which brings us again to the question of the corn laws.

The only way in which we can lighten the pressure of the debt is by adding to the population and wealth of the country. The agricultural districts have, we suspect—so far as the middle classes are concerned—already experienced that dull state incident to the stationary period of society; whilst, under the present amended poor laws, we believe that the farther increase of the pauper population will be effectually checked. The sole way, then, of adding to our numbers, is to give the freest possible

development to the only present superabundant contents of the soil—the mineral products of Great Britain.

By repealing the present corn laws, and putting only a fixed duty of such an amount as would bring the greatest revenue (we object no more to a tax on corn than on tea or sugar, for the purpose of revenue, ? but we oppose a *protective* duty, as it is called), which, probably, might be found to be two shillings a quarter, such an impulse would be given to the manufactures of this country, whilst so great a shock would be experienced by our rivals, from the augmented price of food all over the world, that a rapid growth of wealth and increase of numbers must take place throughout the coal and iron districts of England, Wales, and Scotland.

The population of Staffordshire, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Lanarkshire, and of counties adjacent to these, might be trebled in the course of a couple of generations; and there would be no limit to its increase but in the contents of our coal mines, to which geologists assign a duration varying from two to three thousand years!

It will be asked, what would be the effects of such a change upon the agriculture of the country? The best way of replying to this question is to consider what must have been the consequence to all interests in this country if, in lieu of the restrictions put upon the import of corn in 1816, a law had been passed, imposing only such a moderate duty as would ultimately produce the greatest revenue, and which, in our opinion, would be found to be two shillings a quarter. The factory system would in all probability not have taken place in America or Germany;—it most certainly could not have flourished, as it has done, both in those states, and in France, Belgium, and Switzerland, through the fostering bounties which the high-priced food of the British artisan has offered of the cheaper fed manufacturer of those countries.

Our belief, after some reflection upon this question, is (having already very far exceeded the intended limits of this pamphlet, we are precluded from going into details), that, had a wise modification of our corn laws been effected at the close of the war, the official value of our exports would have exceeded by one-third its present amount. This is, of course, presuming that our manufacturing population had augmented proportionately;—we believe that, under such circumstances, the before-mentioned counties would have now sustained upwards of a million more than their present numbers; but, as the increase of their inhabitants would not have been equal to the demand for labour, a great immigration must have taken place from the agricultural districts. This would have saved those quarters that frightful ordeal of pauperism and crime with which they have disgraced our modern history. The farmer would, by the offer of other resources for his family and dependents, have been saved from the state of servility into which he is plunged. Instead of the rent of the tenants being dictated by the landlords, the former would, under this more favourable state of things, have been the arbiters of the incomes of the latter. In short, the buyers—*i.e.,* the farmers—would, in this case, as the purchasers do in dealing with all other commodities, have decided the prices of their farms—they would not have been as at present, determined by the sellers, *i.e.,* the landowners.

Under such an assumed state of things, this country would, we believe, by this time have acquired an increase to its present wealth to the extent of 350 ? millions—nearly one-half the amount of the national debt.

The immediate effects of all this to the landed proprietor would clearly have been a reduction of rent; or where the property was heavily encumbered, his estates would have passed into other hands.

We should not, in such a case, have heard of those displays of wanton extravagance that tend so much to demoralise all classes. Instead of the exhibitions of prodigality and insolence abroad, with which some of those proprietors affronted the nations of the continent, and disgraced at the same time their native country—instead of their contribution at home to raise and support a palace for Crockford—instead of their dispensing with all decorum, and herding with grooms and black-legs at Newmarket or Doncaster—instead of the necessary consequences of all this, the subsequent ruin and exile of such wastrels † —in place of these things, we might have beheld a provident and virtuous proprietary residing principally upon and managing their estates; and who, we verily believe, would, under this supposed state of things, have become richer in wealth, as well as honour, than they are at this day.

But selfishness, which is ever short-sighted, has hitherto governed supremely the destinies of this empire; and we have seen how disastrous has been its rule, not only to its own interests, but to the prosperity of the nation at large. Should the same misgovernment from no better motives be persevered in with respect to the corn question, the effects will be still more calamitous for the future. The public debt, “that eternal ally of truth and justice” (to use the words of a famous political writer, without adopting his malignancy), will visit with terrible reprisals the monopolists who shall persist in upholding the present corn laws.

We cannot do better than conclude with the words of an intelligent American, as they were addressed to an English traveller. The extract is taken from the preface to “Ferguson's Tour in Canada and a portion of the United States.”

“Even with your present burden of debt, if your Government were to renounce all interference with the affairs of the continent, and keep no more force, land or naval, than is necessary for your own security, have no more wars, and diminish the expenditure as much as possible, you will grow so rapidly in the next fifty years that your debt would cease to be of any importance. I earnestly hope that the passage of the Reform Bill may be only the prelude to an entire change of system; and that your successors may feel, as we do here, that wars do not promote the prosperity of a nation, and have the good sense to avoid them.”

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RUSSIA.
1836.

ADVERTISEMENT.

This is not a party pamphlet. Nor will Russia be found, as the title might seem to imply, to be exclusively the subject of inquiry in the following pages. If, as has lately been shown in England, at certain periods in the history of a nation, it becomes necessary to review its principles of domestic policy, for the purpose of adapting the government to the changing and improving condition of its people—it must be equally the part of a wise community to alter the maxims by which its foreign relations have, in past times, been regulated, in conformity with the changes that have taken place over the entire globe.

Can the “States' System” which was applicable to the international affairs of Europe a century ago, be suited to the circumstances of to-day ?—or, on the contrary, do not those portentous events which have intervened— in the rise and paramount commercial importance of free America, the downfall of the colony system, and the application of the doctrines of free trade—demand reforms of proportionate magnitude in the foreign policy of Great Britain? These important changes have, in the latter part of this pamphlet, for the first time, been taken into consideration with reference to the question of Turkey; and, without presuming, for a moment, to claim for our mode of treating this important subject the slightest attention, we may be allowed to add, that the mighty influence which such changes are now exercising over our destinies ought to be duly studied and appreciated by those who, as statesmen, are permitted to regulate the external affairs of this commercial empire.

NOTE.

This pamphlet, which was published in the year 1836, was suggested by the alarm of a Russian invasion, which prevailed in that year, and which led to an increase in our navy of five thousand men. Although the views of what is now known as the “Eastern Question”, which Mr. Cobden has embodied in the following pages, correspond with those to which he and his distinguished friend, Mr. Bright, gave such forcible and eloquent expression during the war with Russia, it is scarcely too much to say, that political students generally will peruse the pamphlet with as much zest as if it were now for the first time issued from the press; and, indeed, the arguments and illustrations by which Mr. Cobden sought to controvert the popular apprehension of Russian power and ambition which then existed, have a close bearing upon more recent phases of pubic opinion. But at the time Mr. Cobden wrote he had to contend with traditional illusions, which not only inspired large classes of the community with an alarm as mischievous as it was vague and unreal, but formed a no unimportant part of the political creed of statesmen.

The reader can judge of the manner in which Mr. Cobden acquitted himself of his arduous task; but an authentic anecdote will best illustrate the effect which the perusal of his work produced on the minds of public men, who, from the eminent position they occupied thirty years ago, were best qualified to form a critical opinion on its merits. Shortly after the publication of the pamphlet Lord Durham, who was then the English ambassador at St. Petersburg, received a copy of it in his official bag. He read it and was so much impressed with the clearness and force of its leading ideas, that he at once wrote to his friend, the late lamented Mr. Joseph Parkes, and requested him to discover the name of the author. Mr. Parkes obtained Mr. Cobden's permission to mention his name; and when, two years later, his Lordship returned to England, he desired Mr. Parkes to bring about a meeting between himself and Mr. Cobden. The result was that Mr. Cobden dined with Lord Durham, who, after an evening of friendly conversation, was still more struck with his new acquaintance. His subsequent prophetic and sagacious remark to Mr. Parkes deserves to be recorded. "Mark my words," he said, "Cobden will one day be one of the first men in England."

It only remains to add that Mr. Cobden made a tour through Turkey and the East in the year following the publication of his brochure, but that he did not visit Russia until the year 1846, when the abolition of the corn laws enabled him at once to recruit his health, and to disseminate free trade principles in other countries, by a few months of continental travel.

RUSSIA.

CHAPTER I

Russia, Turkey, And England.

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

confess we think there is sufficient ground in the predominant influence which an aristocracy, essentially warlike, exercises at this moment in the Ministry, to warn our readers and the public against the passion for a foolish war, with which the minds of the people have been latterly very industriously inflamed. We do not charge the noble Lords who form the great majority in the Cabinet with a design to stimulate the country to demand hostilities with Russia; the policy of the Ministry may probably have stopped far short of that, and aimed only at accomplishing an augmentation of the army or navy. Certain it is, however, that *one active mind*? has, during the last two years, materially influenced the tone of several of the newspapers of this kingdom, in reference to the affairs of Russia and Turkey, and incessantly roused public opinion, through every accessible channel of the periodical press, against the former and in favour of the latter nations; certain it is, moreover, that this individual, if not previously an agent of the Government, has latterly become so, by being appointed to a diplomatic post in our embassy at Constantinople.† How far this indefatigable spirit has been successful in his design, to diffuse a feeling of terror and a spirit of hatred towards Russia in the public mind, may be ascertained by any one who will take the trouble to sound the opinions of his next neighbour upon the subject, whom, it is ten to one, he will find an alarmist about the subtlety of pozzo di Borgo, the cruelty of the Czar, and the barbarism of the Russians. He most likely will find him to possess but vague feelings of apprehension, and very little exactness of knowledge upon the subject; he will not know, perhaps, precisely, whether the province of Moldavia be on the right or the left bank of the Danube, or whether the Balkan and the ancient Hæmus be an identical range of mountains; he will have but an indistinct acquaintance with the geography of Asia Minor, and probably confound the Bosphorus with the Dardanelles; but still he shall be profoundly alarmed at the encroachments of Russia in those quarters, and quite willing to go to war to prevent them. Such, we gravely assert, is the feeling, and such are the opinions of the great majority of those who take their doctrines from some of the newspapers at this moment, upon the question of Russian aggrandisement. Believing that the fate of Turkey, and the designs of her great northern neighbour, are by no means matters that affect the interests of England so vitally as some writers imagine, we are yet more directly opposed to them, by entertaining a conviction that, even if the worst of their forebodings were to arrive—if even Russia were to subjugate Turkey—England would gain rather than suffer by the event. In order to state our views fairly upon this interesting and difficult question, it will be necessary for us to glance, hastily, at the past history and the present condition, as respects the government and resources, of the two empires; and then, having assumed that Turkey had fallen a prey to the ambition of Russia, we will weigh the probable consequences of, and meet the possible objections to, such an event.

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

In comparing the Turkish Government with that of Russia, however, it will be found that the latter is immeasurably the superior in its laws and institutions; and if, in the remarks which we shall have occasion to make, we should appear to bestow commendations upon that northern people, we entreat that the reader will consider us to be only speaking in comparison with its more barbarous and despotic Mahometan neighbour, and not from any abstract predilection in favour of the Russian nation. Again, whilst we argue that we should, in all probability, benefit by the subjugation of Turkey by Russia, we do not attempt to justify, or even to palliate, the forcible spoliation of its territory; still less do we advocate the intervention of the English Government, for the purpose of promoting such a conquest. Our sole object is to persuade the public that the wisest policy for England is, to take no part in those remote quarrels. To accomplish this end we will endeavour to examine every distinct source of danger which the advocates for our interference in the affairs of states a thousand miles distant, adduce as arguments in defence of their policy. We shall claim the right of putting the question entirely upon a footing of self-interest. We do not, for a moment, imagine that it is necessary for us to show that we are not called upon to preserve the peace and good order of the entire world. Indeed, those writers and speakers who argue in favour of our intervention in the affairs of Russia and Turkey, invariably do so upon the pretence that our commerce, our colonies, or our national existence, are endangered by the encroachments of the former empire. We trust the futility of such fears will be shown by the following appeal to reason, experience, and facts.

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

tobacco, and silk might be made the staple exports of this region, and their culture admits of almost unlimited extension throughout the Turkish territory; whilst some of the native wines are equal to those of Burgundy. Almost every species of tree flourishes in European Turkey. The heights of the Danube are clad with apple, pine, cherry, and apricot trees; whole forests of these may be seen in Wallachia; and they cover the hills of Thrace, Macedonia, and Epirus. The olive, orange, mastic, fig, pomegranate—the laurel, myrtle, and nearly all the beautiful and aromatic shrubs and plants—are natural ;to the soil. Nor are the animal productions less valuable than those of vegetable life. The finest horses have been drawn from this quarter to improve the breeds of Western Europe; and the rich pastures of European Turkey are probably the best adapted in the world for rearing the largest growths of cattle and sheep.

That, in a region so highly favoured, the population should have retrograded, whilst surrounded by abundance; that its wealth and industry should have been annihilated; and that commerce should be banished from those rivers and harbours the first called it into existence—must be accounted for by remembering that the finest soil, the most genial climate, or the brightest intellectual and physical gifts of human nature are as nothing when subjected to the benumbing influences of the Government of Constantinople. It is necessary to refer to the religion and the maxims of its professors, which constitute all that serves as a substitute for law with this Mahometan people, if we would know the causes why ignorance, barbarism, and poverty now overspread the fairest lands of Asia and Europe. The Turks profess, as is well known, the most bigoted and intolerant branch of the Mahometan faith; they regard with equal detestation the Persian Shiite and the follower of Christ; nay, the more zealous amongst their doctors contend that it is as meritorious to slay one Shiite as twenty Christians. Their colleges, or madresses, teach nothing but the Mahometan theology; many years being spent in mastering such knotty points as, *whether the feet should be washed at rising or only rubbed with the dry hand.* As the orthodox Turk, of whatever rank, is taught to despise all other fields of learning than the Koran, under the belief that Mahomet has, in that sacred book, recorded all that his faithful followers are required to know—it follows, of course, that he is religiously ignorant of all that forms the education of a Frenchman, German, or Italian; he knows nothing of the countries beyond the bounds of the sultan's dominions. The Turks (unlike the liberal Persians, who have made some advances in science) are unacquainted with the uses of the commonest scientific instruments, which are exhibited to them by travellers just as we do to amuse children. Notwithstanding that this people have been for nearly four centuries in absolute possession of all the noblest remains of ancient art, they have evinced no taste for architecture or sculpture, whilst painting and music are equally unknown to them. Nor have they been less careless about the preservation of ancient, than the creation of modern, works of labour and ingenuity. They found, at the conquest of the Eastern Empire, splendid and substantial public and private edifices, which have been barbarously destroyed, or allowed to crumble beneath the hand of time; and huts of wood, compared by travellers to large boxes? standing in rows with their lids open upon hinges, compose the streets of modern Constantinople, and other large cities. Bridges, aqueducts, and harbours, the precious and durable donations of remote yet more enlightened generations, have all suffered a like fate; and the roads, even in the vicinity of the capital, which in former ages maintained an

unrivalled celebrity, are describe, by the last tourist,† to be now in so broken and neglected a state as to present a barrier against the progress of artillery as complete as though it had been designed by an engineer for that purpose.

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

Probably, in nothing has this people been more unduly represented than in the praises which have been bestowed on their unrestricted principles of trade. The Turk knows nothing, and cares as little about freedom of commerce; he disdains trade himself, and despises it in others; and, if he has failed to imitate more civilised (though, certainly, in this point of view, not wiser) nations, by fortifying his coasts with custom-houses, it is certainly from no wise principle of taxation, but simply because such a circuitous method of fiscal exaction would be far too complicated and wearisome for the minds of Ottoman governors, who prefer the simpler mode of raising a revenue by the direct extortion of the Pasha or the Aga. Far from favouring the extension of commerce, one great cause of the present barbarism and the past unhappy condition of Turkey is to be found in the aversion and contempt which its people bear for trade. "The Jews," says Hadji-khalfa, the Turkish writer, in speaking of Salonica, "employ many workmen in their different manufactories—support a number of schools in which there are not fewer than two hundred masters. The caravans that travel from Salonica to Semlin, Vienna, and Leipsig, are loaded with cotton, tobacco, carpets, and leather. It is a shame," continues the orthodox Hadji-khalfa, "that so many Jews are allowed to remain in Salonica; the excitement thus given to trade is apt to blind true believers." The fate of those vast and rich tracts bordering upon the Black Sea and its tributary rivers affords ample proof that the genius of Mahometanism is inimical to the interests of commerce and agriculture. The trade carried on by the ancients upon the

shores of the Euxine was very considerable, and gave life and wealth to several populous cities mentioned in history. In more modern times the Genoese formed establishments upon the coasts of the Black Sea, and they took the lead in navigating those waters down to the fifteenth century. At the taking of Constantinople, the Turks closed the Black Sea against the ships of Europe; and from that time its navigation was lost to the commerce of the world for a period of more than three centuries.

By the treaty of Kanardgi, in1774, the ships of Russia were allowed to pass the Bosphorus; other countries soon afterwards obtained similar privileges; some restrictions, which it was still attempted to keep up, were removed by the treaty between the Russians and Turks in 1829; and the Black Sea is now, for commercial purposes, as open as the Mediterranean. The importance of this vast extension of commercial navigation cannot, at present, be fully appreciated, owing to the unfortunate condition of the population which inhabits those regions. Some idea may, however, be formed of the extent and probable importance of those great rivers which fall into the Black Sea, by the following estimate furnished by Malte-Brun :—

If all the rivers in Europe be as . . .	1.000
Those which flow into the Black Sea . .	0.273
Those which flow into the Mediterranean. .	0.144

Of all the features belonging to the Turkish national character, there is none less favourable than that which relates to the neglect and contempt with which that people has invariably treated affairs of trade. Whether it be owing to that dogma of their creed which forbids the receiving interest for money, or to that other familiar text of the Koran, which says, “There is but one law, and that forbids all communication with infidels;” certain it is that such an example as a Turkish merchant transacting matters of commerce with a foreign trader was scarcely ever known in that country. This is an anomaly the more striking, when we refer to other countries, less advantageously situated, as, for instance, China, where trade has acquired an importance, and is conducted on a system the growth of ages of good government, and of a like period of patient industry in the people. Nothing but a tyrannical despotism, at once sanguinary and lawless, could have had the effect of repelling commerce from the superb harbour of Constantinople; but, alas! the thousand ships which might find secure anchorage there would seek in vain for the rich freights of silk, cotton, and wool which ought to await their coming: such is the character of its people and rulers, that no native capitalists have ever been emboldened to accumulate a store of merchandise to tempt the rapacity of the Sultan; and vessels which trade to Constantinople have frequently occasion to go to Salonica, Smyrna, or some other port for return cargoes.

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

themselves by substituting the eternal coffee, tobacco, and opium, and by other sensual indulgences.

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

Russia comprises one-half of Europe, one-third of Asia, and a portion of America; and includes within its bounds nearly sixty millions, or a sixteenth portion of the human race. Its territory stretches in length from the Black Sea to the confines of Upper Canada; and from the border of China to the Arctic Sea in width. The stupendous size of the Russian Empire has excited the wonder and alarm of timid writers, who forget "that it is an identity of language, habits and character, and not the soil or the name of a master, which constitutes a great and powerful nation." Ruling over eighty different nations or tribes, the autocrat of all the Russias claims the allegiance of people of every variety of race, tongue, and religion. Were it possible to transport to one common center of his empire the gay opera lounger of St. Petersburg, habited in the Parisian mode; the fierce Bashkir of the Ural Mountain, clad in rude armour, and armed with bow and arrows; the Crimean, with his camel, from the southern steppes; and the Esquimaux, who traverses with his dogs the frozen regions of the north—these fellow-subjects of one potentate would encounter each other with all the surprise and ignorance of individuals meeting from England, China, Peru, and New Holland; *nor would the time or expense incurred in the journey be greater in the latter than the former interview.* It must be obvious to every reflecting mind that vast deductions must be made from the written and statistical resources of a nation possessing no unison of religious or political feeling, when put in competition with other empires, identified in faith, language, and national characteristics. The popular mind has been, however, greatly misled by many writers on the Russian Empire, who have sought to impress their readers with the idea of the over whelming size of its territory, and who have at the same time willfully or negligently omitted to mention other facts, which, if taken in connection, serve to render that very magnitude of surface a source of weakness rather than power. We are furnished by Malte-Brun with some tables of the relative densities of the population of the European empires, which will help to illustrate our views upon this subject, and from which we give an extract:—

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

Now the same law applies to communities as to physics—in proportion as you condense you strengthen, and as you draw out you weaken bodies; and, according to this rule, the above table, which makes Prussia more than four times as closely peopled as Russia, would, bearing in mind the advantages of her denser population, give to the former power an equality of might with her unwieldy neighbour, which we have no doubt it quite consistent with the truth; whilst the same tabular test if applied

to Russia, France, and England, would assign much the greater share of power to the two latter nations; which experience has demonstrated to be the fact. Here, then, we have the means of exemplifying by a very simple appeal to figures (ever the best reasoning weapons) how the vastness of territory of the Russians is the cause of debility rather then of strength. It would be a trite illustration of a self-evident truism if we were to adduce as a proof of our argument the practice in military tactics. What general ever dreamed of scattering his troops by way of increasing their power? Bonaparte grained his terrible battles by manœuvring great masses of men in smaller limits than any preceding commanders.

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

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

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

St. Petersburg, with a population of . .	305,000
Moscow	190,000
Warsaw	117,000
Kasan	50,000
Kiew	40,000

whilst we find the remainder of the large places on the map of Russia to be only in size upon a par with the third-rate towns of England. That in a country of such vast extent, and comprising sixty millions of people, and where so few populous cities exist, the great mass of the inhabitants are living in poverty, ignorance, and barbarism, scarcely rising above a state of nature, must be apparent. Tribes of Cossacks and of Tartars, wandering over the low countries of Caucasia, own a formal allegiance to

Russia. Other hordes, dignified by the alarmist writers on the subject of Russian greatness with the title of *nations*—such as the Circassians, the Georgians, the Mingrelians, with more than thirty other tribes, some Christian, others Mahometan, or of a mixed creed, occupying the mountainous regions of the Caucasus—are wholly or partially subdued to the dominion of the Czar. These fierce tribes are addicted to all the rude habits of savages; they live by the chase, or the cultivation of a little millet; they commit barbarous outrages, and buy and sell each other for slaves—often disposing of their own children, brothers, and sisters to the Turks. Against these refractory and half-subdued neighbours the Russians are compelled to keep fortresses along the frontier.

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

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

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

If such be the true interests of Russia, it will be admitted, then, that the conquest of those extensive and almost depopulated regions now withering under the government

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

If we would from a fair estimate of the probable results of that event, we ought to glance, for a moment, at the conduct of the same people under somewhat similar circumstances in another quarter. The policy pursued by Russia on the Gulf of Finland (where St. Petersburg arose, like an exhalation from the marshes of the Neva), when those districts were wrested, by its founder, from the maniac Charles XII., would, we have a right to assume, be imitated by the same nation on the shores of the Bosphorus. Let us here pause to do homage to that noblest example of history, far surpassing the exploits of Alexander or Napoleon—that sublime act of devotion at the shrine of commerce and civilisation, offered by Peter the Great, who, to instruct his subjects in the science of navigation and the art of shipbuilding, voluntarily descended from a throne, where he was surrounded by the pomp and splendour of a great potentate, and became a menial workman in the dockyards of Saardam and Deptford! We vindicate not his crimes or his vices—the common attributes of the condition of society in which he lived; his cruelty was but the natural fruit of irresponsible power in savage life; and his acts of grossness and intemperance were regarded by the nation as honourable exploits, but the genius that enabled him to penetrate the thick clouds of prejudice and ignorance which enveloped his people, and to perceive, afar off, the power which civilisation and commerce confer upon nations, was the offspring of his own unaided spirit, and will ever be worthy of peculiar honour at the hands of the historian. Everybody knows under what trying disadvantages this metropolis, planted in the midst of unhealthy and barren marshes, and in a latitude that, by the ancients, was placed beyond the limits of civilisation, sprung from the hands of its founder, and stood forth the most wonderful phenomenon of the 18th century. At present, this capital, which contains upwards of 300,000 inhabitants, and is termed, from the splendour of its public buildings, a city of palaces, can boast of scientific bodies which are in correspondence with all the learned societies of Europe. The government has sent out circumnavigators, who have made discoveries in remote regions of the globe. St. Petersburg contains museums of art and literature; some of the first specimens of sculpture and painting are to be seen in its public halls; its public libraries contain twice as many volumes as those of London; and the best collection of Chinese, Japanese, and Mongol books are to be found on their shelves. All the decencies and even elegancies of life, observable in Paris or London, are found to prevail over this northern metropolis; and there is nothing in the streets (unless it be the costume of the people, necessary to meet the exigencies of the climate) to remind the eye of the traveller that he is not in one of the more western Christian capitals.

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

One of the greatest dangers apprehended (for we set out with promising to answer the popular objections to the aggrandisement of Russia in this quarter) is, from the injury which would be inflicted upon our trade; which trade, exclusively of that portion of our nominal exports to Turkey, which really goes to Persia, does not much exceed half a million yearly, an amount so contemptible when we recollect the population, magnitude, and natural fertility of that empire, that it might safely be predicted, under no possible form of government could it be diminished, But Russia is said, by the panegyrists of Turkey, to be an anti-commercial country. We have already seen that to Russian influence we are indebted for the liberation of the Black Sea from the thraldom in which it had been held by Turkish jealousy for three hundred years. If, however, we would judge of the probable conduct of that people after the conquest of Constantinople, we must appeal to the experience which they have given us of their

commercial policy at St. Petersburg. The first Dutch Merchant vessel (whose captain was welcomed with honours and loaded with presents by Peter the Great) entered that harbour in 1703; and at the present time fifteen hundred vessels clear out annually from the capital of Russia for all parts of the world. The internal navigation of this vast empire has been improved with a patience and perseverance, in the last century, which, bearing in mind the impediments of climate and soil, are deserving our astonishment and admiration, and which contrasts strangely with the supineness of that Mahometan people whose habits are, according to some writers, so favourable to trade, but in whose country not one furlong of canal or navigable stream, the labour of Turkish hands, has been produced in upwards of three hundred years! Three great lines of navigation, one of them 1,400 miles long, extend through Russia, by which the waters of the Baltic, the Caspian, and the Black Sea are brought into connection; and by which channels the provinces of the Volga, the plains of the Ukraine, and the forests and mines of Siberia, transmit their products to the markets of Moscow and St. Petersburg.? Much as may with truth be alleged against the lust for aggrandisement with which Russian counsels have been actuated, yet if we examine, we shall find that it is by the love of improvement—the security given by laws to life and property—but, above all, owing to the encouragement afforded to commerce—that this empire has, more than by conquest, been brought forth from her frozen regions, to hold a first rank among the nations of Europe.

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

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

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

1 to 5,000 roubles includes petty shopkeepers.

Besides these guilds for merchants, the porters of the large towns associate together in bodies, called *artels,* resembling, in some respects, the company of wine coopers in London, for the purpose of guaranteeing persons employing one of them from any loss or damage to his goods. Now, in a country, however far removed from a state of freedom and civilisation (*and we maintain that, in these respects, the condition of Russia is in arrear of all other Christian states*), where laws such as these exist, for encouraging industry, conferring privileges upon trades, and doing honour to the accumulation of capital—in that country prodigious strides have been already taken on the only true path to enlightenment and liberty. *On this path the Turks have disdained to advance a single step.* Here we have at one glance the distinctive characters of the Turkish and Russian, the Sclavonic and Mongolian races—the former unchanging and stationary, the latter progressive and imitative. The very stringent laws which Russia has passed against the importation of our fabrics, are

indications of the same variety of character; evincing a desire to rival us in mechanical industry: while the apathy with which the Turk sees every article of our manufactures enter his ports, without being stimulated to study the construction of a loom or spinning frame, is but another manifestation of his inferior structure of intellect.

To return, then, to the oft agitated question, as to the danger of our commerce consequent upon the conquest of Constantinople by Russia—are we not justified in assuming that our exports to Turkey would exceed half-a-million per annum, if that fertile region were possessed by a nation governed under laws for the fostering of trade, such as we have just described? Some persons argue, indeed, that although the productive industry of those countries would augment under such supposed circumstances, still, so great is the enmity of the Russians towards England, that we should be excluded from all participation in its increase. But how stands the case if we appeal to the policy of that people, as already experienced, and find that—notwithstanding that our own tariff at this time interposes a duty of 100 per cent. against the two staple articles of Russian produce, timber and corn—the amount of trade carried on between Great Britain and St. Petersburg is equal to that of the latter with all the rest of the world together; for of the 1,500 vessels clearing annually from that port, 750 are British? But it is contended that, if Russia were put into possession of the Turkish provinces, she would possess, within her own limits, such a command of all the natural products as might enable her to close the Hellespont against the world, and begin a Japanese system of commercial policy. To this we reply, that commerce cannot, in the present day, turn hermit. It will not answer for a people to try, in the words of Sheridan, to get "an atmosphere and a sun of its own." Nay, better still—no country can carry on great financial transactions except through the medium of England. We are told by Mr. Rothschild, in his evidence before the legislature, that London is the metropolis of the moneyed world; that no large commercial operations can possibly be carried on, but they must be, more or less, under the influence of this common centre of the financial system, round which the less affluent states, like the humbler orbs of the solar creation, revolve, and from whence they must be content to borrow lustre ad nourishment. Supposing, indeed, that Russia were in possession of Turkey, and should commence a system of non-intercourse (we are under the necessity of making these whimsical suppositions in order to reply to grounds of argument which are actually advanced every day by *grave* writers upon this question), could she carry on those extensive manufactures which some people predict, without deriving a supply of raw ingredients from other countries? It will suffice on this head if we observe, that to enable any one of our manufacturers to conduct the simplest branch of his mechanical and chemical industry, it is requisite that he be duly supplied with materials, the growth of every corner of the globe;—the commonest printed calico, worn by the poorest peasant's wife, is the united product of the four quarters of the earth; the cotton of America, the indigo of Asia, the gum of Africa, and the madder of Europe, must all be brought from those remote regions, and be made to combine with fifty other as apparently heterogeneous commodities, by ingenious arts and processes, the results of ten thousand philosophical experiments—and all to produce a rustic's gownpiece! Whilst such are the exigencies of manufacturing industry, binding us in abject dependence upon all the countries of the earth, may we not hope that freedom of commerce, and

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

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

we look into futurity, and speculate upon the probable career of one of these inventions, may we not with safety predict that the steam-engine—the perfecting of which belongs to our own age, and which even now is exerting an influence in the four quarters of the globe—will at no distant day produce moral and physical changes, all over the world, of a magnitude and permanency, surpassing the effects of all the wars and conquests which have convulsed mankind since the beginning of time! England owes to the peaceful exploits of Watt and Arkwright, and not to the deeds of Nelson and Wellington, her commerce, which now extends to every corner of the earth, and which casts into comparative obscurity, by the grandeur and extent of its operations, the peddling ventures of Tyre, Carthage, and Venice, confined within the limits of an inland sea.

If we were to trace, step by step, the opposite careers of aggrandisement, to which we can only thus hastily glance—of England, pursuing the march of improvement within the area of four of her counties, by exploring the recesses of her mines, by constructing canals, docks, and railroads, by her mechanical inventions, and by the patience and ingenuity of her manufacturers in adapting their fabrics to meet the varying wants and tastes of every habitable latitude of the earth's surface—and of Russia, adhering to her policy of territorial conquests, by despoiling of provinces, the empires of Turkey, Persia, and Sweden, by subjugating in unwilling bondage the natives of Georgia and Circassia, and by seizing with robber hand the soil of Poland—if we were to trace these opposite careers of aggrandisement, what should we find to be the relative consequences to these two empires? England, with her steam-engine and spinning frame, has erected the standard of improvement, around which every nation of the world has already prepared to rally; she has, by the magic of her machinery, united for ever two remote hemispheres in the bonds of peace, by placing Europe and America in absolute and inextricable dependence on each other; England's industrious classes, through the energy of their commercial enterprise, are at this moment influencing the civilisation of the whole world, by stimulating the labour, exciting the curiosity, and promoting the taste for refinement of barbarous communities, and, above all, by acquiring and teaching to surrounding nations the beneficent attachment to peace. Such are the moral effects of improvement in Britain, against which Russia can oppose comparatively little but the example of violence, to which humanity points as a beacon to warn society from evil. And if we refer to the physical effects, if—for the sake of convincing minds which do not recognise the far more potent moral influences—we descend to a comparison of mere brute forces, we find still greater superiority resulting from ingenuity and labour. The manufacturing districts alone—even the four counties of England, comprising Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, and Staffordshire—could, at any moment, by means of the wealth drawn, by the skill and industry of its population, from the natural resources of this comparative speck of territory, combat with success the whole Russian empire! Liverpool and Hull, with their navies, and Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham, with their capitals, could blockade, within the waters of Cronstadt, the entire Russian marine, and annihilate the commerce of St. Petersburg. And, further, if we suppose that, during the next thirty years, Russia, adhering to her system of territorial aggrandisement, were to swallow up, successively, her neighbours, Persia and Turkey—whilst England, which we have imagined to comprise only the area of four counties, still persevered in her present career of mechanical ingenuity, the relative

forces would, at the end of that time, yet be more greatly in favour of the peaceful and industrious empire. This mere speck on the ocean—without colonies, which are but the costly appendage? of an aristocratic government—without wars, which have ever been but another aristocratic mode of plundering and oppressing commerce—would, with only a few hundred square leagues of surface, by means of the wealth which, by her arts and industry, she had accumulated, be the arbitress of the destiny of Russia, with its millions of square miles of territory. Liverpool and Hull, with their thousands of vessels, would be in a condition to dictate laws to the possessor of one-fourth part of the surface of the globe; they would then be enabled to blockade Russia in the Sea of Marmora, as they could now do in the Gulf of Finland—to deny her the freedom of the seas—to deprive her proud nobles of every foreign commodity and luxury, and degrade them, amidst their thousands of serfs, to the barbarous state of their ancestors of the ancient Rousniacs—and to confine her Czar in his splendid prison of Constantinople!? If such are the miracles of the mind, such the superiority of improvement over the efforts of brute force and violence, is not the writer of these pages justified in calling the attention of his countrymen elsewhere,† to the progress of another people, whose rapid adoption of the discoveries of the age, whose mechanical skill and unrivalled industry in all the arts of life—as exemplified in their thousands of miles of railroads, their hundreds of steamboats, their ship-building, manufacturing, patent inventions—whose system of universal instruction, and, above all, whose inveterate attachment to peace—all proclaim America, by her competition in improvements, to be destined to affect more vitally than Russia, by her aggrandisement of territory, the future interests of Great Britain?

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

The great grievance, indeed, with us, is one which, of all things born in remembrance, displays quite as much naïveté in the character of the British people as is consistent with a moderate share of self-knowledge. The Russians are accused by *us* of being an aggrandising people! From the day of Pultowa down to the time of the passage eof the Balkan—say the orators, journalists, reviewers, and authors—the government of St. Petersburg has been incessantly addicted to picking and stealing. But, in the meantime, has England been idle? If, during the last century Russia has plundered Sweden, Poland, Turkey, and Persia, until she has grown unwieldy with the extent of her spoils, Great Britain has, in the same period, robbed—no, that would be an unpolite phrase—"*has enlarged the bounds of his Majesty's dominions*" at the expense of France, Holland, and Spain. It would be false logic and just as unsound morality to allow the Muscovite to justify his derelictions of honesty by an appeal to our example; but surely we, who are staggering under the embarrassing weight of our colonies, with one foot upon the rock of Gibraltar and the other at the Cape of Good Hope—with Canada, Australia, and the peninsula of India, forming, Cerberus-like, the heads of our monstrous empire—and with the hundred minor acquisitions scattered so widely over the earth's surface so as to present an unanswerable proof of our wholesome appetite for boundless dominion—surely *we* are not exactly the nation

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

Lord Dudley Stuart (whose zeal, we fear, without knowledge, upon the subject of Poland, and whose prejudice against Russia have led him to occupy so much of the public time uselessly upon the question before us), in the course of his long speech in the House of Commons (February 19th) upon introducing the subject of Russian encroachments, dwelt at considerable length upon the lust of aggrandisement by which he argued that the government of St. Petersburg was so peculiarly distinguished; and he brought forward, at considerable cost of labour, details of its successive conquests of territory during the last century. Where the human mind is swayed by any passion of however amiable a nature, or where the feelings are allowed to predominate over the reason, in investigating a subject which appeals only to the understanding, it will generally happen that the judgment is defective. We attribute to the well-known fervour of Lord Stuart's sentiments upon Russia and Poland, the circumstance that, during the fortnight which he must have employed in collecting the dates of the several treaties by which the former empire has wrested its possessions from neighbouring states, the thought never once occurred to him—a reflection which would have entered the head of almost any other man of sense, who sat down coolly to consider the subject—that, during the last hundred years, England has, for every square league of territory annexed to Russia, *by force, violence, or fraud, appropriated to herself three.* Such would have been the reflection which flashed across the mind of a statesman who sat down, *dispassionately,* to investigate the subject of Russian policy; and it must have prevented him by the consciousness of the egotism and arrogance—nay, the downright effrontery? of such a course—from bringing an accusation against another people which recoils with threefold† criminality upon ourselves. Nor, if we were to enter upon a comparison of the cases, should we find that the *means* whereby Great Britain has augmented her possessions, are a whit less reprehensible than those which have been resorted to by the northern power for a similar purpose. If the English writer calls down indignation upon the conquerors of the Ukraine, Finland, and the Crimea, may not Russian historians conjure up equally painful reminiscences upon the subjects of Gibraltar, the Cape, and Hindostan? Every one conversant with the history of the last century will remember that England has, during almost all that period, maintained an ascendancy at sea; and colonies, which were in times past regarded as the chief source of our wealth and power, being pretty generally the fruits of every succeeding war, the nation fell into a

passion for conquest, under the delusive impression that those distant dependencies were, in spite of the debt contracted in seizing them, profitable acquisitions to the mother country. Hence the British Government was always eager for hostilities the moment an excuse presented itself with one of the maritime continental states possessing colonies; and of the several conflicts in which we have been involved since the peace of Ryswick, at least three out of four have been consequent upon declarations of war made by England.? Russia, on the contrary, has been nearly surrounded by the territory of barbarous nations, one of which? —*by the very nature of its institutions warlike and aggressive*—was, up to the middle of the last century, prompted by a consciousness of strength, and, since then, by a haughty ignorance of its degeneracy, to court hostilities with its neighbours; and the consequence of this and other causes is, that, in the majority of cases, where Russia has been engaged in conflicts with her neighbours, she will be found to have had a war of self-defence for her justification. If such are the facts—if England has, for the sake of the spoil which would accrue to her superiority of naval strength, provoked war, with all its horrors, from weak and unwilling enemies, whilst Russia, on the contrary, with ill-defined boundaries, has been called upon to repel the attacks of fierce and lawless nations—surely, we must admit, unless pitiably blind by national vanity, that the gain (if such there be) resulting from these contentions, is not less unholy in the former than the latter case; and that the title by which the sovereign of St. Petersburg holds his conquered possessions is just as good, at least, as that by which the government of St. James's asserts the right to ours. In the case of Poland, to which we shall again have to recur by and by, there was, indeed, a better title than that of the sword, but which, amidst the clamour of fine sentiments, palmed by philanthropic authors and speakers upon the much abused public mind about Russian aggression in that quarter, has never, we believe, been mentioned by any orator, reviewer, or newspaper writer of the present day. The "Republic of Poland" (we quote the words of Malte-Brun) "had been chiefly composed of provinces wrested from Russia, or from the Great Dukes of Galitch, Vladimir, Volynski, Polotzk, and particularly Kiow by Boleslas the Victorious, Casimir the Great, Kings of Poland, and by Gedimir, Great Duke of Lithuania. Thus the nobles were the only persons interested in the defence of provinces whose inhabitants were estranged from the Poles, although they had remained under their government from the time of the conquest. All the peasants of Podolia and Volhynia were Rousniacs, or Little Russians, ignorant of the language or customs of Poland, which may partly account for the success of the Russians in their invasions of the Polish Republic. The Poles, who were persecuted by intolerant Catholic priests, who disregarded the constitutions of the Polish Diet, abandoned their lords without reluctance, and received willingly their countrymen, the Russian soldiers, who spoke the same dialect as themselves. The division of Poland was, on the part of Russia, not so much a lawless invasion as an act of reprisal on former invaders. Had this leading historical fact been explained in the Russian manifesto, which was published in 1772, so much obloquy might not have been attached to the conduct of that people."

Leaving, however, the question of title—which, whatever may be the conflicting opinions of moralists and legists, is, in the case of national tenures, usually decided according to the *power* of the possessor to hold in fee—we shall be next reminded of the great benefits which British conquests have conferred upon remote and uncivilised

nations, particularly in the example of India; and we shall be called upon to show in what manner Russia has compensated for her violent seizures of independent territory, by any similar amelioration of the condition of its people. Before doing so, we shall premise that we do not offer it as a justification of the policy of Russia. If, by chance, the plunderer makes good use of his spoil, that is not a vindication of robbery; and because the serf of Poland, the savage of Georgia, and the ryot of Bengal, enjoy better laws under the sway of Russia and Great Britain, than they formerly possessed beneath their own governments—to argue that, therefore, these two powers stand morally justified in having subjugated, with fire and sword, those three less civilised states, would be to contend that America, instead of contenting herself with imparting improvements to the unenlightened communities of Europe, by the peaceful but irresistible means of her high example, is warranted in invading Naples or Spain, for the purpose of rescuing their people from the thraldom of monarchy, or marching to Rome, and in place of the Pope, installing a President in the palace of the Vatican!? It is, then, with no view to the justification of war and violence, but solely for the purpose of answering, by a few facts of unquestionable authenticity, those spurious appeals to our sympathies, based upon the false assumption of Russian aggrandisement, being but another term for the spread of barbarism and the extinction of freedom and civilisation, that we glance at the proofs which are afforded in every direction of the vast moral, political, and commercial advantages that have been bestowed upon the countries annexed by conquest to that empire

The writers who have attempted to lead public opinion upon the subject, have not scrupled to claim the interposition of our government with Russia, for the purpose of restoring to *freedom* and *independence* those Caucasian tribes to which we have before alluded, as having fallen under the partial dominion of Russia. Their previous state of freedom may be appreciated, when we recollect that, within our own time, a fierce war was waged between the most powerful of these nations? and the Turks, in consequence of their having refused to continue to supply the harems of the latter with a customary annual tribute of the handsomest of their daughters; offering, however, at the same time, in lieu, a yearly contribution in money. We have already alluded to the emancipating influence of Russian intervention over the commerce of the Black Sea, the only channel by which the civilising intercourse with commercial nations can extend to these unenlightened regions; and we have been told, by the very highest authority,† that their trade, agriculture, and social improvement, already attest the beneficent effects of this improved policy. The following extract from a work‡ of great and deserved reputation, gives the most recent information upon the countries under consideration; and it conveys, perhaps, all that could be said upon the effects of Russian aggrandisement in these quarters: — “The southern declivity of these mountains is highly fertile, abounding in forests and fountains, orchards, vineyards, corn fields, and pastures in rich variety. Grapes, chestnuts, figs, &c., grow spontaneously in these countries; as well as grain of every description—rice, cotton, hemp, &c. But the inhabitants are barbarous and indolent. They consist of mountain tribes, remarkably ferocious, whose delight is in war, and with whom robbery is a hereditary trade; and their practice is to descend from their fastnesses and to sweep everything away from the neighbouring plains—not only grain and cattle, but men, women, and children, who are carried into captivity. The names of the different tribes are, the Georgians, Abassians, Lesghians, Ossetes, Circassians, Taschkents, Khists,

Ingooshes, Charabulaks, Tartars, Armenians, Jews, and in some parts wandering Arabs. They are mostly barbarous in their habits, and idolatrous in their religion, worshipping stars, mountains, rocks, and trees. There are among them Greek and Armenian Christians, Mahometans, and Jews. Several of the tribes, particularly the Circassians and Georgians, are accounted the handsomest people in the world; and the females are much sought after by the eastern monarchs to be immured in their harems. The inhabitants amount to about 900,000, who are partly ruled by petty sovereigns, and partly by their seniors. The most famous are the Lesghians, who inhabit the eastern regions, and, living by plunder, are the terror of the Armenians, Persians, Turks, and Georgians. Their sole occupation is war, and their services can at any time be purchased by every prince in the neighbourhood, for a supply of provisions and a few silver roubles. *Since the extension of the Russian empire in this quarter, many of these mountain tribes have been restrained in their predatory habits. Under the iron rule of that powerful State, they have been taught to tremble and obey; military posts have been dispersed over the country, fortresses have been erected, towns have arisen, and commerce and agriculture begin slowly to supplant the barbarous pursuits of war and plunder, in which these mountain tribes have been hitherto engaged.*? But the work of civilisation in these wild regions is still slow; it is difficult to reclaim the people from their long-settled habits of violence and disorder; and it would not be safe for any traveller to pass alone through these countries, where he would be exposed to robbery and murder."

Another ground of ceaseless jealousy, on the part of our philo-Turkish and Russo-mania writers, has been discovered in the recent intervention of the Russian diplomatists in the affairs of Wallachia and Moldavia. The condition of these two Christian provinces, situated on the right bank of the Danube, and so frequently the scenes of desolating wars between Turkey and her neighbours, has been perhaps more pitiably deplorable than the lot of any other portion of this misgoverned empire. The hospodars of governors of Moldavia and Wallachia were changed every year at the will of the Sultan, and each brought a fresh retinue of greedy dependants, armed with absolute power, to prey upon the defenceless inhabitants. These appointments, as is the case now with every pachalick, were openly sold at Constantinople to the highest bidder; and the hospodars were left to recover from their subjects the price of the purchase, to pay an annual tribute to the Porte, which was usually levied in kind, giving scope for the most arbitrary exactions; and, besides, appease the favourites at court, who might otherwise intrigue against them. Need we be surprised that, under such a state of things, the population decreased, agriculture was neglected, and commerce and the arts of civilised existence were unknown in the finest countries of the world? Not more than one-sixth? part of the land of Wallachia is at present cultivated; and Mr. Wilkinson, the late English consul, estimated that, without any extraordinary exertion, the existing population of Wallachia and Moldavia might, if property were secured, raise twice the quantity of corn and double the number of cattle now produced in those provinces. The treaty of 1829, between Russia and Turkey, stipulates that the hospodars shall be elected for life, and that no tribute in kind shall be levied; it also engages that a quarantine shall be placed on the Danube frontier, thus separating these provinces from the rest of Turkey. This case of intervention is appealed to as a proof of Russian ambition; and Lord Stuart, in the course of his speech before alluded to, complains that, by this policy, its power is

increased in those quarters. Admitting that Russia interferes in behalf of those unhappy countries with no loftier aim than the augmentation of her influence, and that the result will be the separation of the Christian provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia from the rest of the Turkish territory—nay, admitting that this should prove inimical to the interests of England (though the supposition is absurd enough, since what-ever tends to advance the civilisation and augment the wealth of any part of the world must be beneficial in the end to us who are the greatest commercial and manufacturing people) —still the English nation would, we sincerely hope, feel a disinterested gratitude to the power which, by its merciful interposition, has rescued this suffering Christian community from the cruel, remorseless, and harassing grasp of its Mahometan oppressors.

Probably it will not be deemed necessary that we should trace the effects of Russian Government over the territories torn at different epochs from the Persian empire: if, however, we did not feel warranted in assuming that even those of our intelligent readers, who may be the most inimical to the power of the Czar, will readily admit the superiority of the organised despotism of St. Petersburg over the anarchic tyranny of Teheran, we should be prepared to afford proofs, from the works of travellers, themselves hostile to Russian interests, of the rapid ameliorations that have succeeded to the extension of this colossal empire in those regions. Still less shall we be called upon to pause to point out the benefits that must ensue from the annexation of the Crimea to the dominions of the autocrat. Those wandering tribes of Crim Tartars, who exchanged, for the service of the Empress Catherine, the barbarous government of the descendants of Genghis Khan, and who received, as the first-fruits of a Christian administration, the freedom of the commerce of the world, by the opening of the navigation of the Black Sea, which immediately succeed to the encroachments of Russia in that quarter, will gradually but, certainly, acquire the taste for trade; and, as population increases and towns arise, they will abandon, of necessity, their migratory habits, and become the denizens of civilised society

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

POLAND.

CHAPTER II

Poland, Russia, And England.

The foregoing statements, with reference to portions of the Russian acquisitions, founded upon unquestionable authority, are calculated to awaken some doubts as to the genuineness of those writings and speeches, upon the faith of which we are called

upon to subscribe to the orthodox belief in the *barbarising* tendency of all the encroachments of that country; but these facts are unimportant, when we next have to refer to another of its conquests, and to bring before our readers Poland, upon which has been lavished more false sentiment, deluded sympathy, and amiable ignorance, than on any other subject of the present age. This is a topic, however, upon which it behoves us to enter with circumspection, since we shall have not only to encounter the prepossessions of the ardent and sincere devotee, but also to meet the uncandid weapons of bigotry and cant. Let us, therefore, as the only sure defence at all times against such antagonists, clothe our arguments from the armoury of reason in the panoply of truth. We will, moreover, reiterate, *for we will not be misunderstood,* that it is no part of our purpose to attempt to justify the conduct of the partitioning powers towards the Poles. On the contrary, we will join in the verdict of murder, robbery, treason, perjury, and baseness, which every free nation and all honest men must award to Russia, Prussia, and Austria, for their undissembled and unmitigated wickedness on that occasion; nay, we will go further, and admit that all the infamy with which Burke, Sheridan, and Fox laboured, by the force of eloquent genius, to overwhelm the emissaries of British violence in India, was justly earned, at the very same period, by the minions of Russian despotism in Poland. But our question is, not the conduct of the conquerors, but the present, as compared with the former condition of the conquered; the first is but an abstract and barren subject for the disquisition of the moralist; the latter appeals to our sympathies, because it is pregnant with the destinies of millions of our fellow creatures. Of how trifling consequence it must be to the practical minded and humane people of Great Britain, or to the world at large, whether Poland be governed by a king of this dynasty or of that—whether he be lineally descended from Boleslas the Great, or of the line of the Jagellons—contrasted with the importance of the inquiries as to the social and political condition of its people—whether they be as well or worse governed, clothed, fed, and lodged, in the present day as compared with any former period—whether the mass of the people be elevated in the scale of moral and religious beings—whether the country enjoys a smaller or larger amount of the blessings of peace; or whether the laws for the protection of life and property are more or less justly administered! These are the all-important inquiries about which we busy ourselves: and it is to cheat us of our stores of philanthropy, by an appeal to the sympathy with which we regard those vital interests of a whole people, that the declaimers and writers upon the subject, invariably appeal to us in behalf of the oppressed and enslaved *Polish nation;* carefully obscuring, amidst the cloud of epithets about "ancient freedom," national independence, "glorious republic," and such like, the fact that, previously to the dismemberment, the term *nation* implied only the nobles—that, down to the partition of their territory, about nineteen out of every twenty of the inhabitants were slaves, possessing no rights, civil or political—that about one in every twenty was a nobleman—and that this body of nobles formed the very worst aristocracy of ancient or modern times; putting up and pulling down their kings at pleasure; passing selfish laws, which gave them the power of life and death over their serfs, whom they sold and bought like dogs or horses; usurping to each of themselves the privileges of a petty sovereign, and denying to all besides the meanest rights of human beings; and scorning all pursuits as degrading, except that of the sword, they engaged in incessant wars with neighbouring states, or they plunged their own country into all the horrors of anarchy, for the purpose of giving employment to themselves and their dependants.

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

To form a correct estimate of the former condition of this country, it is not necessary to go back beyond the middle of the sixteenth century, previously to which the Poles, in common with the other northern states, were barbarians; and, if they attained to power, and exhibited some traits of rude splendour in their court and capital, they were merely results of incessant wars, which, of course, plunged the great mass of the people in deeper misery and degradation. At this early period of their country, we find them the most restless and warlike of the northern nations; and the Poles, who are now viewed only as a suffering and injured people, were, during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, a most formidable and aggressive enemy to the neighbouring empires. They ravaged successively Russia, Prussia, Lithuania, Bohemia, and Hungary, and were, in turn, invaded by the Turks, Tartars, and Russians. They knew no other employment than that of the sword. War, devastation, and bloodshed were the only fashionable occupations for the nobility, whilst the peasants reaped the fruits of famine and slaughter. Yet the historian, whose volumes, perhaps, adorn the shelves of our colleges, and are deposited in the hands of the rising generation, points to the spectacle of intellectual and moral creatures grovelling in the abuse of a brute instinct shared equally by the shark and the tiger, and, pausing over the hideous annals of human slaughter, ejaculates—Glory!

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

The mode of electing their kings, after the promulgation of this new constitution, was characteristic of the nation. About 150,000 to 200,000 nobles, being the electors,

assembled together in a large plain. Those who possessed horses and arms were mounted and arranged in battle array in the front, whilst such as were poor, and consequently came on foot, and without regular arms, placed themselves, with scythes or clubs in their hands, in the rear rank. Our readers will readily believe that such an assembly as this, composed of warriors accustomed to violence, and with their arms at hand, would form a dangerous deliberative body, and unless actuated by the loftiest feelings of patriotism and virtue, it would degenerate into two armies of sanguinary combatants. But what could we expect from these elections when we know that from the death of Sigismund down to the time of the partition, Poland became one universal scene of corruption, faction, and confusion? The members of the diet—the nobles who had usurped the power of electing their king—were ready to sell themselves to the best bidder at the courts of Vienna, France, Saxony, Sweden, or Brandenburg; nay, in the words of the learned and philosophical historian,? "A polish royal election was henceforth nothing more than a double auction of the throne, partly in secret for the benefit of the voters, partly in public for the benefit of the state;" or, in words of the same authority, when alluding elsewhere to the change in the constitution at the death of Sigismund—"A volcano, in manner, burst forth in the midst of Europe, whose eruptions at almost every change of government threatened in turn every country far and near. Of the eleven kings of Poland, from Henry of Valois, 1572, to Stanislaus, 1764, hardly three were unanimously elected: foreign influence, and a wild spirit of faction, continued from first to last."? In lamentable truth, almost every election became the signal for a civil war, which usually lasted during the greater portion of the next reign; and this, for the whole period from 1572 down to 1772, when the first partition was perpetrated by the three neighbouring powers, Poland was the constant scene of anarchy and its attendant miseries—fire, bloodshed, and famine. There is nothing in the history of the world comparable for confusion, suffering, and wickedness to the condition of this unhappy kingdom during these two centuries. "War, even in its mildest form, is a perpetual violation of every principle of religion and humanity."† But foreign war is carried on with recognized laws for the mitigation of its evils, and under which the rights of person and property are, excepting in well understood cases, secured to the peaceable portions of communities. Should an invasion or a conquest take place, the army of the invader or conqueror is compelled, for self-defence, to preserve discipline, and to congregate as much as possible round one center, by which the enemy's country is preserved from the licentiousness of the victorious soldiers, and the more remote provinces almost entirely escape the miseries of war. Besides, it becomes immediately the policy and the interest of the victor to restore the newly acquired territory to its former condition of quietness and prosperity, and with this view laws for the protection of the inhabitants are generally enforced. But civil war, or intestine war, as we prefer to call it, allows of none of these palliations. It spreads throughout the entire length and breadth of a country, and devastates alike every section of the community, leaving no spot where the olive of peace may flourish and afford shelter to the innocent, and sparing no city which shall serve for a refuge to the timid. It desolates villages and farms, as well as towns and capitals, carries the spirit of deadly animosity into every relation of life, setting neighbours against neighbours, servants against masters, and converting friends into foes. Nay, it penetrates into the scared precincts of domestic life, and often infuses a Cain-like hatred into the hearts of brethren of the same womb. Such is intestine war, which owns no law and permits no neutrality. And, in the midst

of this description of warfare, Poland groaned and bled, with scarcely the slightest intermission, from 1572 down to 1772.

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

The intrigues of Russia did not at first promote the growth of this terrible disorder, as might be objected by some of our readers. That power was itself struggling against powerful enemies, and contending with the difficulties of internal reforms, down to within half a century of the period when the partition of Poland took place. Those wise reforms† that gave to Russia, from the hands of Peter the Great, the seeds of a power which has since grown to such greatness, and which, if adopted by Poland, would have in all probability conducted her to a similar state of prosperity, were absolutely rejected by the profligate nobles, because they must necessarily have involved some amelioration of the fate of the people.

The picture we have drawn of Polish wickedness and corruption is not too highly coloured, or if so, it is not by us: we have given the names and works of the authors from whom we derive our information, and we appeal to them as the highest authorities in the literature of Europe. What have been the retributive consequences to empires, in all ages, of such a career of internal contention and profligacy as we have just described? What was the just fate of Persia, Greece, and Rome, after they had filled up the measure of their degeneracy? When the oak is decayed at its heart the tree yields to the wind and falls prostrate to the earth; a ship that is rotten no longer resists the pressure of surrounding water, and she disappears from the face of the ocean; if, in constructing a bridge, the foundation of the piers be despised and neglected, the entire edifice, superstructure and all, is overwhelmed in the stream.

And knowing that the immutable laws of nature govern equally the destines of animated existence, shall we marvel to find that an empire which had for two hundred years been decaying to its very center, whilst its boundaries presented no bulwark against the influx of ranging enemies, which had all that time exhibited the nobility wallowing in licentiousness, and the labouring population, that ought to be the foundation and support of a country, insolently despised and trampled under foot? ought we to wonder that such an empire at length reaped the sad harvest of its iniquities, and was prostrated or swallowed up by the force of surrounding nations? The fate of Poland was but a triumph of justice, without which its history would have conveyed no moral for the benefit of posterity. The annals of the world do not exhibit an example of a great nation—such, for instance, as Prussia, united, well governed, rising in intelligence, morals, and religion, and advancing in wealth and civilization—falling beneath the destroying hand of a conqueror. Such a catastrophe is reserved for the chastisement of the self-abandoned, depraved, disorganized, ignorant, and irreligious communities, and their anarchical governments—for Babylon and Persepolis—for Poland and Turkey! But though the punishment was a righteous infliction we need not vindicate the executioners. The murderer's sentence is just; but we are not therefore bound to tolerate the hangman.

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

Our business, however, lies with that portion of the (*miscallea*) Republic which fell to the share of Russia; and we shall, in the first place, allude to the present state of that section of the inhabitants which, from being by far the most numerous, ought, upon the soundest principle of justice, to attract the primary notice of the inquirer. Slavery no more exists in Poland; the peasant that tills the soil no longer ranks on a level with the oxen that draw his plough; he can neither be murdered nor maimed at the caprice of an insolent owner, but is as safe in life and limb, under the present laws of Poland, as are the labourers of Sussex or Kent. The modern husbandman is not restricted to mere personal freedom; he enjoys the right to possess property of all kinds—not even excepting land,? against which the nobles of ancient *republican* Poland opposed insuperable prohibitions. In a word, the peasantry of Poland now possess the control over their own persons and fortunes, and are at liberty to pursue happiness? according to their own free will and pleasure; which, after all that can be said for one Government in preference to another, is nearly the amount of freedom that can be *felt* to be possessed by the great mass of any nation. Let it not be supposed that we wish to

convey the impression that the labouring classes of the country under notice are elevated to an equality with the mechanics of husbandmen of England and America; from the very nature of circumstances, and from no one more than our iniquitous corn-laws—which have often starved our artisans in the midst of idle looms, and, at the same time, doomed the ploughman of Poland to nakedness or sheep-skins, whilst surrounded by granaries bursting with the best corn in the world, such an equality is, in our day, impossible. But to show, in as few words as possible, what were the natural fruits, after fifteen years of peace and comparative good government, to a country that had, for two centuries, witnessed only the growth of discord, insecurity, and famine, let us quote from a volume† which bears intrinsic evidence of containing an authentic and candid compendium of the history of Poland:—

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

But it will very naturally and properly be inquired—"How did it happen that the nation revolted against Russia in 1830, if the people enjoyed so much benefit from the connection with that empire?" We have thus far spoken only of the condition of the mass of the people; to answer this objection, it will be necessary to refer to another class, whose interests had always been opposed to the happiness and liberty of the population at large. From the moment when Poland was constituted a kingdom, at the treaty of Vienna, and made an appendage to the Russian crown, the nobles never ceased to sigh for their ancient liberty (*license*) of electing a king—*i.e.* of periodically selling themselves, by a "double auction," as Heeren asserts, to the highest bidder. They sighed also for those times when there was no law to protect the weak from their outrages, and when a reign of violence and disorder gave them perpetual occasions of making war upon each other, and of ravaging the unprotected provinces. The laws which were passed for the defence of the lives and properties of the peasants were regarded with jealousy? by the nobles, who viewed such enactments in the light of encroachments upon their privileges; and they looked back to the days when they alone constituted the *nation,* and all besides were but as the brutes of the field. It was not merely indirectly, however, that the privileges of the aristocracy were curtailed, one of the first acts of the Emperor Alexander being to restrict the use of titles to the possessors of property in that country where, *previously, the rank had descended to*

every son,†*and continued to all their successors,* thus multiplying titles indefinitely, and adding a thousandfold to the mischiefs of conferring absolute power on a particular class, by suffering it to be frequently possessed by desperadoes or paupers. But the cause that, more than all others, had contributed to render the nobles discontented, was the long-protracted peace, which deprived them of their accustomed occupation and revenue; and which, however much it contributed to the happiness of the industrious agriculturists and traders, brought nothing but ruin and discontent to a body that retained too much of the pride and turbulence of character inherited from their warlike ancestors, to dream of descending to pursuits of a commercial or peaceful character. To present a clear view of the state of this *order* of society in Poland, we will extract a few lines upon the subject from the work of Mr.Jacob, before quoted. It will place his authority beyond question, if we remind our readers that he is the gentleman who was selected, by a Parliamentary Committee, to make a journey through the northern portions of Europe, for the purpose of making to his employers a report of the corn trade of those regions. This individual—who was, of course, not only selected for his efficient powers of observation, but also for his character for honour and fidelity—in speaking, incidentally, of the state of society of Russian Poland, in his official report, makes this observation upon the Polish gentry:—"The Polish gentry are too proud to follow any course but the military career; and the Government, by its large standing army, encourages the feeling, though the pay is scarcely sufficient to supply the officers with their expensive uniforms. Whatever difficulties may present themselves to the placing out young men of good family, none have had recourse to commerce; and if they had, such would be treated by others as having lost their caste, and descended to a lower rank of society. The consequence is, that all the trade and manufactures of the country are in the hands of the Germans, or the Jews. The former seek to return home with the fortunes they make—the latter do not possess the full rights of citizenship and cannot be expected to take great interest in the prosperity of the country."

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

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

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

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

In examining the various grounds upon which those who discuss the subject take up their hostile attitudes towards the Russian nation, we have— with infinite surprise and a deep conviction of the truth that a century of aristocratic government and consequent foreign interference have impregnated all classes with the haughty and

arrogant spirit of their rulers—discovered that Great Britain has been argued into a warlike disposition against that remote empire, without one assignable motive or grievance which could have even engendered a tone of resentment from our public writers and speakers, had they been actuated only by the principles of common sense, modest forbearance, and a regard for the benefit of the people. We have sought in vain for cases of insult to *our* flag; for an example of spoliation committed upon *English* merchants; for the appearance of hostile fleets in British waters threatening our shores; for the denial of redress for injuries inflicted; for the refusal to liquidate some just debt. We have sought for such wrongs as these at the hands of the Russian Government to justify an appeal to menaces and a call for armaments from our Russo-maniac orators and writers; but we find only charges of spoliation of Turkish territory, assaults upon Poland, intrigues with Persia, designs upon Sweden, and conquests in Georgia—affairs with which we have less interest in embroiling ourselves than we have with the struggle now raging in the province of Texas between the Americans and Mexicans.

If we refer to the speech of Lord Dudley Stuart, before alluded to (which is a compendium of all the accusations, suppositions, fears, dangers, and suspicions of which the subject is susceptible), we shall find an alarming picture given of the future growth of Russia dominion. Turkey, it seems, is to be only the germ of an empire which shall extend not merely from "Indus to the Pole," but throw forth its arms over Europe and Asia, and embrace every people and nation between the Bay of Bengal and the English Channel! Turkey once possessed, and the devouring process begins. Austria and all Italy are to be swallowed up at a meal, Greece and the Ionian Islands serving for side-dishes. Spain and Portugal follow as a dessert for this Dando of Constantinople; and Louis Philippe and his empire are washed down afterwards with Bordeaux and Champagne. Prussia and the smaller German States, having wisely formed themselves into a trades union of some thirty or forty millions, might be supposed by some persons to be secure from this tyrannical master. Nothing of the kind! His lordship has discovered that this is a mere trick of Russia for making them a richer prey. The German goose is only penned in this Prussian league that it may fatten and be worthier of the fate that awaits it. When Michaelmas arrives it will be served up in due state to the Russian eagle. Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland are to be but as *entremets* for this national repast. And Persia, Egypt, Arabia, and India, in one large bouquet, will furnish the exotics to perfume and adorn this banquet of empires!? One trifling matter, however, Lord Stuart altogether forgets to take into account: he omits to say how all the viands shall be paid for; in other words, in what way the Russian Chancellor of the Exchequer will make good his budget when called upon to clothe, feed, and pay armies to conquer a dozen powerful nations, some of them richer than the conqueror; to meet the expenses of *material* to furnish the commissariat, hire baggage wagons, charter transports, and to cover the thousand other outgoings, including even the frauds and impositions incidental to a state of warfare. His lordship forgets this, and in doing so calls to our recollection a dream—our readers have probably experienced something of the kind—in which we found ourselves buoyed up in the air borne along we could not tell how. It was not walking, flying, or swimming; yet on we glided through space, quite independent of all the laws of nature—hills disappearing, rivers drying up, seas changing into terra firma, trees, walls, and castles vanishing at our approach; despising all the usual

impediments of sublunary travelling, caring no more for inns than if we had been a shooting star, and regardless, like Halley's comet, of a change of horses. On we went, with no luggage to look after, or hotel bills to settle, or postillions to pay, till, alas! We awoke and discovered that we were only a mortal biped, trammelled by the law of gravitation, and enslaved by the rules of political economy, privileged but to travel along coarse, dirty roads, and compelled before starting, not only to calculate the cost of the journey, but to put the money in our purse for coaches, steamboats, turnpike gates, and inns, as well as their waiters, boots, porters, and chambermaids, besides a round sum to cover extortions, if we would keep our temper. Now, Lord Stuart's case was precisely similar to ours, with the exception that he did not wake to his vision of supernatural locomotion. But to be serious. To those who resort, as a crowning bugbear, to the threats of universal sovereignty as the ultimate aim of the Russian Government, we have already in some degree replied by showing the weakness of that empire, as exemplified in its uncultivated surface, in the scattered position of its uncivilized people— their poverty, ignorance, and diversified character— and in the circumstance of its being behind Great Britain and other countries in the march of improvement and discovery.

But we can appeal to other facts, and to experience, to disprove the exaggerated views that are put forth respecting the power of Russia; and in no instance were her weakness and inability to concentrate and support an army more fully illustrated than at the invasion of her territory by Bonaparte. At the battle of Borodino—which was the first great affair that took place between the French and the forces of the Czar—we find, notwithstanding the alarm of invasion had been trumpeted through Europe eighteen months previously, that the number of combatants brought, on that bloody day, to the defence of their native soil, only amounted to 120,000 men, of whom a large portion were without uniforms or arms, excepting scythes or other similar weapons. Now, to illustrate the very superior strength of a nation whose inhabitants are at once concentrated and rich, let us suppose so absurd a circumstance as that Russia, after eighteen months of open preparation and threatening, were to march an army of nearly half a million of soldiers into England; should we be found, after so ample a warning, opposing only 120,000 fighting men, and that number only half armed and clothed, in defence of our homes, our wives and daughters, in the first battle-field? London alone could furnish and equip such an army, in so great a cause, within six months! Nor did the deficiency of numbers arise from want of patriotism. On the contrary, the Russians fought with unequalled ardour and bravery;? and the only reason that Napoleon's troops were not on that occasion overwhelmed by ten times their force, is, that the Government had not money to pay for transporting its subjects from remote provinces to the scene of action, or funds to provide arms and support them when collected together.

It has been well observed by a very sound authority,† that China affords the best answer to those who argue that Russia meditates hostile views towards our Indian possessions. China is separated from Russia by an imaginary boundary only; and that country is universally supposed to contain a vast deposit of riches, well worthy of the spoiler's notice. Besides, it has not enjoyed the "*benefit*" of being civilized by English or other Christian conquerors—an additional reasons for expecting to find a wealthy pagan community, waiting, like unwrought mines, the labours of some Russian

Warren Hastings. Why, then, does not the Czar invade and Chinese empire,? which is his next neighbour, and contains an unravaged soil, rather than contemplate, as the alarmist writers and speakers predict he does, marching three thousand miles over regions of burning deserts and ranges of snowy mountains, to Hindostan, *where he would find that Clive and Wellesley had preceded him?* The reason for such forbearance is, at the present day, as it was when that splendid but immoral genius, Catherine, proposed to undertake this very expedition—*that there was not in Russia sufficient available wealth to transport across its own surface an army large enough to subjugate the Chinese.* How, then, will they reach India through enemies 'territories, and in spite of the power and influence of England? To warrant the attempt, the Czar ought to possess, at least, the command of one hundred millions sterling. Last year, he required but one million and a quarter,† for which he was compelled to solicit the aid of the capitalists of western Europe, and found great difficulty, even after pledges of peace and protestations of good behaviour, in obtaining the necessary loan!

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

But Poland is the best and latest witness of the weakness and poverty of Russia. Notwithstanding that the insurrection in that country broke out at a moment when the preparations were not matured (owing to the rashness of the military youths of Warsaw), and although the natives possessed no strong places, as in Belgium, and their territory is destitute of mountain fastnesses, such as are found in Spain, Scotland, or Switzerland, yet a mere handful of insurgents baffled the whole power of the Czar for twelve months, several times defeating his ill-equipped armies with great

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

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

But supposing that Russia were to seize the first moment of her occupancy of Turkey to begin to build ships of war, and by the aid of Greek sailors to man a fleet Constantinople; and presuming, moreover, that having obtained violent possession of Norway, she were to employ similar means for erecting a naval power in the Baltic: let us then call the attention of our readers to the defenceless and dependent position in which her territory would be placed, owing to the peculiar geographical features of those quarters of the globe. The sole outlet for the waters of the Sea of Marmora and the Black Sea is by the canal of the Dardanelles, called the Hellespont; a passage whose navigable width scarcely exceeds two thousand yards for a length of thirty miles. To blockade the entrance of this Strait would require that a couple of ships of

the line, a frigate, and a steamer, should be stationed at its mouth, and with no larger force than this might the egress of any vessel be prevented from the interior seas; and not only so, but as these four men-of-war would constitute, in the eyes of all foreign powers, and according to the law of nations, a sufficient blockade, they would deprive Constantinople and the whole Turkish empire of all foreign trade, besides shutting out from the commerce of the Mediterranean Sea, and the rest of the world, the entire coast of the Euxine, and its thousands of miles of tributary rivers. If we now transfer our attention to the northern portions of the Russian empire, we shall find that the passage of the Sound, through which all the trade of the Baltic is compelled to pass, is scarcely less narrow than that of the Hellespont; and provided Russia had gained possession of the interior of these Straits, according to the supposition of the alarmists, then half a dozen ships of war might hermetically seal the whole of northern Europe against the trade of the world. In short, Russia, with the addition of Turkey, would possess buttwo outlets, each more contracted than the River Thames at Tilbury Fort; and as these could be declared in a state of blockade by less than a dozen vessels of war, it is clear that nature herself has doomed Russia to be in a condition of the most abject and prostrate subjection to the will of the maritime powers. This is a point of paramount importance in estimating the future growth of the country under consideration. It should never be lost sight of for a moment, in arguing upon the subject, that Russia, in possession of Turkey and all the coasts of the Black Sea, besides her present stupendous expanse of territory, would still be denied, by the hand of Nature herself, a navigation of more than three miles in width, to connect her millions of square leagues of territory with the rest of the globe—a peculiarity the more striking since it could not be found to exist in any other quarter of the earth. It is deserving of notice, that these two narrow straits, which guard the entrances to the Black Sea and the Baltic, are nearly six months' sail distant from each other; and the track by which alone they can communicate lying through the Straits of Dover and of Gibraltar, it must be apparent that, were Russia the mistress of those channels, she could not pass form the one to the other, unless she were in amicable connection with Great Britain.?

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

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

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

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CHAPTER III

The Balance Of Power

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

We shall here be encountered with a very general prepossession in favour of our maintaining what is termed a rank amongst the sates of the Continent—which means, not that we should be free from debt, or that our nation should be an example to all others for the wealth, education, and virtues of its people, but that England shall be consulted before any other countries presume to quarrel or fight; and that she shall be ready, and shall be called upon, to take a part in every contention, either as mediator, second, or principal. So prevalent and so little questioned has this egotistical spirit become, that, when an honourable member rises in Parliament, to call upon a minister of the crown to account for some political changes in Spain, Portugal, or Turkey—instead of the question encountering the laughter of the House (as such an inquiry would probably do from the homely representatives who meet to attend to their constituents' affairs at Washington), or the questioner being put down by the functionary, with something after Cain's answer, "Am I the Spaniard's keeper?"—the latter offers grave explanations and excuses, whilst the audience looks on with silent attention, and though every word of our foreign secretary were pregnant with the fate of nations bowing to his sway.

If we go back through the Parliamentary debates of the last few reigns, we shall find this singular feature in our national character—the passion for meddling with the affairs of foreigners—more strikingly prominent in every succeeding session; and, at the breaking out of the French Revolution, the reader is astonished to see that the characters of the leaders of the mobs of Paris, Marseilles, and Lyons, and the conduct of the government of France, became the constant subjects of discussion in the House of Commons, almost to the exclusion of matters of domestic interest—Pitt and Burke on one side, and Fox, Grey, and Sheridan on the other, attacking and defending the champions of the Revolution, with the same ardour as if the British legislature were a responsible tribunal, erected over the whole of Christendom, and endowed with powers to decide without appeal, the destinies of all the potentates and public men of Europe.? Unhappily, the same passion had impregnated the minds of the public generally (as it continues to do down to our own day), and the result was, as everybody knows, the Bourbon crusade. But England, in taking upon herself to make war with the spirit of the age, encountered the Fates; and, instead of destroying that infant freedom which, however monstrous and hideous at its birth, was destined to throw off its bloody swathes, and, in spite of the enmity of the world, to dispense the

first taste of liberty to Europe—*she was herself the nurse that, by her opposition, rocked the French Revolution into vigorous maturity.*

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

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

The first instance in which we find the "balance of power" alluded to in a king's speech is on the occasion of the last address of William III. to his Parliament, December 31, 1701, where he concludes by saying—"I will only add this—if you do in good earnest desire to see England *hold the balance of Europe,* it will appear by your right improving the present opportunity." From this period down to almost our time (latterly indeed, the phrase has become, like many other cant terms, nearly obsolete), there will be found, in almost every successive king's speech, a constant recurrence to the "balance of Europe;" by which, we may rest assured, was always means, however it might be concealed under pretended alarm for the "equilibrium of power" or the "safety of the Continent," the desire to see England "hold the balance." The phrase was found to please the public ear; it implied something of equity; whilst England, holding the balance of Europe in her hand, sounded like filling the office of Justice herself to one half of the globe. Of course such a post of honour could not be maintained, or its dignity asserted, without a proper attendance of guards and officers, and we consequently find that at about this period of our history large standing armies began to be called for; and not only were the supplies solicited by the government from time to time under the plea of preserving the liberties of Europe, but in the annual mutiny bill (*the same in form as is now passed every year*) the preamble stated, amongst other motives, that the annual army was voted for the purpose of *preserving the balance of power in Europe.* The "balance of power," then, becomes an important practical subject for investigation. It appeals directly to the business and bosoms of our readers, since it is implicated with an expenditure of more than a dozen millions of money per annum, every farthing of which goes, in the shape of taxation, from the pockets of the public.

Such of our readers as have not investigated this subject will not be a little astonished to find a great discrepancy in the several definitions of what is actually meant by the "balance of power." The theory—for it has never yet been applied to practice—appears, after upwards of a century of acknowledged existence, to be less understood now than ever. Latterly, indeed, many intelligent and practical-minded politicians have thrown the question overboard, along with that of the balance of trade, of which number, without participating in their favoured attributes, we claim to be ranked as one. The balance of power, which has for a hundred years been the

burden of kings' speeches, the theme of statesmen, the ground of solemn treaties, and the cause of wars; which has served, down to the very year in which we write, and which will, no doubt, continue to serve for years to come as a pretence for maintaining enormous standing armaments by land and sea, at a cost of many hundreds of millions of treasure—the balance of power is a chimera! It is not a fallacy, a mistake, an imposture, it is an undescribed, indescribable, incomprehensible nothing; mere words, conveying to the mind not ideas, but sounds like those equally barren syllables which our ancestors put together for the purpose of puzzling themselves about words, in the shape of *Prester John* or the *philosopher's stone!* We are bound, however, to see what are the best definitions of this theory.

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

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

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

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

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

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

So far from any such confederation having ever been, by written, verbal, or implied agreement, entered into by the "European powers, obeying certain laws, and actuated in general by a common principle;" the theory of the balance of power has, we believe, generally been interpreted, by those who, from age to age, have, parrotlike, used the phrase, to be a system invented for the very purpose of supplying the want of such a combination. Regarding it for a moment in this point of view, we should still expect to find that the "balancing system" had, at some period of modern history, been recognised and agreed to by all the Continental states; and that it had created a spirit of mutual concession and guarantee, by which the weaker and more powerful empires were placed upon a footing of equal security, and by which any one potentate or state was absolutely unable "to predominate over the others." But, instead of any such self-denial, we discover that the balance of Europe has merely meant (if it has had a meaning) that which our blunt Dutch king openly avowed as his aim to his parliament—a desire, on the part of the great powers, to "*hold the balance of Europe.*" England has, for nearly a century, held the European scales—not with the blindness of the goddess of justice herself, or with a view to the equilibrium of opposite interests, but with a Cyclopean eye to her own aggrandisement. The same lust of conquest has actuated, up to the measure of their abilities, the other great

powers; and, if we find the smaller states still, in the majority of instances, preserving their independent existence, it is owing, not to the watchful guardianship of the "balancing system," but to the limits which nature herself has set to the undue extension of territorial dominion—not only by the physical boundaries of different countries, but in those still more formidable moral impediments to the invader—the unity of language, laws, customs, and traditions; the instinct of patriotism and freedom; the hereditary rights of rulers; and, though last not least, that homage to the restraints of justice which nations and public bodies? have in all ages avowed, however they may have found excuses for evading it.

So far, then, as we can understand the subject, the theory of a balance of power is a mere chimera—a creation of the politician's brain—a phantasm, without definite form or tangible existence—a mere conjunction of syllables, forming words which convey sound without meaning. Yet these words have been echoed by the greatest orators and statesmen of England; they gingled successively from the lips of Bolingbroke, Chatham, Pitt, Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Grey, and Brougham—ay, even whilst we were in the act of stripping the maritime nations of the Continent of their colonies, then regarded as the sole source of commercial greatness; whilst we stood sword in hand upon the neck of Spain, or planted our standard on the rock of Malta; and even when England usurped the dominion of the ocean, and attempted to extend the sphere of human despotism over another element, by insolently putting barriers upon that highway of nations—even then the tongues of our orators resounded most loudly with the praises of the "balance of power!"? There would be something peculiarly humiliating in connection with this subject, in beholding the greatest minds of successive ages, instead of exercising the faculty of thought, become the mere automata of authority, and retail, with less examination than the haberdasher bestows upon the length, breadth, and quality of his wares, the sentiments bequeathed from former generations of writers and speakers—but that, unhappily, the annals of philosophy and of past religions afford too many examples of the triumph of mere imitativeness over the higher faculties of the human intellect.

We must not, however, pass over the "balance of power" without at least endeavouring to discover the meaning of a phrase which still enters into the preamble of an annual act of Parliament, for raising and maintaining a standing army of ninety thousand men. The theory, according to the historian Robertson, was first invented by the Machiavellian statesmen of Italy during the prosperous era of the Florentine (miscalled) republic; and it was imported into Western Europe in the early part of the sixteenth century, and became "fashionable,' to use the very word of the historian of Charles V., along with many other modes borrowed, about the same time, from that commercial and civilised people. This explanation of its origin does not meet with the concurrence of some other writers; for it is singular, but still consistent with the ignis-fatuus character of the "balance of power," that scarcely two authors agree, either as to the nature or the precise period of invention of the system. Lord Brougham claims for the theory an origin as remote as the time of the Athenians; and Hume describes Demosthenes to have been the first advocate of the "balancing system"—very recommendatory, remembering that ancient history is little else than a calendar of savage wars! There can be little doubt, however, that the idea, by whomsoever or at whatever epoch conceived, sprang from that first instinct of our nature, fear, and

originally meant at least some scheme for preventing the dangerous growth of the power of any particular state; *that power being always regarded, be it well remembered, as solely the offspring of conquest and aggrandisement:* notwithstanding, as we have had occasion to show in a former page of this pamphlet, in the case of England and the United States, that labour, improvements, and discoveries confer the greatest strength upon a people; and that, by these alone, and not by the sword of the conqueror, can nations, in modern and all future times, hope to rise to supreme power and grandeur. And it must be obvious that a system professing to observe a "balance of power"—by which, says Vattel, "no one potentate or state shall be able absolutely to predominate;" or, according to Gentz, "to injure the independence or essential rights of another;" by which, says Brougham, "a perpetual attention to foreign affairs is inculcated, and a constant watchfulness over every nation is prescribed:"—it must be obvious that such a "balancing system"—if it disregards those swiftest strides towards power which are making by nations excelling in mechanical and chemical science, industry, education, morality, and freedom—must be altogether chimerical.

Lord Bacon, indeed, took a broader and more comprehensive view of this question when he wrote, in his essay on empire—"*First,* for their neighbours, there can no general rule be given (the occasions are so variable) save one, which ever holdeth; which is, that princes do keep due sentinel, that none of their neighbours do overgrow so (by increase of territory, by *embracing of trade,* by approaches, *or the like),* as they become more able to annoy them than they were: and this is generally the work of standing councils, to see and *to hinder it.*" This appears to us to be the only sound and correct view of such a principle as is generally understood by the phrase, "the balance of power." It involves, however, such a dereliction of justice, and utter absence of conscientiousness, that subsequent writers upon the subject have not dared to follow out the principle of hindering the growth of trade, and the like (which includes all advance in civilisation); although, to treat it in any other manner than that in which it is handled by this "wisest, greatest, meanest of mankind," is to abandon the whole system to contempt, as unsound, insufficient, and illusory.? As for the *rule* of Lord Bacon; were the great enemy of mankind himself to summon a council, to devise a law of nations which should convert this fair earth, with all its capacity for life, enjoyment, and goodness, into one vast theatre of death and misery, more dismal than his own Pandemonium, the very words of the philosopher would compose that law! It would reduce us even below the level of the brute animals. *They* do not make war against their own instincts; but this "rule" would, if acted upon universally, plunge us into a war of annihilation with that instinct of progression which is the distinguishing nature of intellectual man. It would forbid all increase in knowledge, which, by the great writer's own authority, is power. It would interdict the growth of morality and freedom, which are power. Were Lord Bacon's "rule" enforced, not only would the uninstructed Russians commence a crusade against our steam-engines and our skilful artisans; the still more barbarous Turk would be called upon to destroy the civilisation and commerce of Petersburg; the savage African would be warranted, nay, compelled to reduce the turbaned Osmanli to his own nakedness and a wigwam; nor would the levelling strife cease until either the "*rule*" were abrogated, or mankind had been reduced to the only pristine possessions—teeth and nails!?

The balance of power, then, might in the first place, be very well dismissed as *chimera,* because no state of things, such as the "disposition," "constitution," or "union" of European powers referred to as the basis of their system, by Vattel, Gentz, and Brougham, ever did exist; and, secondly, the theory could, on other grounds, be discarded as *fallacious,* since it gives no definition—whether by breadth of territory, number of inhabitants, or extent of wealth—according to which, in balancing the respective powers, each state shall be estimated; whilst, lastly, it would be altogether incomplete and inoperative from neglecting, or refusing to provide against, the silent and peaceful aggrandisements which spring from improvement and labour. Upon these triple grounds, the question of the balance of power might be dismissed from further consideration. We shall, however, assume, merely for the sake of argument, that such an equilibrium existed in complete efficiency; and the first inquiry that suggests itself is—Upon what principle is Turkey made a member of this European system? The Turks, at least, will be admitted by everybody, to form no party to this "*union*;" nor do they give that "perpetual attention to foreign affairs which it inculcates;" or that "constant watchfulness over every nation which it prescribes." They never read of the balance of power in the Koran; and they live in pious and orthodox ignorance of the authorities for this "fine and delicate" theory; for the names of Bacon, Vattel, and Brougham are nowhere recorded by the prophet! Turkey cannot enter into the political system of Europe; for the Turks are not Europeans. During the nearly four centuries that that people have been encamped upon the finest soil of the Continent, so far from becoming one of the families of Christendom, they have not adopted one European custom. Their habits are still Oriental, as when they first crossed the Bosphorus. They scrupulously exclude their females from the society of the other sex; they wear the Asiatic dress; sit cross-legged, or loll upon couches, using neither chair nor bed; they shave their heads, retaining their beards; and they use their fingers still, in the place of those civilised substitutes, knives and forks. Equally uninfluenced, after nearly four hundred years' contact with Europeans, is the Osmanli's condition by the discoveries and improvements of modern times. A printing press may be said to be unknown in Turkey; or, if one be found at Constantinople, it is in the hands of foreigners. The steam engine, gas, the mariner's compass, paper money, vaccination, canals, the spinning-jenny, and railroads, are mysteries not yet dreamed about by Ottoman philosophers. Literature and science are so far from finding disciples amongst the Turks, that that people have been renowned as *twice* the destroyers of learning: in the splendid though corrupt remains of Greek literature at Constantinople; and by extinguishing the dawn of experimental philosophy, at the subversion of the Caliphate.

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

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

And are the Turks of our own day less *cruel* or *savage,* that we should not only admit them within the pale of civilised nations, but impose on our people, for their defence, the burden of enormous armaments? We appeal to Dr. Walsh's late account of the atrocities perpetrated at Constantinople upon the unarmed Greeks, at the revolt of that people; we refer to the horrible massacre of the peaceful and civilised population of Scio! Is this empire less *wasteful* now than when, forty-five years ago, Burke mourned over those fine provinces which were consigned to devastation and the crescent? We again recur to the description given to us by Walsh, and every other recent traveller, of the desolation that reigns throughout the Turkish dominions; we adduce those ruined cities, those deserted, though still fertile plains, and that population, wasting away in regions where ten times its numbers once found abundance; we point to the deplorable condition of agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and all the arts of life, in a country which comprised the ancient civilised world—to prove the waste of human life, happiness, wealth, and civilisation, that is suffered every year at the hands of this Mahometan Government. Has the pestilence ceased to ravage the Turkish territory? The quarantine now blockades, in a manner, from Christian Europe, Constantinople—standing upon the same latitude as Naples, Oporto, and New York, and chosen by Constantine as the most salubrious spot on earth—a city now the impure nurse and victim of the plague! Does Christianity or public virtue call upon us, in 1836, more than they did in 1791, to arm ourselves in behalf of Turkey? We point to the Koran and those orthodox vices which it inculcates—we refer to the slave trade and to polygamy, abominations which still flourish in that country, under the precept of the impostor of Mecca—to prove that neither religion nor morality can sanction the government of Great Britain in shedding a drop of the blood, or lavishing the treasure of Englishmen for the support of this “cruel,” “savage,” “wasteful,” “devastating,” “pestilential,” and “infidel” nation, in a conflict with Russia or any other Christian people.

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

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

Not having been supplied by the authors of the theory with any rule by which to judge of their mode of estimating or weighing the powers of the respective parties to the balancing system, and being equally uninformed as to the qualifications required from those States which aspired to the union, it would be presumptuous to guess upon what principle Turkey is admitted to a connection with England, from which Brazil is excluded; or why, in forming a balance of the civilised powers, the United States are rejected, in order to give room to admit Russia into one of the scales. It cannot be from proximity that Turkey is preferred to the Brazils. A voyage from Rio Janeiro to Liverpool will average about forty days; whilst the time taken in going from England to Constantinople usually reaches double that period. Nor can it arise from a comparison of our commerce with the two countries, which is four times as valuable with the American as the European State. Then a wise and provident regard to the future cannot be the guiding motive, since the prospect is altogether in favour of the trans-Atlantic empire, which embraces within its bounds a territory equalling in extent the whole of Russia in Europe, and forming the finest, and destined in all probability to be, both as respects vegetable and mineral riches, the most productive amongst all the countries in the world. Religion, language, national character, and the plague, all oppose the claim of the Turk to this preference over the Christian rival; and we can only suspend our conjectures, and entreat that some advocate of the "balancing system" will inform the world upon what *principle,* commercial, social, or

political—in short, upon what ground, consistent with common sense—does the foreign secretary involve Great Britain in the barbarian politics of the Ottoman Government, to the manifest risk of future wars, and the present pecuniary sacrifice attending standing armaments; whilst, with another State, with which we are more deeply interested as traders, more identified as men, and from which we are, navally speaking, less distant, no political intercourse is found necessary? The same argument applies, with more or less force, to the other eleven South American States, with each of which our commerce averages probably more in amount than with Turkey; yet, although they are Christian communities, all but universally at peace,? and notwithstanding the future influence which they are inevitably destined to exercise over the interests of the entire world—these countries have not been thought worthy of admission into that system of civilised nations which is now agitated from one extremity to the other with the fate of Mahometan Turkey! However impossible it may be to speculate successfully upon the intended operation of a system which, in reality, never existed except in the precincts of the politician's brain, still it must be remembered that, at the time the theory was first invented, it proposed to give to the European powers owning American colonies, a weight proportioned to the extent of those possessions; and the question then arises—which we shall merely propound, and leave in despair, for the solution of such of our readers as may wish to pursue this chimerical inquiry still farther—By what ingenious process was the balance of power preserved, when England, Spain, and Portugal were deprived of their trans-Atlantic territories? Canning, indeed, once talked of "calling into existence a new world, to adjust the balance of the old;" but, as in many other oratorical flourishes of our State-rhetorician, he meant quite a different practical object; in other and more homely language, that statesman proposed to acknowledge the independence of South America—ten years after every private individual of judgment had predicted the freedom of that Continent. To this day those States which once formed so important a part of the balancing system, as appendages to the mother countries, are wanting in the scales of Europe; and by what arts, *whether by false weights or the legerdemain of the nation still holding the balance,* the equilibrium can be preserved without them, constituting as they do nearly one-third of the terrestrial globe, is a mystery beyond the reach of our powers of divination.

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

Upon whatever principle the theory under consideration may have been at first devised—whether, according to Gentz, for the purpose of uniting neighbouring States, or, as Brougham asserts, with a view to the union of all the European powers—it is certain that it would have been held fatal to the success of the balancing system for any one power, and that one amongst the most civilised, wealthy, and commercial, to have refused to subscribe to its constitution. Yet the United States (for the number of its inhabitants), the richest, the most commercial, and, for either attack or defence, the most powerful of modern empires; a country which possesses a wider surface of fertile land than Russia could boast even with the accession of Turkey; and, instead of being imprisoned, like Russia, by the Dardanelles and the Sound, owning five thousand miles of coast, washed by two oceans, and open to the whole world; *the*

United States are not parties to the balance of power! Ignorant as we are of the rule of admission to and exclusion from this balancing system, it would be vain to conjecture why Russia should be entitled, not only to be a member of this union, but to engross its exclusive attention, whilst North America is unknown or not recognised as of any weight in the balance of power. It cannot be, on our part, from closer neighbourhood; for Russia, even at Constantinople, would—commercially and navally speaking—be three times as distant? as New York from Great Britain. Nor on account of the greater amount of the European commerce transacted by Russia. The commerce of the United States with the countries of Europe is nearly as great in amount as that of the British empire with the Continent; twice as large as the trade of France with the same quarters; and three times that of Russia. It cannot be because of the more important nature of the trade which we carry on with Russia as compared with that with America, since the cotton of the latter gives employment and subsistence to more than a million of our people, and is actually indispensable to our commercial and political existence. Here are cogent reasons why the trans-Atlantic power should form a party to the union of States—why, at least, it should, in place of an empire situated upon the Baltic or Black Sea, be united in political bands with Great Britain. And wherefore is this rich, commercial, and this contiguous country—with a population more entirely enlightened than any besides, and whose improvements and institutions England and all Europe are eager to emulate—an alien to the "balancing system," of which Turkey, Spain, and Persia are members? It would be difficult to find any other satisfactory answer than that which we are able to give as the reason of this exclusion: *America, with infinite wisdom, refuses to be a party to the "balance of power."*

Washington (who could remember when the national debt of England was under fifty-five millions; who saw it augmented, by the Austrian war of succession, to seventy-eight millions; and again increased, by the seven years' war, to one hundred and forty-six millions; and who lived to behold the first fruits of the French revolutionary wars, with probably a presentiment of the harvest of debt and oppression that was to follow—whose paternal eye looked abroad only with the patriotic hope of finding in the conduct of other nations example or warning for the instruction of his countrymen), seeing the chimerical objects for which England, *although an island,* plunged into the contentions of the Continent, with no other result to her suffering people but an enduring and increasing debt—bequeathed, as a legacy to his fellow-citizens, the injunction, that they should never be tempted by any inducements or provocations to become parties to the States' system of Europe. And faithfully, zealously, and happily has that testament been obeyed! Down even to our day the feeling and conviction of the people, and consequently of the Government and the authors? of the United States, have constantly increased in favour of a policy from which so much wealth, prosperity, and moral greatness have sprung. America, for fifty years at peace, with the exception of two years of defensive war, is a spectacle of the beneficent effects of that policy which may be comprised in the maxim—As little intercourse as possible betwixt the *Governments,* as much connection as possible between the *nations* of the world. And when England (*without being a republic*) shall be governed upon the same principles of regard for the interests of the people, and a like common sense view of the advantages of its position, we shall adopt a similar motto for our policy; and then we shall hear no more mention of that costly chimera, the balance of power.

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CHAPTER IV

Protection Of Commerce

We began the preceding remarks upon a question which, however universally recognised in former times, has now almost fallen into neglect, by quoting a passage from the last speech of King William III. to his Parliament; and—before proceeding to discuss that other, but still more popular, pretence for wars and standing armaments, *the protection of our commerce*—we shall give an extract or two from the latest (though we sincerely hope not the last) address of William IV. to his Reformed Parliament, delivered on the 4th of February, 1836:—

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

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

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

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

"intervention." The rest of Asia is our own. Where, then, shall we seek for a solution of the difficulty, or how account for the necessity which called for the increase of our naval strength?

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

The Directors of the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester (of which board the author has the honour of being a member) were favoured, a short time since, with a communication from the Right Hon. C. P. Thomson, accompanied by an assortment of samples of various fabrics, which, in the diligent fulfilment of his official duties, he had caused to be procured from the several manufacturing districts of the Continent; and requesting a report as to the comparative relation which, after due examination, they might be found to bear towards the manufactures of England. Among these were patterns of Swiss Turkey-red chintz prints and of mixed cotton and linen Saxony drills—both of which commodities have been for some time sold in those quarters—superior, both in cheapness and quality, to similar articles produced in this country: and, consequently, in reporting to the Board of Trade, the Directors of the Chamber of Commerce had the disagreeable duty of stating that, in those particular products of the loom and printing machine, we were beaten by our foreign rivals, and superseded in third or neutral markets. The causes of the advantage thus possessed over us by our competitors on the Continent, and which were pointed out to the attention of the Right Hon. President, are the heavy imposts still fettering our manufacturing energies, and the greater cost of the food of our workmen: the remedy is, obviously, a reduction of the duties on corn, oil, soap, &c. But, if, instead of naming such causes and remedies as these, the Manchester Chamber of Commerce

had stated in its report that the prints of Switzerland and the drills of Saxony (*the governments of which two countries do not together own a ship of war, as we believe*) were cheaper than the like articles fabricated here, *because the British navy was not sufficiently strong*, and had advised for relief that half a million a year should be added to the navy estimates—would not a writ *de lunatico inquirendo* have justly been issued against those intelligent Directors, the writer's colleagues, without further evidence of their insanity! Yet, having seen that the only way in which we can protect our commerce is the cheapness of our manufactures, what other object can be meant, when the Government calls for an augmentation of the navy, with a view to the protection of our commerce, but some plan, however inappreciable to common minds, for reducing the expenditure of the country, and thereby relieving us from some of the burdensome imposts with which our race of competition is impeded?

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

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

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

If, by way of example, we refer to the present commercial intercourse between the United States and this empire, how completely does it illustrate the force of the above maxim! At no period of history were two people, aliens to each other by birth, government, laws, and institutions, united indissolubly by one common interest and mutual dependence, like these distant nations. One-third? of our whole exports consists of cotton manufactures, the raw material of which is produced from the soil of the United States. More than a million of our population depend upon the due supply of this cotton wool for the labour of every succeeding day, and for the regular payment of their weekly wages. We sometimes hear objections against the free importation of corn, made on the ground that we should become dependent upon foreigners for bread; but here we have a million of people, whose power of purchasing not only bread, but meat, ay, or even potatoes, as well as clothing, is supplied from the annual growth of lands possessed by an independent nation, more than three thousand miles off. The equilibrium† of this stupendous industry is preserved by the punctual arrival from the United States of a quantity of raw cotton, averaging 15,000‡ bales weekly, or more than 2,000 bales a day; and it depends also upon the equally constant weekly departure of more than a quarter of a million sterling worth of cotton goods, exported to foreign parts. Now, what precaution is taken by the Government of this country to guard and regulate this precious flood of traffic? How many of those costly vessels of war, which are maintained at an expense to the nation of many millions of pounds annually, do our readers suppose, are stationed at the mouths of the Mersey and Clyde, to welcome and convoy into Liverpool and Glasgow the merchant ships from New York, Charleston, or New Orleans, all bearing the inestimable freight of cotton wool, upon which our commercial and social existence depends? Not one! What portion of our standing army, costing seven millions a year, is occupied in defending this more than Pactolus—this golden stream of trade, on which floats not only the wealth, but the hopes and existence of a great community? Four invalids at the Perch Rock Battery hold the sinecure office of defending the port of Liverpool! But our exports to the United States will reach this year, perhaps, in real or declared value, more than ten millions sterling, and nearly one half of this amount goes to New York:—what portion of the Royal navy is stationed off that port to protect our merchants' ships and cargoes? The appearance of a King's ship at New York is an occurrence of such rarity as to attract the especial notice of the public journals; whilst, all along the entire Atlantic coast of the United States—extending, as it does, more than 3,000 miles, to

which we send a quarter of our whole yearly exports—there are stationed two? British ships of only, and these two have also their stations at the West Indies.

No! this commerce, unparalleled in magnitude, between two remote nations, demands no armament as its guide or safeguard; nature itself is both. And will one rational mind recognise the possibility of these two communities putting a sudden stop to such a friendly traffic, and, contrary to every motive of self-interest, encountering each other as enemies? Such a rupture would be more calamitous to England than the sudden drying up of the river Thames; and more intolerable to America than the cessation of sunshine and rain over the entire surface of one of her maritime states?

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

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

At the moment when we write the British naval force stationed in the Mediterranean amounts to thirty-six vessels of war,? mounting altogether 1,320 guns, being rather more than a third of the death-dealing metal afloat in our King's ships. Our entire trade to all the nations bordering on this sea, and including the whole of that with Spain and France, amounts to very nearly the same as our exports to the United States; in value or importance, however, it is not equal to the latter. Now, leaving for the present the question of the profitableness of carrying on a traffic with such heavy protecting expenses annexed, let us proceed to ascertain whether or not this prodigious and costly navy affords an *efficient* protection to our commerce in those quarters. The reader will bear in mind our statement, that the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester had the unpleasant task of reporting to the Board of Trade that the drill manufacturers of Saxony and the calico printers of Switzerland had superseded goods of the same descriptions, made in England, in third or neutral markets. *Those markets were in the Mediterranean!* This is not all. One of those markets, from which our manufacturers were reported to have been expelled, by a decree of far more potency

than was penned by the hand of violence at Berlin and Milan, and prohibited by an interdict ten times more powerful than ever sprang from the Prussian league—the interdict of *dearness;* one of those markets was *Gibraltar!!* (We promised, a few pages back, to prove that the industrious middling and working classes of this empire have no interest in the violent and unjust seizure and retention of an integral portion of the Spanish territory; and we have, in this simple fact, redeemed our pledge.) We give it to the reflecting portion of our readers, as a truth authenticated by the very best authority, and worthy of deep attention from the economist, the statesman, and the advocate of peace and of a moral ascendency over physical force—that the artisans of Switzerland and of Saxony have achieved a victory over the manufacturers of England, upon her own fortress—the free port of Gibraltar! We kiss the rod —we dote upon this fact, which teaches, through us, a lesson to mankind, of the inefficacy of brute violence in the trading concerns of the world. Let us pause, then, to recapitulate our facts. On the one hand, behold a commerce with America, amounting to a quarter of the whole trade of the kingdom—upon which depends, from week to week, the subsistence of a million of people, and whereon rests our very existence as a commercial empire—conducted regularly, day by day, without the aid or intervention of ships of war to guide or coerce it; on the other, an armament, avowedly to protect our commerce, of 1,320 cannon, unable to guard our manufactures against the successful cheapness of the poorest, the weakest, and humblest community of the Continent—a community destitute of fleets, and without a standing army. The inference is plain—we have succeeded in establishing our premises; for, having proved that the (physically speaking) impregnable fortress of Gibraltar, with its triple lines of batteries, aided by thirty-six vessels of war, and altogether combining a greater quantity of artillery than was put in requisition to gain the victory of Waterloo, Trafalgar, or the Nile, surrenders our commerce into the hands of the Swiss and Saxons, unable to protect us against the cheaper commodities of those countries—we need not go further to show, since these two countries without navies are our witnesses of the facts, that armed fleets, armies, and fortresses, are not essential to the extension of commerce, and that they do not possess the power of protecting it against the *cheapness* of rivals. These may appear trite and familiar truths to our intelligent readers; our justification may be found, if needed, in the fact, that the Government has demanded and obtained an addition to our navy estimates, this session of Parliament, amounting to nearly half a million sterling per annum, under the pretence of *protecting* our commerce; and we do not recollect that one of our representatives rose from his seat to tell the minister, as we now tell him, that *his* is that kind of *protection* which the eagle affords to the lamb—*covering it to devour it*.

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

Having thus shown that cheapness, and not the cannon or the sword, is the weapon through which alone we possess and can hope to defend or extend our commerce—having proved, also, that an increase of trade, so far from demanding an augmentation of warlike armaments, furnishes an increased safeguard against the chances of war—is it not clear that, to diminish the taxes and duties which tend to enhance the cost of our manufactures, by a reduction of our navy? and army, is the obvious policy of a ministry which understands and desires to promote the true interests of this commercial nation? Were our army and navy reduced to one-half of their present forces, and the amount saved applied to the abolition of the duties upon cotton, wool, glass, paper, oil, soap, drugs, and the thousand other ingredients of our manufactures, such a step would do more towards protecting and extending the commerce of Great Britain than an augmentation of the naval armaments to fifty times their present strength, even supposing such an increase could be effected with no addition to the national burdens.

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

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

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

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

1800 . . . . . 500 bales.
1805 . . . . . 1,000 bales.
1810 . . . . . 10,000 bales.
1815 . . . . . 90,000 bales.

And afterwards it goes on to say, in speaking of Great Britain—"No improper motives are intended to be imputed to that government. But does not experience teach a lesson that should never be forgotten, that governments, like individuals, are apt 'to feel power and forget right'? It is not inconsistent with national decorum to become circumspect and prudent. May not the Government of Great Britain be inclined, in analysing the basis of her political power, to consider and regard the United States as her rival, and to indulge an improper jealousy, the enemy of peace and repose?" And, in proposing on February 12, 1816, a new tariff to the *Senate*, in which cotton goods are subjected to 331/3 per cent. duty, the Secretary of the Treasury, in the course of

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

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

to the occupations of the spinning-jenny and the loom by the violence of Great Britain herself!

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

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

If that which constitutes cowardice in individuals, viz., the taking of undue and excessive precautions against danger, merits the same designation when practised by communities—then England certainly must rank as the greatest poltroon among nations. With twenty-five millions of the most robust, the freest, the richest, and most united population of Europe—enclosed within a smaller area than ever before contained so vast a number of inhabitants—placed upon two islands, which, for security, would have been chosen before any spot on earth, by the commander seeking for a *Torres Vedras* to contain his host—and with the experience of seven hundred years of safety, during which period no enemy has set foot upon their

shores—yet behold the government of Great Britain maintaining mighty armaments, by sea and land, ready to repel the assaults of imaginary enemies! There is no greater obstacle to cheap and good government than this feeling of danger, which has been created and fostered for the very purpose of misgovernment.?

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

But to return to that course of inquiry from which our argument has slightly swerved. We recur to the subject of protecting our commerce by armed ships; and it becomes necessary next to examine, whether, even supposing our naval force could defend our trade against the attacks of rivals (which we have conclusively proved it cannot), the cost of its protection does not, in some cases, more than absorb the gain of such traffic. The real or declared value of all the British manufactures and other produce exported to the Mediterranean, including the coast of Africa and the Black Sea, will this year amount to about £9,500,000. Under the groundless plea of protecting this commerce, we find, from the *United Service Journal* of June 1st, that a naval armament, mounting more than 1,300 guns, being upwards of a third of the national force, is stationed within the Straits of Gibraltar. Taking the annual cost of the entire British navy at five millions, if we apportion a third part of this amount, and add the whole cost of the fortifications and garrisons of the Mediterranean, with their contingents at the war office, ordnance, etc., we shall be quite safe and within the mark, in estimating that our yearly expenditure in guarding the commerce of this sea, amounts to upwards of three millions sterling, or one-third of our exports to those quarters. Now, what kind of a business would a wholesale dealer or merchant pronounce it, were his traveller's expenses, for escort alone, to come to 6s. 8d.? in the pound on the amount of his sales! Yet this is precisely the unprofitable character of our yearly trade to the Mediterranean. Most people approach the investigation of a nation's affairs with the impression that they do not come under the same laws of common sense and homely wisdom by which private concerns are governed—than which nothing can be more erroneous. America, which carries on a traffic one-half as extensive as Great Britain, with only a sixth† of our navy expenses, and with no charge for maintaining colonies or garrisons, is every year realising a profit to her people beyond that of her extravagant rival, in proportion to her more economical establishments; just exactly in the same way that the merchant or shopkeeper who conducts his business at a less cost for rent, clerks, etc., will, at each stock-taking, find

his balance-sheet more favourable than that of his less frugal competitor. And the result will be in the one case as in the other—that the cheaper management will produce cheaper commodities; which, in the event, will give a victory, in every market, to the more prudent trader.

But if, instead of the Mediterranean generally, we apply this test to an individual nation situated on that sea, we shall be able to illustrate the matter more plainly. In the same work from which we have before quoted, we find it stated that there are (June 1st) thirteen British ships of war lying at Lisbon, carrying 372 guns; *a force about equal to the whole American navyemployed in protecting the interests of that commercial people all over the world!* That part of our annual navy estimates which goes to support this amount of guns, with contingent expenses fairly proportioned, will reach about £700,000. Turning to M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary (article, Oporto), we find that the declared value of exports of British manufactures and produce to the entire kingdom of Portugal, reached in 1831 (the latest year we have at this moment access to), £975,991. Here then we find, even allowing for increase, the escort costing nearly as much as the amount sold. In a word, Portugal is, at this moment, *paying* us at the rate of £500,000 a year clear and dead loss! Our commerce with that country, on this 1st June, was precisely of the same ruinous character to the British nation as it would be in the case of an individual trader who turned over twenty thousand a year, and whose expenses in clerks, watchmen, rents, etc., were £15,000. If anything could add to the folly of such conduct—conduct which, if proved against an individual brought before an insolvent debtors' tribunal would be enough to consign him to prison—it is, to recollect that no part of such a nautical force can possibly be of the slightest service to our trade with Portugal, which is wholly independent of such coercion. Even our foreign secretary—a functionary who, during the last hundred and fifty years, has travelled abroad for this commercial empire with no other result to the national ledger but eight hundred millions of bad debts—has, we are happy to see, discovered this truth; for, on being questioned by Mr. Robinson in the House,? as to a recent *grateful* augmentation of duties upon British goods, amounting to 14 per cent., by the Government of Lisbon, our present foreign secretary, Lord Palmerston, avowed that the Portuguese were free to put whatever restraints they chose upon our trade with their country; and he merely threatened, if the tariff was not satisfactory, that he would attack them—how do our readers suppose?—with the thunder of our ships in the Tagus?—with soldiers and sailors?—with grape, musketry, shot, shell, and rocket?—all of which we provide for the protection of our commerce? No—with *retaliatory duties!*

To proceed to a worse case. On the 1st June, our naval force, on the West India station (see *United Service Journal*), amounted to 29 vessels, carrying 474 guns, to protect a commerce just exceeding two millions per annum. This is not all. A considerable military force is kept up in those islands, which, with its contingent of home expenses at the War Office, Ordnance Office, etc., must also be put to the debit of the same account. Add to which, our civil expenditure, and the charges at the Colonial Office on behalf of the West Indies; and we find, after due computation, that our whole expenditure, in governing and protecting the trade of those islands, exceeds, considerably, the total amount of their imports of our produce and manufactures. Our case here is no better than that of Jenkins and Sons, or Jobson and Co., or any other

firm, whose yearly returns are less than the amount of their expenses for travellers, clerks, etc.; and if the British Empire escapes the ruin which, at the close of the year, must inevitably befall those improvident traders, it is only because we have other markets and resources—the Americas, and Asia, and the productive industry of these islands—to draw upon, to cover the annual loss sustained by our West India *possessions* (*?*)

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

Enough has been said to prove that even if armaments for the protection of commerce could effect the object for which they are maintained (although we have shown the false pretensions of the plea of defending our trade), still the cost of supporting these safeguards may often be greater than the amount of profit gained. This argument applies more immediately to Turkey and the East, upon which countries a share of public attention has lately been bestowed far beyond the importance of their commerce.? It would be difficult to apportion the precise quota of our ships of war, which may be said to be at this moment maintained with a view to support our influence or carry into effect the views of our Foreign Secretary in the affairs of Constantinople. The late augmentation of the navy—the most exceptionable vote

which has passed a reformed House of Commons—although accomplished by the Ministry without explanation of its designs, further than the century-old pretence of protecting our commerce,? was generally believed to have been aimed at Russia in the Black Sea. Our naval force in the East was considerable previously; but taking only the increase into calculation, it will cost more than three times the amount of the current profits of our trade with Turkey, whilst it can show no prospective benefits, since, even if we possessed Constantinople ourselves, we should only be able to command its trade by selling, as at Gibraltar, cheaper than other people. Our nautical establishments devoted to the *(pretended)* guardianship of British *commercial* interests (for we can have no other description of interests a thousand miles off) in Turkey are, the present year, costing the tax-payers of this country, upon the lowest computation, more than three times the amount of the annual profit of our trade with that country. Not content with this state of things, which leaves very little chance of future gain, some writers and speakers would plunge us into a war with Russia, in defence of Turkey, for the purpose of protecting this commerce, the result of which would inevitably be, as in former examples of wars undertaken to defend Spain or Portugal, that such an accumulation of expenses would ensue as to prevent the possibility of the future profit upon our exports to the Ottoman empire even amounting to so much as should discharge the yearly interest of the debt contracted in its behalf.

We had intended and were prepared to give a summary of the wars, their causes and *commercial* consequences, in which Great Britain has been during the last century and a half from time to time engaged; but we are admonished that our limited space will not allow us to follow out this design. It must suffice to offer as the moral of the subject, that although the conflicts in which this country has during the last 150 years involved itself have, as Sir Henry Parnell? has justly remarked, in almost every instance been undertaken in behalf of our commerce, yet we hesitate not to declare that there is no instance recorded in which a favourable tariff or a beneficial commercial treaty has been extorted from an unwilling enemy at the point of the sword. On the contrary, every restriction that embarrasses the trade of the whole world, all existing commercial jealousies between nations, the debts that oppress the countries of Europe, the incalculable waste owing to the misdirected labour and capital of communities, these and a thousand other evils that are now actively thwarting and oppressing commerce are all the consequences of wars. How shall a profession which withdraws from productive industry the ablest of the human race, and teaches them systematically the best modes of destroying mankind, which awards honours only in proportion to the number of victims offered at its sanguinary altar, which overturns cities, ravages farms and vineyards, uproots forests, burns the ripened harvest, which, in a word, exists but in the absence of law, order, and security— how can such a profession be favourable to commerce, which increases only with the increase of human life, whose parent is agriculture, and which perishes or flies at the approach of lawless rapine? Besides, they who propose to influence by force the traffic of the world, forget that affairs of trade, like matters of conscience, change their very nature if touched by the hand of violence; for as faith, if forced, would no longer be religion, but hypocrisy, so commerce becomes robbery if coerced by warlike armaments.? If, then, war has in past times in no instance served the just interests of commerce, whilst it has been the sole cause of all its embarrassments; if

for the future, when trade and manufactures are brought under the empire of "cheapness," it can still less protect, whilst its cost will yet more heavily oppress it; and having seen that if war could confer a golden harvest of gain upon us instead of this unmixed catalogue of evils it would still be not profit, but plunder; having demonstrated these truths, surely we may hope to be spared a repetition of the mockery offered to this commercial empire at the hands of its government and legislature in the proposal to protect our commerce *by an increase of the Royal navy*! On behalf of the trading world an indissoluble alliance is proclaimed with the cause of peace, and if the unnatural union be again attempted of that daughter of Peace, Commerce, whose path has ever been strewed with the choicest gifts of religion, civilisation, and the arts, with the demon of carnage, War, loaded with the maledictions of widows and orphans, reeking with the blood of thousands of millions† of victims, with feet fresh from the smoking ruins of cities, whose ears delight in the groans of the dying, and whose eyes love to gloat upon the dead, if such an unholy union be hereafter proposed, as the humblest of the votaries of that commerce which is destined to regenerate and unite the whole world, we will forbid the banns.

It was our intention, had space permitted it, to have proved, from facts which we had prepared for the purpose, that no class or calling, of whatever rank in society, has ever derived substantial or permanent advantage from war. The agriculturist, indeed, might be supposed to be interested in that state of things which yielded an augmentation of price for his produce, and so he might if hostilities were constant and eternal. But war is at best but a kind of intermittent fever, and the cure or death of the patient must at some time follow. This simile may be justly applied to the condition of the farmer during the French wars and subsequently, at which former period, exposed to the effects of the bank restriction, of enormous loans, and of paper issues, the pulsation of prices sometimes alternated biennially, with dreadful consequences to the *febrile* sufferer, the agriculturist. What management or calculation on the part of the farmer could be proof against such fluctuations in the market, arising from continental battles or the violence or wickedness of a powerful and corrupt government as we find when wheat, which in 1798 averaged £2 10*s.* 3*d.* a quarter, had in 1800 reached £5 13*s.* 7*d.*, and again sold in 1802 at £3 7*s.* 5*d.*, a state of things which exposed the capitalist and the adventurer, the prudent man and the gambler, to one common fate of suffering and ruin? The dull and, to many, fatal peace brought a state of convalesence more intolerable than the excitement of war. After more than twenty years of this latter species of suffering the invalid is even now scarcely cured. Will he permit his wounds to be re-opened merely that he may again undergo the self-same healing process? But the great majority of agriculturists, the labourers, so far from deriving any advantages from it, suffered grievously from the effects of that war which is sometimes excused or palliated on account of the pretended benefits it conferred upon the "landed interest."

Whilst the prices of every commodity of food and clothing were rising, in consequence of the depreciation of the currency and other causes incidental to the state of war, the labourers' earnings continued pretty much the same. The consequence was that bread sometimes became a luxury, as is now the case in Ireland, too dear for the English husbandman's resources; that the cruel salt-tax interposed a

barrier between him and that necessary of life which frequently compelled him, when providing his winter's stock of provisions, to exchange one half of his pig for the means of curing the other; that good beer rose to a price nearly as prohibitory to the peasant's paiate as port wine; and that, owing to the high cost of clothing, he possessed little more change of habiliments than the Russian serf of the present day. What greater proof can be required that war prices conferred no blessings upon the husbandmen than is afforded in the fact that the poor rates were the heaviest in the agricultural districts at a time when wheat was at its highest market price? In a word, at no period were the peasantry of this country enjoying so great an amount of comforts as they possess at this time, and the primary cause of which is the twenty years' duration of peace.

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

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

We are, then, justified in the assertion that no class or calling of society can derive permanent benefit from war. Even the aristocracy, which, from holding all the offices of the State, profited exclusively by the honours and emoluments arising from past hostilities, would derive no advantages from future conflicts. The governing power is

now wholly transferred to the hands of the middling class; and, although time may be necessary to develop all the effects of this complete subversion of the former dominant influence, can any one for a moment doubt that one of its consequences will be to dissipate among that more numerous, but now authoritative class, those substantial fruits of power, the civil and military patronage, which, under the self-same circumstances, were previously enjoyed exclusively by the aristocracy? The electors of the British empire are much too numerous a body to possess interests distinct from those of the rest of their countrymen; and, as the nation at large can never derive advantages from war, we regard the Reform Bill, which has virtually bestowed upon the ten-pounders of this country the guardianship of the Temple of Janus, to be our guarantee for all future time of the continuance of peace.

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

It has been no part of our object to advocate the *right* of Russia to invade Turkey or any other state; nor have we sought to impart too favourable a colouring to our portraiture of the government or people of the former empire; but what nation can fail to stand out in a contrast of loveliness, when relieved by the dark and loathsome picture which the Ottoman territory presents to the eye of the observer? It ought not to be forgotten that Russian civilisation (such as it is at this day) is a gain from the empire of barbarism; that the population of that country, however low its condition may now be, was, at no former period, so prosperous, enlightened, or happy, as now; and that its rapid increase in numbers is one of the surest proofs of a salutary government: whilst, on the other side, it must be remembered that Mahometanism has sat, for nearly four centuries, as an incubus upon the fairest and most renowned regions of the earth; and has, during all that period, paralysed the intellectual and moral energies of the noblest portion of the human species; under whose benumbing sway those countries which, in former ages produced Solomon, Homer, Longinus,

and Plato, have not given one poetic genius or man of learning to the world—beneath which the arts have remained unstudied by the descendants of Phidias and Praxiteles; whilst labour has ceased where Alexandria, Tyre, and Colchis formerly flourished, and the accumulation of wealth is unknown in the land where Crœsus himself once eclipsed even the capitalists of the modern world.? If we refer to the criterion afforded by the comparison of numbers, we shall find in the place of the overflowing population which, in former ages poured out from these regions to colonise the rest of the world, nothing but deserted wastes and abandoned cities; and the spectacle of the inhabitants of modern Turkey melting away, whilst history and the yet existing ruins of empires attest the richness and fertility of its soil, affords incontestable proof of the destructive and impoverishing character of the government of Constantinople.

Our object, however, in vindicating Russia from the attacks of prejudice and ignorance, has not been to transfer the national hatred to Turkey, but to neutralise public feeling, by showing that our only wise policy—nay, the only course consistent with the instinct of self-preservation—is to hold ourselves altogether independent of and aloof from the political relations of both these remote and comparatively barbarous nations. England, with her insular territory, her consolidated and free institutions, and her civilised and artificial condition of society, ought not to be, and cannot be, dependent for safety or prosperity upon the conduct of Russia or Turkey; and she will not, provided wisdom governs her counsels, enter into any engagements so obviously to the disadvantage of her people, as to place the peace and happiness of this empire at the mercy of the violence or wickedness of two despotic rulers over savage tribes more than a thousand miles distant from our shores.

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

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

Apply this principle to Russia, which we will suppose had conquered Turkey. Ten years at least of turbulence and bloodshed would elapse before its fierce Mahometan inhabitants submitted to their Christian invaders, which period must be one of continued exhaustion to the nation. Suppose that at the end of that time those plundered possessions became tranquillised, and the government, which had been impoverished by internal troubles, began to reflect and to look abroad for information as to the course of policy it should pursue. England, which had wisely remained at

peace, pursuing its reforms and improvements, would, we have a right to assume, present a spectacle of prosperity, wealth, and power which invariably reward a period of peace. Can there be a doubt that this *example* of the advantages to be derived from labour and improvement over those accruing from bloodshed and rapine, presented in the happiness of the peaceful and the misery of the warlike nation, would determine the future career of Russia in favour of industry and commerce? The mere instinct of self-love and self-preservation must so decide. Had England and all Europe been plunged in war to prevent Russia from effecting her conquest there would have been no such *example* of the fruits and blessings of peace at the close of hostilities as we have here supposed her to present.

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

One word at parting between the author and the reader. This pamphlet, advocating peace, economy, and a moral ascendancy over brute violence, as well as deprecating national antipathies, has, as our excellent and public-spirited publisher will vouch, been written without the slightest view to notoriety or gain (what fame or emolument can accrue from the anonymous publication of an eightpenny work?), and we therefore run no risk of invidious misconception if, in taking leave of our readers, we do so, not with the usual bow of ceremony, but after a fashion of our own. In a word, as trade, and not authorship, is our proper calling, they will, we hope, excuse our attempting to make a bargain with them before we part. And, first, for that very small portion of our friends who will only step out of their way to do an acceptable act provided good and sufficient claims be established against them: they will compel us, then, to remind them that this petty production (which we frankly admit reveals nothing new) contains as much matter as might have been printed in a volume, and sold at above ten times its charge; and, therefore, if those aforesaid customers approve the quality of the article, indifferent as it is, our terms of sale are that they lend this pamphlet to at least six of their acquaintances for perusal. This is the amount of our demand, and as we are dealing with "*good* "men we shall book the debt with the certainty that it will be duly paid.

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

AUTHOR'S NOTE

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

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

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

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

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

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APPENDIX.

Extracts From Various Writers, Illustrative Of The Condition Of Turkey.

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

Turkish Desolation.

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

A victory obtained at Patras was certified to the Sultan by the very intelligible gazette of a waggon loaded with the ears and noses of the slain, which were exposed in a heap to gratify the feelings of pious Mussulmans. Dr. Walsh went to see this ghastly exhibition, which he thus describes in his *Residence in Constantinople:*—"Here I found, indeed, that the Turks did actually take human features as the Indians take scalps, and the trophies of ears, lips, and noses were no fiction. At each side of the gate were two piles, like small haycocks, formed of every portion of the countenance. The ears were generally perforated and hanging on strings. The noses had one lip and a part of the forehead attached to them; the chins had the other, with generally a long

beard. Sometimes the face was cut off whole, and all the features remained together; sometimes it was divided into scraps in all forms of mutilation. It was through these goodly monuments of human glory the Sultan and all his train passed every day, and no doubt were highly gratified by the ghastly aspects they presented; for here they were to remain till they were trampled into the mire of the street. Wherever the heaps were partly trodden down the Turks passed over them with perfect indifference. The features, growing soft by putridity, continually attached themselves to their feet, and frequently a man went off with a lip or a chin sticking to his slippers, which were fringed with human beard as if they were lined with fur. This display I again saw by accident on another occasion, and when you hear of sacks of ears sent to Constantinople you may be sure it is a reality, and not a figure of speech. But you are not to suppose they are always cut from the heads of enemies, and on the particular occasion they are sent to commemorate. The number of Greeks killed at Patras did not exceed perhaps one hundred; but noses, ears, and lips were cut indiscriminately from every skull they could find to swell the amount."

Geography And The Use Of The Globes.

Lord Strangford sent the Porte a valuable present. He had brought with him a pair of very large globes from England, and as the Turks had latterly shown some disposition to learn languages, he thought it would be a good opportunity to teach them something else, and he determined to send them over to the Porte, and asked me to go with them and explain their object. . . . This important present was brought over with becoming respect. A Choreash went first with his bâton of office, then followed two Janissaries, like Atlases, bearing worlds upon their shoulders, then myself, attended by our principal dragoman in full costume, and finally a train of Janissaries and attendants. When arrived at the Porte we were introduced to the *Reis Effendi,* or Minister for Foreign Affairs, who with other ministers were waiting for us. When I had the globes put together on their frames they came round us with great interest, and the Reis Effendi, who thought, *ex officio,* he ought to know something of geography, put on his spectacles and began to examine them. The first thing that struck them was the compass in the stand. When they observed the needle always kept the same position they expressed great surprise, and thought it was done by some interior mechanism. It was midday, and the shadow of the frame of the window was on the floor. I endeavoured to explain to them that the needle was always found nearly in that direction, pointing to the north. I could only make them understand that it always turned towards the sun! The Reis Effendi then asked me to show him England. When I pointed out the small comparative spot on the great globe he turned to the rest and said "Keetchuk" (little), and they repeated all round "Keetchuk," in various tones of contempt. But when I showed them the dependencies of the empire, and particularly the respectable size of India, they said "Beeyuk" with some marks of respect. I also took occasion to show them the only mode of coming from thence to Constantinople by sea, and that a ship could not sail with a cargo of coffee from Mocha across the Isthmus of Suez. The newly appointed dragoman of the Porte, who had been a Jew, and was imbued with a slighter tincture of information, was present, so after explaining to him as much as I could make him comprehend, I left to him the task of further instructing the ministers in this new science. Indeed, it appeared to me as if

none of them had ever seen an artificial globe before, or even a mariner's compass.—*Walsh's Constantinople.*

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

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

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

Nothing can be more gloomy than the appearance of things on entering a Turkish village. It is as quiet as the grave; the streets are narrow; the doors all shut and locked; the windows all latticed; not a human being to be seen in the filthy streets. A growling, half-starved dog, or a bitch with her hopeful progeny, which depend for their subsistence on some depository of filth—is all you meet with of animated nature. You proceed through the inhospitable outskirts, despairing of meeting wherewith to satisfy the calls of nature, or a place of shelter, when you at length arrive at perhaps half-a-dozen filthy little shops of six feet square, in each of which you discover a

solitary, squatting, silent, smoking Turk. He may glance his eyes at you, but will not turn his head: that would be too much trouble. Now, investigate the contents of these shops, and you will find as follows:—five, or, perhaps, six girths, for pack-horses, made of goats' hair; half-a-dozen halters for horses; fifteen or twenty pounds of rancid Russian butter; a small box containing from one to two pounds of salt, and half a pound of ground pepper. A few bars of curd cheese, looking very like Marseilles soap, not much better in taste, and not so good for digestion. One quart of black salt olives; half a pound of sewing twine, cut into needlefuls; one clothes line; half-a-dozen loaves of brown bread; and two bunches of onions, with a string of garlic. Nine times out of ten, you will find this to be the stock in trade of a Turkish village shopkeeper: and, over this, in his pitiful box, will he sit and smoke, day after day, without seeing a purchaser, or apparently caring whether one comes or not. If one calls and asks if he has any particular article, his answer is, simply, without raising his eyes, "Yoke." (No.) "Can you inform me where I may procure the article?" "Yoke." It is of no use to try to get anything more out of him. He is as silent as the grave. If he has the article asked for, he hands it to you, and names the price. When the money is laid on the counter, he merely brushes it with his hand through the hole in the till, and then relapses into his former apathy. No compliments, no "thanks for favours received," no "call again if you please." Not the slightest emotion can be discovered. He never raises his eyes to see who his customer is or was; he sees nothing but the article sold, and the money; and he would disdain to spend a breath or perform an action that was not indispensable to the conclusion of the bargain. . . . . Give a Turk a mat to sleep on, a pipe and a cup of coffee, and you will give him the sum total of all earthly enjoyments.

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

Extract From Lardner's Cabinet CyclopÆdia (History Of Poland).

Lewis. 1370–1382.

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

Hedwig. 1382–1386.

The death of Louis was speedily followed by troubles, raised chiefly by the turbulent nobles. Notwithstanding their oaths in favour of Mary and her husband Sigismund—oaths in return for which they had extorted such great concessions—they excluded both, with the design of extorting still greater from a new candidate. Sigismund advanced to claim his rights. A civil war desolated several provinces.—P. 102.

Casimir IV. 1445–1492.

Under this monarch aristocracy made rapid progress in Poland. When, on the conclnsion of the war he assembled a diet for the purpose of devising means of paying the troops their arrears, it was resolved to resist the demand in a way which should compel him to relinquish it. Hitherto the diets had consisted of isolated nobles, whom the king's summons or their own will had assembled: as their votes were irresponsible and given generally from motives of personal interest or prejudice, the advantage to the order at large had been purely accidental. *Now,* that order resolved to exercise a new and irresistible influence over the executive. As every noble could not attend the diet, yet as every one wished to have a voice in its deliberations, *deputies* were elected to bear the representations of those who could not attend. . . . . What in England was the foundation of rational freedom, was in Poland subversive of all order, all good government: in the former country, representation was devised as a check to feudal aristocracy, which shackled both king and nation; in the latter it was devised by the aristocracy themselves, both to destroy the already too limited prerogatives of the crown, and to rivet the chain of slavery on the whole nation.—Pp. 121–122. . . . . This very diet annulled the humane decree of Casimir the Great, which permitted a peasant to leave his master for ill usage; and enacted that in all cases such peasant might be demanded by his lord; nay, that whoever harboured the fugitive should be visited with a heavy fine. This, and the assumption of judicial authority over their serfs, for peasants they can no longer be called, was a restoration of the worst evils of feudality.—P. 123.

John Albert I. 1492–1506.

Evils of a nature still more to be dreaded menaced the murmuring kingdom. Aided by the Turks and Tartars, the Voivode of Wallachia penetrated into Podolia and Polish Russia, the flourishing towns of which he laid in ashes, and returned with immense booty, and 100,000 captives.—P. 125. . . . . Under his reign, not only was the national independence in great peril, but internal freedom, the freedom of the agricultural class, was annihilated. At the diet of Petrikaus (held in 1496), the selfish aristocracy decreed that henceforth no citizen or peasant should aspire to the ecclesiastical dignities, which they reserved for themselves alone. The peasantry, too, were prohibited from other tribunals than those of their tyrannical masters: they were reduced to the most deplorable slavery.—P. 127.

Alexander. 1501–1506.

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

Sigismund I. 1506–1548.

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

Interregnum. Henry De Valois. 1572–1574.

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

This feeble prince soon sighed for the banks of the Seine; amidst the ferocious people whose authority he was constrained to recognise, and who despised him for his imbecility, he had no hope of enjoyment. . . . . The truth is, no criminal ever longed to flee from his fetters so heartily as Henry from his imperious subjects. . . . . His flight was soon made known. . . . . A pursuit was ordered; but Henry was already on the

lands of the Empire, before he was overtaken by the grand chamberlian, to whom he presented a ring and continued his journey.—P. 157.

Stephen. 1575–1586.

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

During the struggle of Stephen with his rebellious subjects, the Muscovites had laid waste Livonia. To punish their audacity, and wrest from their grasp the conquests they had made during the reign of his immediate predecessor, was now his object. War, however, was more easily declared than made; the treasury was empty, and the nobles refused to replenish it. Of them it might truly be said, that, while they eagerly concurred in any burdens laid on the other orders of the State—on the clergy and the burghers—those burdens they would not so much as touch with one of their fingers. . . . . The Polish nobles were less alive to the glory of their country than to the preservation of their monstrous privileges, which they apprehended might be endangered under so vigilant and able a ruler. . . . . However signal the services which this great prince rendered to the republic, he could not escape the common lot of his predecessors—the jealousy, the opposition, and the hatred of a licentious nobility; nor could he easily quell the tumults which arose among them.—Pp. 158, 160, 161, 165.

Sigismund III. 1586–1632.

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

Uladislas VII. (Vasa.) 1632–1648.

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

. . Obtaining no redress from the diet—the members of which, however jealous of their own liberties, would allow none to the people—they had laid their complaints before the throne of the late monarch, Sigismund III. With every disposition, that monarch was utterly powerless to relieve them: Uladislas was equally well-intentioned, and equally unable to satisfy them. On one occasion the latter prince is said to have replied to the deputies from these sons of the wilderness—"Have you no sabres?" Whether such a reply was given them or not, both sabres and lances were speedily in requisition. Their first efforts were unsuccessful. This failure rather enraged than discouraged them; and their exasperation was increased by the annihilation of their religious hierarchy, of their civil privileges, of their territorial revenues, and by their degradation to the rank of serfs—all which iniquities were done by the diet of nobles 1638. Nay, a resolution was taken, at the same time, to extirpate both their faith and themselves, if they showed any disposition to escape the bondage doomed them. Again they armed, and, by their combination, so imposed on the troops sent to subdue them, that a promise was made them of restoring the privileges which had been so wickedly and so impolitically wrested from them. Such a promise, however, was not intended to be fulfilled; the Cossacks, in revenge, made frequent irruptions into the palatinate of the grand duchy, and no longer prevented the Tartars from similar outrages. Some idea may be formed of the extent of these depredations when it is known that, from the princely domains of one noble alone 30,000 peasants were carried away, and sold as slaves to the Turks and Tartars. Things were in this state, when a new instance of outrageous cruelty, inflicted upon the family of a veteran Cossack, Bogdan Chmielnicki by name—whose valour under the ensigns of the republic was known far beyond the bounds of his nation—spread the flames of insurrection from one end of the Ukraine to the other, and lent fearful force to their intensity. . . . . The bolt of vengeance, so long suspended, at length fell. At the head of 40,000 Tartars, and of many times that number of Cossacks, who had wrongs to be redressed as well as he, and whom the tale of *his* had summoned around him with electric rapidity, he began his fearful march. Two successive armies of the republic, which endeavoured to stem the tide of inundation, were utterly swept away by the torrent; their generals and superior officers led away captives, and 70,000 peasants consigned to hopeless bondage.

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

Interregnum—John Casimir. 1698.

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

Scarcely an evil can be mentioned which did not afflict the kingdom during the eventful reign of this monarch. To the horrors of invasion by so many enemies must now be added those of domestic strife—P. 196. . . . . In this beautiful picture of disasters abroad and anarchy at home—of carnage and misery on every side, the disbanded military now took a prominent part.—P. 197. . . . . In short, the reign of this monarch, while it exhibits a continued succession of the worst evils which have afflicted nations, is unredeemed by a single advantage to the republic; its only distinction is the fearfully accelerated impulse which it gave to the decline of Poland. The fact speaks little either for monarch or diet: but he must not be blamed with undue severity; his heart was better than his head; and both were superior to those of the turbulent, fierce, and ungovernable men who composed a body at once legislative and executive.

Michael. 1668–1673.

The first act of the diet of nobles was to declare that no Polish king should hereafter abdicate; the fetters he might assume were thus rendered everlasting.—P. 199. . . . . At this time, no less than five armed confederacies were opposed to each other—of the great against the king—of the loyal in his favour—of the army in defence of their chief, whom Michael and his party had resolved to try, as implicated in the French party; of the Lithuanians against the Poles; and, finally, of the servants against their masters—the peasants against their lords.—P. 203.

John III. (Sobieski.) 1674–1696.

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

Frederic Augustus. 1696–1733.

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

Frederic Augustus II. 1733–1763.

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

Stanislas Augustus. 1763–1795.

During the few following years, Poland presented the spectacle of a country exhausted alike by its own dissensions and the arms of its enemies. The calm was unusual, and would have been a blessing could any salutary laws have been adopted by the diet. Many such, indeed, were proposed, the most signal of which was the emancipation of the serfs; but the very proposition was received with such indignation by the selfish nobles, that Russian gold was not wanted to defeat the other measures with which it was accompanied—the suppression of the veto, and the establishment of an hereditary monarchy.—P. 242. . . . The republic was thus erased from the list of nations after an existence of near ten centuries. That a country without government (for Poland had none, properly so called, after the extinction of the Jagellos, 1572), without finances, without army, and depending for its existence, year after year, on tumultuous levies, ill-disciplined, ill-armed, and worse paid, should have so long preserved its independence, in defiance, too, of the powerful nations around, and with a great portion of its own inhabitants, whom ages of tyranny had exasperated hostile to its success—is the most astonishing fact in all history. What valour must that have been, which could enable one hundred thousand men to trample on a whole nation naturally prone to revolt, and bid defiance to Europe and Asia—to Christian and Mussulman, both ever ready to invade the republic!—P. 256.

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1793 And 1853, In Three Letters.

"The passions were excited; democratic ambition was awakened; the desire of power under the name of Reform was rapidly gaining ground among the middle ranks, and the institutions of the country were threatened with an overthrow as violent as that which had recently taken place in the French monarchy. In these circumstances, the only mode of checking the evil was by engaging in a foreign contest, by drawing off the ardent spirits into active service, and, in lieu of the modern desire for innovation, rousing the ancient gallantry of the British nation."—*Alison,* vol. iv., p. 7.

NOTE.

Mr. Cobden wrote his pamphlet on Russia mainly to combat the alarm which the supposed policy of that unwieldy empire had excited. It was therefore only natural that, when in 1852–3 the public mind was filled with apprehensions of a French invasion, Mr. Cobden should thoroughly examine the grounds of the panic, and seek to recall the nation to a sense both of what was due to its own dignity and of the misery which could not fail to be provoked by the revival of the ancient distrust and enmity between the two countries. The series of admirable speeches which he delivered at this time will long live in the memory of his countrymen. Mr. Cobden saw a considerable analogy between the epoch of 1793 and that of 1853; for in both the same influences were at work to stimulate the fears of the people, and in both our nearest neighbour was the object of attack. The death of the Duke of Wellington, as well as the elevation of Louis Napoleon to supreme power, contributed to re-awaken the old sentiment of hostility towards France, and therefore, taking a typical sermon on the Iron Duke's death as, to some extent, the text of his pamphlet, Mr. Cobden proceeded to deduce from the authentic history of a former period the lessons which it taught, and to show that whatever might have been the traditions of statesmen, the true interests of both nations were based upon mutual friendship and goodwill.

This pamphlet excited the attention not only of England, but of the civilised world, and gave birth to eager discussions in every European and American journal. It was published, *in extenso,* in the columns of the *Times* and of the *Manchester Examiner.* Some fifty thousand copies of a cheap edition were circulated by the Peace Congress Committee alone. It passed through many editions and its readers must have numbered hundreds of thousands.

The preface which Mr. Cobden wrote for the last edition is reproduced on the following page.

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PREFACE.

The storm of adverse criticism with which the first appearance of this pamphlet was assailed from certain quarters did not surprise me. My censors had joined in the cry of "a French invasion," and my argument would therefore only prove successful in proportion as it impugned their judgment. Unless I could be shown to be wrong, they could not possibly be right. When the accuser is arraigned before the accused, it is not difficult to foresee what the judgment will be. Time can alone arbitrate between me and my opponents; but even they must admit that the three months which have elapsed since I penned these pages have not diminished my chances of a favourable award.

I have endeavoured with all humility to profit by the strictures so liberally bestowed on the historical part of my argument, by correcting any errors into which I might have inadvertently fallen. But I am bound to state that I have not found an excuse for altering a fact, or for adding or withdrawing a single line. I have been charged with an anachronism in having designated the hostilities which terminated in 1815 as "the war of 1793." I must confess that I have regarded this objection as something very like a compliment, in so far at least as it may without presumption be accepted in proof of the difficulties in the way of hostile criticism—for who is ignorant that Napoleon, the genius of that epoch, was brought forth and educated by us—that he, until then an obscure youth, placed his foot upon the first step of the ladder of fame when he drove our forces from Toulon in 1793, and that it was in overcoming the coalitions created by British energy, and subsidised with English gold, that he found occasions for the display of his almost superhuman powers?

It is true that there were brief suspensions of hostilities at the peace, or, more properly speaking, the truce of Amiens, and during Bonaparte's short sojourn at Elba; but even if it were clear that Napoleon's ambition put an end to the peace, it would prove nothing but that he had by the ordinary workings of the moral law been in the meantime raised into a retributive agent for the chastisement of those who were the authors of the original war. I am bound, however, to add that, if we examine the circumstances which led to the renewal of hostilities, after the short intervals of peace, we shall find that our government showed quite as great readiness for war in 1803 and 1815 as they had done in 1793.

R. C.

March 22nd, 1853.

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LETTER I.

Mr. Cobden To The Reverend — —.

My Dear Sir,

—Accept my thanks for your kindness in forwarding me a copy of your sermon upon the death of the Duke of Wellington. I am glad to observe that, like nearly all the commentators upon the achievements of the great warrior, you think it necessary to assume the fact that the war of the French Revolution was on our side defensive in its origin, and had for its object the vindication of the rights and liberties of mankind. A word or two upon that question by-and-by. But let us at least rejoice that, thanks to the progress of the spirit of Christianity, we have so far improved upon the age of Froissart as no longer to lavish our admiration upon warriors regardless of the cause to which they may devote themselves. It is not enough now that a soldier possesses that courage which Gibbon designates "the cheapest and most common quality of human nature," and which a still greater? authority has declared to be the attribute of all men; he must be *morally* right, or he fights without our sympathy; he must present better title-deeds than the record of his exploits written in blood with the point of the sword before he can lay claim to our reverence or admiration. This, at least, is the doctrine now professed, and the profession of such a faith, even if our works do not quite correspond, is an act of homage to an advanced civilisation.

The sermon with which you have favoured me, and which is, I presume, but one of many thousands written in the same spirit, takes still higher ground; it looks forward to the time when the religion of Christ shall have so far prevailed over the wickedness of this world that men will "beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." In the meantime it condemns all war, excepting that which is strictly defensive, and waged in behalf of the dearest interests of humanity; it professes no sympathy for warriors, no admiration for the profession of arms, and sees less glory in the achievements of the most successful soldier than in the calm endurance of the Christian martyr, or the heroism of him who first ventures alone and unarmed as the ambassador of Jesus Christ among the heathen. "But," says the sermon, "an occasion may undoubtedly arise when a resort to arms is necessary to rescue the nations of Europe from a tyrant who has trodden their liberties under foot. At such times God has never failed to raise up an instrument to accomplish the good work. Such an occasion undoubtedly was the usurpation of Napoleon and his deadly hostility to this country, and such an instrument was the Duke of Wellington."

It is impossible to deny that the last extract gives expression to the opinion of the majority of the people of this country—or at least to a majority of those who form opinions upon such matters—as to the origin of the last war.

If we were discussing the wars of the Heptarchy the question would not, as Milton has truly observed, deserve more consideration at our hands than a battle of kites and crows. But the impression that exists in the public mind respecting the origin and history of the last French war may affect the question of peace or war for the future. It is already giving a character to our policy towards the government and people of France. There is a prevalent and active belief among us that that war arose from an unprovoked and unjust attack made upon us; that we were desirous of peace, but were forced into hostilities; that in spite of our pacific intentions our shores were menaced with a French invasion; and that such having been our fate, in spite of all our efforts to avoid a rupture, what so natural as to expect a like treatment from the same quarter in future? and, as a rational deduction from these premises, we call for an increase of our "national defences."

Now so far is this from being a true statement of the case, it is, I regret to say, the very opposite of the truth. I do not hesitate to affirm that nothing was ever more conclusively proved by evidence in a court of law than the fact, resting upon historical documents and official acts, that England was the aggressor in the last French war. It is not enough to say that France did not provoke hostilities. She all but went down on her knees (if I may apply such a phrase to a nation) to avert a rupture with this country. Take one broad fact in illustration of the conduct of the two countries. On the news of the insurrection in Paris on the 10th of August, 1792, reaching this country, our ambassador was immediately recalled, not on the ground that any insult or slight had been offered to him, but on the plea, as stated in the instructions transmitted to him by the foreign minister, a copy of which was presented to Parliament, that the King of France having been deprived of his authority the credentials under which our ambassador had hitherto acted were no longer available; and at the same time we gave the French ambassador at London notice that he would no longer be officially recognised by our government, but could remain in England only in a private capacity. How far the judgment of the present age sanctions the course our government pursued on that occasion may be known by comparing our conduct then with the policy we adopted in 1848, when our ambassador at Paris found no difficulty, after the flight of Louis Philippe, in procuring fresh credentials to the French Republic, and remaining at his post during all the successive changes of rulers, and when our own government hastened to receive the ambassador of France, although he was no longer accredited from a crowned head.

But France being in 1792 already involved in a war with Austria and Prussia, whose armies were marching upon her frontiers, and menaced at the same time by Russia, Sweden, Spain, and Sardinia, being in fact assailed openly or covertly by all the despotic powers of the Continent, nothing was so much to be dreaded by her as a maritime war with England, for which, owing to the neglected state of her navy, she was wholly unprepared.? By the Treaty of 1786, which then regulated the intercourse of the two countries, it was stipulated that the recalling or sending away their respective ambassadors or ministers should be deemed to be equivalent to a declaration of war between the two countries. Instead of seizing the opportunity of a rupture afforded by the conduct of England, the French Government redoubled their efforts to maintain peace. Their ambassador remained in London from August till the January following, in his private capacity, holding frequent correspondence with our

foreign minister, Lord Grenville, submitting to any condition, however humiliating, in order to procure a hearing, and not even resenting the indignity of having had two of his letters returned to him, one of them through the medium of a clerk in the Foreign Office. At length, upon the receipt of the intelligence of the execution of Louis XVI., the French ambassador received, on the 24th January, 1793, from Lord Grenville, an order of the Privy Council peremptorily requiring him to leave the kingdom in eight days.

The sole ground alleged by the British Government for this step was the execution of the French King. England,† which had 140 years before been the first to set the example to Europe of decapitating a monarch, England which, as is observed by Madame de Stael, has dethroned, banished, and executed more kings than all the rest of Europe, was suddenly seized with so great a horror for regicides, as to be unable to tolerate the presence of the French ambassador!

The war which followed is said by the sermon before me to have been in defence of the liberties of Europe. Where are they? *Circumspice!*—I can only say that I have sought for them from Cadiz to Moscow without having been so fortunate as to find them. When shall we be proof against the transparent appeal to our vanity involved in the "liberties-of-Europe" argument? We had not forty thousand British troops engaged on one field of battle on the Continent during the whole war. Yet we are taught to believe that the nations of Europe, numbering nearly two hundred millions, owe their liberty to our prowess. If so, no better proof could be given that they are not worthy of freedom.

But, in truth, the originators of the war never pretended that they were fighting for the liberties of the people anywhere. Their avowed object was to sustain the old governments of Europe. The advocates of the war were not the friends of popular freedom even at home. The Liberal party were ranged on the side of peace—Lansdowne, Bedford, and Lauderdale, in the Lords; and Fox, Sheridan, and Grey, in the Commons—were the strenuous opponents of the war. They were sustained out of doors by a small minority of intelligent men who saw through the arts by which the war was rendered popular. But (and it is a mournful fact) the advocates of peace were clamoured down, their persons and property left insecure, and even their families exposed to outrage at the hands of the populace. Yes, the whole truth must be told, for we require it to be known, as some safeguard against a repetition of the same scenes; the mass of the people, then wholly uneducated, were instigated to join in the cry for war against France. It is equally true, and must be remembered, that when the war had been carried on for two years only, and when its effects had been felt, in the high price of food, diminished employment, and the consequent sufferings of the working classes, crowds of people surrounded the King's carriage, as he proceeded to the Houses of Parliament, shouting, "Bread, bread! peace, peace!"

But, to revert to the question of the merits of the last French war. The assumption put forth in the sermon that we were engaged in a strictly defensive war is, I regret to say, historically untrue. If you will examine the proofs, as they exist in the unchangeable public records, you will be satisfied of this. And let us not forget that our history will ultimately be submitted to the judgment of a tribunal, over which Englishmen will

exercise no influence beyond that which is derived from the truth and justice of their cause, and from whose decision there will be no appeal. I allude, of course, to the collective wisdom and moral sense of future generations of men. In the case before us, however, not only are we constrained by the evidence of facts to confess that we were engaged in an aggressive war, but the multiplied avowals and confessions of its authors and partisans themselves leave no room to doubt that they entered upon it to put down *opinions* by physical force, one of the worst, if not the very worst, of motives with which a people can embark in war. The question, then, is, shall we, in estimating the glory of the general who commands in such a war, take into account the antecedent merits of the war itself? The question is answered by the sermon before me, and by every other writer upon the subject, professing to be under the influence of Christian principles; they all assume, as the condition precedent, that England was engaged in a defensive war.

There are two ways of judging the merits of a soldier; the one, by regarding solely his genius as a commander, excluding all considerations of the justice of the cause for which he fights. This is the ancient mode of dealing with the subject, and is still followed by professional men, and others of easy consciences in such matters. These critics will, for example, recognise a higher title to glory, in the career of Suwarrow than in that of Kosciusko, because the former gained the greater number of important victories.

There is another and more modern school of commentators which *professes* to withhold its admiration from the deeds of the military hero, unless they be performed in defence of justice and humanity. With these the patriot Pole is greater than the Russian general, because his cause was just, he having been obviously engaged in a defensive contest, and contending, too, for the dearest rights of home, family, and country.

Now, the condition which I think we may fairly impose upon the latter description of judges is, that they take the needful trouble to inform themselves of the merits of the cause in hand, so as to be competent to give a conscientious judgment upon it. In the case of the Duke of Wellington, the wars which he carried on with so much ability and success on the Continent, were in their character precisely the opposite of that upon which the sermon ought, according to its own principle, to invoke the approbation of Heaven.

The Duke himself did not evidently recognise the responsibility of the commander for the moral character of his campaigns. His theory of “duty” gave him military absolution, and separated most completely the man from the soldier.

Some of the Duke's biographers have hardly done him justice, in the sense in which they have eulogised him for the strict performance of his duty. Nor have they acted with more fairness towards their countrymen, for, by implication, they would lead us to infer that it is an exception to the rule when an Englishman does his duty. In the vulgar meaning they have attached to this trait in his character, they have lowered him to the level of the humblest labourer who does his duty for weekly wages. *Duty* with the Duke meant something more. It was a professional principle—the military code

expressed in one word. He was always subordinate to some higher authority, and acted from an impulse imparted from without; just as an army surrenders will, reason, and conscience to some one who exercises all these powers in its behalf. Sometimes it was the Queen; sometimes the public service; or the apprehension of a civil war; or a famine which changed his course, and induced him to take up a new position; but reason, or conscience, or will, seemed to have no more to do in the matter than in the manœuvres of an army. We did not know to his death what were the Duke's convictions upon Free Trade, Reform, or Catholic Emancipation. In his public capacity he never seemed to ask himself—what *ought* I to do? but what *must* I do? This principle of subordination, which is the very essence of military discipline, is at the same time the weak part and blot of the system. It deprives us of the man, and gives us instead a machine; but one requiring power of some description to move it. The best that can be said of it is, that when honestly adhered to, as in the case of the Duke, it protects us against the attempts of individual selfishness or ambition. He would never have betrayed his trust, so long as he could find a power to whom he was responsible. *That* was the only point upon which he could have ever felt any difficulty. Had he been, like Monk, in the command of an army in times of political confusion, he would have gone to London to discover the legal heir to his "duty," whether it was the son of the Protector, or the remains of the Rump Parliament; but he would never have dreamed of selling himself to a Pretender, even had he been the son of a king. Should the time ever come (which Heaven forbid!) when the work which the Duke achieved needs to be repeated, it is not likely that there will be found one who will surpass him in the ability, courage, honesty, and perseverance which he brought to the accomplishment of the task. But amongst all his high merits—and they place him in dignity and moral worth immeasurably above Marlborough or even Nelson—he would have been probably the last to have claimed for himself the title of the champion of the liberties of any people. No attentive reader of his despatches will fall into any such delusion as to his own views of his mission to the Peninsula. Or if any doubt still remain, let him consult the classic pages of Napier.

Let me only refer you to the accompanying extracts from the "History of the Peninsular War":—

"But the occult source of most of these difficulties is to be found in the inconsistent attempts of the British Cabinet to uphold national independence with internal slavery against foreign aggression with an ameliorated government. The clergy, who led the mass of the people, clung to the English, because they supported aristocracy and church domination. ? ? ? The English ministers hating Napoleon, not because he was the enemy of England, but because he was the champion of equality, cared not for Spain unless her people were enslaved. They were willing enough to use a liberal Cortes to defeat Napoleon, but they also desired to put down that Cortes by the aid of the clergy, and of the bigoted part of the people."—Vol. iv., p. 259.

"It was some time before the church and aristocratic party discovered that the secret policy of England was the same as their own. It was so, however, even to the upholding of the Inquisition, which it was ridiculously asserted had become objectionable only in name."—Vol. iv., p. 350.

I could also refer you to another instructive passage (vol. iii., p. 271), telling us, amongst other things, that the "educated classes of Spain shrunk from the British Government's known hostility to all free institutions." But I have carried my letter already to an unreasonable length, and so I conclude.—Yours faithfully, Richard Cobden.

To The Reverend ——

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LETTER II.

Mr. Cobden To The Reverend — —.

My Dear Sir,

—You asked me to direct you to the best sources of information for those particulars of the origin of the French war to which I briefly alluded in my last letter. What an illustration does this afford of our habitual neglect of the most important part of history, namely, that which refers to our own country, and more immediately affects the destinies of the generation to which we belong! If you *feel* at a loss for the facts necessary for forming a judgment upon the events of the last century, how much more inaccessible must that knowledge be to the mass of the people. In truth, modern English history is a tabooed study in our common schools, and the young men of our Universities acquire a far more accurate knowledge of the origin and progress of the Punic and Peloponnesian wars than of the wars of the French Revolution.

The best record of facts, and especially of State papers, referring to our modern history is to be found in the *Annual Register.* These materials have been digested by several writers. The *Pictorial History of England* is not conveniently arranged for reference; and, although the facts are carefully given, the opinions, with reference to the events in question, have a strong Tory bias. The earliest and latest periods of this history are written in a liberal and enlightened spirit; but that portion which embraces the American and French revolutions fell somehow under the control of politicians of a more contracted and bigoted school. Alison, of whose views and principles I shall not be expected to approve, has given the best narrative of the events which followed the French Revolution down to the close of the war. His work, which has passed through many editions, is admirably arranged for reference. Scott's *Life of Napoleon* is the most readable book upon the subject, but not the most reliable for facts and figures.

But if you would really understand the motives with which we embarked upon the last French war, you must turn to Hansard, and read the debates in both Houses of Parliament upon the subject from 1791 to 1796. This has been with me a favourite amusement; and I have culled many extracts which are within reach. Shall I put them together for you? They may probably be of use beyond the purposes of a private letter. But there is one condition for which I will stipulate. There must be a very precise and accurate attention to dates in order to understand the subject in hand. Banish from your mind all vague floating ideas arising out of a confusion of events extending over the twenty-two years of war. Our business lies with the interval from 1789, when the Constituent Assembly of France met, till 1793, when war commenced between England and France. Bear in mind we are now merely investigating the origin and cause of the rupture between the two countries.

The ten years from the close of the American war in 1783 to the commencement of the war with France in 1793, was a period of remarkable prosperity. To the astonishment of all parties the separation of the American Colonies, which had been dreaded as the signal for our national ruin, was followed by an increased commercial intercourse with the mother country. The mechanical inventions connected with the cotton trade and other manufactures, and the recent improvement in the steam engine, were adding rapidly to our powers of production; and the consequent demand for labour, and accumulation of capital diffused general comfort and well-being throughout the land. Such a state of things always tends to produce political contentment, and never were the people of this country less disposed to seek for reforms, still less to think of revolution, than when the attention of Europe was first drawn to the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly of France in 1789. The startling reforms effected by that body, and the captivating appeals to first principles made by its orators, soon attracted the sympathies of a certain class of philosophical reformers in this country, who, followed by a few of the more intelligent and speculative amongst the artisan class in the towns, began to take an active interest in French politics. Amongst the most influential of the leaders of this party were Doctor Price and Doctor Priestley, and the Dissenters generally were ranked amongst their adherents. But the great mass of the population were strongly, almost fanatically, on the side of the Church, which was of course opposed to the doctrines of the French Assembly; the spirit of hostility to Dissenters broke forth in many parts of the country, and in Birmingham and other manufacturing places it led to riots, and a considerable destruction of property. "It was not," said Mr. Fox,? "in his opinion a republican spirit that we had to dread in this country; there was no tincture of republicanism in the country. If there was any prevailing tendency to riot, it was on the other side. It was the High Church spirit, and an indisposition to all reform which marked more than anything else the temper of the times."

Such was the state of the public mind when Mr. Burke published his celebrated *Reflections on the French Revolution,* a work which produced an instant and most powerful effect not only in England, but upon the governing classes on the Continent. This production was given to the world in 1790: the date is all important; for bear in mind that the Constituent Assembly had then been sitting for a year only; that its labours had been directed to the effecting of reforms compatible with the preservation of a limited monarchy; and that such men as Lafayette and Necker had been taking a lead in its deliberations. Do not confound in your mind the proceedings of this body with those of the Legislative Assembly which succeeded to it the next year; or the National Convention which followed the year after. Do not disturb your fancy with thoughts of the Reign of Terror: *that* did not begin till four years later. Burke's great philippic contains no complaint of the Constituent Assembly having interfered with us, or meditated forcing its reforms upon other countries. It gives utterance to no suspicion of a warlike tendency on the side of the French. On the contrary, the author of the *Reflections,* in a speech upon the army estimates in the House of Commons on the 9th of February of this year (1790), declared that "the French army was rendered an army for every other purpose than that of defence;" describing the French soldiers "as base hireling mutineers, and mercenary sordid deserters, wholly destitute of any honourable principle;" alleging, on the same occasion, "that France is at this time in a political light to be considered as expunged out of the system of Europe;" and he

asserted that the French "had done their business for us as rivals in a way in which twenty Ramilies or Blenheims could never have done it."

What, then, was the ground on which he assailed the French Government with a force of invective that drew from Fox six years later the following tribute to its fatal influence?

"In a most masterly performance, he has charmed all the world with the brilliancy of his genius, fascinating the country with the powers of his eloquence, and in as far as that cause went to produce this effect, plunged the country into all the calamities consequent upon war. I admire the genius of the man, and I admit the integrity and usefulness of his long public life; I cannot, however, but lament that his talents, when in my opinion they were directed most beneficially to the interest of his country, produced very little effect, and that when he espoused sentiments different from those which I hold to be wise and expedient, then his exertions should have been crowned with a success that I deplore."

Read this famous performance again; and then, having freed your mind from the effects of its gorgeous imagery, and fascinating style, ask yourself what grounds it affords, what facts it contains to justify even an angry remonstrance, still less to lead to a war. From beginning to end it is an indictment against the representatives of the French people, for having presumed to pursue a course, in a strictly domestic matter, contrary to what Mr. Burke and the English, who are assumed to be infallible judges, held to be the wisest policy. Everything is brought to the test of our own practice, and condemned or approved in proportion as it is in opposition to or in harmony with British example. The Constituent Assembly is charged with robbery, usurpation, imposture, cheating, violence, and tyranny, for presuming to abolish the law of primogeniture, or appropriate their Church lands to secular purposes, making religion a charge upon the State; or limit to a greater degree than ourselves the prerogative of the Crown; or establish universal suffrage as the basis of their representation; changes which however unsuitable they may have been to the habits and dispositions of Englishmen were yet such as have not been found incompatible with the prosperity of the people of America, and which to a large extent are practically applied to the government of our own colonies.

But let us see what was done besides by this Assembly. Liberty of religious worship to its fullest extent was secured; torture abolished; trial by jury and publicity of courts of law were established; *lettres-de-cachet* abolished; the nobles and clergy made liable in common with other classes to taxation; the most oppressive imposts, such as those on salt, tobacco, *the taille,* &c., suppressed; the feudal privileges of the nobles extinguished; access to the superior ranks of the army, heretofore monopolised by the privileged class, made free to all; and the same rule applied to all civil employments.

I dwell on these particulars, because it was from this sweeping list of reforms, effected by the Constituent Assembly of France, and the sympathy which they excited amongst the more active and intelligent of our liberal politicians, that the war between the two countries really sprung. It was not to put down the Reign of Terror that we entered upon hostilities. That would have been no legitimate object for a war. But the

Reign of Terror did not commence till nearly a year after the war began. Our indignation was not excited to blows in 1793, by the madness which afterwards possessed the National Convention, and which manifested itself in the alteration of the Calendar, the abolition of Christianity, and, finally, in the deposition of the Deity Himself. These were the consequences, not the causes of war. No, the war was entered upon to prevent the contagion of those principles which were put forth in such captivating terms in 1789 and 1790 by the Constituent Assembly of France. The ruling class in England took alarm at a revolution going on in a neighbouring state where the governing body had abolished all hereditary titles, appropriated the Church lands to State purposes, and decreed universal suffrage as the basis of the representative system. "If," says Alison,? "the changes in France were regarded with favour by one, they were looked on with utter horror by another class of the community. The majority of the aristocratic body, all the adherents of the Church, all the holders of office under the Monarchy, in general, the great bulk of the opulent ranks of society, beheld them with apprehension or aversion."

From this moment the friends and opponents of the French Revolution formed themselves into opposing parties, whose conduct, says Sir W. Scott,† resembled that of rival factions at a play, who hiss and applaud the actors on the stage as much from party spirit as from real critical judgment; while every instant increases the probability that they will try the question by actual force. Strange that to neither party should it have occurred that to the twenty-four millions of Frenchmen interested in the issue, might be left the task of framing their own government, without the intervention of the people of England; and that the circumstance of a peculiar form of Constitution having been found suitable for one country, did not necessarily prove that it would be acceptable to the other!

But the Revolution in France produced a more decisive impression on the despotic powers of the Continent. As soon as the democratic measures of the Constituent Assembly were accomplished, and the powers of the King made subordinate to the will of the representative body, the neighbouring potentates took the alarm, and began to concert measures for enabling Louis XVI. to recover at least a part of his lost prerogatives. The Emperor of Germany, Leopold, the most able and enlightened Sovereign of Europe, who, as Grand Duke of Tuscany had carried out many of those great economical and legal reforms which constitute the pride of modern statesmen, took the lead in these unwarrantable acts of intervention in the affairs of the French people. His relationship to the Queen of Louis XVI. (for they were both the offspring of Maria Theresa) afforded, however, an amiable plea for his conduct, which was not shared by his Royal confederates. Almost every crowned head on the Continent was now covertly or openly conspiring against the principle of self-government in France; and even the Sovereign of England, under the title of King of Hanover, was supposed to be represented at some of their private conferences. The result was the famous Declaration of Pilnitz, put forth in the names of the Emperor and the King of Prussia, in which they declared conjointly, "That they consider the situation of the King of France as a matter of common interest to all the European Sovereigns. They hope that the reality of that interest will be duly appreciated by the other powers, whose assistance they will invoke, and that in consequence, they will not decline to employ their forces conjointly with their Majesties, in order to put the King of France in a

situation to lay the foundation of a monarchical government, conformable alike to the rights of Sovereigns and the well-being of the French nation. In that case, the Emperor and the King are resolved to act promptly with the forces necessary to attain their common end. In the meantime, they will give the requisite orders for their troops to hold themselves in immediate readiness for active service."

It is all-important to observe the date of this Declaration—August 27, 1791—for upon the date depends entirely the question whether France or the Allied Powers were the authors and instigators of the war. Up to this period the French were wholly engrossed in their own internal reforms, and had not given the slightest ground for suspecting that they meditated an act of hostility against any foreign power. "Whilst employed in the extension and security of her liberties," says Mr. Baines, in his able and candid history of these events, "amidst the struggle with a reluctant monarch, a discontented priesthood, and a hostile nobility, she was menaced at the same time by a sudden and portentous combination of the two great military states—Prussia under the dominion of Frederic William, and Austria under the Emperor Leopold, brother to Marie Antoinette, queen of France." The French were wholly unprepared for war. Not only were their finances in a ruinous state—the army had fallen into disorder; for whilst the common soldiers were enthusiastic partisans of the Revolution, the officers, who were all of the class of nobles, were often its violent enemies, and many of them had fled the kingdom. Great as was at that time the dread of French principles, no foreign power felt any fear of the physical force of France; for everybody shared the opinion of Burke, that that country had reduced itself to a state of abject weakness by its revolutionary excesses.

But the best proof that the French Government had not given any good ground of offence to foreign powers, is to be found in the fact that the declaration of the Allied Sovereigns contains no complaint of the kind. Their sole object, as avowed by them in this and subsequent manifestoes, was to restore the King to the prerogatives of which he had been deprived by his people. It needs no argument now to prove that this threat of an armed intervention in the internal affairs of France was tantamount to a declaration of war. Compare this conduct of the despotic powers in 1791 with the abstinence from all interference—nay, the punctilious disavowal of all right to interfere—in the domestic affairs of France in 1848, when the changes in the government of that country were of a far more sudden and startling character than those which had taken place at the time of the Declaration of Pilnitz.

These proceedings of the Allied Powers were not sufficient to divert the French from the all-absorbing domestic struggle in which they were involved. No acts of hostility immediately followed. The wise Leopold, who wished to support the authority of the King of France by other means than war, now exerted himself to assemble a congress of all the great powers of Europe, with a view to agree to a form of government for France. Whilst busying himself with this scheme, death put a sudden close to his reign, and his less prudent and pacific successor soon brought matters to extremities. In the meantime Russia, Sweden, Sardinia, and Spain, assumed a more and more hostile attitude towards France. It was, however, from the side of Germany where twenty thousand emigrant French nobles were menacing their native country with invasion, that the chief danger was apprehended; and it was to the Emperor that the

French Government addressed itself for a categorical explanation of its intentions. The note in answer demanded the re-establishment of the French monarchy on the basis which had been rejected by the nation in 1789; it required the restoration of the Church lands, part of which had been sold; and it ignored all that had been done by the Constituent Assembly during the last two years. But I will give a description of the Note by one whose leaning to the French will not be suspected.? "The demands of the Austrian Court went now, when fully explained, so far back upon the Revolution, that a peace negotiated upon such terms must have laid France and all its various parties (with the exception of a few of the First Assembly) at the "foot of the sovereign, and, what might be more dangerous, at the mercy of the restored emigrants." The consequences of this Note may be described in the language of the same author. "The Legislative Assembly received these extravagant terms as an insult on the national dignity; and the King, whatever might be his sentiments as an individual, could not, on this occasion, dispense with the duty his office as constitutional monarch imposed on him. Louis, therefore, had the melancholy task of proposing† to an Assembly filled with the enemies of his throne and person, a declaration of war against his brother-in-law‡ the Emperor."

Thus began a war which, if not the longest, was the bloodiest and most costly that ever afflicted mankind. Whatever faults or crimes may be fairly chargeable upon the French nation for the excesses and cruelties of the Revolution up to this time (April, 1792) it cannot be with justice made responsible for the commencement of the war. What *might* have happened if foreign governments had abstained from all interference, has frequently been a topic of speculation and hypothetical prophecy with those who, whilst admitting that the French were not the aggressors, are yet unwilling to allow that war could have been avoided. If such speculations were worth pursuing, surely the experience we have since had in France and other countries would lead to the conclusion that a nation, if unmolested from without, is never so little prone to meddle with its neighbours as when involved in the difficulties, dangers, and embarrassments of an internal revolution. But we have to deal with facts and experiences, and they prove that in the case before us France was the aggrieved, and not the aggressive, party.

It is true that France was the first to *declare* war; which is a proof that she had more respect for the usages and laws of nations than her enemies; for they were making formidable preparations for an invasion, under the plea of restoring order, and re-establishing the King on his throne, with the view, as they pretended, of benefiting the French people. They would not have declared war against France, but against the oppressors of France, as they chose to term the Legislative Assembly. The resistance they met with proved that they were opposed by the whole French nation; and, therefore, the only plea put forth in their justification fails them in the hands of the historian.

On the 25th July following, the Duke of Brunswick, when, on the eve of invading France, with an army of 80,000 Austrian and Prussian troops, and a formidable band of emigrant French nobles, issued a manifesto, in the name of Austria and Prussia, in which he states his conviction that "the majority of the inhabitants of France wait with impatience the moment when succour shall arrive, to declare themselves openly

against the odious enterprises of their oppressors." To afford a full knowledge of the objects of the invaders, and of the atrocious spirit which animated them, I give the following extract from the 8th article of this manifesto:—

"The city of Paris and all its inhabitants, without distinction, shall be called upon to submit instantly, and without delay, to the King, to set that prince at full liberty, and to ensure to him and all the royal persons that inviolability and respect which are due, *by the laws of nature* and of all nations, to sovereigns; their Imperial and Royal Majesties making personally responsible for all events, on pain of losing their heads, pursuant to military trials, without hope of pardon, all the members of the National Assembly, of the Departments, of the Districts, of the Municipality, and of the National Guards of Paris, Justices of the Peace, and others whom it may concern. And their Imperial and Royal Majesties further declare, on the faith and word of Emperor and King, that if the palace of the Tuileries be forced or insulted, if the least violence be offered, the least outrage done, their Majesties, the King, the Queen, and the Royal Family, if they be not immediately placed in safety, and set at liberty, they will inflict on those who shall deserve it the most exemplary and ever memorable avenging punishment, *by giving up the city of Paris to military execution, and exposing it to total destruction.*"

In an additional declaration, published two days later, after declaring that he makes no alteration in the 8th article of the former manifesto, he adds, in case the King, Queen, or any member or the Royal Family should be carried off by any of the factions, that "all the places and towns whatsoever, which shall not have opposed their passage, and shall not have stopped their proceeding, *shall incur the same punishments as those inflicted on the inhabitants of Paris;* and the route which shall be taken by those who carry off the King and the Royal Family shall be marked with a series of exemplary punishments, justly due to the authors and abettors of crimes for which there is no remission."

Let it be borne in mind that these proclamations, worthy of Timoor or Attila, were issued at a moment when Louis XVI. was still exercising the functions of a Constitutional Sovereign in France; for it was not till the 10th of August that his palace was assailed by the armed populace, and he and his family were consigned to a prison. And here, in taking leave of the belligerents on the Continent—for my task is confined to the investigation of the origin, and not the progress of the war—let it be observed that there is not a writer, whether French or English, who, in recording historically the dismal catalogue of crimes which from this time for a period of three years disgraced the domestic annals of France, does not attribute the ferocity of the people, and the atrocities committed by them, in a large degree, to the proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick, and the subsequent invasion of the French territory.

There is nothing so certain to extinguish the magnanimity, which is the natural attribute of great multitudes of men, conscious of their strength, as the suspicion of treachery on the part of those to whom they are opposed. It is under the excitement of this passion that the most terrible sacrifices to popular vengeance have been made. The names of De Witt and Artevelde are remarkable among the victims to popular suspicion. But never was this feeling excited to such a state of frenzy as in Paris on

the first news of the successes of the invading armies. The King, the nobility, the clergy, and all the opulent classes were suspected of being in correspondence with the foreigner; and the terrors of the populace pictured the Austrians already at the gates of Paris, and the royalists pouring forth to welcome them and to offer their aid in the vengeance which was to follow. It was under this impression of treachery that the horrible massacre of the political prisoners, on the 2nd of September, took place.

But I prefer to give the testimony of a writer who will have little sympathy, probably, for the main argument of this letter:

"No doubt," says Alison,? "can now exist that the interference of the Allies augmented the horrors and added to the duration of the Revolution. All its bloodiest excesses were committed during or after an alarming, but unsuccessful, invasion by the allied forces. The massacres of September 2nd were perpetrated when the public mind was excited to the highest degree by the near approach of the Duke of Brunswick, and the worst days of the government of Robespierre were immediately after the defection of Dumourier and the battle of Nerwinde threatened the rule of the Jacobins with destruction. Nothing but a sense of public danger could have united the factions who then strove with so much exasperation against each other; the peril of France alone could have induced the people to submit to the sanguinary rule which so long desolated its plains. The Jacobins maintained their ascendancy by constantly representing their cause as that of national independence, by stigmatising their enemies as the enemies of the country; and the patriots wept and suffered in silence, lest by resistance they should weaken the state and cause France to be erased from among the nations."

If facts have any logical bearing upon human affairs, I think I have shown that the war was provoked by the allied powers. Let us now turn to the part performed by England in the events which followed.

From the moment of the appearance of Burke's famous *Reflections* in 1790, the character, objects, and proceedings of the Constituent Assembly occupied every day more intensely the attention of the English public. The country took sides, and politicians attacked or defended, according to their own views and aspirations, the conduct of the leaders of the Revolution. Not only were the columns of the newspapers occupied with this all-engrossing topic, but the press teemed with pamphlets and volumes in support of, or in opposition to, Burke's production. The most masterly of the latter class was the *Vindiciæ Galliæ* of Sir James Macintosh, which advocated the fundamental principles of freedom and humanity with a far closer logic and a style scarcely less attractive than that of his great opponent. By degrees the character of the liberal party, comprising the Whigs and Dissenters, became involved to some extent in the fate of the Revolution, and their opponents took care to heap upon them all the odium which attached to the disorders and excesses of the French people. When the Jacobins, as the ultra party were nicknamed, became powerful in France, that detestable name was assigned to the English reformers by their Tory enemies, who, holding as they did the stamp of fashion in their hands, could give general currency to their damaging epithets.

But gradually, and almost imperceptibly, a change came over the character of the controversy. In a couple of years the tone of the dominant classes had altered, first from cold criticism upon the Revolution to fierce invectives, then to menaces, and finally to the cry for war, until at last the Tories and Liberals, instead of being merely contending commentators upon French politics were involved in a fierce contest with each other upon the question of peace or war with the government of France. From that time all that remained of the liberal party, thinned as it was by defection, and headed heroically by Fox, ranged themselves on the side of peace. "The cry of peace," said Windham? (Secretary at War), "proceeded from the Jacobin party in this country, and although every one who wished for peace was not a Jacobin, yet every Jacobin wished for peace."

There is every reason to suppose that Pitt† would have individually preferred peace. By a commercial treaty which he had entered into with France a few years previously he had greatly extended the trading relations of the two countries, and it is known that he was bent upon some important plans of financial and commercial reform. Upon the meeting of Parliament in 1792, he proposed reduced estimates for our military establishments, and nothing boded the approach of war. The governing class in this country shared the opinions of Mr. Burke as to the powerless condition to which France had reduced herself by her internal convulsion. A veteran army of nearly 100,000 men, under experienced generals, was preparing to invade that country, which, torn by civil strife, with a bankrupt exchequer, and with the court, aristocracy, and clergy secretly favouring the enemy, seemed to offer a certain triumph to its assailants. Little doubt was felt that one campaign would "restore order" to France.

But the Duke of Brunswick's atrocious proclamation had produced upon the French people an effect very different from that which was expected. It is thus described by Alison:? "A unanimous spirit of resistance burst forth in every part of France. The military preparations were redoubled; the ardour of the multitude was raised to the highest pitch. The manifesto of the allied powers was regarded as unfolding the real designs of the court and the emigrants. Revolt against the throne appeared the only mode of maintaining their liberties or preserving their independence; the people of Paris had no choice between victory or death."

The campaign which followed proved disastrous to the invaders, and in September the Duke of Brunswick was in full retreat from French territory. Soon afterwards Dumourier gained the battle of Jemmappes, and took possession of the Austrian Netherlands. On the Rhine and the frontier of Savoy the French armies were also successful.

An instantaneous change of policy now took place in England. The Government had looked on in silence, or with merely an occasional protestation of neutrality, whilst the allied armies were preparing to invade, and, as everybody believed, to occupy the French territory. But no sooner did the news of French victories arrive than the tone of our ministers instantly changed, and even Pitt, with all his cautiousness, was so thrown off his guard, that he disclosed the true object of the war which followed:—

"Those opinions," said he,? "which the French entertained, were of the most dangerous nature; they were opinions professed by interest, inflamed by passion, propagated by delusion, which their success had carried to the utmost excess, and had contributed to render still more dangerous. For, would the Right Honourable Gentleman tell him that the French opinions received no additional weight from the success of their armies? Was it possible to separate between the progress of their opinions and the success of their armies? It was evident that the one must influence the other, and that the diffusion of their principles must keep pace with the extent of their victories. He was not afraid of the progress of French principles in this country, unless the defence of the country should be previously undermined by the introduction of those principles."

And in the same speech he thus particularises the objects of his solicitude:—

"They had seen, within two or three years, a revolution in France, founded upon principles which were inconsistent with every regular government, which were hostile to hereditary monarchy, to nobility, to all the privileged orders, and to every sort of popular representation, short of that which would give to every individual a voice in the election of representatives."

The militia was now suddenly embodied, and Parliament was summoned to meet on the 13th of December. Before, however, we refer to this, the closing scene of the peace, it is necessary for a correct understanding of our relationship with France to take a review of the correspondence which was at the same time going on between our Foreign Secretary and M. Chauvelin, the French ambassador at London. Here again, we must pay particular attention to dates.?

The correspondence commences with a letter, dated May 12, 1792, from M. Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, explaining the cause of the war between France and the Emperor, and complaining in the name of the King of the French that the Emperor Leopold had promoted a great conspiracy against France.

On the 18th June, 1792, M. Chauvelin alludes at greater length, in a letter to Lord Grenville, to the coalition formed on the Continent against France, and asks the British Government to exert its influence to stop the progress of that confederacy, and especially "to dissuade from all accession to this project all those of the allies of England whom it may be wished to draw into it!"

In reply to this letter, Lord Grenville declines to interfere with the allies of this country, to put an end to the confederacy against France, alleging that "the intervention of his counsels or of his good offices cannot be of use unless they should be desired by all the parties interested." [In direct contradiction to his, was the following passage in the King's speech, January 31, of this very year, 1792, on opening the session:—"Our intervention has also been employed with a view to promote a pacification between the Empress of Russia and the Porte; and conditions have been agreed upon *between us and the former of these powers which we undertook to recommend to the Porte,* as the re-establishment of peace on such terms

appeared to be, under all the circumstances, a desirable event for the general interests of Europe."]

On the news of the dethronement of the King of France in August, M. Chauvelin received notice, as has been before seen, that he would no longer be recognised by the English Government in his official character; and there was an interval of several months during which the correspondence was suspended. On the 13th December, as before stated, Parliament was hastily assembled: the King's speech announced that the militia had been embodied, and recommended an increase of the army and navy; it complained of the aggressive conduct of the French, and their disregard of the rights of neutral nations. [Not a syllable had been said in disapproval of the conduct of the allied powers when they began the unprovoked attack on France, an attack the complete failure of which was now known in England.] The speeches of the ministers and the majority in Parliament, in the debate on the address, were of a most warlike character. On the 27th of December, 1792, after these occurrences (do not for a moment lose sight of the dates), M. Chauvelin renews the correspondence with Lord Grenville. He begins by saying that he makes his communication at the request of his own Government. After adducing the fact of his having remained in England since August, notwithstanding the recall of our ambassador Lord Gower from Paris, as "a proof of the desire the French Government had to live on good terms with his Britannic Majesty," he proceeds to complain that "a character of ill-will to which he is yet unwilling to give credit," has been observable in the measures recently adopted by the British Government, and he asks whether France ought to consider England as a neutral power or an enemy. "But in asking from the ministers of his Britannic Majesty a frank and open explanation as to their intentions with regard to France, the Executive Council of the French Government is unwilling they should have the smallest remaining doubt as to the disposition of France towards England, and as to its desire of remaining at peace with her; it has ever been desirous of answering beforehand all the reproaches which they may be tempted to make in justification of a rupture." He then proceeds to offer explanations upon the three reasons which he surmises might weigh with the English, and lead them "to break with the French Republic." The first has reference to the decree of the National Convention of the 19th November, offering fraternity to all people who wish to recover their liberty; the next, the opening of the Scheldt, consequent upon the conquest of the Austrian Netherlands; and thirdly, the violation of the territory of Holland. With respect to the decree of the 19th November, offering assistance to all people wishing for liberty, he said: "The National Convention never meant that the French Republic should favour insurrections, should espouse the quarrels of a few seditious persons, or in a word should endeavour to excite disturbances in any neutral or friendly country whatever." He then proceeds to say—"France ought to and will respect, not only the independence of England, but even that of those of her allies with whom she is not at war. The undersigned has therefore been charged formally to declare that she will not attack Holland so long as that power shall on its side confine itself towards her within the bounds of a strict neutrality." He then refers to the only other question, the opening of the Scheldt, "a question irrevocably decided by reason and justice, of small importance in itself, and on which the opinion of England, and perhaps of Holland itself, is sufficiently known to render it difficult to make it seriously the single subject of war."

M. Chauvelin says, in conclusion, “He hopes that the ministers of his Britannic Majesty will be brought back by the explanations which this note contains, to ideas more favourable to the re-union of the two countries, and that they will not have occasion, for the purpose of returning to them, to consider the terrible responsibility of a declaration of war, which will incontestably be their own work, the consequences of which cannot be otherwise than fatal to the two countries, and to human nature in general, and in which a generous and free people cannot long consent to betray their own interests, by serving as an auxiliary and a reinforcement to a tyrannical coalition.”

The reply of Lord Grenville, dated December 31, begins in the following haughty fashion:—“I have received, Sir, from you a note, in which, styling yourself minister plenipotentiary of France, you communicate to me, as the King's Secretary of State, the instructions which you state to have yourself received from the Executive Council of the French Republic. You are not ignorant, that since the unhappy events of the 10th August, the King has thought proper to suspend all official communication with France.” The rest of the letter repels with little ceremony the advances of the French minister, and subjects his pleas and excuses to a cold and incredulous criticism. It reiterates the complaints respecting the Decree of the 19th November, the opening of the Scheldt, and the violation of the territory of Holland. “If France,” said Lord Grenville, “is really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandisement, and confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, without disturbing their tranquillity, or violating their rights.” [It would have added much to the force of this remonstrance if a similar tone had been taken a year earlier, when the famous Declaration of Pilnitz was published.]

M. Chauvelin, notwithstanding this repulse, again addresses Lord Grenville, January 7, 1793, bringing under his notice the Alien bill just introduced into Parliament, and which contained, as he alleged, provisions, so far as French citizens were concerned, inconsistent with the letter and spirit of the treaty of commerce entered into by France and England in 1786; and he concludes by asking to be informed whether, “under the general denomination of foreigners, in the bill on which the Houses are occupied, the Government of Great Britain means likewise to include the French.” This letter is returned to the writer by Lord Grenville, the same day, accompanied with a short note, declaring it to be “totally inadmissible, M. Chauvelin assuming therein a character which is not acknowledged.”

Unable to obtain a hearing in his official capacity, M. Chauvelin abandons the former style of his letters, which ran—*the undersigned minister plenipotentiary, &c.,* and now addresses a letter to Lord Grenville, beginning “My Lord,” and dropping all allusion to his own diplomatic quality. In this letter, he complains that several vessels in British ports freighted with grain for the French Government had been stopped, contrary to law; he has been informed by respectable authorities that the custom-houses had received orders to permit the exportation of foreign wheat to all ports except those of France; and he goes on to say, “I should the first moment of my knowing it, have waited upon you, my Lord, to be assured from yourself of its certainty, or its falsehood, if the determination taken by his Britannic Majesty, in the

present circumstance, to break off all communication between the governments of the two countries, had not rendered friendly and open steps the more difficult in proportion as they became the more necessary."

And he adds:—"But I considered, my Lord, when the question of war or peace arose between two powerful nations, that which manifested the desire of attending to all explanations, that which strove the longest to preserve the last link of union and friendship, was the only one which appeared truly worthy and truly great. I beseech you, my Lord, in the name of public faith, in the name of justice and of humanity, to explain to me facts which I will not characterise, and which the French nation would take for granted by your silence only, or by the refusal of an answer."

Lord Grenville's answer, dated 9th January, 1793, evades the question:—"I do not know," says he, "in what capacity you address me, in the letter which I have received; but in every case it would be necessary to know the resolutions which shall have been taken in France, in consequence of what has already passed before I can enter into any new explanations, especially with respect to measures founded, in a great degree, on those motives of jealousy and uneasiness which I have already detailed to you."

Nothing daunted, the indefatigable Frenchman renews the correspondence on the 11th. But having resumed the diplomatic style of "the undersigned minister plenipotentiary," his letter, which states that the "French Republic cannot but regard the conduct of the English Government as a manifest infraction of the treaty of commerce concluded between the two powers, and that, consequently, France ceases to consider herself as bound by that treaty, and that she regards it from this moment as broken and annulled," was returned to him by *Mr. Aust,* a clerk, probably, in the Foreign Office, with the following note:—

"Mr. Aust is charged to send back to M. Chauvelin the enclosed paper received yesterday at the office for Foreign Affairs."

Next, we have a letter from M. Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, written in an unofficial form, dated January 12th, stating that he had just received a messenger from Paris, and soliciting a personal interview; which request is granted, on condition that the communication be put upon paper. On the following day M. Chauvelin communicates to Lord Grenville a copy of a paper which he had received from M. Le Brun, the Foreign Minister of France. This dispatch contains the strongest expressions of a desire to maintain amicable relations with England. "The sentiments of the French nation towards the English," says the Foreign Minister of France, "have been manifested during the whole course of the Revolution, in so constant, so unanimous a manner, that there cannot remain the smallest doubt of the esteem which it has vowed them, and of its desire of having them for friends." He then proceeds to discuss, at length, the several topics in dispute between the two countries. As respects the obnoxious decree of the 19th November, every effort is made to explain away its offensive meaning, and it is at last admitted that the object contemplated "might, perhaps, be dispensed with by the National Convention, that it was scarcely worth the while to express it, and it did not deserve to be made the object of a particular decree."

Assuming that the British Government is satisfied with the declaration made on the part of the French, relative to Holland, the paper proceeds, at length, into the question of the opening of the Scheldt, which is justified by an appeal to the rights of nature and of all the nations of Europe. The Emperor of Germany concluded the treaty for giving the exclusive right of the navigation of the Scheldt to the Dutch without consulting the Belgians. "The Emperor, to secure the possession of the Low Countries, sacrificed, without scruple, the most inviolable of rights." And, further, "France enters into war with the House of Austria, expels it from the Low Countries, and calls back to freedom those people whom the Court of Vienna had devoted to slavery." The paper proceeds to say that France does not aim at the permanent occupation of the Low Countries, and that after the close of the war, if England and Holland still attach some importance to the re-closing of the Scheldt, they may put the affair into a direct negotiation with Belgium. If the Belgians, by any motive whatever, consent to deprive themselves of the navigation of the Scheldt, France will not oppose it.

Lord Grenville in his reply to this letter (January 18, 1793) begins by saying, "I have examined, Sir, with the greatest attention, the paper which you delivered to me on the 13th of this month. I cannot conceal from you that I have found nothing satisfactory in the result of that note." The rest of the letter is either a repetition of the former complaints, or an attempt to extract fresh sources of dispute from the preceding communication. After the exchange of two other unimportant letters, we come to the *dénouement.* On the 24th January, on the news reaching London of the execution of Louis XVI., Lord Grenville transmits to M. Chauvelin the order of the Privy Council, requiring him to leave the country in eight days.

I have given these copious extracts from this most portentous of all diplomatic correspondence, not to exonerate you from the trouble of reading the remainder, for every word ought to be studied by those who wish to understand the origin of the war, but to enable you to form a correct opinion of the *animus* which influenced the two parties. Contrast the conciliatory, the almost supplicatory tone of the one, with the repulsive and haughty style of the other, and then ask—which was bent upon hostilities, and which on peace? Recollect that these correspondents were the representatives respectively of sixteen millions of British and twenty-four millions of French, and then say whether the insolent *de-haut-en-bas* treatment received by the latter could have been intended for any other purpose but to provoke a war. Observe that the more urgent the Frenchman became in his desire to explain away the ground of quarrel, the more resolute was the English negotiator to close up the path to reconciliation;—forcing upon us the conviction that what the British Government really dreaded at that moment was, not the hostility but, the friendship of France.

And, now, a word as to the alleged grounds of the rupture. It must be observed, in the first place, that there is no complaint on our part of any hostile act, or even word being directed against *ourselves*. The bombastic decree? of the National Convention—one of the midnight declarations of that excited body—was put prominently in the bill of indictment, but it was never alleged that it was specially levelled at this country. It was aimed at the *governments* of the Continent in retaliation for their conspiracies against the French Revolution. "If you invade us with

bayonets, we will invade you with liberties,"—was the language addressed by the orators of the Convention to the despotic powers. That this decree was, however, a fair ground of negotiation by our Government cannot be denied, and it is evident from the desire of the French minister to explain away its obnoxious meaning, going so far even as to admit that "perhaps" it ought not to have been passed, that a little more remonstrance in an earnest and peaceful spirit, would have led to a satisfactory explanation on this point. In fact, within a few months of this time the decree was rescinded.

With respect to the Dutch right to a monopoly of the Scheldt:—if that was really one of the objects of the war, the twenty-two years of hostilities might have been spared; for if there was any one thing, besides the abolition of the slave trade, which the Congress of Vienna effected at the close of the war, to the satisfaction of all parties, and with the hearty concurrence of England, it was setting free the navigation of the great rivers of Europe. Nothing need be said about the remaining question of the inviolability of the territory of Holland, inasmuch as the French minister offered to give us a satisfactory pledge upon that point. I may merely add that the Dutch Government abstained from making any demand upon England to sustain its claim to the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt, and wisely so:—for it probably foresaw what happened in the war which followed, when the French, having taken possession of Holland, where they were welcomed by a large part of the population as friends, and having turned the Dutch fleet against us, in less than three years, we seized all the principal colonies of that country, and some of them (to our cost) we retain to the present day.

Whilst through this official correspondence the French Government was endeavouring to remove the causes of war, other and less formal means were resorted to for accomplishing the same end. Attached to the French embassy were several individuals, selected for their popular address, their familiarity with the English language, and their talent in conversation or as writers, who, by mixing in society, and especially that of the Liberals, might, it was hoped, influence public opinion in favour of peace. Amongst these was one who played the chief diplomatic part in the great drama which was about to follow. "The mission of M. de Talleyrand to London," says M. Lamartine,? "was to endeavour to fraternise the aristocratic principle of the English constitution with the democratic principle of the French constitution, which it was believed could be effected and controlled by an upper Chamber. It was hoped to interest the statesmen of Great Britain in a revolution imitated from their own, which, after having convulsed the people, was now being moulded in the hands of an intelligent aristocracy."

Beyond the circles of the more ardent reformers, however, or the society of a few philosophical thinkers, these semiofficial diplomatists made very little way. They were coldly, and sometimes even uncivilly treated; as the following incident, in which Talleyrand played a part, will shew. "One evening all the members of the embassy, with Dumont, went to Ranelagh, which was then frequented by the most respectable classes of English society. As they entered, there was a murmur of voices—'There is the French embassy!' All eyes were fixed on them with a curiosity not mixed with any expression of good-will; and presently the crowd fell back on both sides, as if the

Frenchmen had the plague upon them, and left them all the promenade to themselves."? This incident occurred before the dethronement of the King in August; and the writer from whom the above is quoted in the "Pictorial History of England," after labouring through several pages to prove that the French were the authors of the war, refutes himself with great *naïveté* by adding, "The public feeling which would have driven England into a war in spite of any ministry, shewed itself in a marked manner even before the horrors of the 10th August and the massacres of September."

The feeling in France towards England was the very opposite of this, up to the time when the hostile sentiments of our Government became known, and, even then, there was a strong disposition to separate the aristocracy from the people, and to attribute to the former all the enmity which characterised our policy towards them. Previously to the Revolution, English tastes had been largely adopted in France; and indeed so great was at one time the disposition to imitate the amusements, dress, equipage, &c., of Englishmen, that it had acquired the epithet of *Anglomania.* When political reform became the engrossing thought of the nation, what so natural as that the French people should turn a favourable eye to England, whose superior aptitude for self-government, and more jealous love of personal liberty, they were ready then, as they are now, to acknowledge. Never, therefore, was the sympathy for England so strong as at the commencement of their Revolution. When the Declaration of Pilnitz, and the hostile proceedings of the emigrant nobles at Coblentz in 1791, drew forth the indignant denunciations of Brissot and other orators, and induced some of them to call for war as the only means of putting an end to the clandestine correspondence which was carried on between the "conspirators without and the traitors within," no such feeling was entertained towards England; and even after the breaking out of hostilities with this country, so unpopular was the war, that the strongest reproach that one unscrupulous faction could throw upon another was in mutual accusation of having provoked it. This fact was at a subsequent period referred to by Lord Mornington,? one of Pitt's supporters, as a proof that the British Government at least did not provoke the war. "Robespierre," said he, "imputes it to Brissot; Brissot retorts it upon Robespierre; the Jacobins charge it upon the Girondists; the Girondists recriminate upon the Jacobins; the mountain thunders it upon the valley; and the valley re-echoes it back against the mountain."

"All facts," said Sheridan, with unanswerable force, in reply, "tending to contradict the assertion which the noble Lord professed to establish by them, and making still plainer that there was no party in France which was not earnest to avoid a rupture with this country, nor any party which we may not at this moment reasonably believe to be inclined to put an end to hostilities."

I have said sufficient probably to satisfy you that France did not desire a collision with England; and that the pretexts put forward by Lord Grenville in his correspondence with M. Chauvelin were not sufficient grounds for the rupture. But I will now redeem my pledge, and prove to you, from the admissions of the partisans of the war, that the real motive was to put down opinions in France, or at least to prevent the spread of them in this country.

Parliament, as I before stated, was hastily summoned for the 13th December, 1792. The country stood on the verge of the most fearful calamity that could befall it. But the mass of the people, whose passions and prejudices had been roused against their old enemies the French, did not see the danger before them, and they were ready for a war. At the same time, to quote the words of Sir Walter Scott,? "the whole aristocratic party, commanding a very large majority in both Houses of Parliament, became urgent that war should be declared against France; a holy war, it said, against treason, blasphemy, and murder; and a necessary war, in order to break off all connection betwixt the French Government and the discontented part of our own subjects, who could not otherwise be prevented from the most close, constant, and dangerous intercourse with them." To add to the excitement, tales of plots and conspiracies were circulated; additional fortifications were ordered for the Tower of London; and a large armed force was drawn round the metropolis. Speaking of the efforts that were made to create a panic in the public mind, Lord Lauderdale† at a later period observed:—"But is there a man in England ignorant that the most wicked arts have been practised to irritate and mislead the multitude? Have not handbills, wretched songs, infamous pamphlets, false and defamatory paragraphs in newspapers been circulated with the greatest assiduity, all tending to rouse the indignation of this country against France, with whom it has been long determined I fear to go to war? To such low artifices are these mercenaries reduced, that they have both the folly and audacity to proclaim that the New River water has been poisoned with arsenic by French emissaries."

It must not be forgotten that at the very moment when all this preparation was being made against an attack from the French, and when this panic in the public mind was thus artfully created, M. Chauvelin was besieging the Foreign Office with proposals for peace, and, when denied admittance at the front door, entered meekly at the back, asking only to know on what terms, however humiliating, war with England might be averted. The public knew nothing of this at the time, for diplomacy was then, as now, a secret art; *but the Government knew it.*

The King's speech, at the opening of the session, began by saying, that having judged it necessary to embody a part of the militia, he had, according to law, called Parliament together. He then alluded to seditious practices and a spirit of tumult and disorder, "shewing itself in acts of riot and insurrection, which required the interposition of a military force." Then followed an allusion to "our happy constitution," which seems a little misplaced in the midst of riot and insurrection; but the King relied on the firm determination of Parliament "to defend and maintain that constitution which has so long protected the liberties, and promoted the happiness of every class of my subjects." Next, there was a complaint against France for "exciting disturbances in foreign countries, disregarding the rights of neutral nations, and pursuing views of conquest and aggrandisement." The speech then announced an augmentation of the naval and military force, as "necessary in the present state of affairs, and best calculated, both to maintain internal tranquillity, and to render a firm and temperate conduct effectual for preserving the blessings of peace."

The address, in reply to the speech, was carried without a division. The members who were opposed to the war, spoke under the discouraging consciousness that, so far

from having that popular support and sympathy which could alone make their opposition formidable, the advocates of peace were in as small a minority in the country as in Parliament. On the first night of the session, after denouncing the panic which had been artfully created, Mr. Fox said, "I am not so ignorant of the present state of men's minds, and of the ferment artfully created, as not to know that I am now advancing an opinion likely to be unpopular. It is not the first time I have incurred the same hazard." And, on a subsequent occasion, in a still more dejected tone, he said,? —"I have done my duty in submitting my ideas to the House; and in doing this, I cannot possibly have had any other motive than those of public duty. What were my motives? Not to court the favour of ministers, or those by whom ministers are supposed to be favoured; not to gratify my friends, as the debates in this House have shewn; not to court popularity, for the general conversation, both within and without these walls, has shewn that to gain popularity I must have held the opposite course. The people may treat my house as they have done that of Dr. Priestley—as it is said they have done more recently that of Mr. Walker.? My motive only was that they might know what was the real cause of the war into which they are likely to be plunged; and that they might know that it depended on a mere matter of form and ceremony."

It is impossible to read the speeches of Fox, at this time, without feeling one's heart yearn with admiration and gratitude for the bold and resolute manner in which he opposed the war, never yielding and never repining, under the most discouraging defeats; and, although deserted by many of his friends in the House, taunted with having only a score of followers left, and obliged to admit† that he could not walk the streets without being insulted by hearing the charge made against him of carrying on an improper correspondence with the enemy in France, yet bearing it all with uncomplaining manliness and dignity. The annals of Parliament do not record a nobler struggle in a nobler cause.

It may naturally be asked, why, with the popular opinions running thus strongly against "French principles," did the Government resort to such arts as have been described, for creating a still greater panic in men's minds, or where was the motive for going to war with the French Republic? But "the wicked fleeth when no man pursueth." The vaunted "Constitution" of that time was, so far as the House of Commons was concerned, an insult to reason, an impudent fraud, which would not bear discussion; and the "borough-mongers," as they were afterwards called, were trembling lest its real character might be exposed, if people were left at leisure to examine it. What that character was, we have been, with infinite *naïveté,* informed by one of its admirers. "The Government of Great Britain," says Alison,? "which was supposed, by theoretical observers, to have been anterior to the great change of 1832, a mixed constitution, in which the Crown, the Nobles, and the Commons mutually checked and counteracted each other, was in reality an aristocracy, having a sovereign for the executive, disguised under the popular forms of a republic." Although this Government of false pretences had two extremes of society, the interested few and the ignorant many, on its side; yet there was a small party of parliamentary reformers, who, though stigmatised as "Jacobins," "Levellers," and "Republicans," were active, earnest, and able men, comprising in their body nearly all the intellect of the age; and it was from the chimerical fear that these men would put themselves under the

influence of French politicians that the two countries were to be rent asunder by war. Upon this point we have the ingenious avowal of a young statesman, who lived to fill the highest office in the State. Mr. Jenkinson† (afterwards Lord Liverpool), said,—"He had heard it frequently urged that this was a period particularly unfavourable to a war with France, on account of the number of discontented persons amongst us in correspondence with the seditious of that country, who menaced and endangered our government and constitution. That there was a small party entertaining such designs he had very little doubt; and, from their great activity, he also considered them as dangerous; but he confessed that this very circumstance, so far from deterring him from war, became a kind of inducement. They might be troublesome in times of peace—they might be tranquil in time of war; for as soon as hostilities were commenced, the correspondence with the French must cease, and all the resource they had would be to emigrate to that country, which would be a good thing for this; or, remaining where they are, to conduct themselves like good citizens, as that correspondence which by law was not punishable now, would in time of war be treason."

The same motive for the war was at last avowed by him who had performed the part of Peter the Hermit, in rousing the warlike spirit of the nation. Edmund Burke, who from the year 1789, was possessed by a species of monomania upon the French Revolution, took a prominent part in these discussions; indeed, whatever was the subject before the House, if he rose to speak upon it, he was pretty certain to mount his favourite hobby before he resumed his seat. "Let the subject, the occasion, the argument be what it may," said Mr. Francis,? "he has but one way of treating it. War and peace, the repair of a turnpike, the better government of nations, the direction of a canal, and the security of the constitution are all alike in his contemplation: the French Revolution is an answer to everything; the French Revolution is his everlasting theme, the universal remedy, the grand specific, the never-failing panacea, the principal burden of his song; and with this he treats us from day to day; a cold, flat, insipid hash of the same dish, perpetually served up to us in different shapes, till at length with all his cookery, the taste revolts, the palate sickens at it."

At length, on the discussion of the Alien Bill,† Burke's powers of reason and judgment seemed to be entirely overborne by a frenzied imagination. Drawing forth a dagger and brandishing it in the air, he cast it with great vehemence of action on the floor: "It is my object," said he, "to keep the French infection from this country: their principles from our minds, and their daggers from our hearts! I vote for this bill, because I believe it to be the means of saving my life and all our lives from the hands of assassins; I vote for it because it will break the abominable system of the modern pantheon, and prevent the introduction of French principles and French daggers. When they smile I see blood trickling down their faces; I see their insidious purposes,—I see that the object of all their cajoling is blood! I now warn my countrymen to beware of these execrable philosophers, whose only object it is to destroy everything that is good here, and to establish immorality and murder by precept and example!"

And on a subsequent occasion,? immediately after the declaration of hostilities, he declared his fixed opinion that "if we continued at peace with France, there would not

be ten years of stability in the government of this country." Thus did he who first sounded the tocsin of war, and led the public mind through each successive phase of hostility, until he triumphed in the deadly struggle which had now begun, avow that the object he sought was to avert the danger with which French principles menaced the institutions of this country.

I must add one extract from a speech delivered by Mr. Windham, the leader of the Whig seceders, who became Pitt's Secretary at War. It was delivered on the 1st February, 1793, the day on which war was declared by France, but before that event was known here. "*He agreed that in all probability the French had no wish at this moment to go to war with this country,* as they were not yet ready to do so; their object seemed to be to take all Europe in detail, and we might be reserved to be the last." Here the whole case as against ourselves is fully admitted by one of the most determined advocates of the war. It is needless to add, that if we were justified in going to war because *we predicted* that France would attack us at some future time, there never need be a want of justification for a war.

But it is at a somewhat later period that we discover more clearly the real motives of the war as acknowledged by its authors. In 1795, when hostilities had been carried on for two years, with but little impression upon the enemy, and when the cry for peace became general, there was less reserve in avowing the objects for which we had entered upon war. In a speech in favour of peace, Mr. Wilberforce? said: "With regard to the probable consequences of pursuing the war, he considered them to be in their nature uncertain. *Heretofore it might justly be said to be carried on in order to prevent the progress of French principles;* but now there was much more danger of their being strengthened by a general discontent, arising from a continuance of the war, than from any importation of the principles themselves from France."

On a subsequent occasion, after the government of France had undergone a change, and had passed into the hands of the Directory, and when the British ministry was constrained by the general discontent to make a profession of willingness to negotiate for peace, they were obliged, in order to justify themselves for having formerly advocated war, to point to the altered, and as they alleged more settled, state of the French Government as the cause of the change in their policy. Mr. Pitt† said—"I certainly said that the war was not like others, occasioned by particular insult, or the unjust seizure of territory, or the like, *or undertaken to repel usurpation, connected with principles calculated to subvert all government,* and which, while they flourished in their original force and malignity, were totally incompatible with the accustomed relations of peace and amity. We professed also that many persons in that country felt the pressure of the calamities under which it laboured, and were ready to co-operate for the destruction of the causes which occasioned them."

In the debate in the House of Lords which followed this pacific message from the King a more undisguised statement was made by one who, as a cabinet minister, had the fullest opportunity of knowing the motives of those who entered upon the war. Earl Fitzwilliam? said:—"The present war was of a nature different from all common wars. It was commenced, not from any of the ordinary motives of policy and ambition. *It was expressly undertaken to restore order in France, and to effect the*

destruction of the abominable system that prevailed in that country. Upon this understanding it was that he had separated from some of those with whom he had long acted in politics, and with other noble friends had lent aid to his Majesty's ministers. Upon this understanding he had filled that situation which he some time since held in the Cabinet. *Knowing then on such authority the object of the war to have been to restore order in France,* he was somewhat surprised at the declaration in the message that his Majesty was now prepared to treat for peace."

The Fitzwilliams have always had the habit of plain-speaking, though not of invariably foreseeing all the logical consequences of what they say. Their honesty has, however, been proverbial; and as in this case the speaker went to the unusual length of giving evidence as a cabinet minister against his former colleagues, and was not contradicted, we may take his statement as conclusive proof upon the question in hand. But what must we think of the conduct of the government, and especially of Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, in having thrown the responsibility of the war upon France upon such pretences as the opening of the navigation of the Scheldt whilst at the same time we have overwhelming evidence to show that they were determined to provoke a collision for totally different objects? What will be said of it when our history is written by some future Niebuhr? I could multiply quotations of a similar tendency to the above, but I forbear from a conviction that no further evidence is required to prove my case.

But there is one *act* of our government, illustrative of its motives in entering upon the war, which I must not omit to mention. Shortly after the commencement of hostilities (November, 1793) our naval forces took possession of Toulon, when Admiral Hood and the British Commissioners published a proclamation, in the name of the King of England, to the people of France, in which they declared in favour of monarchy in France in the person of Louis XVII. But not a word did they say about the opening of the navigation of the Scheldt or the pretended objects of the war. And about the same time? the King of England published a declaration to the French nation, in which he promises the "suspension of hostilities, and friendship, security and protection to all those who by declaring for monarchical government shall shake off the yoke of a sanguinary anarchy." It is strange that our government did not see that this was as much an act of intervention in the internal concerns of another people as anything which had been done by the French Convention, and that, in fact, it was affording a justification for every act of the kind perpetrated on the Continent, from the Declaration of Pilnitz to the present moment.

In drawing this argument to a close, I have done nothing but prove the truth of a statement made by a writer who has devoted far more time, labour, and learning to the investigation of the subject than it is in my power to bestow. Considering that he is a partisan of the war, and an admirer of the political system which it was designed to uphold, I cannot but marvel at his candour, which I should the more admire if I were sure that he has fully appreciated the logical consequences that flow from his admissions. The following are the remarks of Sir A. Alison upon the origin of the war:—

"In truth, the arguments urged by Government were not the only motives for commencing the war. The danger they apprehended lay nearer home than the conquest of the Republicans: it was not foreign subjugation so much as domestic revolution that was dreaded if a pacific intercourse were any longer maintained with France. 'Croyez-moi,' said the Empress Catherine to Segur, in 1789, 'une guerre seule peut changer la direction des esprits en France, les réunir, donner un but plus utile aux passions et réveiller le vrai patriotisme.'?*In this observation is contained the true secret, and the best vindication of the revolutionary war.* The passions were excited; democratic ambition was awakened; the desire of power under the name of reform was rapidly gaining ground among the middle ranks, and the institutions of the country were threatened with an overthrow as violent as that which had recently taken place in the French monarchy. *In these circumstances the only mode of checking the evil was by engaging in a foreign contest,* by drawing off the ardent spirits into active service, and, in lieu of the modern desire for innovation, rousing the ancient gallantry of the British nation."†

Of the moral sense which could permit an approval of the sentiments of the imperial patroness of Suwarrow, I would rather not speak. But I wish that a copy of this extract could be possessed by every man in England, that all might understand the "true secret" of despots, which is to employ one nation in cutting the throats of another, so that neither may have time to reform the abuses in their own domestic government. I would say on the contrary, the true secret of the people is to remain at peace; and not only so, but to be on their guard against false alarms about the intended aggressions of their neighbours, which when too credulously believed, give to government all the political advantages of a war, without its risks; for they keep men's minds in a degrading state of fear and dependence, and afford the excuse for continually increasing government expenditure.

One word only upon the objection that the French were the first to *declare* war. In the present case, as in that of the Allied Powers on the Continent, to which we before alluded, we were giving to ourselves all the advantages of a belligerent power by our warlike preparations, without affording to the French the fair warning of a declaration of war. The Government of France acted more in accordance with the recognised law of nations in publishing the reasons why they were, contrary to their own wishes, at war with England. The language and acts of Mr. Pitt were a virtual declaration of war. Half as much said or done by a Prime Minister now would be enough to plunge all Europe in flames. We have seen that the Militia was embodied, and the Parliament suddenly assembled on the 13th December, 1792, when the King's speech recommended an augmentation of the army and navy. On the 28th January, 1793, upon the arrival of the news of the execution of the French king, not only was M. Chauvelin, the French Minister, ordered to leave the kingdom in eight days, but the King's message, which was sent to the House of Commons announcing this fact, recommended a further augmentation of the land and sea forces. This increased armament was not now wanted, as was professed to be the case on the 13th December, for "preserving the blessings of peace," but, to quote the words of the Message, "to enable his Majesty to take the most effectual measures, in the present important conjuncture, for maintaining the security and rights of his own dominions; *for supporting his allies;* and for opposing views of aggrandizement and ambition on

the part of France, which would be at all times dangerous to the general interests of Europe, but are peculiarly so when connected with the propagation of principles which lead to the violation of the most sacred duties, and are utterly subversive of the peace and order of all civil society." Once more I must beg your attention to dates. This message was delivered on the 28th January, 1793. Up to this time the French Government had given undeniable proofs of desiring to preserve peace with England. And it was not till after the delivery of this message to Parliament, after a peremptory order had been given to their ambassador to leave England; after all these preparations for war; and after the insulting speeches and menaces uttered by Mr. Pitt and the other ministers in Parliament, which, as will be seen by referring to the debates of this time, were of themselves sufficient to provoke hostilities, that the French Convention, by a unanimous vote, declared war against England on the 1st February, 1793.

On the 11th February, the King sent a message to Parliament, in which he said he "relied with confidence on the firm and effectual support of the House of Commons, and on the zealous exertions of a brave and loyal people in prosecuting a [when was war ever acknowledged to be otherwise?] *just and necessary war.*"

The wisdom of the advice of the Czarina Catherine was exemplified in what followed. The war diverted men's minds from every domestic grievance. Hatred to the French was the one passion henceforth cultivated. All political ameliorations were postponed; Reform of Parliament, a question which had previously been so ripe that Pitt himself, in company with Major Cartwright, attended public meetings in its favour, was put aside for forty years; and even the voice of Wilberforce, pleading for the slave, was for several successive sessions mute, amidst the death struggle which absorbed all the passions and sympathies of mankind.

And now, my dear Sir, if you have done me the honour to read this long letter, I will conclude with an appeal for your candid judgment upon the merits of the question between us. Recollect that we are not discussing the professional claims of the Duke of Wellington to our admiration. He and his great opponent were brought forth and educated by the war of the Revolution. They were the accidents, not the cause, of that mighty struggle. The question is—was that war in its origin just and necessary on our part? Was it so strictly a defensive war that we are warranted in saying that God raised up the Duke as an instrument for our protection? I humbly submit that the facts of the case are in direct opposition to this view; and that it is only by pleading ignorance of the historical details which I have narrated that we can hope to be acquitted of impiety in attributing to an all-wise and just Providence an active interposition in favour of a war so evidently unprovoked and aggressive.—And I remain faithfully yours, Richard Cobden.

To The Rev. ———

[?]"Though in a future age it will probably become difficult to persuade some nations that any human two-legged creature could ever embrace such principles. And it is a thousand to one but those nations themselves shall have something fully as absurd in their own creed, to which they will give a most implicit consent."

[?][Mr. Urquhart, formerly Secretary of the English Embassy at Constantinople.]

[?]Official value.

[?]Sir Matthew Decker.

[?]It would be amusing, and full of romantic interest, to detail some of the ten thousand justifiable arts invented to thwart this unnatural coalition, which, of necessity, converted almost every citizen of Europe into a smuggler. Bourrienne, who was himself one of the commissioners at Hamburgh, gives some interesting anecdotes in his "Memoirs" under this head. This writer is acquainted with a merchant who was interested in a house that employed five hundred horses in transporting British goods, many of which were landed in Sclavonia, and thence conveyed overland to France, at a charge of about £28 a cwt.—more than fifty times the present freight of merchandise from London to Calcutta!

[?][This prohibition does not now exist.]

[?]Chateaubriand.

[†]Macfarlane's Turkey.

[?][These monopolies have, of course, long since been abolished.]

[?][The charges for army, navy, and ordnance, for the year 1865, amounted to £25,280,925.]

[?]M'Culloch's Dictionary, p. 858; a work of unrivalled labour and usefulness, which ought to have a place in the library of every merchant or reader who feels interested in the commerce and statistics of the world. We will quote from another part this valuable work, the opinion of the author upon the influences of Russian sway in this quarter:— "On the whole, however, a gradual improvement is taking place; and whatever objections may, on other grounds, be made to be encroachments of Russia in this quarter, there can be no doubt that, by introducing comparative security and good order into the countries under her authority, she has materially improved their condition, and accelerated their progress to a more advanced state."—P. 1108.

[?]We here give an extract from the correspondence of a London morning paper, upon the affairs of Greece, that is illustrative of the case in hand:—

"*Nauplia, Nov*. 28, 1834. —If we (the English people) had not been paying for fleets, destroyers of fleets, protocols, loans, extraordinary ambassadors, presidents, couriers, subsidies, &c., in the Levant, we might not have been surprised at the present state of things. But taking into account the talents of Palmerston and S. Canning, and the straightforward, open, John Bull policy of their agent here, really it is wonderful how they can have allowed the other powers to have made such a mess of the business. But the worst part of the affairs is, that things are quite as complicated now as they were a week after the breaking out of the Revolution. Here we have a fleet reaching from Gibraltar to the Dardanelles— here we have the Russians as busy as ever— and here

we have *not* the proceeds of the loan which our (the British) Government has guaranteed, nor have we a revenue that will pay the interest of it." Amusingly enough, we find, in another column of the very same copy of the same journal, a letter from its correspondent, dated at Constantiniple, Nov. 25, from which the following is extracted:— "Now is the time to step forward; a cracking south-wester and a bold front are all that would be wanted; and our ships once at anchor in the Bosphorus, adieu to the ambitious views of Russia! They would burst like a child's bubble. Adieu to the stupid notions about the inevitable dissolution of Turkey. Adieu to the accursed treaty which binds lovely Turkey to a remorseless ravager! ? ? ? One of her vain finesses is now visible in Austria, where a hired press would make the world believe that Austria is seriously opposed to Russian schemes. It does not require a very long or sharp look-out to see that the two absolute governments are acting in collusion. ? ? ? It is a pretty manœuvre to lead us from the real point of attack — a mere feint; we must pay no attention to it, but direct all our strength and energy to the true point, Constantinople; that Constantinople which, once in Russia's hands, becomes the mistress of Europe."

[?]Extract from a London paper, *October* 22, 1834:— "As at home, so abroad; the Whigs have failed in all their negotiations, and not one question have they settled, except the passing of a Reform Bill and a Poor Law Bill. The Dutch question is undecided; the French are still at Ancona; Don Carlos is fighting in Spain; Don Miguel and his adherents are preparing for a new conflict in Portugal; Turkey and Egypt are at daggers drawn; Switzerland is quarrelling with her neighbouring states about Italian refugees; Frankfort is occupied by Prussian troops, in violation of the treaty of Vienna; Algiers is being made a large French colony, in violation of the promises made to the contrary by France in 1829 and 1830; ten thousand polish nobles are still proscribed and wandering in Europe; French goals are full of political offenders, who, when liberated or acquitted, will begin again to conspire. In one word, nothing is terminated." It is plain that, if this writer had his will, the whigs would leave nothing in the world for Providence to attend to.

[?]Since writing this, the death of the Emperor of Austria is announced.

[?]Lest it might be said that we are advocating Russian objects of ambition, we think it necessary to observe, that we trust the entire spirit of this pamphlet will show that we are not of *Russian politics*. Our sole aim is the *just interests* of England, regardless of the objects of other nations

[?]"And sure it is yet a most beautiful and sweet country as any is under heaven being stored throughout with many goodly rivers, replenished with all sorts of fish most abundantly, sprinkled with many very sweet islands and goodly lakes, like inland seas that will carry even shippes upon their waters; adorned with goodly woods, even fit for building of houses and shippes so commodiously, as that, if some princes in the world had them, they would soon hope to be lords of all the seas, of all the world; also full of very good ports and havens opening upon England, as inviting us to come into them, to see what excellent commodities that country can afford; besides, the soyle itselfe fit to yeeld all kinde of fruit that shall be committed thereunto . And lastly, the

heavens most mild and temperate, though somewhat more moist than the parts towards the east."—*Spenser.*

[?]Dundee.

[?]Appenzell, St. Gall, and Aargau.

[?]"In no country is there more bigotry and superstition among the lower orders, or more blind obedience to the priesthood; in no country is there so much intolerance and zeal among the ministers of religion. I do believe, that at this moment Catholic Ireland is more rife for the re-establishment of the Inquisition than any other country in Europe."—*Inglis' Travels in Ireland.* See the same traveller's description of Patrick's Purgatory, Loch Dergh. It adds weight to the testimony of this writer upon such a subject, when it is recollected that he is the author of "Travels in Spain."

[?]In the United States a Jew can hold all offices of State; he may by law become the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Chief Justice, or even President. An American naval commander of the Hebrew faith was, upon one occasion, introduced to George IV.

[?]Stations of the British Army in Ireland on the 1st November, 1834. (*From the United Service Journal.*) Those marked thus ? are depots of Regiments. 3rd Dragoon Guards, Dublin; 4th Dragoon Guards, Cork; 7th Dragoon Guards, Limerick; 9th Lancers, Newbridge; 10th Hussars, Dundalk; 14th Light Dragoons, Longford; 15th Hussars, Dublin; 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards, Dublin; 1st Foot, 1st Battalion, Londonderry;? 2nd Battalion, Athlone; 7th, Drogheda;? 9th, Youghal;? 14th, Mullingar; 18th, Limerick; 24th, Kinsale;? 25th, Armagh;? 27th, Dublin; 29th, Kinsale;? 30th, Clonmel;? 43rd, Cork; 46th, Dublin; 47th Foot, Boyle;? 52nd, Enniskillen; 56th, Cork;? 60th, Nenagh; 2nd Battalion, Kilkenny; 67th, Cashel;? 69th, Clare Castle;? 70th, Cork;? 74th, Belfast; 76th, Boyle;? 81st, Dublin; 82nd, Belfast; 83rd, Newry; 85th, Galway; 89th, Fermoy; 90th, Nass; 91st, Birr; 94th, Cork; 95th, Templemore; 96th, Kinsale. Here is an array of bayonets that renders it difficult to believe that Ireland is other than a recently conquered territory, throughout which an enemy's army has just distributed its encampments. Four times as many soldiers as comprise the standing army of the United States are at this time quartered in Ireland!

[?]Dr. Clarke tells us that the serfs of Russia, when old, are of right supported by the owners of the estate.

[†]In the Koran, the charities are enjoined: and Tournefort tells us—"There are no beggars to be seen in Turkey, because they take care to prevent the unfortunate from falling into such necessities. They visit the prisons to discharge those who are arrested for debt; they are very careful to relieve persons who are bashfully ashamed of their poverty. How many families may one find who have been ruined by fires, and are restored by charities! They need only present themselves at the doors of the mosques. They also go to their houses to comfort the afflicted. The diseased, and they who have the pestilence, are succoured by the neighbours' purse."—*Vol. ii.,* p. 59. The bible still more strictly commands charity, and—see *Inglis' Ireland!*

[?]In alluding to this eminent, and we fervently believe disinterestedly patriotic, individual, we have no wish to be thought to have caught the contagion of that virulence with which, perhaps from the unworthiest of motives, his character has been latterly assailed. We feel no very great respect for mere eloquence, which, from the time of Demosthenes down to that of the subject of these remarks, has, probably, as often been sacrificed at the altar of falsehood as upon the purer shrine of truth. But Lord Brougham's labours on behalf of popular intelligence, at a time, too, be it always remembered, when the cause of education was not, as now, fashionable, places his fame on a monument that is based securely upon the broad and durable interests of the people.

At the very instant of penning this note, we have seen the report of a speech made by Lord Brougham in the House of Lords upon the subject of foreign politics, from which we subjoin an extract, illustrating how little the judgment of this nobleman has profited by the interval since 1823 upon a question on which, unluckily for England, her statesmen have, one and all, been alike infatuated:— "With regard to the change of the sovereign in Austria, he could not avoid expressing his hope that His Majesty's Government would seize upon the opportunity offered by the change of the reigning Sovereign there, and enforce, what *he knew their predecessors had tried to enforce* (!), the humane, and in his conscience he believed the sound, prudent, and politic course, as regarded the individual interest of the Austrian government, imposed upon the government of His Imperial Majesty, to mitigate the rigours, if not to terminate the sufferings, that, for nearly the whole of the last seventeen years, had been inflicted upon some of the ablest, most accomplished, virtuous, and enlightened individuals, the ornaments of the nobility of a part of His Imperial Majesty's dominions. He hoped that an occasion would be taken of enforcing this subject on the attention of the Austrian government, in a manner that became the character, the policy, and the *wisdom* (!) of this country; for he was convinced." &c.—*Morning Chronicle Report, March 11th,* 1835.

The circumstances under which the above was uttered were even still more inopportune than those we alluded to of 1823.

Under the same roof—at the very same instant of time in which an interference with the domestic concerns of a capital nearly a thousand miles distant, and with which we have scarcely more interested connection than with Timbuctoo, was thus invoked—a debate was proceeding in the House of Commons (the malt question), in which it was stated, by several speakers, that three fourths of the population of this kingdom are plunged in distress and poverty; and in the course of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer declared that he possessed not the power of alleviating such misery; whilst such was the extremity to which this minister of the crown as driven, that he felt impelled to appeal to the honesty of a British Parliament in behalf of the national creditor.

[?]In June, 1819, a steamship crossed the Atlantic from Savannah to Liverpool.

[†][In 1858, when the Earl of Eglinton was Lord Lieutenant, the first Irish Trans-Atlantic packet station was established at Galway; and in about a year later Cork was made a port of call for the Inman steamships, and subsequently for the Cunard line.]

[?][On June 21st, 1864, the Secretary of Ireland stated that in 1854 there were 151,403 acres under flax cultivation; in 1863, 214,063 acres; and in 1864 about 300,000 acres.]

[†]The barbarities committed in Ireland as frequently spring out of feuds arising from the competition after land as from disputes upon the question of tithes.

[?]When, at the commencement of the last century, a commission of the most intelligent merchants of Holland drew up, at the request of the Government, a statement of the causes of the commercial prosperity of that country, they placed the following words first in the list of "moral causes,":—"Among the moral and political causes are to be placed—unalterable maxim and fundamental law relating to the free exercise of different religions; and always to consider this toleration and connivance as the most effectual means to draw foreigners from adjacent countries to settle and reside here, and so become instrumental to the peopling of these provinces."

[?]At the last sitting of the Belgian Chambers, a sum of £400 was voted towards the support of the English chapel; and a similar amount was granted for the service of the Jewish faith.

[†]"In planting of religion, thus much is needful to be done—that it be not sought forcibly to be impressed into them with terror and sharpe penalties, as now is the manner, bur rather delivered and intimated with mildness and gentlenesse, *so as it may not be hated before it be understood, and their professors despised and rejected.* And therefore it is expedient, that some discreete ministers of their owne countrymen be first sent over amongst them, which, by their meeke persuasions and instructions, as also by their sober lives and conversations, may draw them first to understand, and afterwards to imbrace the doctrine of their salvation; for if that the auncient godly fathers which first converted them, when they were infidells, to the faith, were able to pull them from idolatry and paganisme to the true belief in Christ, as St. Patrick and St. Colomb, how much more easily shall godly teachers bring them to the true understanding of that which they already professed? Wherein is the great wonder to see the oddes that is betweene the zeale of Popish priests and the ministers of the gospell; for they spare not to come out of Spaine, from Rome, and from Remes, by long toyle and dangerous travayling hither, where they know perill of death awayteth them, and no reward or riches is to be found, only to draw the people unto the Church of Rome. Whereas some of our idle ministers, having a way for credite and estimation thereby opened unto them, and having the livings of the country offered unto them, without peines and without perile, will neither for the same nor any love of God nor zeale of religion, nor for all the good they may doe by winning soules to God, bee drawne foorth from their warme nestes to look out into God's harvest, which is even ready for the sickle and all the fields yellow long ago; doubtless those good olde godly fathers will (I fear mee) rise up in the day of judgement to condemne them."—*Spenser.*

[?]

"Who could their Sovereign, in their purse, forget,
And break allegiance but to cancel debt."—Moore.

[?]An instance of this nature has come to our own knowledge. A gentleman presented to the Lincoln Mechanics' Institution a copy of Stuart's work on America (probably the best, because the most matter-of-fact and impartial of all the writers upon that country), which an influential and wealthy individual of the neighbourhood, one of the patrons of the society, induced the committee to reject. We do not feel intolerant towards these errors of judgment, the fruits of ignorance or a faulty education. The only wonder is, in this instance, to find such a character so out of his element as to be supporting a Mechanics' Institute at all!

[?]The total amount of cotton worked up in this country in 1832 was 277,260,490 lbs., of which no less a proportion than 212,313,690 lbs, was imported from the United States.

[?][According to the census of 1860, the population of the United States was 31,676,267.]

[†][The population of the United Kingdom in 1861 was 29,346,834.]

[?]Bearing in mind that two millions of the American population are negroes, it makes the commerce decidedly in favour of the United States.

[†]Another fanciful theory upon the subject of the debt, invented, we believe, by Coleridge (it must have been by a *poet,* for the consolation of less ideal minds), has been lately promulgated. We are told that the country is none the worse off for the national debt, because it is all owing to Englishmen; and that, therefore, it is only like drawing off the blood from one part of the body to inject it into another vein—*it is still all in the system.* We feel sorry to molest so comfortable an illusion.

But does it made no difference in what manner the *outlay* is invested—whether eight hundred millions of capital be sunk in the depths of the sea, or put out to good interest? Is there no difference between such a sum being thrown away, *destroyed, annihilated,* in devastating foreign countries, whilst the nation is called upon, out of its remaining capital, and with its gratuitous labour, to pay the interest—and the like amount being employed in making canals, railways, roads, bridges, drains, docks, &c planting trees, educating the people, or in any other may in which it *would return its own interest of capital*?

[?]We believe, almost incredible as the fact is even to ourselves, that the British naval *commissioned* officers exceed, by upwards of a thousand, the whole number of the men and officers of the American navy. A comment of a similar tenor, applied to the army of England, is to be found in a following page.

Yet we are in the twentieth year of peace, and every King's speech assures us to the friendly disposition of all foreign powers!

[?]Upon what principle of justice are the people of these realms subjected to the whole expense of attempting to put down the slave trade? We say attempting, because it is well known that the traffic is carried on as actively as ever; and, during the last year, the number of negroes conveyed away from the shores of Africa has been estimated at twenty thousand. Here is a horrid trade, which will entail a dismal reckoning, at the hands of Providence, upon the future generations of those countries that encourage it! But by what right, by what credentials from on high, does England lay claim to the expensive and vain office of keeping all mankind within the pale of honesty?

[†]These statements refer to the ships in commission. Our navy comprises about six hundred vessels of all sizes and in all conditions. The whole American naval force consists of seventy ships. Yet Sir James Graham, when bringing forward our navy estimates for 1833, actually made use of this comparison to justify one force. So much for the *usefulness* of that which is called dexterity in debate!

[?]"The railroads, which were partly finished, partly in progress, at the time when I visited the Untied States, were as follow:—

	MILES.
Baltimore and Ohio (from Baltimore and Pittsburgh) .	250
Massachusetts (from Boston to Albany) . . .	200
Catskill to Ithaca (State of New York)	167
Charleston to Hamburgh (South Carolina) . . .	135
Boston and Brattleboro'(Massachusetts and Vermont) .	114
Albany and New York	160
Columbia and Philadelphia (from Philadelphia to New York)	96
Lexington and Ohio (from Lexington to Cincinnati) .	75
Camden and Amboy (New Jersey)	60
Baltimore and Susquehanna (Maryland) . . .	48
Boston and Providence (Massachusetts and Rhode Island)	43
Trenton and Philadelphia	30
Providence and Stonington	70
Baltimore and Washington	38
Holliday's Burgh and Johnstown (Pennsylvania) . .	37
Ithaca and Oswego (New York)	28
Hudson and Berkshire (New York and Massachusetts).	25
Boston and Lowell (Massachusetts)	24
Senectady and Saratoga (New York)	21½
Mohawk and Hudson (New York)	15
Lackawaxen (from Honesdale to Carbondale, Pennsylvania)	17
Frenchtown to Newcastle (Delaware and Maryland) .	16
Philadelphia and Norristown (Pennsylvania) . .	15
Richmond and Chesterfield (Virginia)	12
Manch Chunk (Pennsylvania) . . .	9
Haarlem (from New York to Haarlem) . . .	8
Quincey (from Boston to Quincey)	6
New Orleans (from Lake Pontchartrain to Orleans) .	5¼

The extent of the railroads forms an aggregate of one thousand seven hundred and fifty miles. Ten years hence this amount to miles will probably be doubled or trebled; so that scarcely any other roads will be used than those on which steam-carriages may travel."—*Arfwedson's Travels in* 1834. [Note to the Sixth Edition of "England, Ireland, and America."]

[It may be stated on the authority of Mr. Robert H. Berdell, President of the Erie Railway Company, that thirty-five thousand miles of railway are now in operation in the United States, and that nearly three thousand millions of dollars are invested in these gigantic enterprises.]

[?]By Amos Lay.

[?][Mr. Bright, in the speech which he delivered at Birmingham on the 13th December, 1865, said :— "I have just seen a report of a speech delivered last night by Mr. Watkin, who has recently returned from the United States. Speaking of education,

he says that, taking the nine Northern States to contain ten millions and a half of people, he found there were 40,000 schools, and an average attendance of 2,133,000 children, the total cost of their education being 9,000,000 dols. In the four Western States, with a population of 6,100,000, there are 37,000 schools, with an average attendance of nearly one million and a half scholars, at a cost of 1,250,000 dols. Thus, in a population of sixteen millions, there are 77,000 schools, to which every poor child can go, at a cost of £2,000,000 a year. He thought this highly to the credit of our American cousins, and I perfectly agree with him on that point."]

[†][This was written before the date of the education movement, in which Mr. Cobden from an early period took a conspicuous part. According to the last Report of the committee of Council on Education, the sum of £8,087,296 Is IId. has been expended on Parliamentary grants from 1839 to 31st December, 1864. "The expenditure rom Education grants," in the latter year, amounted to £655,041 11s. 5d.]

[?][The census of 1860 states that 4,051 newspapers and periodicals were then published in the United States, of which 3,242 were political, the remainder being devoted to religion and literature. The annual aggregate circulation of copies was estimated at 927,951, 548.]

[†][From "Mitchell's Newspaper Directory" for 1865 it appears that 1,271 journals are now published in the United Kingdom, exclusive of 554 Reviews and Magazines. There are no trustworthy statistics of the circulation of these publications.]

[?]There is scarcely a large town in England whose prosperity and improvement are not vitally affected by the operation of our laws of entail. In the vicinity of Manchester scarcely any freehold land can be bought; Birmingham is almost wholly built upon leasehold land, Wolverhampton has long been presenting a dilapidated aspect, in the best part of the town, in consequence of the property required for improvement being in the hands of the Church, and consequently inalienable. In many parts, manufactures are, from the like obstructing causes, prevented extending themselves over our coal-beds. The neighbourhood of Bullock Smithy might be instanced, for example.

[†]It would form an instructive summary to collect from our parliamentary history, for the last three hundred years, details of the time spent in the vain endeavour to make conscience square with Acts of Parliament. —See the debates in both Houses on Ireland in 1832 and 1833, for example.

[‡]It is not uncommon to find two thousand advertisements, principally of merchandise, contained in a single copy of a New York journal. We have counted no less than one hundred and seventy announcements in one column or compartment of the *New York Gazette.* Of course the crowded aspect of one of these sheets, in comparison with a London newspaper, is as different as in one of the latter in contrast with a Salisbury or any other provincial journal.

[?]We mean individually and nationally, As individuals, because, in our opinion, the people that are the best educated must, morally and religiously speaking, be the best.

As a nation, because it is the only great community that has never waged war excepting in absolute self-defence—the only one which has never made a conquest of territory by force of arms (contrast the conduct of this government to the native Indians on the Mississippi, with our treatment of the aborigines on the Swan River); because it is the only nation whose government has never had occasion to employ the army to defend it against the people; the only one which has never had one of its citizens convicted of treason; and because it is the only country that has honourably discharged its public debt.

The slavery deformity was forcibly impressed upon this people in its infancy by the mother country. May the present generation outgrow the blemish.

[?]A diverting specimen of aristocracy in low life is to be found in an amusing little volume, called, "Mornings at Bow Street." A chimney-sweep, who had married the daughter of a costermonger, against the latter's consent, applied to the magistrate for a warrant to recover the person of his wife, who had been taken away from him by her father did not object to the charater of the husband, but protested against the connection as being "*so low,*"

[?]Basil Hall's spending class.

[?]Pitt.

[†]Nelson, Lady Hamilton, Prince Caraccioli.

[?]We have the testimony of the Leeds manufacturers, in their evidence before the legislature, that foreign wools are absolutely indispensable to our Yorkshire industry.

[?]To avoid exaggeration, we have named a lower average than we are entitled to quote.

[†]Here let us remark, in reference to the absurdest of all absurd chimeras with which we haun ourselves, of this empire being in danger from the assaults of Russia—that we are convinced there is, at this moment, ten thousand times more cause of apprehension from the financial evils of Great Britain than from all the powers of the world.

[?][Mr. Cobden soon afterwards acknowledged his error. *See* Prentice's History of the League, vol. i., p. 194.]

[?]It is estimated that our annual loss on corn alone is nine millions.

[†]*Wastrel,* in Lancashire phrase, an idle, debauched, and worthless spend-thrift—a word that may be useful in London.

[?]"When once Persia fell under the yoke of Russia, one great obstacle to the acquirement of that which constituted our possessions in the East would be removed. He hoped that its success would be impossible—it was at least problematical; but this, at all events, was in no degree doubtful, that the matter was very seriously entertained

at St. Petersburg. *In the War Office there, maps and plans, drawn expressly for the purpose, were deposited, showing not only the practicability of such a scheme of aggrandisement, but the various modes in which it might be best carried into effect, and the way the several military stations necessary for the purpose might be established." —Lord Dudley Stuart's Speech, House of Commons, Feb.* 19, 1836.

[?][Mr. David Urquhart.]

[†]We state these facts from personal knowledge.

[?]Willis—"Pencillings by the Way."

[†]Quin— "Voyage down the Danube."

[?]"Present State of Turkey.

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

[?]A silver rouble is about 3*s.* 2*d*

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

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

laws, that confer rights, privileges, and exemptions upon landed possessions, which are denied to personal property.

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

The writer has been surprised at the little knowledge that exists here with respect to the mineral resources of America. Few are aware that in nothing does that country surpass Europe so much as in its rich beds of coal. By a Government survey of the State of Pennsylvania, it appears that it contains twenty thousand square miles of coal, with iron in proportion. This in one State only! Whilst the whole of the Mississippi valley is more or less enriched with this invaluable combustible. Several of his neighbours have been astonished by the inspection of a specimen of bituminous coal, which the writer procured from a pit at Brownsville, on the Monongahela river, above Pittsburg, and which is pronounced equal to the very best qualities produced from the mines in Yorkshire. The mode of working the pits is to drive an adit into the sloping banks of the navigable rivers, and, at a few yards distance, the coal stratum is usually found, six feet in thickness; and, as the miner is always enabled to work in an upright posture, one man will frequently produce as much as 100 loads a-day. The steamboat in which the author went from Brownsville to Pittsburg stopped at one of those pit's mouths, and took in a supply of fuel, which was charged at the rate of about three farthings a bushel. These are facts which bear more directly upon the future destinies of this country than the marriages of crowned heads in Portugal, the movements of savage forces in Russia, and similar proceedings, to which we attach so much importance.

[?]*Extract from Mr. T. Attwood's speech, House of Commons, July* 9, 1833. —"The House will recollect that, for two centuries, Russia has been gradually encroaching upon the territories of all her neighbours; for the last 150 years her progress has been general on all sides—east, west, north, and south. A few years ago she attacked

Sweden as seized upon Finland. Then she attacked Persia, and added some most important provinces to her empire in the south. Not content with this, she appropriated, in 1792, a great part of Poland; and it is but lately she has attacked Turkey. Thus, for years, she has gone on in her course of aggrandisement, in defiance of the laws of God and man!" —If for Sweden, Persia, and Poland, we substitute France, Spain, and Holland, and if, instead of Turkey, we put the Burmese Empire, how admirably the above description would apply to another nation, of whose unprofitable aggrandisements in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America Mr. Attwood may read a few particulars in Mr. Montgomery Martin's "History of the British Colonies" —five volumes, octavo!

[?]We allude to the nation—the epithet cannot be applied to his lordship.

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

Progressive augmentation of the Russian Empire: —

	Sq. miles.	Population.
At the accession of Peter I. . . 1689,	2,980,000	15,000,000
At his death 1725,	3,150,000	20,000,000
At the accession of Catherine IL. 1763,	3,700,000	25,000,000
At her death 1796,	3,850,000	36,000,000
At the death of Alexander . 1825,	4,250,000	58,000,000

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

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

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

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

"I come now to speak of the internal state of the country. Two hundred and seventy millions have been added to our national debt, exclusive of imperial and other loans, and of the reduction effected by the sinking fund; and yet we are told, by the ex-ministers, that they leave the country in a flourishing situation! I ask any man whether, from diminished comforts or from positive distress, he does not feel this declaration an insult. Ask the ruined manufacturers of Yorkshire, Manchester, and Birmingham; ask the starving inhabitants of London and Westminster. In some parts of Yorkshire, formerly the most flourishing, it appears, from an authentic paper which I hold in my hand, that the poor-rates have increased from £522 to £6,000 a year; though the whole rack-rent of the parish does not exceed £5,600. *In Birmingham, I know, from undoubted authority, there are near 11,000 persons who receive parochial relief, though the whole number of the inhabitants cannot exceed 80,000—and this of a town reckoned one of the most prosperous in England.*"

[?]Turkey.

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

[?]The Georgians.

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

[‡]Encyclopædia Britannica, new edition, now publishing, vol, 6, p. 250—art. Caucasus.

[?]Yet the most active and persevering assailant of Russia, a writer to whom we alluded in the beginning of this pamphlet, does not scruple to invoke the aid of these hordes against their present rulers: —. "The Georgian provinces would instantly throw off the yoke; even the Wallachians, Moldavians, and Bessarabians, would join in the general impulse; the millions of brave and independent Circassians would pour

across the Couban and spread over the Crimea—and where would Russia be?" —*See Pamphlet,* "England, France, Russia, and Turkey."

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

[?]Vol. vi. p. 499. Malte-Brun's Geography.

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

[?]"Manual of the State Policy of Modern Europe," by Professor Heeren, vol. i., p. 262.

[?]Heeren, vol. i., pp. 191 and 192.

[†]Gibbon.

[?]"Histoire de l'Anarchie de Pologne et du Démembrement de cette République." Par C. Rublière. Paris: 1807. 4 vols. 8vo. The history of the Anarchy of Poland, *in four volumes octavo!*

[?]"The flame of religious discord was now added, and the Jesuits took care that the fire should not be extinguished."—*Heeren,* vol. i. p. 334.

[†]"The nation (*the nobles*) carefully guarded against any reforms, such as was taking place in Russia."—*Heeren,* vol. i. p. 328.

[?]"The whole of the lands are now alienable, and may be purchased by the peasants, and all other classes, except the Jews."—*Jacob's Report to the Lords,* 1826, p. 66.—This is the shameful exception in England!

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

[†]Cabinet Cyclopædia—History of Poland, p. 269.

[?]"Wherever Russia extended her sovereignty, there prevailed overwhelming tyranny, grinding oppression, unblushing venality, odious corruption, treacherous espionages, spoliation, moral degradation, and slavery. (Hear, hear.)What good did

Russia ever accomplish? It was said that she might civilise the barbarian Turks; he believed they would hear no more about that after the conduct of Russia towards Poland. *The Poles did not, as the House well knew, rise until goaded into madness by a series of oppressions before unheard of; the country was watered by the tears of its inhabitants."—Lord Dudley Stuart's Speech, House of Commons, Feb,* 19, 1836.

[?]Heeren, vol. ii. p. 231.

[†]Jacob's Report, p. 60

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

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

[?]See Appendix for extracts from history of Poland.

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

[?]"Russia, as honourable members must be well aware, was not at the least pains to disguise her dissatisfaction at the present state of affairs in the Peninsula; and with a frontier so far advanced as hers now was, could any man living doubt that she would very soon adopt plain modes of making that dissatisfaction felt? He repeated that, with a frontier so far advanced, Italy was not safe from her grasp, and Russia once established there the consequences to Austria must be tremendous. Russia was surrounding—was enveloping Austria. Turkey would soon fall a prey to her lust of extended dominion. Greece would be a mere province of Russia; indeed, already Greece was subjected to her influence, and she scarcely hesitated to menace France.… He would again say that the whole of the Prussian league was at the instigation of Russia, the former being the mere creature of the latter. When the present designs of Russia were accomplished, they would soon see how she was becoming jealous of Prussia, and a pretext would not be long wanting for the destruction of that instrument which the great northern power had used in erecting and confirming its own ascendancy. Prussia was prepared to do everything which Russia might dictate for the purpose of forwarding her designs; but she might fully anticipate this—that as soon as the plans of the Autocrat were matured, he would *in a day* (*!*) dismember and pull down his present allies, and after that Austria could not long resist. Then in another quarter of her great empire, let them only look at the advantages possessed by Russia. She had military stations within thirty miles of the western coast of Norway.… That country could furnish sailors inferior to none in the world, and the whole kingdom abounded with timber of the best quality. *Russia would then become a naval power of the first order* (*!*) and might be joined by the Americans or the Dutch to the manifest disadvantage of England." (*! !*)—*Times, report of Lord Dudley Stuart's Speech, Feb.* 19. 1836.

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

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

[†]*Spectator* newspaper, No. 386.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[?]The conquests of colonies have been regarded with some complacency because they are merely, in most instances, reprisals for previous depredations by the parent state; but England for fifty years at Gibraltar is a spectacle of brute violence unmitigated by any such excuses. Upon no principle of morality can this unique

outrange upon the integrity of an ancient, powerful, and renowned nation, placed at a remote distance from our shores, be justified. The example, if imitated, instead of being shunned, universally, would throw all the nations of the earth into barbarous anarchy, and deprive mankind of the blessings of law, justice, and religion. It is time not only to think, but to speak, of these things in a spirit of honest truth. The people of this country—the middling and working classes—have no interest, as we shall by-and-by have to show, in these acts of unjust aggression and foreign violence. Alas for the cause of morals if they had!

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

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

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

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

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

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

[?]Burke's Speech, House of Commons, March 29, 1791.—See *Hansard's Parliamentary History,* vol. xxix., pp. 76, 77.

[†]See *Hansard's Parliamentary History,* vol. xxix., p. 929.

[?]We add an extract from a letter, dated January 26, 1836, addressed to the author by a friend—a gallant officer, and an enlightened and amiable man, who himself holds an official rank at the British Court from one of the States of South America:—"You, who are so strong an advocate for peace and freedom, will be glad to hear of the tranquillity of America, and that our systems of government are at last working well. Of the thirteen trans-Atlantic republics, ten are now in a perfect state of order and prosperity. The capture of Puerto Cabello from a banditti who are in possession of it will restore that of Venezuela; and the next news from Peru will give us that of the peaceable settlement of its government. Mexico, therefore, will alone remain an exception to this peaceful state; and I am afraid she will long remain so; yet, in spite of the troubles of Mexico, she last year raised from her mines (according to the official report of the Minister of Finance, and without including what was smuggled), thirty millions of dollars, in gold and silver, being three millions more than was ever produced under the most flourishing year of the old Spanish Government. As to the national debts of America, the bonds of the United States were used to be sold by basketfuls, in the first years of their independence, yet they have now paid off the whole. You have about fourteen principal nations in Europe, and you know two or three of them have internal dissensions."

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

[?]Washington Irving has good humouredly satirised this national propensity for foreign politics in the well-known sketch of "John Bull." "He is," says that exquisite writer, "a busy-minded personage, who thinks, not merely for himself and family, but for all the country round, and is most generously disposed to be everybody's champion. He is continually volunteering his services to settle his neighbour's affairs, and takes it in great dudgeon if they engage in any matter of consequence without asking his advice; though he seldom engages in any friendly office of the kind without

finishing by getting into a squabble with all parties, and then railing bitterly at their ingratitude. He unluckily took lessons in his youth in the noble science of defence; and having accomplished himself in the use of his limbs and weapons [i.e., *standing armies and navies*] and become a perfect master at boxing and cudgel play, he has had a troublesome life of it ever since. He cannot hear of a quarrel between the most distant of his neighbours but he begins incontinently to fumble with the head of his cudgel, and consider whether interest or honour does not require that he should meddle in their broils. Indeed he has extended his relations of pride and policy so completely over the whole country [i.e., *quadripartite treaties and quintuple alliances*] that no event can take place without infringing some of his finely-spun rights and dignities. Couched in his little domain, with those filaments stretching forth in every direction, he is like some choleric, bottle-bellied old spider, who has woven his web over a whole chamber, so that a fly cannot buzz, nor a breeze blow, without startling his repose and causing him to sally forth wrathfully from his den. Though really a good-tempered, good-hearted old fellow at bottom, yet he is singularly fond of being in the midst of contention. It is one of his peculiarities, however, that he only relishes the beginning of an affray; he always goes into a fight with alacrity, but comes out of it grumbling even when victorious; and, though no one fights with more obstinacy to carry a contested point, yet, when the battle is over, and he comes to a reconciliation, he is so much taken up with the mere shaking of hands [*Lord Castlereagh at the Treaty of Vienna*] that he is apt to let his antagonists pocket all they have been grumbling about. It is not, therefore, fighting that he ought to be so much on his guard against as making friends…. All that I wish is, that John's present troubles may teach him more prudence in future; [*nothing of the kind—look at him now, fifteen years after this was written, playing the fool again, ten times worse than ever, in Spain*] that he may cease to distress his mind about other people's affairs; that he may give up the fruitless attempt to promote the good of his neighbours, and the peace and happiness of the world, by dint of the cudgel: that he may remain quietly at home; gradually get his house into repair; cultivate his rich estate according to his fancy; husband his income—if he thinks proper; bring his unruly children into order—if he can."—*Sketch Book.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

will cost us, this year, half a million sterling; whilst with difficulty we have obtained £10,000 for establishing Normal Schools!

[?]The ignorance manifested in the French Chamber of Deputies upon commercial affairs, during the recent discussions, and the folly and egotism of the majority of the speakers, leave little hope of an increased intercourse between the two countries. M. Thiers openly avowed that we were to be manufacturing rivals, but political friends: we disclaim both these relationships. The French, whilst they are obliged to prohibit our fabrics from their own market, because their manufacturers cannot, they say, sustain a competition with us, even with a heavy protecting duty, never will become our rivals in third markets, where both will pay alike. The boast of the Prime Minister of France is like the swagger of one, who, having barricaded himself securely in his own house, blusters about giving battle in a neighbouring county. For the English ministry to form a mere political connection with the present unstable government and dynasty of France, to the exclusion of trading objects, would be to put us in partnership with a party in a desperate state of fortune, who resolved not to mend it. There can be no real alliance, unless by a union of interests. Schoolboys have sufficient knowledge of human nature to feel this, when they throw their marbles into a common bag, and become friends.

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

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

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

the means of subsistence by the Ordinances of Charles X. against the press. How much of our own Reform Bill was the fruits of a season of distress?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[?]House of Commons' Report, June 6.

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

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

"Of the importance of the Levant trade," said Mr. Pitt (see *Hansard's Par. Hist.* vol. xxxvi., p. 59), "much had formerly been said, volumes had been written upon it, and even nations had gone to war to obtain it. The value of that trade, even in the periods to which he had alluded, had been much exaggerated; but even supposing those statements to have been correct, they applied to times when the other great branches of our trade to which we owe our present greatness and our naval superiority did not exist—he alluded to the great increase of our manufactures, to our great internal trade, to our commerce with Ireland, with the United States of America. It was these which formed the sinews of our strength, and compared with which the Levant trade was trifling." This was spoken in 1801, since which time our trade with the United States has increased threefold, and by the emancipation of South American colonies, another continent of still greater magnitude offers us a market which throws by its superior advantages those of the Levant and Turkey into comparative insignificance, and adds proportionably to the force of the argument in the above quotation. Yet we have *statesmen* of our day who seem to have scarcely recognised the existence of America.

[?]Two letters have since been published in the *Manchester Guardian*, May 28, which are written by Lord Durham and addressed to Mr. Gisborne, the British Consul at Petersburg, giving the most positive assurances that no interruption will take place in our friendly commercial relations with Russia. Will the navy be reduced? We may apply the lines of Gay, written upon standing armies a century ago, to sailors—

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

Apropos of soldiers. In 1831, during the progress of the Reform Bill, and when the country was upon the eve of a new election, in which, owing to the excitement of the people, tumults were justly to be dreaded, an augmentation of the army to the extent of 7,680 men was voted by the Parliament. Mr. Wynn, the then War Secretary, declared that this increase had no reference to continental affairs. He should be rejoiced, he said, if the causes which led to this augmentation should cease and enable the Government to reduce the estimates before the end of three months. *No reduction yet*—1836! Where is Mr. Hume?

[?]"Financial Reform."

[?]"To me it seems that neither the obtaining nor the retaining of any trade, however valuable, is an object for which men may justly spill each other's blood; that the true and sure means of extending and securing commerce is the goodness and cheapness of commodities; and that the profit of no trade can ever be equal to the expense of

compelling it and of holding it by fleets and armies."—*Franklin's letter to Lord Howe, quoted in Hughes' History of England*, vol. xv., p. 254.

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

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

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

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

[?]"England, France, Russia, and Turkey."

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

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

[?]Those whom God would destroy, He first deprives of reason.

[?]"I believe every man is brave."—Duke of Wellington, House of Lords, June 15, 1852.

[?]England had, in 1792, 153 ships of the line, and France 86.—*James*'s *Naval History.*

[†]The Marquis of Lansdowne, speaking of the probable execution of the King of France, said, "Such a King was not a fit object for punishment, and to screen him from it every nation ought to interpose its good offices; but England, above all, was bound to do so, because he had reason to believe that what had encouraged the French to bring him to trial was the precedent established by England in the unfortunate and disgraceful case of Charles I."—*Dec.* 21, 1792.

[?]House of Commons, May 25, 1792. All the speeches from which I have quoted were delivered in Parliament, and the quotations are from Hansard.

[?]Vol. iii. p. 108.

[†]"Life of Napoleon," ch. vii.

[?]Scott's Napoleon.

[†]20th April, 1792.

[‡]With his too common inaccuracy, the author has overlooked the previous death of Leopold.

[?]Vol. v. p. 129.

[?]May 27, 1795.

[†]"No one more clearly than Mr. Pitt saw the ruinous consequences of the contest into which his new associates, the deserters from the Whig standard, were drawing or were driving him. None so clearly perceived or so highly valued the blessings of peace as the finance minister who had but the year before accompanied his reduction of the whole national establishment with a picture of our future prosperity almost too glowing even for his great eloquence to attempt. Accordingly, it is well known, nor is it even contradicted by his few surviving friends, that his thoughts were all turned to peace. But the voice of the court was for war; the aristocracy was for war; the country was not disinclined towards war, being just in that state of excitable (though as yet not excited) feeling which is dependent on the Government, that is, upon Mr. Pitt, either to calm down into a sufferance of peace or rouse into a vehement desire of hostilities. In these circumstances the able tactician, whose genius was confined to parliamentary operations, at once perceived that a war must place him at the head of all the power in the State, and, by uniting with him the more aristocratic portion of the Whigs, cripple his adversaries irreparably; and he preferred flinging his country into a contest which he and his great antagonist, by uniting their forces, might have prevented; but then he must also have shared with Mr. Fox the power which he was determined to enjoy alone and supreme."—*Brougham's Statesmen of George III., series i., vol. i., p. 77–79.*

[?]Vol. ii. p. 330.

[?]Jan. 4, 1793.

[?]And here let me give an extract from Scott's *Life of Napoleon,* illustrative of the looseness and inaccuracy with which history is sometimes written. I have explained the errors in italics:—

"Lord Gower, the British ambassador, was recalled from Paris immediately on the King's execution." [*He was recalled on the King's deposition in August, his execution not taking place till January following*.] "The Prince to whom he was sent was no more; and, on the same ground, the French envoy at the Court of St. James, though not dismissed by his Majesty's Government, was made acquainted that the ministers no longer considered him as an accredited person." [*The French ambassador was peremptorily ordered to leave this country in eight days, upon the news of the King's death reaching this country.*] And from these inaccurate data he draws the conclusion that we are not the aggressors in the war which immediately followed.

[?]Degree of Fraternity. The National Convention declares in the name of the French nation that it will grant fraternity and assistance to all people who wish to recover their liberty; and it charges the Executive power to send the necessary orders to the generals to give assistance to such people, and to defend those citizens who have suffered or may suffer in the cause of liberty.—19th November, 1792.

[?]"History of Girondins," vol. i. p. 197.

[?]"Pictorial History of England," vol. iii. p. 276.

[?]January 21, 1794.

[?]"Life of Napoleon," ch. xv.

[†]February 12, 1793.

[?]December 15, 1792.

[?]A highly respectable inhabitant of Manchester, whose house was assailed by a "Church and King" mob, upon the charge of being a "Jacobin," or "Republican and Leveller." His son, who inherits his liberal principles, but whose good fortune it has been to live in times when popular intelligence can discriminate between friends and foes, is an alderman and magistrate of that city.

[†]February 7, 1793.

[?]Vol. iii. p. 101.

[†]December 15, 1792.

[?]May 7, 1793.

[†]December 28, 1792.

[?]Feb. 18, 1793.

[?]May 27, 1795.

[†]Dec. 9, 1795.

[?]December 14, 1795.

[?]October 29, 1793.

[?]Believe me, a war alone can change the direction of men's minds in France, re-unite them, give a more useful aim to the passions, and awaken true patriotism.

[†]Vol. iv. p. 7.