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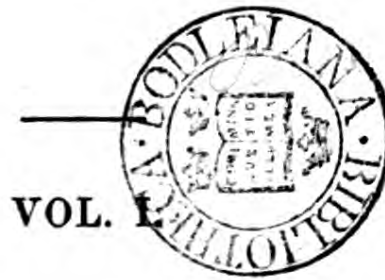
EASTERN EUROPE

AND

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“REVELATIONS OF RUSSIA;” “THE WHITE SLAVE.”



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P R E F A C E.

THIS book, like the preceding works which the author has offered to the public, treats of the condition and influences of the Russian despotism.

He has little dread of being monotonous, though publishing eight volumes on an identical subject ; because it is a theme so vast and varied that a hundred tomes would scarce suffice to make known to the British public all that it should know about an empire covering one half the continent of Europe,—whose action is so marked upon the present destiny, so inextricably interwoven with the future fate of so many neighbouring races.

In the prosecution of this task, to which he trusts to see many and more able pens devoted, truth will oblige him to heap more opprobrium on the Russian government, and its imperial head, than he has done even in former works ; but it has now, perhaps, become his turn to warn the public against that Russo-phobia with which his first book was unfairly reproached,—unfairly, because the author has always striven to render justice to the

natural character of the Russian people, stigmatising only the monstrous system which so profoundly demoralises and so cruelly oppresses it, and pointing out the vices engendered by its social and political administration, not with the view of holding up to obloquy a nation, which, in the midst of its long degradation, has retained so many estimable qualities ; but to make its government expiate at the bar of public opinion the crying abuse of a responsibility the most extensive ever entailed on any human authority.

On the first exposure of a state of society so incredible, because so unparalleled, it was natural that the public, through the press, its organs, should have received with extreme caution the statements of those who sought to raise the veil in which the Russian government had so artfully enveloped the condition of its empire. But when the startling nature of the facts adduced, by giving rise to investigation, had led to their confirmation, the previous scepticism entertained seems to have given place to a growing contempt of the whole Russian nation, in which the reprobation that ought to mark its rulers has been merged.

Nothing can be more unjust than this confusion of victims and oppressors, though it appears one which too readily results from the disgust experienced on contemplating the guilt and the corruption of the mass into which both are blended.

Out of the few writers who have recently thrown

light upon this mournful but profoundly interesting subject, two,—the Marquis de Custine, and Lacroix,—whilst helping to expose the character of the Russian government, have imbibed a deeply-rooted prejudice against the Russian people, in which the author of these volumes has never shared, and which in the ensuing pages he will strive to dissipate.

The objects which he has in view are threefold.

He proposes in the first place to point out distinctly the frightful nature of the most extensive slavery in the world, and the direct and guilty participation of the Russian cabinet in it; in the second, to show by recent instances, both in Russia and Poland, that the fearful state of things which has been from many sources recently made public, is not a matter of past history, but of present and hourly occurrence; and thirdly, to call its attention to the vast political changes which at no distant day threaten to convulse the whole of eastern Europe.

It is almost impossible that, in the event of any great struggle, we should not directly or indirectly be called on to interfere in many ways impossible to foresee, since our relations with the whole world are now so extended that every distant vibration, like that which moves the extremities of a spider's web, must be felt at the centre.

The policy of our own government must continue to become more directly influenced by public opinion, which it grows therefore daily more needful to enlighten on all questions of political import; so that discussion

having led to due appreciation of truth, the sympathies of the nation may not, when surprised by any unexpected outbreak of events, be led into any false channels, or rendered subservient to the timid or contracted views of statesmen, sacrificing to expediency, or seeking only to avoid personal embarrassment, to the eventual prejudice of the character and interests of their country.

For all who have due opportunities of noting such signs of the times as by their accumulation point to inevitable results, it becomes obvious that a growing spirit of resistance is now animating whole populations which have remained so long in torpid apathy that their distinct existence has become popularly forgotten, or confounded in the artificial states amongst which they have been parcelled out.

A glance at the rough map accompanying this work will remind the reader, that whilst the western half of Europe comprises nearly all its constitutionally governed states, (which lie contiguous to each other, and are established on the broad basis of an homogeneity of national population,) all the eastern portion of its continent is divided between four despotisms, whose rule is established over heterogenous races, nearly always subdued by a minority, and ruled over by a system of deceit and terror which has hitherto acted on the jealousies, ignorance, and abasement, which for their own selfish ends these governments still strive to perpetuate amongst more than half the population of the most civilised quarter of the globe.

It will be perceived that the great bulk of this population is Slavonic, parcelled out between Prussia, Austria, Russia, and Turkey, to the extent of between 85 and 100 millions.

Finns, Magyars, Italians, Greeks, and Albanians are united beneath a common yoke with this vast Slavonic family, which has hitherto been kept in easy subjection by its own unconsciousness ; and through the power which its oppressors derived from the abject submission of 35 millions of its number (the Muscovites), from the long prestige of domination of one million of Turks, and the uses made of the prejudices of race of the Germans, who in Austria do not number six, in Prussia eight millions, and whose amount in the whole of Europe is not assumed at more than 35, and probably does not exceed 30 millions, as long as these populations remained unconscious of their present condition, unemulative of the destinies of more favoured races, the amount of the force by which they were kept quiescent was rather matter of speculation as regarded some distant future than of any present, or practical import. The insignificance of the projection which stays the avalanche through years, is immaterial till the mighty mass is set in motion by the thaw which loosens its bonds, or the tempest which rocks it into life.

But this progressive movement, of too extensive a character to be stayed by any of those means which long impeded its commencement, has begun with the double tendency towards repudiation of the system by

which numerous populations have been held in degradation and subjection, and towards antagonism to the Germanic race, which it regards as the accomplice, as in truth it has been the tool of its tyrants.

It threatens the Russian, Austrian, and Turkish empires, and the Prussian kingdom, with a like danger; though according to the antecedents and nature of these despotisms, it offers prospects which widely differ as to the facilities that may be afforded them of averting and evading the peril, which if not averted or evaded must lead to eventual destruction.

But at the present time, whilst the Slavonic populations, as well as those bowing with them beneath a common yoke, are awakening to consciousness of their condition, the instruments of their oppression are growing less supple and effective in the hands of their oppressors.

The cultivation of the German mind, which once imposed upon Slavonic ignorance, has ceased to influence it, now that the progress of enlightenment has taught the Slavonians to look beyond Germany to France and England for the inspirations of their civilisation. On the other hand, the German people itself is becoming daily a tool more unsafe, and less submissive in the hands of those who have hitherto used it. Divided between Prussia, Austria, and a host of petty princes, it is beginning to perceive that its interests point rather to the re-union of all its contiguous and homogenous fragments into one prosperous whole, than to uphold the

ambition of the houses of Brandenburg or Hapsburg ; whether by directly playing the jailors in the Prussian or Austrian states, to the amount of a few millions opposed to the long oppressed races, now awakening from their apathy ; or whether arrayed in more imposing masses in the back-ground, to support these despotisms, the pillars on which repose the minutely subdivided tyranny of their own petty princes.

In the Russian empire, that larger half of the Polish nation which it has gathered beneath its sceptre is now, like a diseased limb, threatening to impart its gangrene to the Cossacs, a sister people, and through this link to the Muscovite body of the despotism. The nobility and burghesses of Poland, in former insurrections, took either an exclusive or chief part in the struggle of the nation for independence ; but now religious persecution has raised the enthusiasm of every Polish peasant, and identified his hatred of the Russian authorities with his religious faith. The other portions of the Polish nation, divided between Prussia and Austria, are animated with all the same feelings as their brethren beneath the rule of Russia, and will thus connect these three despotisms in a common fate.

The author is well aware that the apparent boldness of opinion, which involves states so gigantic in the popular estimation, will appear hazardous and startling at the first blush. Russia's colossal despotism,—the thirty-seven millions of Austria's empire,—the fourteen millions

of the Prussian military kingdom, all seem, when identified in a common cause, to constitute a power of repression, at which all hope seems to wither for the populations from whom their policy keeps the benefit of enlightenment and civilization.

But let the reader turn to the map accompanying these volumes, and he will see that nothing is more artificial than the power of these imposing governments. They have shared between them the most numerous race upon the earth but one,—or they have united whole nations beneath their sceptre dividing frequently an identical people by imaginary lines, whilst others are bound up with them in a common rule by mere conventionalities. No Austria, no Prussia would remain, excepting insignificant provinces of that name, if their sovereigns chose, to-morrow, to sign them away with a few scratches of the pen; but no human authority can blot out Poland, Hungary, or Sc'avia from existence, any more than could be done by England, France, Italy, or Sweden. Nothing but that process of extermination, which has probably never been executed against any numerous people, can therefore affect these masses, and millions, which, practically indestructible, are rising to antagonism with perishable kingdoms and empire, which the signatures of a treaty may destroy, and which before one breath of their strong and unanimous volition must be scattered like chaff before the wind.

This is the distinction between what may be designated as natural and artificial states; and a reference to the map will recall to the reader that such only as are natural have yet ventured to give any voice in its own government to their people.

The author is aware that by calling attention to the peculiar circumstances which menace all these eastern states with a common dissolution in the event of any great commotion, that he may occasion dismay and pain to many whose cause he has at heart, to some through their Romanist or Protestant sympathies, which would lead them to handle tenderly the Prussian and Austrian governments, to others through very awe of the magnitude of the struggle which events are hourly prognosticating, or because they dread to see their cause compromised by connection with an alarming vista of political revolutions, or again through a recollection of alliances and treaties, which based upon a condition of things which has no longer any existence, can no more regulate the future intercourse of governments than stipulations entered into with the Stuart or Vasa dynasties, designating by letter the individual family, but in spirit considering only the hereditary rulers who have ceased to rule.

If, however, this gathering storm threatened results as desolating as they are eventually cheering to humanity, no voluntary blindness to the signs which shadow it forth would stay the progress of its accumulation; whilst in the belief of the writer that political tempest is fraught

with promise to their hopes which nothing but its agency will realise,

It becomes of national importance that the public of England should not be left in utter ignorance of the popular feeling, and of the tendency of opinions in the east of Europe, so that whenever it is convulsed by those changes with which its future is now pregnant, we may not be led through the obscurity of the question to misdirect our sympathies, or to allow a line of policy to be pursued, intended perhaps to further national interests, whilst regardless of those of humanity, but which on the contrary whilst injurious to those rights, can only prove eventually still more to the interests of this country.

The imposing names of certain governments are apt, in the public estimation, to have all the weight to which they would be entitled if really identified with the populations over which they have hitherto ruled ; but when these populations are rising, or prepared to rise in antagonism to their governments, it becomes as impolitic as unjust to league with the latter, or to aid, abet, or encourage them against their people by the sanction of our name, alliance or interference.

This was distinctly understood in England when a revolution drove from the throne of France the elder Bourbon branch ; and if this result could have been generally foreseen, everyone would have felt how valueless, and in fact pernicious, would have been the

favours of the sovereign and the ministry, who had incurred the odium of the nation about to repudiate them for ever.

Thus our alliances with the Prussian, Austrian, and (under certain circumstances) with the Turkish cabinets are worse than useless, though no friendship with a *nation* is to be disdained.

Those political notions which have survived,—in some cases still sound, in others degenerated into prejudice,—from an epoch since which astonishing changes have silently been taking place, lead us popularly to place great weight on our relations with these governments, as checks to the ambition of France and Russia. This principle was rational at a period when all these governments disposed of their heterogenous populations, as we may now of the subjects of our Indian empire; and these countries may still serve to limit the encroachments dreaded, but only through the will of their masses and millions, not through the dynasties which their indignation threatens to overturn.

If an exception is to be made in favour of the Ottoman Porte, which it is still to our undoubted interest, and to the interests of civilisation, to uphold as a barrier to the spread of the Russian conquest, it is not for the fallacious reason commonly given, that it possesses in itself any power to stay the advance of the imperial eagles; but because, having been comparatively more just, more merciful, and less vexatious to its Slavonian subjects than

Austria or Prussia, these subjects have now a tendency, after the example of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Servia, to form into federative states, gathered in a sincere union beneath the Ottoman supremacy.

Even though still blinded to its interests, it is probable that the very weakness of the Porte will oblige it to acquiesce in this arrangement, and thus, through an agency which was formerly never contemplated to assume stability as a political barrier.

As regards Austria and Prussia, the events of a single summer may sweep these governments for ever from existence.

Thirty-one millions of restless Italians, warlike Magyars, and discontented Slavonians, are plotting its overthrow; and its power reposes on nothing but the tame submission of between five and six millions of Germans, of whom half are colonists dispersed amidst strange populations, or mere temporary settlers.

The death of Metternich may alone suffice to plunge all these incoherent elements into chaos, and to bring about the dissolution of an empire, whose traditionary power and glories still render its decrepitude majestic.

The eastern provinces of Prussia, Polish,—or at least Slavonic,—are filled alike with hatred at the affectation of liberalism of their despotic government, and with contempt at the part it plays as jailor, and jackal to the

Tsar, and above all, are animated with a vivid consciousness of their Polish nationality and fraternity ; on the west its Rhenish provinces are with reason discontented ; and part of its centre, reluctantly torn from Saxony, has no ambition of Prussian nationality.

In thus shadowing forth inevitably impending changes in the fate of all these eastern states, which we are apt to regard by a sort of prescription as so immutable, it is not meant to be asserted that inevitable and entire destruction threatens them.

The Austrian empire, abandoning its hold of the Italian, perhaps even of its German provinces, may become Slavonic, as proposed in the reign of Joseph the Second. It may gather in a constitutionally federative form all the remainder of its present elements around the nucleus of the Hungarian kingdom ; and thus entering on a career of progress, its wholly altered government may exchange a precarious irresponsibility of power for permanent solidity.

Prussia, when deprived of its Slavonic subjects, may at length reconcile the remainder by really giving the long promised constitution to its subjects, and thus gather under its ascendancy all the German race now absolutely governed, or mocked by some illusory representative forms, which some hitch reduces to nullity, and which the author has heard bitterly compared to the harmless guns given to children as playthings, with lock, stock and barrel complete, but without a touch-hole.

This movement in the east of Europe, which has hitherto escaped the popular notice of its western countries, is indicated by signs as visible as those pointing out in 1830 the imminent change of the Bourbon dynasty of France to the cabinet of St Petersburg, which gave Charles the Tenth so many fruitless warnings on this subject. It is therefore probable that the Prussian, Austrian, and Russian cabinets are fully sensible of what is passing in their own dominions.

We may perhaps trace that consciousness in some of the most recent acts of the reigning families. It is well known that the Emperor Nicholas was anxious for the marriage of that most beautiful of princesses, his daughter Olga, with an archduke of Austria. Austria refused the alliance, for the very reason that Nicholas was solicitous that it should take place, because he had then as still a party amongst the Slavonians of the Greek persuasion in the Austrian dominions. But since then events progressing with rapid strides, portend a storm which makes absolute princes forget their ambition in the common danger threatening them, to league together against the restless nations they oppress. Hence Austria finding the danger of Russian influence past and a new peril menacing its existence, agrees to that alliance which it before refused ; and the emperor Nicholas, so inexorable on this point before, consents to his daughter embracing the catholic faith ; and having by his savage and bootless persecution raised the nonconformists of Poland into ardent

enthusiasts, he, now that it is too late, sees the peril to which he has given rise, and attempts to conciliate the enmity of Rome.

The providential prudence which has watched over the house of Hapsburg, enabling it to repair all its disasters by marriages and treaties, may inspire it to avert the peril. The unprincipled and undignified sagacity which has caused the cabinet of Berlin to crouch abjectly, on one hand to Russia, and to deceive its subjects on the other by illusory promises of a constitution, may lead it in a like manner to elude the threatening danger by entering on the course above adverted to; but if these two states should neglect to do so, then the *mene mene thekel* of their destiny is being figured out in legible characters, which those who run may read.

The author is perfectly aware that the resuscitation of national feeling amongst the scattered fragments of the Slavonic family—at least amongst those of the Greek communion—originated in the ambition of the Russian tsars, who saw the prospect of uniting them within their empire.

But they have evoked a spirit now beyond their power to lay. On the dawn of political and national consciousness amongst these populations, their first impulse was no doubt to regard the Russian empire with hope and affection; but a little more enlightenment and experience taught them more to dread its iron rule than the yoke of Austria, or of the Porte.

Even the allurements of religious motives is powerless to excite the sympathies of Greek communicants, wherever their church is unoppressed—and it is not now anywhere persecuted—because on narrower acquaintance they discern the abject degradation, and the hopeless bondage into which it has fallen in the Russian empire.

Thence, and from other concurring causes, the revival of Slavonic nationality, first devised by Russia, is now everywhere anti-Russian in its tendency.

There is another prejudice to which the author cannot help here adverting, which regards every struggle between a people and its established government as the contention of anarchy and infidelity against all law, social order, and religion.

But it is not so in the case to which allusion is being made. There exists, probably, throughout the United Kingdom, scarce a relic of that defunct Toryism which strenuously maintained the right divine of princes; scarce an intolerantly loyal Orangeman, wedded to the ideas of one epoch of prejudice and bigotry, who, if transferred beneath the despotism, not even of Russia, but of Austria and Prussia, would not rise in mortal enmity to his government, or seal his resistance to it with his blood.

In a religious point of view, these anticipated changes, far from threatening to sweep out any human belief, are partially, as in Poland, founded on a religious impulse. Whilst on the one hand they promise to unbind for myriads of men the fetters of private slavery and serfdom,

on the other they will be mainly advocated and carried through by the gentry and nobility of Hungary and Poland, which if not absolutely the most chivalrous and worthy aristocracy, may at least rank with that of Great Britain,—as the only three in Europe which have not incurred the contempt of their respective countrymen.

In attempting in a limited space to call public attention to many important generalities, the author has from several causes been obliged to deviate from the order which he ought more rigorously to have followed, if he had aimed at literary excellence.

He has found himself in that anomalous position for a writer, of hoping that his works will not retain a permanent interest with the public, because he trusts that such truths as he may have set forth, though startling in their novelty on an unknown subject now, will before long have become mere commonplaces.

With this anticipation he has been careless of artistically grouping his facts, so that they were not omitted, and speedily published to the world.

Thus at the close of the two first volumes, whilst the third was going through the press, he has interrupted his observations on the Slavonic race, to insert an account of the horrible persecution of the Basilian nuns.

It may perhaps be judged, that considering their title, too large a space has been devoted in these volumes to Slavonic literature, and to the Polish nation. But to this, on one hand, he may reply, that

it is chiefly through the literature of a people and of a period that we may imbue ourselves with its spirit, and that this is peculiarly the case with eastern Europe, at the present moment; for it is to the written exposition of its cotemporary thought and feeling that he has confined his efforts. As regards the Polish nation, one glance at the accompanying map, in which a treble line marks the boundary of a people which artificial distinctions have divided, will speak as to its extent; but it derives a higher importance from the fact that intolerable religious and political persecutions; together with the trammels of individual slavery, unite to fill its population with religious and patriotic zeal, and with an ardent longing for extensive social change. This Polish nation, too, like the Hungarian, must prove the link, acting as conductor to convey to the eastern world beyond, the ideas and civilisation of the west, to which already it aspires.

In a like manner the Polish question may prove one on which France and England in a common sympathy may cordially unite.

In his endeavours to give some account of the Polish emigration, and the parties into which it was divided, it must be understood that the judgment which the author gives of individual character is not his own, but that he only echoes the opinions of a usually adverse party; whilst peculiar circumstances have obliged him to defer the close of the second and commencement of the

third volume, to which the reader is referred, the defence which its partisans offer of the conduct of their leaders. In a like manner the numbers of the partisans adhering to each opinion must be considered as arbitrary ; and is, perhaps, impossible to determine with any accuracy, as many emigrants have never distinctly pronounced themselves as belonging to any.

The author, in conclusion, must remind the reader, who may consider the observations he has made as uncourteously harsh and personal towards the emperor Nicholas, that this sovereign has voluntarily incurred a larger share in the responsibility of the horrors enacted within his dominions, than could have been assumed by any other prince, or minister ; and that to leave the stigma of acts that he has ordered, or permitted on his people, his ministry, or his church, (on whom they must otherwise fall by implication,) would be to exercise a diplomatic forbearance at the expense of truth and justice.

It is assuredly unfair to brand the cruelties of a petty tyrant like Rosas, who perhaps can only uphold his rule by a system of terror, whilst only censuring by disapprobatory silence the actions of a mighty potentate, seeking by more extensive barbarities to extend an already colossal power,



CHAP. I.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS, AND THE SLAVE POPULATION.

Personal responsibility assumed by the Emperor—Injustice of charging the people with the ambition of the Russian cabinet—Distinction between the Muscovites, and Ruthenians; Pacific character of the former—Tendency of the Ruthenians to recall their ancient independence.

IN every successive effort to lay bare the policy and tendencies of the Russian Cabinet, an author is forced at the very commencement of his labours, to an incessant repetition. He must answer an ever-recurring objection, which would otherwise divest his subject of its chief interest, and envelop his attempts to treat it in a semblance of contradiction.

It is urged by those disinclined to mere speculative theories, that, “Either Russia is dangerous to her neighbours on account of the strength which places her beyond the reach of western interference, or that she is weak, and not to be dreaded.”

They are thence apt to conclude that, whichever

of these positions an author takes up, must considerably diminish the practical importance of his subject, whilst any attempt to prove both must involve self-refutation.

But such is not the case. The Russian government is at once both weak and dangerous. That is to say, that with inherent weakness, it derives a real and formidable strength from the very terror which exaggerated notions of its power inspire.

It may in this respect be compared to the great idol of Juggernaut, composed of inert matter, yet whose imaginary power becomes a horrible reality when filling the minds of men with superstitious awe, which, stronger than the love of life, leads them to throw themselves beneath its chariot wheels.

Fear, far more than corruption, is the instrument by which the Russian Cabinet spreads its influence abroad. The weak and the timid in the immediate neighbourhood of its empire, crouch to its will; and the prudent in more powerful states, so long as it shows some moderation in its ambition, forbear from all interference, fearful of provoking a struggle which in reality the Russian government dreads much more than themselves.

It is on this account, at least as important to point out and popularize the weakness of this

demoralizing power, as to shew the dangers which exist of its extension ; or to detail the sufferings of those actually beneath its rule. So sensible is the Russian Cabinet itself to the urgency of keeping up the exaggerated idea of its strength, which it has succeeded in disseminating, that any revelations on this subject are far more dreaded than the disclosure of such acts of tyranny and violence as tend to draw on it the odium of civilized Europe.

Ever since the unfortunate attempt of Mr. Gretch to refute the Marquis de Custine, it has enjoined its agents to abstain from all open discussion with those who fiercely attack its policy or its institutions. Discussion can only lead to further investigation, which would bring ten hideous facts to light in the attempt to convict of one exaggeration ; but this wise forbearance did not apply to such attacks as tended to destroy the valuable *prestige* of its colossal power ; and its agents have therefore broken their prudential silence in a few feeble efforts to contradict such arguments and statements as might have weakened it.

The personal feeling of Nicholas is apparent in the spirit of these instructions. His sensitiveness to the public opinion of the civilised world appears to have been succeeded by a profound disgust at

the failure of his efforts to conciliate its favour. The ingratitude which is alike insensible to the shower of diamond rings, snuff-boxes, orders, and pensions, unmoved by the condescension with which he has been at the pains of colouring his acts—occasionally inspires him with a lofty disdain which shews itself to the utter dismay of such of his advisers as hand down the traditional policy of his house,—a policy which in this respect has been, whilst never weighing the public opinion of Europe against any tangible advantage, never to neglect an opportunity of cheaply propitiating it.

Just as Nicholas, when smarting perhaps under some provocation, has shewn occasionally an impolitic disregard of the judgments of the world, so he may easily have been led to pass over in contemptuous and politic silence, all attacks that simply tended to make his government odious; but he could not leave wholly unnoticed such as might lower the general opinion of his power. He can resign himself to be hated, so that he be feared; and therefore is assuredly more injured, and probably more piqued by an assertion of weakness, than by any disclosures of the oppression or cruelty practised by his government.

It is necessary here to remind the reader of the peculiar circumstances which render it impossible

for an author, in treating of the policy of Russia, to divest his subject of an apparently invidious personality, which, where possible, it is always in better taste to avoid. An emperor of Russia at the present day, enjoys the sole and irresponsible control of a power which for extent and completeness bears no analogy to any other existing, if we except that at the disposal of the sovereign of China.

It is true that it does not necessarily follow that he should personally exercise this authority, which, like the emperor Alexander, he may delegate to ministers and favourites, who in this case share so large a portion of the monarch's responsibility as to leave the writer the gracious privilege of censuring or praising *the government* collectively, and of besides attributing to the master—wherever praise is due—the merit of originating all beneficial measures through his judicious choice of men.

But Nicholas, in every sense of the word an autocrat, has chosen to govern for himself. In this respect he is the third sovereign who has followed in the footsteps of Peter the Great, the first Tsar who assumed the title of Emperor, and brought the Russian empire within the European pale. The other two were his grandmother Catherine, and his father Paul. Some, indeed, amongst the rest of

his predecessors, have occasionally, and as caprice directed, snatched up for a brief period the reins of the empire, but only to abandon them again to those who enjoyed their habitual confidence. It is, however, worthy of remark, that one and all of them were trammelled by causes which have ceased to exist for Nicholas, who has therefore enjoyed a liberty of action denied to those who filled the throne before him. It is needless to recall the peculiar circumstances which rendered the greater part of Peter the First's reign one prolonged and perilous struggle,—the power of his nobles, the hatred of the church, and the national prejudice of the old Muscovites. All these dangers vanquished, —but not entirely subdued by his barbaric energy— he transmitted with the crown to his successors. It has been the work of many successive reigns, for their more feeble hands to annihilate the Hydra which the Russian Hercules struck down, but on the accession of Nicholas this work was almost done. His first step to ascend the throne, trampled the last gasp out of the enemy which had once threatened, and even till then faintly struggled with the imperial authority. Catherine, it will be remembered, owed not only the sceptre which she wielded so vigorously, but even her own life to the national and religious

prejudice of the old Muscovites. Paul, whose murder, a mere seraglio revolution, proves nothing, had still ample cause to dread the power of his nobility.

But the last desperate effort made by this body, and quelled on the 12th of December, 1825, left it utterly crushed and powerless, at the mercy of Nicholas. This tragic episode—which by a rare exception only marked the accession of a Russian emperor with the blood of subjects, instead of with imperial blood—placed the new sovereign in a situation more favourable than that of any of his predecessors. The power of the nobility, in which so many people still obstinately persist in believing, had become as completely matter of history as that of the Janissaries, or of the Mamelukes. The Church had not only been long since disarmed as an enemy, but converted into a powerful instrument of domination, by means of which all the old Muscovite feeling (perhaps always more religious than national) had been rendered completely harmless.

Nicholas, therefore, found himself more free and untrammelled, than it has perhaps ever fallen to the lot of a despotic prince to be. Since the commencement of his reign, he has governed for him-

self ; thus accepting, whether for good or evil, the full responsibility of all the acts of his government. It must be distinctly understood, that he no more subjects his conduct to the advice of his nominal ministers, than the real ministers of constitutionally governed countries do theirs, to the opinion of those subordinates whose experience they may occasionally consult. In constitutional, and even in most despotic states, the zeal of partisanship may, with some colour of reason, exonerate the sovereign from the chief blame of all that is most reprehensible in the conduct of his government ; but nothing can be more unjust than to saddle on the ministers, or on the prejudice and ambition of the people, the consequences of violent or impolitic acts which originate with a supreme master, and which are sometimes at variance both with the advice of his servitors, and with the wishes of the nation over which he rules.

What, for instance, can be more injudicious than the vast navy which the Emperor Nicholas persists in maintaining, and which, far beyond the pecuniary resources of the state, burthens it with a maritime establishment which would assuredly be at least as formidable if reduced to one quarter of its present extent ? All the ministers of Nicholas

have been opposed to the imperial mania for this useless and exhausting toy, with the one exception of Prince Menchikoff, the minister of marine, who being without hope of acquiring in any other department an equal influence, continues to encourage the obstinate predilection of his master. But nothing could be more unjust than to render responsible for this costly folly, those advisers who dare not express an opinion on the subject.

Again, there is no Russian village, of which the serf population would not sooner see the independence of the Poles re-established, and all the old Polish provinces restored to independent Poland, than send two additional recruits, chained hand and foot—as they are always sent—to the imperial armies. So indifferent are they to every political question, even with regard to Poland, that there is not a landlord who would give one per cent. of his serfs to prevent a similar result, even in the few instances in which a positive satisfaction would not be felt by him at anything which thwarted the imperial government. What, therefore, can be more unjust than to excuse the violence and cruelty of Nicholas towards the Poles, by attributing it, as we see frequently done by his

apologists, to a necessity entailed upon him by the prejudice and hatred of the Russian nation ?

The attempt to avoid a discourteous personality when treating of Russian affairs, must therefore lead a writer into positive injustice ; since, if he speak of “ the *Russian Cabinet*,” where its members are the mere instruments of an individual will,—or of “ *Russia*,” where the national feeling is without the faintest influence on the decisions of its chief, he may be unfairly stigmatising a people, or a minister, opposed perhaps in reality to the very act he is censuring.

The full extent of any beneficial measure is due to an autocratic prince who uses, like Nicholas, his privilege of guiding with his own imperial hand the helm of state ; but, for the same reason, any attempt to affix on others the blame of violent and oppressive acts, for which he alone can be responsible, is to exercise needlessly a diplomatic reserve, at the expense of truth and justice. It must, therefore, be distinctly understood throughout these volumes, that wherever *Russia* as a power, or the *Russian Cabinet* is spoken of, the Emperor Nicholas is meant ; the nation or the cabinet being only named as the instruments through which, or wherewith he acts. It is true

that he is not the originator either of the lamentable and demoralizing system of his government, or of the line of policy which he pursues; but then, being more free than any of his predecessors to depart from, he has personally directed it with unscrupulous energy, and occasionally with a boastful and injudicious violence which has threatened to compromise its success. It must not, however, be forgotten, that though Nicholas is at the present moment the incarnation of the policy of the Tsars, with that insatiate thirst of dominion, which mere extension will not satisfy, without an incessant increase of intensity and degree—a policy which distinguished by its reckless violence of action, and its specious smoothness of pretence, views the happiness of the human race as subservient to the vanity or interests of a family,—still the life or death of this powerful individual will probably have but little influence on a state of things, which, existing long before his reign, will, in every human probability, for years to come survive him.

Singularly enough, Louis Phillipe, the only other European prince who has the reputation of governing for himself,—at least as far as the most consummate sagacity and talent can enable him to

govern in a constitutional state,—represents a peaceful and progressive system, which will be perhaps as much endangered by his death as the march of Russian despotism will remain uninfluenced by the decease of Nicholas.

Whilst, therefore, Nicholas may alike be branded as having done nothing to avert a monstrous evil, and as having used it with savage and unrelenting energy, he must be saved the odium of identifying his existence with the lamentable condition of the people beneath his rule, or with the dangers to be dreaded by adjoining provinces from a desolating incorporation with the empire over which he presides.

The peaceful prosperity of France may, perhaps, be unhappily interrupted by the death of Louis Phillippe,—the hollow and barbaric imitation of western civilization, selfishly raised up in Egypt for the sole advantage of its ruler, may fairly be expected to crumble on the death of the old viceroy ;—and the decease of Metternich will seriously endanger the solidity of the heterogenous and decrepid empire which he governs ;—but it is not so with Nicholas and Russia. Paradoxical as it may seem, perhaps the best interests of humanity have more to gain by his life than by his death. The

fitful violence to which his temper causes him occasionally to give way, and the effects of which are not to be obliterated whenever his cooler judgment shew him their impolicy, appears rather to increase than to diminish with age. Recent appearances have even given rise to the belief amongst many Russians, that some tendency exists to the hereditary aberration, which could scarcely be designated permanent insanity, either in Paul his father, or in his brother Constantine; and from which even Alexander was not wholly exempt; though with him it assumed sometimes the form of a superstitious mysticism, and at others, of the gloomy despondency which long preceded his dissolution. It is easy to conceive that the positive madness of a sovereign must be less injurious to the interests of his family, than that which only occasionally exhibits itself, and then verges too closely on eccentricity and passion to allow them to take cognisance of it.

Whatever the future may bring forth, it is, however, certain, that if Nicholas only continues to act as through the past, the impatient violence which he cannot always restrain, will do more to weaken, or at least to raise up formidable dangers against his power, than several such reigns as that of Alexander.

Though in the general tenor of his policy and conduct he may walk in the footsteps of his predecessors, his fitful and frequent departure from its habitual prudence will far more than counterbalance the advantages which might be supposed to accrue from his energy.

The real progress of Russia has generally been made as silently as possible ; but Nicholas cannot always restrain his impatience or his exultation, and has often allowed it to break forth against his cooler judgment, which leads him, when too late, to attempt to repair the injury done.

This has been apparent both in many of his acts, and in the mode of carrying them out. For instance : in his imprudent eagerness to tighten the rein in the principality of Finland, as soon as the treaty which guaranteed some of its privileges had expired,—though on the possession of Finland, perhaps, depends the eventual security of St. Petersburg itself.

Ten or fifteen years more of indulgent government might have sufficed to attach this peaceful people to the rule of Russia ; but Nicholas could not wait thus long ; though it is true that when the mischief was done, and that he had given his Finnish subjects a taste of what they might

eventually expect, he again relaxed in some degree his grasp. Again : in Poland, not content with the difficult attempt of denationalizing a whole people, he complicated it by gratuitously rousing the mortal enmity of Rome, and by commencing a virulent religious persecution on a scale of almost unprecedented magnitude. He has allowed his personal antipathy to the Jews to carry him lengths which have drawn on him the attention of the whole civilized world. It is to be observed that most of these acts of unscrupulous violence, though quite in character with Russian policy, yet differ from it in being injudiciously as well as wickedly undertaken, and are in many instances distinguished by the boastful arrogance with which they are needlessly avowed. And yet these ukases—if differing from the usually insidious smoothness of those which have so often clothed in the most plausible language the intent of cruelty, and treachery, and spoliation,—do not, as it might be imagined, stamp the recklessness of purpose of open and unswerving tyranny. No,—in most instances, as soon as he has succeeded in outraging public opinion, that dangerous enemy which, sooner or later, must shiver the sceptre of the Tsars,—he appears to repent of this departure from precedent, and en-

deavours, when too late, to smoothen down the effect of his imprudence, till a fresh fit of anger leads him to repeat his error. Thus, to judge by their conduct on many occasions, the predecessors of Nicholas would not, for an important object, have scrupled at the iniquitous transplantation of the Jewish population, undertaken by him from a capricious aversion ; but they would have veiled their object, instead of avowing it by an ukase which rung in the ears of Europe, and forced on it the conviction of an enormity, which would have been otherwise disbelieved. It would have been so easy to have made this measure appear on paper a scheme of pure philanthropy, as Catherine did when dividing Poland ; and Russia would have found so many defenders anxious to adopt this version. No sooner, however, was all the evil done, than the Tsar began to regret his imprudence, and to issue orders, perfectly illusory indeed, but intended to convey the impression of having relented in his severity. He had thus provoked, but would not brave to the end, the animadversion of Europe ; and yet, so sudden and irresistible seem to be for him the impulses of violence, that scarce another year has elapsed before he shows once more his vindictive antipathy towards the unhappy Israelites, by an

ukase respecting their costume. The persecution itself is comparatively insignificant in the history of such a despotism ; and a private order to a governor, or to a police official, would have insured its execution ; but Nicholas could not resist adding to this puerile and vexatious infliction, the weight of his imperial signature.

Before proceeding to examine the causes which render the Russian Empire, in its present state, so much more vulnerable than is commonly supposed, the author cannot help alluding to the "Revelations of Russia," a work previously published by him, with the view of giving a general insight into the condition of that empire. Though received at first with a suspicion of exaggeration, no serious refutation has ever met his statements, which have since been every day confirmed ; and he may perhaps be pardoned for recalling a passage from a letter published in April last, in the *Athenæum*, and dated St. Petersburg, wherein the correspondent mentions that he has known as much as 500 roubles, or £22, paid for the perusal of the book in question ; proving how rigorous must be its prohibition. Notwithstanding the exorbitant price which this sedulous exclusion naturally occasions, two hundred copies have been smuggled into Russia by Tiflis and the

ports on the Black sea ; a demand which of itself, under existing circumstances, is a striking tribute to the general veracity of the author's portraiture. The effect of its circulation amongst the Russians, and those most intimately acquainted with the Russian empire, has been to occasion many of these readers to place at his disposal a considerable mass of information which—generally confirmatory of the opinions expressed in his work—has in a few instances tended to modify his ideas.

In the "Revelations of Russia," the author has drawn a formidable picture of the resources apparently at the disposal of a Russian autocrat, and then pointed out a cause which neutralises these advantages. He has endeavoured to shew how the formidable elements of power enumerated, are paralysed by the hopeless, incredible, and all-pervading venality which renders the empire comparable to a mighty line-of-battle ship, with abundant armament and stores, but completely rotten in the hull. But he has been reproached by certain Ruthenians with neglecting other causes of internal weakness, or at least with having imbibed too favourable an idea of the political homogeneity of the Muscovite, or pure Russian, and of the Ruthenian, or Cossack races.

In all the very imperfect descriptions of the Russian Empire which had previously been published, the important distinction had never been made with sufficient clearness between the Muscovite and the Ruthenian, vulgarly called Little-Russian population, to which the Cossack tribes belong. And yet, perhaps, no two people united by the bonds of a common faith, and of an almost common language, ever so widely differed. The pale, sallow Muscovite, timid and servile, and fitted only to play the part of an Armenian trader, is as unlike, morally as physically, to the bold, vivacious Little Russian, eager for war, enamoured of adventure, and shewing in his very demeanour a comparative independence. It is to their dominion over the latter people that the Russian Tsars chiefly owe the extension of their empire. Rallied under their rule when separated by religious and political persecution from Poland, they have contributed far more than the dense and slavish masses of the old Russian population, to spread abroad their power. From the Ruthenians sprang all those numerous hordes of Cossacks rather encamped than settled at hundreds of miles of interval from the Don, across the whole width of northern Asia,—the conquerors of Siberia,—the tamers of the Tartar.

But the sedentary portion of the people to whom they owe their origin, not only very far exceeds in number the warrior tribes of Cossacks, but bears no inconsiderable proportion to the remainder of the Russian nation. They cannot be reckoned at less than ten out of six-and-forty millions, whilst the wealth of the territory they inhabit, their frontier situation, the rapidity with which they seem spreading over the plains of southern Russia, and their identity with the tribes of military Cossacks, all add amazingly to their importance.

This people, the author of these volumes was careful in the "Revelations of Russia," to distinguish from the Muscovite; but he appears to have considered it too hopelessly, as what it had been so long, a formidable but passive instrument in the hands of Russian sovereigns. "Nothing," say such of the Ruthenians as disapprove of this judgment, "could have appeared more plausible a very few years ago, but since then, a movement has been taking place, so gradual and imperceptible indeed as to escape a stranger's eyes, but which may eventually exercise a prodigious influence on the destinies of the Russian Empire."

Within a very brief space of time, a singular

but marked fermentation has arisen in the mind of the Slavonic nations of Austria and of Turkey. Awakening from the long apathy of centuries, they seem likely at no distant day to play a part for which their antecedents, and the want of general information respecting their importance and condition, has little prepared the British public.

In dwelling more fully on this subject in a subsequent chapter, it may be necessary to point out how the Russian Cabinet, for the sake of forwarding its own ambitious views, first sought to awaken to a sense of their humiliation the Slavonic populations beyond its pale of the empire. It will, however, suffice for our present purpose, to shew that the craving for independence, and the tendency to fraternise, which has gradually arisen amongst the Slavonians within the empire, has taken a turn very fatal to the policy of the Tsars, since almost everywhere accompanied by a strong and increasing antipathy to their government,

This resuscitation of a national and independent feeling has at length extended to the Ruthenians; thus embracing every branch of the Slavonic family except the Muscovite. The Ruthenian, or Little-Russian people, though distinct in character and idiom both from the Poles and

Muscovites, has far more analogy to the former than to the latter. Scarcely two centuries have yet elapsed since its separation from Poland and incorporation with the Russian empire. Originally driven by the hatred which civil and religious wars engender, to seek the protection of the Muscovite, the virulent antipathy of the Ruthenians towards the Poles, has in the course of time subsided, and is being fast succeeded by all the sympathies to which analogy of character and identity of interests can give rise. The Ruthenian idiom, poetry, and traditions, which once bid fair to be lost or merged in the Muscovite, are distinctly reviving; and the revival of an extinct nationality is occasionally full of significance, though more often so puerile and unimportant as to be even encouraged by an ambitious government within its own dominions; as in the case of Finland, where it has been considered by the Tsars as a harmless set-off to the deeply-rooted Swedish feeling still prevalent in that principality. But with the Little-Russians such a tendency would have a very different import; and it is of this tendency that some of their countrymen contend that unequivocal signs have been recently manifesting themselves to those who dwell amidst its population.

It was the happy accident of the dissensions which so long enfeebled both the Poles and Ruthenians, which enabled the Tsars to acquire strength sufficient subsequently to protect the former. A happy accident placed in their dependence this angry and warlike race, which became in their hands an instrument of such extensive conquest; and it has of course always been their policy to confound as much as possible their new people with the Muscovite. So assiduously had they endeavoured to disseminate this impression throughout Europe, that the Cossack, differing from the Muscovite as much as the Lape from the Italian, is vulgarly taken as the type of the Russian. The Little-Russian's recollection of his Polish fraternity, and independent origin, at first merged in his hatred, would probably have entirely disappeared, if the differences of character betwixt him and the Muscovite had been less striking, or if he had been less heavily oppressed by a yoke, which, with the improved mechanism of centralization, becomes every day more galling;—as it is, he is beginning to insist and to plume himself on distinctions of race, idiom, and character, of which he formerly neglected to take cognisance. It is true that this is not the case with the Cossack tribes, but then it must be

borne in mind that these military tribes and colonies commonly enjoy an independence long since denied to their Ruthenian brethren; and furthermore, their warlike avocations would give a colouring of military discipline to any restraint to which, under that pretence, the Little-Russians would cheerfully have submitted.

The author does not go the length of imagining, in common with these patriotic Ruthenians, that any danger to the despotism of the Tsars is to be anticipated from the march of public mind amongst their countrymen, any more than from the sole and unaided influence of any causes operating within any part of the Russian empire,—always indeed excepting Poland. Inclusive of the condition of that country, there are, however, perils menacing from without, which may very fatally influence this as well as other causes of internal weakness; constituting, as they do, a germ of dissolution, which, if incapable of any proximate self-developement, yet may rapidly attain it through external agency.

Before proceeding to investigate the relations of the Imperial Cabinet with the neighbouring governments, and neighbouring races, on which it has long exercised an extensive action, now likely to

recoil against itself ;—before examining even the condition of these vast and varied additions made within the last half century to the empire,—it is necessary to look closely into the position in which it stands with regard to the great bulk of its Russian population.

It will be readily understood that such possessions as Poland, Finland, and the trans-Caucasian provinces, do not offer the same solid elements of power as the domination over fifty millions of people united by the bond of a common religion, and concentrated in a comparatively limited space of territory.

Those least imposed upon by the array of figures, or the display of myriads of barren and unpeopled acres, are apt to view this fact with alarm. They are led to consider the Russian population as a compact body of gigantic unity and pliancy, which, fashioned to the hand of despotism, gives it a vitality and a preponderance of strength sufficient to enable it in the long run not only to absorb, but eventually to assimilate the weaker elements with which it comes in contact. In short, the Russian Tsars, blindly obeyed by so vast a population, were considered to enjoy all the advantages of being inaccessible in the body of

their power ; and it was therefore evident that their dominion must inevitably extend by the chances of a prolonged struggle with neighbours, whose success could only enable them to baffle without retorting an aggression, and to whom defeat was fatal.

But in viewing this subject, two important considerations are apt to escape our notice, and yet they of themselves suffice to render the invulnerability of the empire a fiction.

The first is, the fact already mentioned, and which will be more amply reverted to, that ten millions of this population—the only warlike portion of it—are a people as distinct in origin and character from the remaining thirty-five, as the Muscovites from the inhabitants of Poland. The devotion of this race to the Tsars, under certain circumstances, is becoming daily more problematical. The Russian despotism has failed to digest this antithetic aliment. The efforts of a century have not sufficed to blend the Muscovite and Little-Russian. Like oil and wine, their natures will not let them mix ; or where they have done so in a time of trouble and of agitation, the inherent tendency of repulsion operates again in the first moment of repose. Should the growing sympathies

of the Ruthenians for the rest of their Slavonic brethren be kindled at any critical juncture, a consuming fire will thus be lighted in the very vitals of the state; and on the probabilities of such an accident, we shall elsewhere dwell at greater length.

The next consideration is derived from a due appreciation of the character of the Muscovites themselves. With many redeeming qualities, there exists no race more fitted to become the blind and submissive tool of despotism. In this respect it differs even from the most servile branches of the vast and varied Slavonic family. Though any sincere devotion to the Tsars may be confined to the serfs, the proportion which this class bears amongst the Muscovites to the free population, is very far greater than for the whole empire. The collective population is reckoned at 63 millions, and of these 36 are Muscovites. The slaves amount to 45 millions, according to the lowest computation; and of these, nearly 35 are Muscovites,—the conquering and absorbing race thus affording the unprecedented spectacle of remaining in a thralldom more complete than those absorbed and conquered. Over these serfs the dominion of the Tsars is firmly established. It is

rooted as deeply as those religious prejudices which in some barbaric creeds spring up, without affection, indeed, for their terrible divinity, but still not alone from fear ; and of which the votaries do not only bow to the terrors of their God, but view in him an avenger, if not a benefactor. These blindly obedient millions would no doubt themselves furnish a Russian sovereign with unprecedented elements of power, were it not, as the author has striven to show elsewhere, for the utter corruption so hopelessly ingrafted on all ranks of the people, as to deprive the government of any means of effecting the organization of this material. What avail hundreds of thousands, of which only tens can ever reach the scene of action, on account of that consummate venality which has become a second nature to the Russian, and which renders it so impossible to move these formidable masses, that a Russian regiment suffers more before it reaches its own frontier, than an English corps after years of service in India ?

But there is another equally important feature to be found in the character and temper of this Muscovite people, which tends to diminish very much the value of its submissive fidelity to its ruler ; viz., its pacific disposition, and its absolute want of

national ambition and pride. There exist other races even less warlike,—there are others whose degraded condition is lower than even that of the Muscovite, but there is no people in the world which exceeds him in apathy for the national glory or advancement. Most of those who have noticed this peculiarity—which all who have any intimate acquaintance with the Russians never fail to observe,—are apt to attribute it wholly to the profound servitude in which he is plunged. But though servitude and oppression may go far towards extinguishing in the individual that pride and interest in the welfare of the state, which can only find its full development in the breast of a freeman, still the past history of the world, and the present condition of some of its races, proves incontestibly, that patriotic pride, or at least national ambition, is not incompatible with a state of bondage. The thirst for conquest has been in all ages the most successful means which despots have employed to reduce their subjects to this condition. An ambitious people, regarding absolute submission as a means, has been prone to look forward only to the end, which excused in its own eyes the humiliation of the yoke which it endured. The Polish serf, sunk in a state of servitude as degrading as the Musco-

vite's, was yet always keenly alive to the feeling of which the latter has always been insensible. Beneath the rule of Islamism, the hope of conquest and extension has made whole nations bend in contented slavery. For this lure held out by the prophet, the Arab sold his birthright, abandoning the freedom cherished for tens of centuries in his deserts, to prostrate himself at the footstool of the despotism which promised him the subjugation of the world.

Without entering into the question of how far a race may in the long run be affected by the condition in which it is forcedly placed, it is evident that this feature in the Muscovite character is not wholly to be attributed to his servile state, but arises in some measure from an inherent tendency. The Muscovite, in fact, is in temper an Armenian. Where left to his own free agency, he sets no value upon power or glory. He does not wish to rule ; he seeks not for precedence ; he only aspires to be allowed to trade, and to be let to live in peace.

This irresistible propensity to traffic, and to intervene betwixt the producer and consumer, is one of which the gratification has of course become nationally impossible, by the very extent to which his people has multiplied. There is no room in the

world for thirty-six millions of Muscovites to play the part of the Hebrew and the Armenian. But though his strong instinct leads him to trade and brokerage, he is well fitted for agricultural pursuits,—and the nature of the country he inhabits would allow him, in following this avocation, so well in accordance with his pacific genius, to attain that wealth which he seems alone to prize. Something, however, of this apathy and indifference, no doubt is owing to the severity with which the Russian Tsars have bent and broken the national spirit to their will; but by a strange inconsistency, after using every imaginable effort to reduce their people to the condition of automatons, they imagine that they can breathe at pleasure into them the life of animation for a given purpose.

Nicholas, who has been more unremitting than any of his predecessors in extinguishing the faintest semblance of independence or opinion, has sought most arduously to inspire the nation with a thirst for war and for extension, and appears surprised to find that it should remain mute and unmoved by this appeal.

Like the ass of the fable, who had nothing to lose by a change of masters, it is no exaggeration to say that the vast majority of the Muscovites, so

that their religious prejudices be not brought into play, would bend contentedly to a foreign yoke, rather than make the slightest voluntary sacrifice to extend their dominion over other races. But though averse to war, patient of servitude, and indifferent to the national glory, we must not be led to regard the character of this people with undue contempt, or to join hastily in the sweeping judgment which unjustly stigmatises it as worthy of its debased condition. A poetic, but unfounded prejudice, leads us with nations, as with individuals, to underrate the value of useful but ignoble qualities, and to identify others which have no necessary connexion. We are apt to regard valour as inseparable from generosity,—ferocity and bravado as always indicative of cowardice. We are apt to disbelieve in the virtues of a race divested of public spirit, of patriotism, or of courage to resist oppression; and yet nothing can be more erroneous. There exist nations, as there do individuals, cruel, vindictive, or boastful, and yet brave; tribes, whose unquenchable spirit of independence and adventurous temper, renders even the restraint of agricultural avocations unendurable, and in whom it is yet allied to weaknesses and vices which can never allow them to occupy any but an inferior station in

the scale of humanity. So, in like manner, the Muscovite, without the requisite energy to shake off the most benumbing oppression, is yet calculated to play a respectable and useful, if not a brilliant part in the history of civilization. Just as the tastes, capacities, or habits of individuals fit them for certain pursuits, so nations may be said to have their peculiar vocations. This vocation we have no right to thwart, or treat with any want of deference, so long as it proves beneficial, or even not injurious to the great human community. To some it has been given, to advance the great cause of improvement, by daring examples of thought and action, or by the cultivation of arts which might tend to refine and purify the energies thence derived. Some, urged by irresistible impulses, ransack the world, scattering through it the seeds of knowledge and of civilization. But this can never be the case with more than a few millions,—few in comparison with the earth's inhabitants. Like Columbus and his companions, they may discover and conquer in the regions of thought, of art, of science, of invention,—but the discovery and the conquest once effected, they must give place to the laborious patience of the colonist and cultivator. This is the destiny inevitably marked out for the

great majority of mankind : its laws must operate every day as civilization advances on a larger portion even of the very nations which now lead its onward march. There is nothing, therefore, either contemptible or humiliating in the obvious mission of the Muscovite, towards which his inclinations and his instincts lead him ; viz., to be allowed, undisturbed by thought of war or of ambition, to cultivate in peace the fertile territory settled by his race, and to carry on an unrestricted trade both of exchange and transit.

In the same manner that there are turbulent tribes never yet subdued, and nations violently self-enfranchised, which yet make a deplorable use of their anarchic independence, so there is every reason to believe that far from abusing, the Muscovite would turn a state of comparative freedom to the best account, by deriving from it an increase of prosperity which would benefit both himself and his neighbours.

From these useful and pacific avocations, to which alone his instincts prompt, he is deterred by his social condition and by his government. He, who progressing in peaceful civilization, might, under favouring auspices, have drawn wealth as a happy cultivator from the soil, or have interchanged

with the West the produce of Central Asia and of his country,—is forced by his Tsar to follow the hateful trade of a soldier; or at least his interests and well-being are sacrificed to a system of aggrandisement and conquest, with which he has not the remotest sympathy.

Not only, therefore, is the Muscovite prevented from following profitable and congenial occupations, for the sake of extending all the miseries of his own condition over other portions of the human family, but he is furthermore so employed against the bent of his natural inclinations, without deriving even the slightest pride or satisfaction from the triumphs of which he is at once the instrument and the victim.

The position of the Russian people is in this respect as unparalleled as cruel, for it is difficult to cite any other which has ever entered even forcedly on a career of conquest, without deriving some compensation from the national success, even amongst the miseries or the servitude which aggrandisement may have entailed. The Germanic portion even of the Austrian empire, is not without some feeling of exultation at the dominion of its emperors in Italy, but—setting aside the Muscovite nobility, profoundly inimical to its government,—it would

be difficult to find amongst the people which is so devoted to it, one solitary individual who would not prefer the slightest diminution of the duties on British cottons, or on distillation, to the uninteresting intelligence that the imperial eagles were floating victoriously over Stockholm, Constantinople, or Calcutta.

This remarkable peculiarity in the Old-Russian character, which renders it impossible for the cabinet to inoculate the people in the faintest degree with its boundless ambition, becomes, therefore, a most serious consideration in estimating the value of its submissive attachment to the Tsars. Of this most solid instrument of their power, the author is, however, so little disposed to underrate the importance, that, before proceeding further, he proposes examining with his reader what modifications it may undergo, and investigating more closely the relation in which the Russian autocrat stands with these compact thirty-six millions of Muscovites, the nucleus of his empire, around which so many discordant elements have been gathered.

CHAP. II.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS, AND THE SLAVE
POPULATION.

Identity between the terms slave, and serf, in Russia—Distinctions between the Emperor's slaves and the private slaves—Condition, prospects, and feelings of both.

IF—including Finland, Poland, the German and Caucasian provinces,—forty-five out of every sixty-three individuals are in a state of servitude throughout the whole Russian empire,—when we turn to the Muscovite population, we find it almost wholly in that deplorable condition. The proportion of slaves which it contains exceeds thirty-four out of every thirty-six of its number. In examining the mutual relations of the Russian government and of its Muscovite subjects, it is therefore fitting to commence with the serf class, whose overwhelming majority, and whose exclusive and superstitious fidelity gives it such preponderating importance.

But firstly, let us be allowed an observation which naturally suggests itself on the term *serf*. In England, and indeed throughout all parts of Europe where feudal institutions once prevailed, we have derived our ideas of serfdom from its former condition, as it existed in those countries, when modified by the revival of old Roman municipal institutions, by the spirit of chivalry, and by the protective power of the Church.

Undoubtedly the fate of the serf was little enviable, but still not to be confounded with that of the negro slave; and accordingly a very different meaning attaches in the public estimation to the term of serf, and to that of slave.

In England, those who with an instinctive veneration for prosperity and power, seek always to view in its least unfavourable light the reprehensible conduct of the mighty, and who reserve their virtuous indignation for the derelictions of the feeble—who denounce and anathematise petty states for conniving at the slave-trade, but who eschew even discussion on the transgressions of the powerful—these, and a still more numerous class, willing to shut their eyes to wrong which they would be incapable of regarding with indifference—all carefully use the word *serf*, even when faintly

pitying the Russian peasant ; thus half in hope, and half in self-deception, laying the flattering unction to their souls, that he is not a slave : like those nursed in the lap of luxury, and sensibly alive to the miseries of others, whose indolent benevolence accepts with eager and culpable credulity the consolatory arguments which tax with falsehood and exaggeration accounts of suffering harrowing to their feelings,—who, compassionate in their natures, allow the houseless wretch to pass them faint with inanition, in the comfortable belief that he is a mendicant impostor going to his revels,—whose ears are given so readily to the refutation of asserted wretchedness, and so slowly to the proofs of its existence, that it is only by incessant repetition that credence can be forced upon them, of what they ingenuously avow themselves so loth to believe. There exists no party at the present day in England, and no public individual who would dare to weigh any considerations of loss or gain with the abolition of negro slavery in the British dominions, or the suppression of the slave-trade out of them ; none who would call in question the horrors, or at least the immorality of either ; and in fact, even few who now, whenever the opportunity presents itself, neglect what po-

pularity may be attained through zeal as abolitionists : yet there are men in both houses of parliament who can remember when the emancipation of the blacks, and the abolition of the infamous trade in human flesh was regarded by the senate and the nation as a scheme of visionary philanthropy, which session after session was triumphantly defeated by ridiculing the necessity of its adoption. In vain the horrors and the miseries of such a state of things were brought before them,—the majority preferred to turn from this undeniable evidence to a consolatory belief in the refutation attempted. It was only by accumulating these proofs, and bringing them year after year incessantly under the eyes of the nation, that at length it could no longer refuse to admit the truth ; and it is no small praise, that once convinced, albeit against its will, it rose like one man to relieve the wrong of which it had been so long and obstinately incredulous.

However tardily convinced, there is happily now but one opinion in England on the subject of slavery. Right or wrong, the time is gone by for the arguments of its apologists. All men are alike ashamed to mention it by its proper name, with any thing but unqualified condemnation ; and on this account, so large a portion of the public,

and of its organs, in all allusions to the bondage of five-and-forty millions in the Russian empire, take refuge in the term of *serfdom*.

With every respect for that practical bent of the English genius which, unlike the fitful enthusiasm of France, raised in an hour for any noble purpose, and exhausted in an hour, leads it, even in its persevering benevolence, to prefer the pursuit of objects the most feasible,—it must not be confounded with the culpable weakness which would rather shut its eyes to an unpalatable truth, than raise its voice in reprobation, or find its feelings strained to sympathy. It is the duty of every writer on the Russian empire, to make the unbeliever probe the very wound from which he turns away, and ring incessantly in his unwilling ears, that these forty-five millions of fellow-creatures, the Russian serfs, are in every sense of the word as completely slaves as the negroes captured on the coast of Africa, and sold in the markets of the new world.

The few who having entered more deeply into the question, are aware of this distinction without a difference in the nature of their respective bondage, still derive some consolation from considerations of which the futility will be naturally exposed as we proceed with our investigation.

“Dark and pitiable as may be the condition of the Russian serfs,” they argue, “it is still progressing towards improvement. On the one hand, the state of debasement of this vast population, and on the other the interests of the nobility, forbid any but a very gradual solution of the question. This it is receiving. None could untie so promptly and so safely these cruel bonds as its despotic government. It has the power, and for a long time past it has avowed its intention of using it for this purpose. Every thing seems to guarantee the conduct of the Russian autocrat in this respect,—his jealousy of his nobility—his wish to humble it,—the traditional policy of the throne according with his personal vindictiveness. Who, in fact, can be more interested than he in the speediest possible enfranchisement of the loyal serfs of his empire, at the expense of his nobility, which he mistrusts? It is evident, therefore, that it could not be confided to better hands, since who can have more power to effect its cessation, or be more interested in it,—who have less to gain by its continuance than the chief of an unlimited despotism, whose station gives him already absolute power over every individual in his realm?”

Nothing would appear more reasonable than such

a supposition ; one can hardly conceive any possible position in which a man can be more free from all temptation of playing the slave-master, than when, by the very nature of his sovereignty, he exercises such unbounded controul over every human being in his empire, that nothing more can be added to the extent of his authority. To possess civilly those of whom he is politically master in so unreserved a manner, must appear an aimless and useless distinction ; whilst on the other hand, to allow the possession of one set of his subjects by another, is to tolerate a sort of *imperium in imperio*, which cannot fail to be repugnant to his policy. It would therefore seem impossible that the emperors of Russia can be any thing but the hearty abolitionists, which for several reigns past they have almost avowed themselves. In as far as removing the private serfs from the power of their lords, there can be no doubt of the sincerity either of the past or present policy of the crown ; neither can there be any doubt of the many practical difficulties which retard its accomplishment in any but a gradual manner.

But is this deliverance intended to be absolute ? —when the mortgaged serfs are forfeited to the crown, does the crown grant them even nominal

freedom? No,—they are then added to the twenty-one millions and a half of serfs in its own private domain ; and thus the sovereigns of Russia, whilst they have succeeded in disseminating abroad the opinion that it is their mission to abolish servitude in their dominions, have been, and are still, the chief slave proprietors in their empire,—holding upwards of twenty-one out of every forty-five serfs within it !

The private slave-holder is deterred from emancipating his slaves by considerations of vital interest. This human property constitutes his only revenue. The land is valueless without the peasantry, and it is not in his power to make any law or regulation which would save him not alone from loss, but from absolute ruin. With the crown it is widely different,—every imaginable motive of policy and of interest point out the expediency of such a course.

In giving its serfs at least the same nominal freedom as is enjoyed by the private serf, occasionally emancipated by his baron, an emperor of Russia would risk no pecuniary sacrifice, since he can tax in any way he pleases any of his subjects, and can make by a dash of his pen the most stringent laws and regulations to enforce his object.

On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that considerable advantage would be hence derived. He would not have to relinquish the slightest portion of that authority which may have attractions for the private slave-master, since there is no distinction in his power as autocrat over the first noble or the lowliest slave in his dominions. Nothing would prevent him from exercising over this population every restraint from which the slightest benefit to his power is now conceived to be derived. With the system of administration pursued in the Russian empire, he might even render this emancipation in fact illusory, and yet secure gratuitously all the advantages of conferring a boon in the estimation of his own serfs,—of securing still more firmly the attachment of the private serfs, through the hopes inspired by such an example,—and of appearing incontestibly in the eyes of Europe and of history, as a great emancipator and reformer. Viewed in this character, the public opinion of the world would excuse the violence, the oppression, the severity, and the ambition conducing to increase a power which was applied to effect a purpose apparently so great and noble.

So difficult does it appear to account for this want of resolution to emancipate the slaves of the imperial domain, in the face of so many causes

concurring to establish its expediency, that it seems difficult to find any solution of this strange hesitation more plausible than that once offered by a philosophic Russian to the author.

“Natural,” he contended, “as is the comprehension of *meum* and *tuum* to the human mind, it is limited in extent, and there is a something so monstrous in the idea of a really unlimited despotism, which gives to one individual not merely extensive privileges over a large portion of the earth, but the absolute possession of it with everything living and inanimate which it contains, that the human mind, even in the despot, has seldom power to conceive it upon such an extended scale. Unless gifted with extraordinary mind, the inherent love of property is generally found to operate with him, and he feels an indefinite longing to hold privately something within these vast possessions whose boundlessness fatigues him. This is the reason why, except in a few rare instances, really absolute princes, when they hold as complete possession of everything within their realms as it is ever possible for frail humanity to do, yet create themselves a private property—a smaller within their wider domain; adopting the feelings and the aimless avarice which is based

upon the more limited consciousness of ownership which alone the ordinary intellect can perfectly conceive.

Innumerable examples have been afforded of men in such situations, seriously influenced by the futile and arbitrary distinctions they have established betwixt their private and their public rights, even when the latter comprise all other which can possibly be assumed. It is therefore only to the private feeling of the slave-master, unwilling to abandon his privilege as such,—contained though it be within the attributes of the emperor,—that we can refer, to account with any degree of plausibility for the impolitic reluctance shewn by the crown in the emancipation of its serfs.

It is true that a strong and not unwise determination, (as regards the interest of the Tsars) is exhibited to keep the moujiks as much as possible in their present barbarism and ignorance, in accordance with the policy of the present reign; which is, for the first time since the days of Peter the Great, designedly retrogressive. Instruction was formerly forced upon the people; its nobility were, until recently, encouraged to travel abroad. The latter are now almost imprisoned in the empire. The Emperor Nicholas has by ukase

prohibited the admission of the lower order from the elementary to the superior schools ; he has forbidden the establishment of temperance societies, and has branded the literary tastes which his servants may exhibit, by classing it with insubordination and drunkenness—as a vicious tendency on which it is the duty of their superiors to report. It appears to be now received, that at the present day more is to be dreaded than hoped for from the civilisation of these masses, by whose enlightenment his predecessors thought to profit. To keep the serf in his present ignorance and barbarism, it is however by no means necessary to retain him in personal servitude ; and though this consideration, added to the many which have been adduced, may at any moment lead to his nominal enfranchisement, it will unhappily only be when the growing precautions taking to trammel him with other bonds, will leave him no advantage in his new condition.

The Muscovite serf population is undeniably attached, with very few exceptions, to the Tsars ; and this serf population comprises a large portion of the burgher class ; because the trader, whether simple mestchinine, or first, second, or third guild merchant,—most commonly belongs to it.

Now, though it must not be forgotten that the slaves or serfs of the empire form two distinct bodies, of which 23-45ths are the property of the landholders, and upwards of 21-45ths appertain to the domain of the emperor or empress, still this serf property of the crown is of comparatively recent origin, having accumulated to its present extent from the confiscations of latter reigns, and from the forfeit mortgages of the nobility. The crown serfs and the private serfs were not, therefore, as now, two classes nearly equal in numbers, but the great mass of the peasantry belonged to the latter category, and at that time derived those feelings of attachment towards the Tsars which still continuing to influence them in their new condition, distinguish, if in a much lesser degree, the crown serf as well as the private serf. Ever since the systematic abasement of the nobility, begun by Peter, and continued by his successors with more or less of energy and vigour, the Russian sovereigns have been viewed by the people, as stepping betwixt them and their lords, to protect and snatch them from their tyranny.

Though there may be certain races which submit more readily, and thrive better than others in servitude,—like the Negro in the black, and the

Muscovite in the white breed of men,—there are none who ever become so far accustomed to it as not to wish to leave it directly they have obtained the faintest glimpse of a freer condition; particularly when the nature of their bondage is as oppressive as in Russia, where the weight of slavery has never been alleviated by partaking in the slightest degree of that semi-patriarchal character which in some Mahomedan countries causes the slave to be regarded as a humble member of his master's family.

The Russian sovereigns, at the very outset of the period of the nominal civilisation of the empire, succeeded in conveying to the peasantry the impression that they would eventually relieve them from the galling yoke of private servitude; and this impression has at times become so vivid and so menacing, that it has become repeatedly necessary for the government, even in the present reign, to give it public contradiction.

Up to the time that he was first taught to look to the Tsar as a protector, the moujik had bent the more submissively to his lord, that he had conceived a notion of his power, derived from the extent to which it was exercised upon himself. We have seen nations take a sort of pride in the

magnitude of the despotism from which they suffered—even a people with an incontestible love of independence. The Spaniard is even now ever ready with some approval of bold and violent acts, by declaring that their perpetrator is *mucho hombre*, “every inch a man,” just as he was wont to observe that a monarch under similar circumstances was *mucho rey*, or “every inch a king.” In a race naturally servile, timid, and yielding, this sort of worship for power, however applied, may therefore easily be understood. But directly the slave-master was interfered with at every turn, and evidence given in a thousand ways, that if his authority remained unbounded over the moujik, he himself was only like the potter’s clay before the iron sceptre of the Tsars, all the veneration which he had before inspired reverted to the crown, leaving only a feeling of latent irritation at the galling yoke.

Hitherto his baron had appeared the mightiest individual in the slave’s eyes, he was now taught clearly to see him trembling before one more mighty still, one whom his hopes led him to regard as a protector, and in whom at least he found an avenger. On the other hand, the increasing exactions of the crown were made from the baron,

who had to bear from his slaves all the odium of exacting the contributions which directly or indirectly the government squeezed from him.

In the recruitment for the army, on all the lands belonging to private individuals, the proprietor is rated at so many men per cent. upon his slaves. He has to designate those whom he chooses for this hated service, and on him falls the odium of those families from which the recruit is chosen; but the Tsar, by holding out the promise of freedom at the expiration of the term of military service, is only seen in a comparatively amiable light.

The feeling of loyalty and attachment engendered from these causes, is still paramount with the twenty-three millions who linger in private servitude; but with the twenty-one millions and a half of imperial serfs, it has undergone considerable modifications. It partakes, however, even where most deeply rooted, very much more of superstitious awe than of affection. It bears no resemblance to the enthusiastic attachment which is occasionally exhibited in free countries towards popular princes. It has no reference to the individual man, but to his station; and when he dies, is therefore transferred at once, and without regret, to his successor. It is not even sensibly affected by the vices or the

virtues of a sovereign, which die with him,—but is based upon the despotism which endures. You never meet with a peasant, who can distinguish the sovereigns under whose reign he has lived in anything but name. He is alike ignorant and careless of the ferocious insanity of Paul, and of the benevolence of Alexander. Of all who ruled before he himself was born, the names of Peter the Great, and of Ivan the Terrible, alone survive traditionally. The cruelties of the latter—the most sanguinary monster that ever disgraced humanity—cited without reprobation, have earned him this distinction. The ideas which the lower order of Russians entertain of the awful power of their emperor, are such, that they conceive nothing which can resist his authority and command. They have heard, indeed, of foreign states, and of foreign princes, but believe them to be in a state of dependence and vassalage. It is no uncommon thing to hear the travelled peasant, who is the *esprit fort* of his village, whispering in wonder when he sees a *talega* posting by, in which some prisoner is seated beside the field-jager, and suggesting, after he has named the great men of the empire, that it may be the King of Prussia, or of France, or England, sent for to St. Petersburg,

or despatched to Siberia or to the Caucasus, by the emperor's order. This idea is entertained in common both by the private and the imperial serfs; but naturally, a distinction already exists in their feeling towards the government. The private slave in general looks forward with envy to the condition of the emperor's slaves, and he still hopes much from the mighty master in whose name retribution is so often dealt upon his petty tyrants. Hope operates no longer with the imperial serf. He is oppressed by the emperor's own servants, instead of by a private lord; he no longer, therefore, sees in him a protector. Though on the whole his condition is undoubtedly preferable to that of the average of private serfs, he is apt to look only to the peculiar disadvantages of his situation. To be able to appreciate both these and its advantages, let us recapitulate a few of the real differences which exist between the condition of the two classes into which the slave population is divided.

The fate of the private serfs differs as much as the character of their many masters. The vices, the personal inhumanity, the avarice, the necessities, the inattention or absenteeism of the lord, all operate upon the destiny of the slave. According

to law, a slave proprietor can be punished for putting his serf to death,—but only by incarceration in a monastery, even if he have burned him alive, or crucified him; and such horrors have been perpetrated before now;—let us hope, for the sake of those who committed them, in a moment of temporary insanity. But another law forbids any court to receive the evidence of a slave against his master. It owes its origin to an ukase issued in 1767, by the Empress Catherine, which says:—“If a serf, forgetful of the obedience he owes his lord, make any complaint against him, particularly to imperial majesty, both the author of the petition and he presenting it shall be amenable to the punishment which the laws award.” This punishment is the infliction of the knout, and exile to Siberia. This ukase has been confirmed by another issued by the Emperor Nicholas in 1828, with a slight modification; so that as the law now stands, (article 577 of that division of the Russian code which treats on serfdom,) it forbids the serf to accuse or give evidence against his master, under penalty of capital punishment, in any but the two following cases,—viz: 1. Treason against the crown. 2. Concealment of the number of his slaves liable to the imperial poll-tax.

As long, therefore, as a master confines his cruelties to his own slaves, without interfering with those of other people, he is practically safe. The law itself is therefore, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, neutralized by this contradictory clause; but if it could even be put into execution, the most barbarous murder of a slave does not receive the punishment due to capital offences, which in Russia is exile to Siberia, and the infliction of the knout. The law thus, in its very theory, does not pretend to give the slave the protection which five-and-thirty years ago was practically extended to the West Indian negro by the legislature of Great Britain. During the administration of Spencer Perceval, on the 8th of May, 1811, the Honourable A. W. Hodge, a member of his Britannic Majesty's Council at Tortola, was executed for the murder of one of his negroes by excessive flogging. The law does not in Russia, even in 1845, render such a retribution possible upon a slave proprietor, under any circumstances. Such punishment as it threatens in the few instances where it is possible for the evidence of freemen to establish the perpetration of the crime, is quite inefficient to deter, in a country where the laws are so easily evaded. Besides this, the proprietor, where a certain dis-

tance removed from a police station, can punish without other legal limitation than the responsibility which falls upon him if his victim dies within three days; and at all times he has a right to send his serfs, male and female, and of any age, as often as he pleases, not for trial, but for correction, to the police authorities, without incurring the remotest risk.

The ukases issued to protect the slave, principally by the Emperor Alexander, are a dead-letter; but if zealously enforced, they would be as inefficient for that purpose as the acts of parliament for the prevention of cruelty to animals unhappily prove to effect their object. Drivers and carters are occasionally fined and imprisoned, but it is doubtful whether the penalties enforced have tended to diminish animal suffering. Men brutalised enough to commit barbarities which come within the act, may indeed become more careful of detection, but will commonly wreak their revenge in the shape of increased cruelty towards the animals to which they attribute their punishment. They know that, like the Russian serf, these poor dumb beasts cannot give evidence.

Practically, therefore, the private serf is life and limb at the disposal of his master, as completely as

slaves have ever been in any country. He can be sold or hired out like a beast of burthen. The law now wills that a certain portion of land must be sold with him, but land is of mere nominal value. The master may remove one or all his peasants for life from one estate to another, though thousands of miles apart. In purchasing a slave, he has, therefore, only to go through the formality of receiving from the former proprietor a few acres with him, of which he soon forgets the possession, and from which he may remove the slave, separating him for ever from his family, and dooming him to perpetual banishment from his home.

The slave, male or female, cannot marry without the permission of the lord;—the law stipulates that they shall not be forced to marry against their inclinations, but does not offer to protect them; and the means of coercion in the power of the masters are so efficient, that resistance to their wishes is unknown. A soured old maid may sometimes be seen, forcing all the handsomest girls in a village to wed the most repulsive objects; at another, an experimental agriculturist will range his male and female slaves by categories, and marry them according to some fanciful theory which he believes will tend most rapidly to the reproduction

of the species. No further respect is paid to the feelings of the father or of the husband, of the daughter or the wife; and there are no purposes, the most infamous, to which the slave is not always liable to be devoted, and frequently applied. The master may at any time send his male slave to Siberia, or for a soldier,—and some he must constantly choose for this service.

Where the law offers little ostensible, and no real protection,—where there is no public opinion, and where the masters only superficially civilized, are plunged in all the vices which have usually marked the decrepitude of society, it may readily be imagined what must often be the condition of their slaves. On the other hand, his lord may be wealthy, benevolent, or sufficiently conscious of his true interests to see the advantages he may derive from his prosperity. In this case, the moujik often derives from his connexion with his master, facilities for acquiring wealth; and with this wealth, which he has learned by a thousand arts to conceal so that it can seldom all be extorted from him by any change of fortune, he sometimes manages to purchase freedom. Being less exposed to the rapacity of the police and government agents than a crown serf, or free trader, he has therefore, under

a wise or good master, in some respects the advantage of them.

It is easier for him to become rich, in a country where riches, or at least competence, appear so easily attainable by the industrious peasant, who enjoys any respite from the habitual extortion of his master, and of the imperial servants, whose double oppression in general weighs so heavily on him. For it cannot be too often repeated, that Russia bears no analogy to those densely peopled countries, in which the superabundance of labour, and the limited channels through which industry can be made available, render existence a painful struggle for a portion of the population.

The Russian only requires not to be cruelly interfered with, to grow affluent. Somewhere about 122 individuals out of every 126 are reduced, on an average, to consume less than six shillings' worth of produce monthly. Whereas, if it were not for the state of servitude in which they are held, and the wretched government which cramps their energies, there is nothing to prevent them from being in the same condition as the inhabitants of the United States, where the labour of an able-bodied man will bring him in a pound a week at the lowest computation.

The greater number of the prosperous traders have grown wealthy through the kindness and protection of their lords, or have thus been enabled to acquire their freedom. There is always, however, for the private slave, this terrible drawback, even under the best of masters,—the uncertainty of life, and the dread of coming into the possession of a cruel or rapacious successor. Of such vital importance is the character of his lord to his serfs, and such is the facility with which, under an indulgent master, they may prosper, that it is by no means uncommon, when an estate which has been well administered passes out of his hands by death or sale, to find them applying to some neighbouring proprietor, of whose humanity to his own people they are convinced, and requesting him to purchase them, on consideration of their furnishing him with the requisite sum.

A similar instance came to the knowledge of the author of these volumes:—A nobleman, with a small estate, but who had behaved with unvarying kindness to his serfs, was waited on by a deputation of the serfs of a vast adjoining domain, then about to be sold, and of which the full value of his own would not have paid a year's rental. They offered to advance him the money to purchase this,—

and of course such an advance from men about to become his bondsmen was a gift. Unhappily, when the negotiation was nearly concluded, he was seized with a violent fit of coughing; it was dreaded that his lungs might be affected, and the opinion of a doctor having confirmed this apprehension, the serfs withdrew their offer. Meanwhile, this people, who had enjoyed for years a state of peace and liberty, which had led to such prosperity, passed with the estate into the hands of an avaricious and eccentric beldame, who on her arrival began by causing several of her people, taken haphazard, to be chastised; to let them know, she said, "that she would not be imposed on, though she was a woman." The second day she amused herself with trying the contents of her English medicine chest upon her slaves, to ascertain the precise effects of each; and beyond this the author knows no more of her inauspiciously commencing reign.

Happiness, enjoyed under any despotism, public or private, is, however, obviously uncertain. The history of an estate in Russia is in this respect a picture of the empire, only that, as besides benevolent intentions, it requires singular talent and energy to produce beneficial results in a realm so extensive,—a good sovereign is a scarcer acci-

dent for the nation, than a good slave-master for the slave.

Now, if we turn to the serfs of the imperial domain, amongst other advantages, they labour under no such painful uncertainty as to the future. They are not subject to be sold from one master to another, since the emperor, though constantly increasing their number by the forfeiture of the mortgaged estates of his nobility, very rarely parts with his slaves to another owner.

The imperial serf is not either liable to the same extensive privations which the private serf endures, nor to the same extent of capricious cruelty of which he is at times the victim. He can more readily obtain leave to move about the empire ; and he enjoys some of the advantages of belonging to an extensive and wealthy proprietor,—but then it is of an absentee proprietor, who has abandoned the administration of his overgrown estates to overseers and agents. This comparative exemption from utter misery and unendurable tyranny, which the crown serf to some extent enjoys, is not, however, without exception. The vast and corrupt body which administers this prodigious estate, is sometimes guilty of incredible barbarity and injustice ; and the imperial serfs are sometimes decimated by

hunger, as well as those belonging to private individuals,—and to an extent of which the writer of these volumes was not aware, even when he published the “Revelations of Russia.” Though it is true that in cases of famine relief is always afforded from the imperial treasury to this population, the sums intended for that purpose seldom reach their destination.

On the whole, however, it is incontestible that the average condition of the imperial is better than that of the private serf ; and it may be considered as a conclusive proof thereof, that the great majority of the private serfs would willingly change places with those belonging to the emperor ; but then, if you question the crown serf on the subject, in nine cases out of ten he will let you perceive that he looks with envy on the condition of the serf owned by a private master.

He will point out to you the numerous examples of private slaves who have attained to vast wealth, who have succeeded in purchasing, or been gifted with freedom,—all chances of which as an imperial slave he is almost entirely deprived.

And in fact, though the great majority of successful traders are, or have been, in a state of servitude, it is almost invariably in a state of private

servitude that they have attained their prosperity. In point of fact, wherever the crown serf succeeds in obtaining permission to trade, and resorts to a town for that purpose, besides the exactions of the administrators of the imperial domains, he becomes a victim to the extortion of the police and other government servants, who regard it as their undisputed right to turn him to any possible account. The soil is, however, so fertile, that, wherever confining himself to its cultivation he is so fortunate as to be under the direction of overseers who are tolerably reasonable, it is by no means uncommon for the imperial serf to attain considerable agricultural wealth ; but in that case the detestable and Machiavelian policy of the crown itself interferes, and proves as pernicious as in other cases the oppression of its agents, for which it may indeed be held responsible, but with which it has no connivance.

Wherever by his industry and intelligence a crown serf has succeeded in acquiring agricultural wealth, converting his hut and his patch of ground into flourishing farms, and having erected valuable buildings, after the lapse of a certain number of years he is suddenly transplanted for life to a distant government ; in which case the property

which he has collected, and must leave behind, falls to the use of the imperial domain.

A double advantage is supposed to arise from this injustice : firstly,—the immediate gain derived from this insidious confiscation ; whilst, secondly, this proved and industrious labourer in the imperial vineyard is removed to fructify some hitherto unproductive spot. Amongst the higher authorities, this is called taking the honey from the emperor's hives ; and the author has heard this iniquitous proceeding highly extolled for its ingenuity, by comparison with the policy of the Turkish divan, which allows its servants to accumulate treasures, and then, through the intermedium of the bow-string, sweeps them all into the treasury of the sultan. "That," say they, "is the old barbarous system of suffocating the bees in the hive ; but our emperor takes away the honey without destroying them, and then lets loose his bees to gather fresh." It may appear strange, but such is the force of industrious habit, that after this discouraging experience, these men are really sometimes seen attempting to accumulate property again ; but though this is occasionally true with the individual, it is not so with his class, which is impolitically deterred from any general or serious attempt to attain such uncertain prosperity.

The imperial serf is taxed at the stipulated sum of fifteen roubles annually ; he is bound to keep the roads in order, and to contribute a portion of his labour to works of public utility ; and he receives from the crown for his support ten dsiatines of land to cultivate. He is bound to feed the troops quartered upon him, and to afford means of conveyance for the public service, and is ostensibly awarded payment for the same. Practically, however, he is so much at the mercy of the vast establishment of officials comprised in the administration of the imperial domains, that the annual tax extends to double and treble its avowed amount ; he cannot stir from the place of his birth without the dearly purchased permission of these rapacious agents, and he is liable with his family to any corporal punishment it pleases them to inflict, or to banishment to Siberia at their will and pleasure. What he most dreads, however, and what is consequently used as the readiest means of extortion, is being selected for the army, or for the government works. The disgust and horror entertained by the lower order of Muscovites for the military profession, which after a certain period of service frees them from slavery, is so profound and deeply rooted, that it is only fully to

be accounted for, by the innate aversion of this pacific people to everything warlike. Uninviting as may be the prospect of the soldier, it is still strange to see the tenacity with which the peasantry will cling to the most wretched mode of life rather than be enlisted; but their dread of serving in the public works or the manufactories of the crown, is perfectly natural.

When the traveller is shown the mines and canals, or the vast imperial manufactories and iron works,—when he sees the stupendous docks in the ports of the Black Sea and of the Baltic, he is seldom aware of the true condition of the unfortunates by whom they have been erected and are chiefly filled. They are forced labourers, slaves of the imperial domain. It is considered that as they are the emperor's property, they are bound to do the work he wishes done, without remuneration; and they consequently receive only the coarse rations necessary for their support, and the almost nominal pay of the soldier. So far from any encouragement being held out for the zeal they may show, or the proficiency they may attain, they see by experience that the more a workman is valued, the longer and the harder is the toil at which he is kept, and the less his chance of ever

being dismissed to his village ; whilst, on the other hand, as it is the habit of the slave to conceal his dexterity, the awkwardness he may show is always supposed to be feigned, and it is only after a long course of cruel treatment that it is believed to be real.

So prejudicial is this iniquitous system to the very interests of these establishments, by destroying all emulation, that it is found that the labour of these imperial serfs, which costs nothing but the value of their coarse food and raiment, is still dearer than that of highly paid workmen in private manufactories kept by foreigners in the empire.

The private serf may hope in some cases to profit by his industry, his skill, and the proficiency he has acquired in various arts ; for though his master, in letting him seek employment, commonly raises his *obrock* or annual tax in such proportion to his supposed gains, as at times to absorb them all, still the baron is sometimes reasonable, and more frequently deceived ; but the crown serf is debarred from all such prospect.

This incertitude of a proper requital for their labour in the one case, and the certainty in the other, of the value of their services proving rather prejudicial than otherwise to themselves, has rendered it a maxim of a traditonal wisdom

amongst the slaves of both classes, obstinately to conceal their acquirements as much as possible. This notorious habit has accustomed those who have any of these unfortunates committed to their charge, with whose antecedents they are unacquainted, to consider in every case their ignorance and awkwardness as the results of ill-will, which a due course of severity may conquer. There is no Russian employed as the superintendant of peasants born and reared far from his own eye, who will not relate to you instances in which, after a due number of inflictions of the lash, some of those committed to his charge did not miraculously find the use of their hands and of their tools ; and this of course confirms him in his system, forgetful that ninety-nine times out of a hundred his cruelty has been wasted without result.

Amongst the many superficial remarks made by travellers on the Russian empire, it has frequently been observed, how wonderfully efficacious is, after all, the violence used towards the peasant. “ If the master wishes the serf to become a tailor, a carpenter, a shoemaker,—say these philosophers, he is set to work at once, flogged when he fails and then flogged and flogged again, and it is truly marvellous how singularly this course of

proceeding stimulates the inventive genius of the Russian, for he becomes in the briefest possible space of time what his master wishes. Hence they frequently proceed to insinuate that such treatment is in some measure excusable towards so singular a people, or at least this is the inference too often drawn from their statement; whereas, in point of fact, it should only tend to prove how the long injustice of their superiors has taught the slave class to conceal the skill and ingenuity by which they can never hope to profit, and how a further cruelty and injustice is practised to surprise the secret of this concealment, indiscriminately on those who are innocent or guilty of it.

This obstinate ill-will of the moujiks, which severity does not always conquer, is, as it may readily be imagined, exceedingly hurtful to the very interests of their owners. Let us take one instance out of millions, which will show at once the cause for hopeless discouragement in the crown serf, and the prejudicial operation of this feeling on the interests of the government. An Englishman employed in a certain imperial manufactory, informed the author that he served the Russian government by contract. In England he was one of the chief workmen in a similar establishment, earning by

hard labour a high salary for an artisan. He had acquired that limited but practical knowledge of a given branch which mere theory will not supply, and he was consequently offered an engagement in Russia. As is usual in such cases with skilful workmen highly paid in England, he refused to go to a distant country until a tempting offer was made him ; and once in Russia, he acted merely as superintendant in his department. His sole utility consisted in his practical knowledge of the mixture of certain ingredients ; and he pointed out to the author one of his workmen, a crown slave, whom he frankly confessed to be as well acquainted with the art as himself, but added that the slave would never avow it, being assured from the example of several of his companions, that the only result would be his retention till a later age in the manufactory. The government thus paid the Englishman between three and four hundred pounds per annum uselessly, and the poor serf saw a foreigner receive this sum whilst aware that his own proficiency in the art would never procure him more than the coarse black bread and fermented cabbage on which he lived, or tend to exempt him from the rigid military discipline which in the imperial works and establishments adds its irksome restraints to the

monotony of a manufactory life, and to the toil of the labourer.

For it will, of course, excite no surprise, that military habits, dress, and organisation should be extended to these workmen under a government which clothes in the significant uniform, and distinguishes by military rank, such varied classes, from the members of the holy synod of the Russian church down to the lamplighters.

When we see this system applied—with a vigour increasing every reign, and never so far exerted as in the present—to a people, of which the great bulk, that is to say, the whole Muscovite portion of it, is by nature peculiarly disinclined to everything military, one is tempted to believe that the inspiring thought of the government policy must have been to conquer this repugnance, on the principle that habit becomes a second nature. The obvious result, however, has been, instead of giving birth to any taste for the pomp and circumstance of war, through this martial administration of its pacific subjects, to induce a more profound disgust amongst them for everything therewith connected. When we examine the usually abject condition either of the private or of the crown serf in his native village, we are apt to imagine that once sunk

into such misery and degradation, he must be tolerably insensible to a little further restraint ; but this is by no means the case. The loss of liberty may produce the most humble submission to restraints more irksome still, but it is evident that the slave enjoys every remnant of freedom left him even by sufferance, and keenly feels its deprivation. The serf in his village, though exposed to perpetual tyranny,—though liable to every injury in his person, his interests, his feelings, and affections, still commonly enjoys some degree of liberty and peace, however uncertain ; but directly he is incorporated in any of the institutions organised for the imperial service, his life becomes one monotonous period of restraint without hope or alleviation.

The imperial serfs, whilst their numbers have augmented, find their condition becoming in two ways harder. Firstly, the increased charges of the government, arising chiefly from the preposterous augmentation of its military force, obliges it to oppress more heavily its own as well as the private serfs ; whilst the progress of luxury amongst the officials who administer them, and their increasing numbers, have forced them to wring more out of them than was formerly believed practicable.

The science of extracting the full amount of men and means from a population, was comparatively undeveloped before the French revolution; but this is one of the discoveries of civilisation which Russia has perfectly appropriated: secondly, the increase of the military force, of the government manufactories and works, and the establishment of military colonies, to all of which they are called personally to contribute, inspires them with disgust and dread, whilst the organization of every department with which they come in contact, assumes a vexatious minuteness from which there is daily less possibility of escape. On the whole, therefore, the crown serf, whilst full of awe at the power of the emperor, regards him with far less attachment than his brother slave.

It has been said elsewhere, that partial rebellions of the serfs, when local oppression becomes unendurable, are frequent throughout the empire. On these occasions, like the camel goaded into fury, they turn on their tyrants, and putting them to cruel deaths, burn and destroy and ravage.

In the course of the present year, one of the distinguished family of Apraxin perished in a similar manner. The fact was generally known, not on account of his great name, but because it

enabled his wife, then residing in Austria, and who had long in vain sued for a divorce, to marry ; and it is never but through some such casualty that these Jacqueries come to light. It is, however, remarkable that out of about a dozen revolts of private serfs, of which the author received accounts from personal testimony, in almost every case, the peasants, in the midst of their excesses, always spoke with respect of the emperor, and often were excited by their leaders in his name to fresh acts of outrageous violence. But, on the other hand, amongst the imperial serfs these rebellions are also frequent, though in a like manner local, and produced by the unendurable oppression of their overseers. If fewer instances come to the knowledge of those who seek for information in these matters, considering the additional facilities for suppressing it in such cases, there is much reason to believe that these revolts occur as commonly amongst the imperial, as amongst the private slaves.

The conduct of the insurgents is usually in both cases the same, with this remarkable distinction however, that in every one of these rebellions, from that dangerous outbreak in the military colonies on the banks of the Volchova, towards the close of Alexander's reign, down to those of most

recent occurrence, the imperial slaves, when once roused, show none of that superstitious awe for the sovereign, which with their fellow slaves survives even when they have furiously broken through all other trammels.

An officer who witnessed the revolt of the military colonies in the government of Novogorod, and who had some reason to remember them, having narrowly escaped being boiled alive, informed the author, that when he made an appeal to the rebels in the emperor's name, they tore the portrait of his imperial majesty from the walls, and ignominiously trampled it under foot. The image of the saint which hangs in the corner of every Russian apartment, was, however, still respected.

But if there be a marked distinction in the feeling with which the two classes of slaves regard their sovereign or his government, there is also a difference equally significant between the great mass of uneducated Russians, who are filled with awe at the imperial power, and the few for whom the *prestige* of its omnipotence is destroyed. This is chiefly observable amongst the soldiery. The few veterans who have survived the campaigns against the Republic and Napoleon, the scanty remnant of the last Turkish campaign and the last but

one in Poland—may be distinguished by the very much less respectful tone in which they speak of the imperial authority.

Usually, the soldiers, like the peasantry, are full of deferential awe; they regard their emperor as the master of the earth, and appear to view in the light of rashness—or, one might almost say of blasphemy—any opposition to an order emanating from him; but wherever they have had the opportunity of distinctly seeing that his power is limited to Russia, and that there are vast nations beyond exempt from his rule,—where they have seen his authority braved with success by rebellious Poles and contemptuous Turks, their confidence in his infallibility is destroyed; and then their veneration, being based rather on fear than on affection, undergoes a singular modification.

CHAP. III.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS, AND THE SLAVE
POPULATION.

Rebellion of the crown slaves and private slaves—Probabilities of a social, or slave war—Conduct of the slaves in the rebellions of Pugatcheff, and during the French invasion of 1812—Admiral Tchitchagoff and the Emperor.

THE frequently recurring insurrections of the serfs of all descriptions have, it is true, as it has been already stated, merely a local character. The insurrection of the crown serfs in the military colonies on the banks of the Volchova, towards the close of Alexander's reign, in which his favourite, the tyrannical Arakcheief, their founder, narrowly escaped with his life, though it created considerable alarm in the imperial cabinet at the time, could scarcely be deemed an exception. This revolt derived its sole importance from pointing out so vividly the danger to the Tsars, of the gigantic plan, of which these colonies were a first experiment,

for rendering the whole empire one vast military establishment,—a plan from that moment virtually abandoned.

These partial rebellions are the result of desperation unmixed with the faintest hope. When oppression is pushed too far, Siberia and the knout have not terrors enough by comparison with the sufferings the slaves endure, to deter them from the satiation of revenge. Beyond this the insurgents never seem to aspire. In the military colonies above alluded to, the habitual severity of Araktcheief's administration, would probably not have produced this outbreak, without the natural horror and disinclination of the peasantry to the military nature of their new organisation; for it must be observed, that though the cavalry colonies in the south have since attained to considerable prosperity, that they are composed not of Muscovites, but chiefly of Ruthenians, who have a marked predilection for everything warlike, which their Muscovite brethren dread and detest so much that they make little, if any, distinction between being enlisted, or exiled for life to Siberia.

But though there has never been, and probably never will be, anything like a spontaneous attempt

made by the serfs to shake off the yoke of servitude, it becomes a very different question how they might act if supported by some external agency sufficiently powerful to neutralise their belief in the temporal omnipotence of their Tsars.

During the last century, the serfs have been thus twice tempted; firstly in the rebellion of Pugatcheff in the last generation; and secondly, in the memory of the present, during the French invasion.

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The second instance was that afforded in the invasion of Russia by Napoleon in 1812.

There are few historical events of importance, near our own time, of which impressions so erroneous have remained upon the public mind, or which have retained so long the colouring given by the passions and the prejudices of the moment.

Constituting an episode of profound interest in the long struggle between France and England, it could not easily be then regarded in this country with due impartiality. The example of popular patriotism in the Peninsula, where an indomitable people continued obstinately to assert its independence with ever vanquished armies, led the English

public to conceive an ideal analogy of character between the Russians and the Spaniards.

The magnitude of the conqueror's reverses, equal to the greatness of his previous fortunes, could be traced to one dramatic incident—the destruction of the holy city of the invaded empire—on which the startling change appeared to hinge. With the example of Saragossa fresh in its recollection, the English public jumped at once to the conclusion that a patriotic sacrifice of unequalled greatness had led deservedly to the unparalleled results which followed. The fact that the Russian government not only denied in the most strenuous manner all participation in the burning of Moscow, but long after continued to attribute it to the French, did not prevent the English from saddling on the inhabitants of that city the glory of having by its voluntary conflagration saved the empire.

Notwithstanding the disavowal published by Rostopchin, of its having originated even with the government, and the glaring falsity of the destruction of the capital with the knowledge or concurrence of the inhabitants, this misconception has become a popular error, confirmed as it was by the great romancer, whose fictions were so full of his-

tory, his histories so full of fiction,—and consecrated by the genius of Byron, who apostrophises the burning city as “sublimest of volcanoes,” adding :—

“To this the soldier lent his kindling match,
To this the peasant gave his cottage thatch,
To this the merchant flung his hoarded store,
The prince his hall—and Moscow was no more !”

The unaccountable continuance of this delusion will serve to show with how little correctness the important passage of history comprised in the invasion of Russia in 1812, has been investigated. The readiness of the English to be deceived, the misrepresentations of the Russian government, and the want of confidence in the subsequent refutations of the French,—deserved, by the utter want of veracity and probity to which the world had grown accustomed in their statements about this period,—have all tended conjointly to confound truth and falsehood in the page of popular history relating to the singular events which marked this stirring epoch.

A very remarkable circumstance has been thus lost sight of—one which is of no common import, if we are to draw from the past any augury for the future,—I mean the disposition of mind of the

be extended to them, now that Lithuania was added to the Polish confederation. From the Polish frontier these ideas were transmitted by the enthusiastic peasantry to their Russian neighbours, and spread so rapidly that there can be no doubt that millions of Russian serfs were only awaiting the arrival of the French to rise against their masters.

The unvarying testimony of all those who were at this period inhabiting amidst the peasantry, in any portion of the country comprised between the Dnieper and the Moscowa rivers, establishes beyond a doubt the universal prevalence of this disposition on the part of the slaves. Let us take the evidence of two Scotchmen, filling the situations of *oupravitels*, or land-stewards, on two distinct estates at more than a hundred and fifty miles distance from each other. In the one nearest to the frontier, as soon as the French army was known to be advancing, the serfs, who (according to the steward's own account) were unusually well treated, by comparison with their neighbours, ceased to work. There did not ensue the same scene of destruction as on the two neighbouring estates, the slaves confining themselves to an insolent intrusion into the best rooms of the manor house, where they emptied the lord's cellar, tore up the fruit,

ripe and unripe, from the hot-houses and pineries, and smashed the costly mirrors to get fragments of the glass. No one dared interfere with them; they said that the French were coming, and that all their master's property would be their own. Some even understood that they were literally to change places with their barons,—the barons becoming serfs in their turn. On the other estate, in the environs of Mojaisk, a fellow-steward of the other Scotchman was killed in the attempt to keep the moujiks in order. After plundering and burning the house, the peasantry took to the woods, or dispersed amongst the neighbouring villages. Little more than a month after, the tide of popular prejudice had so far turned against the invaders, that the very day after the evacuation of the field of Borodino by the Russian army, the greater number of these peasants had joined a fanatical body, which boldly attacked the vanguard of the French under the viceroy of Italy, as it was advancing upon Rusa. They were dispersed by a few cannon shots.

On the other hand, no sooner had the French army passed Witepsk, than the Russian serfs flocked from beyond Welij to their out-posts, bringing with them, to deliver into their hands, the lords and oupravitels of the estates which they

inhabited. Napoleon by no means encouraged this tendency. It is probable that there was some truth in his reply to an address from the French senate, wherein he stated :—“ I could have armed a great portion of the Russian population against the remainder, by proclaiming the enfranchisement of the serfs. I was asked to do so by the population of many villages, but on considering the debased and barbarous condition of the Russian peasantry, I could not think of adopting a measure which would have been the signal for putting to death and torturing whole families.”

He could not but be aware, not only from the example afforded in Pugatcheff's rebellion, but from what was passing under his own eyes, that such a step would have been applying the torch of the incendiary to the whole social system of the empire; and it is quite natural that, whilst confident of success, he should have preferred a conquest of which the value was not diminished by its being in a state of political conflagration.

Long before the destruction of Moscow, this terrible means of aggression was not only out of his power, but had been turned against him.

If we examine attentively Napoleon's history, we find him, towards the latter part of his career,

animated by a different spirit from that which at first inspired him, or at least having entirely changed his means of action. At the outset of his conquests he not only struck into the path which the French republic had opened, but pushed forward in it with a degree of energy which led to unparalleled results.

The great power of the republic was derived from moral means, though it neglected none of a material nature conducive to success. Human thought and opinion, the supposed championship of a new and better order of things against all abuses, acted as a mighty lever. When grasped in the unswerving hand of a successful leader, this tremendous engine, which had never been brought into play before, produced effects, which reduced the ordinary struggles of nations and of princes to comparative insignificance. The history of Europe had presented no situation even faintly analogous since the great movement of the crusades. In other wars, the fears, the prejudices, and the vanities of races had been feebly acted on; but the example of the French revolution appealed to the most stormy passions of mankind.

A battle won by the French armies was no longer a mere military triumph, but an event

which trumpet-tongued confirmed the authenticity of their mission ; and for once, the roar of cannon and the clang of arms, instead of striking terror into nations, roused the palpitating hearts of millions to fallacious hopes.

The French republic had announced that it would break through all fetters, but when victory gave it up the keys, it kept them for its own account ; and by a just and speedy retribution, it was bound in turn. Nevertheless, the oppressed throughout Europe had not yet perceived, what France herself has been so slow to recognise,—confounding as she still does her glories and ignominy,—so that her name continued like an incantation which stirred nations to their profoundest depths long after she had become the tool of an individual ambition. Napoleon became the incarnation, in their eyes, of that revolution from which the freedom of the world was expected ; and blinded by the hatred to which centuries of wrongs had given rise, they continued to applaud in him, the avenger, humbling those who had so long enthralled them. It was of this moral element, which had never yet been to the same extent at the command of any conqueror, that he profited, to attain results which were without a parallel. Great as he was

undoubtedly, he was still too little for his fortunes. The Italian hero, like the French nation, had been placed in a position more proud than ever a people or an individual had reached before. The French republic had in its hands the freedom of the world, and sacrificing to its ephemeral aggrandisement, the noblest part a nation had ever been called to play, it sank into a despotism. Napoleon, when the most astounding successes, based on the public prejudice and opinion, had raised him to a station no human being had ever filled before, when in the tyrant mankind could only see the tyrant tamer,—the man of destiny, who trod upon the necks of princes, and made his footstool of the proudest thrones—at that very moment of unprecedented triumph, he proved as much below the mission which the world persisted in attributing to him, as the republic before him had proved to that which it had neglected. When the emperor cast ungratefully aside the loving daughter of the people, the authoress of his first success, to take to his bed the scion of a degenerate and conquered dynasty,—from that time forward, moved by a common-place pride and vanity, he became a vulgar despot. He was no longer the champion of a new and promising order of things,—but the

proselyte of the old, which his very victories had so far discredited; and from that fatal period, contented with the material means at his disposal, he learned gradually to neglect—perhaps to dread the *prestige* and opinion which had made him a giant; and placing his sole trust in the number and brute strength of his battalions, it was beneath the brute strength of banded numbers that he succumbed at length.

After inflicting a series of terrible defeats on two of the three great powers, spoliators of Poland; by the treaty of Tilsit in 1807, he had established the grand duchy of Warsaw. Here already, instead of restoring to independence all that portion of Poland which he had obliged Prussia to disgorge, he gave up to Russia the circle of Bialystok. Nevertheless, the restoration of the grand duchy, and the establishment of a constitution, which by its first article abolished slavery for ever, led men to forget in the greatness of what he had done, that which he had left undone.

In 1809, having forced Austria not only to an ignominious peace, but to give in illegitimate marriage the hand of a princess of the proudest house on earth, to the son of a private gentleman of Corsica,—for by the Church of Rome his second

marriage was never recognised,—he had stripped that empire in its turn of a large portion of the territory it had acquired as its share of the iniquitous partition of Poland under Catherine.

His will having become a law in Europe, the Poles had hoped, that, unfettered by political necessities, he would have restored the ancient limits of the republic,—but they were deceived; for though he added New Gallicia and the district of Zamosk to the grand duchy, he again gave over to Russian domination a portion of Podolia.

From that time forward, his policy became the narrow policy of those absolute monarchs, who staked cities, provinces, and nations, throwing them in to trim the balance of negotiation, like inanimate things, without regard to their feelings or their wishes. After the example of those princes over whom he had achieved stupendous triumphs, strong in their neglect of an agency, which in his turn he now neglected, every national and independent feeling—every liberal tendency very soon became as distasteful to him as if born in the purple.

As soon as preparations were known to be making for the invasion of Russia in 1812, the enthusiastic hopes of every part of Poland were raised to the highest pitch. There was no sacrifice sixteen

millions of Poles were not ready to make. Lithuania having been added to the grand duchy of Warsaw, the diet, under the presidency of Prince Adam Czartoryski, declared the independence of all the Polish provinces. Never, perhaps, were the fervent hopes and the enthusiastic wishes of a people more truly expressed than in the speech of the deputation sent by the diet to Napoleon at Wilna.—“Only say, sire, that the Polish kingdom exists,” exclaimed Wybinski, its mouth-piece, “and this decree will become for the world a reality. We are sixteen millions of Poles, and amongst us there is not one whose arms, whose life, and whose fortune is not at the disposal of your imperial majesty. There is no imaginable sacrifice we shall dread, if it lead to the restoration of our country, from the Dwina to the Dniester, from the Borysthenes to the Oder. That one word will devote to your majesty, all our efforts, all our hearts.”

But this magic word, the emperor, now the son-in-law of the Austrian Cæsar, would not speak. His reply was cold and evasive, his promises were vague. His ambassador at Warsaw took care to declare that his master did not wish to make the war national, and counted only on his armies.

It will therefore be readily understood, when Napoleon thus cast aside with a disdainful aversion, in the thorough spirit of a prince "by right divine," the mighty moral weapon almost forced upon him in Poland, how he should have neglected to resort to its use on the Russian territories, which he was so confident of appropriating by the sole intermedium of his marshalled hosts.

The means which he so impolitically neglected, was, as it is well known, used against him ; and from Moscow to Leipzig, the popular feeling roused in Russia and Germany by long baffled adversaries, changed his military failures into irreparable reverses. The tide of opinion which had helped to carry him to successes far beyond those to which any other conqueror had ever attained, thus turned to overwhelm him.

But though Napoleon damped the patriotic ardour of the Poles, and discouraged the tendency which the Russian serfs exhibited to make his invasion of their country the opportunity of a social war, it must not be forgotten that he could never have entertained the insane idea of giving rise to a gratuitous difficulty, by enlisting against his armies the religious prejudices of the invaded people. There can be no doubt but that his instructions to

the republic, to a system of foraging, which induced habits of plunder, from which they were never afterwards reclaimed.

The prospect of prize-money, or of plunder, is well known to have, from its very uncertainty, attraction for those who lead a military life, far above what many times its value of stipulated pay can offer ; and the best of troops are easily led to practise any sort of extortion when they can legitimatise it in their own estimation by that specious name.

Now, in the armies of the French empire, the officers, all raised from the same rank as their men, were not only unwilling to restrain, but all animated, from high to low, with the same spirit as the soldiers. However strict the orders of their imperial chief, they were only too glad to avail themselves of the pretext which was offered them ; and the clergy and the peasantry, at first alarmed by insidious reports of the incendiary and sacrilegious practices of the French, were soon aroused by their reality.

This unhappy tendency to violence and *brigandage*, of which the wars of that period offer so many examples, from commanders-in-chief downwards, has never been stigmatised or acknowledged by

French writers in any of the campaigns in which it was most indisputably evinced. It is not, therefore, extraordinary, that they should pass over in silence the share it had in arming against them the Russian peasantry. The conduct of French officers in this respect, after they had crossed the hostile frontier, may be judged from their behaviour whilst still on the friendly territory of Poland. The Poles, who have reaped so large a share of the glories of France, and who are indissolubly attached to them by so many sympathies of historic association and analogy of character, bear painful testimony to the prevalence of this propensity in the officers of the imperial armies. Even in Poland, where all the accounts of the French are unanimous as to the friendliness of their reception by its enthusiastic inhabitants, it is related by the Poles, that in the houses where these military visitants were quartered, they commonly carried off the silver forks and spoons; whilst, singularly enough, they disdained to accept the value of their meal, and placed a florin beneath their plates to pay for it. Amongst other instances, a marshal of France with his officers was invited by the bishop of Pultusk to a banquet: all the plate in the environs, to the amount of more than thirty thousand pounds in

value, was collected to do honour to their guests, who, when the repast was over, coolly appropriated it to themselves. The histories of this campaign are mute as to these occurrences, but France and England are unhappily filled with Polish emigrants, who can substantiate these and many similar facts.

Though it may be perfectly true that Smolensko, Dorogobui, Wiasma, Gjat, Moscow, and hundreds of villages were burned by the Russian authorities, it was through ocular demonstration of the incendiary violence, and the sacrilegious pillage of the French, that the feeling of the serfs was changed towards them; and they were soon led to attribute the conflagration of their cities to those whom they had seen destroying their hamlets.

All ready on the first approach of the French to rise against their lords, and setting at defiance even their Tsar, when for the first time a power more extensive than his own appeared likely to afford them shelter,—their ardour was in the first place damped by finding no encouragement from the invader; and these hopes being blasted, the imprudence of the French commanders, or their want of control over their forces, sufficed to change the favourable feeling entertained towards them into fanatic hatred, with a rapidity which character-

ises such revulsions amongst uncultivated masses. Then, it is true that they made desperate and successful efforts against the very armies to which, on their first appearance, they had brought their masters bound hand and foot, as a peace-offering.

But the war, though it thus became national, assumed a religious, not a patriotic aspect.

Already at the battle of Borodino, the popular spirit had been roused by the only incentive which has ever been found to operate upon the Muscovites. It was the first fight in which Napoleon showed a want of moral resolution, the last in which the since degenerated Russian armies proved worthy of their actions under Suwarow, Romantzow, and the leaders of the philosophic Catherine's school. These energetic and unscrupulous generals had understood, that fanaticism alone could inspire to combat, masses of men, naturally timid, and who had nothing to combat for,—that no imposition whereby they might increase it, was too gross for their barbarous credulity. Somewhat of their spirit still lingered amongst the superior officers who had served beneath their orders; for though Kutusoff, the commander-in-chief, was inferior even to his German competitors, having no merit but that of resolution to bring matters to the issue of a

battle, full advantage was taken of the religious stimulus by which the soldiers and the peasantry were animated. At this period, incredible as it may seem, the belief which Suwarow had instilled into his men was prevalent amongst the soldiers, and the recently embodied slaves were persuaded that those killed in fighting would resuscitate.

The battle of Borodino, one of the most bloody modern history records,—before whose carnage the slaughter even of Waterloo sinks into insignificance,—was as glorious to the valour of the French, and to the obstinacy of the Muscovites, as discreditable to the leaders of both armies. Kutusoff's generalship was worthy, on that occasion, of his subsequent blunders; and Napoleon, for the first time, as it is well known, hesitated to engage his reserves; thus leaving his victory incomplete and barren. On the side of the Russians, the reserve on the rear of the left wing of their line of battle, under Tutchkoff, was chiefly composed of these scarce disciplined bands of peasantry, in their grey homespun clothing. Prince Poniatowski, at the head of the fifth corps of the French army, had orders to turn the Russian line by advancing along the old Smolensk road, which skirts the woods bounding the field of Borodino, on the French

right and the Russian left. He was here met by Tutchkoff with his militia. Whilst the Russian line, defended by redoubts (as at Pultava), was being slowly beaten back in front by the rest of the French army, these embodied peasants, who the day before had each embraced a holy image from Smolensk miraculously saved from the French, were moved forward in column after column, signing the cross and rushing blindly on the danger. By degrees it is true they were cut to pieces, and pursued along the road to Smolensk; but they resisted so obstinately and so long that the Russian line of battle had already been pushed before the French beyond the point at which Poniatowski could have taken them in the rear, if he had not been so long delayed.

Of this militia no prisoners were made; like the soldiers of Suwarow's armies, they signed the cross, and in the hope of resurrection, refused to ask for quarter.

This battle of Borodino, which opened to the French the road to Moscow, was claimed as a victory in the private dispatches of Kutusoff, of whom a Russian ex-general writes as follows, in his memoirs, destined to be published at his death: —“ By the same courier arrived the important

intelligence of the victory of Borodino, of which the result was, to make the Russian army retreat hastily through Moscow. That Kutusoff should have been shameless enough to write this falsehood to his sovereign, to gain his marshal's baton, proves only effrontery ; but that he should have deceived two commanders-in-chief, whom it was important to enlighten, so as to enable them to determine on ulterior operations, speaks at once as to the rank which ought to be assigned him as a leader."

Nevertheless, this version has been adopted by the Russians. The Emperor Nicholas, in the futile hope of inspiring his army with a passion for military glory, celebrates it as a victory, and has since given a sham representation of the battle, on the very field on which it was fought ; altering many of its episodes, in the spirit of the painter in the fable, who designed the man getting the better of the lion.

The French, who should ridicule this useless comedy, appeared peculiarly outraged to see the Duke of Leuchtenberg, son of the gallant Eugene Beauharnois, and husband to the Princess Marie, daughter of the Emperor Nicholas, commanding that portion of the Russian army which in the sham fight was to represent the defeated French.

But though, after this battle, the rising hatred of the serfs to the French was evinced on several occasions, the population of Moscow was deceived by the pretended victory of Kutusoff, and by the assurance of Rostopchin, the governor. Count Rostopchin, on the 11th, declared by proclamation that Prince Kutusoff "would defend Moscow to the last drop of his blood;" at the same time taking most stringent measures to prevent the escape of the fugitive citizens, whose flight might have spread a panic. On the 13th, Kutusoff, with his army, and with ten thousand wounded, entered the holy city. It was now no longer possible to conceal the truth; but thus, at the eleventh hour, its innumerable inhabitants, in the midst of the inevitable confusion which ensued, could barely save themselves; abandoning, in the majority of instances, all that they could not carry on their persons. On the 14th, at mid-day, Murat's vanguard was at the Mojaisk gate. On the same day, Napoleon entered the Kremlin, which was feebly defended by a handful of the mob;—and it was scarcely occupied before the fire broke out. As to this conflagration, there is one point on which there is no diversity of opinion amongst those who have made it the subject of investigation.

It is undoubted that Moscow was not destroyed either by its inhabitants, or with their knowledge or concurrence.

It is the opinion of the inhabitants, even to the present day, that the French themselves set fire to it. The Russian government, for years after, gave this version of the occurrence. Kutusoff, with his army, and an immense rabblement which had fled the city or gathered from the environs, ventured on a dangerous flank march, of which the only object was, to rouse their animosity by leading them for thirty miles within sight of the conflagration, which was carefully pointed out as the work of its sacrilegious occupants. Rostopchin, so far from attributing it to the inhabitants, denies all participation in the event, even for himself or for the government. The fire undoubtedly originated with the criminals let loose by Rostopchin before evacuating the city; but whether executed by his instigation or not there is no means of distinctly ascertaining. It is possible that the governor's sole motive in liberating them may have been the one avowed, of embittering and rendering national the war, by exciting the populace to attack the French armies, thus animating it to reprisals.

As to the character of Rostopchin, whom Sir

Walter Scott exalts into a hero, the following anecdote, of which the authenticity has been confirmed to the author by the highest authority, will of itself suffice to stamp its barbarity in the estimation of every western reader.

On the 14th of September, Count Rostopchin being about to evacuate the city, caused the prisoners and criminals to be brought before him. After telling the latter that they were to expiate their crimes by serving their country, he set them at liberty. He then ordered a Russian, named Verechtchaguinn, who had been arrested on the charge of translating into Russ, for one of his friends, a German newspaper which contained accounts of the movements of the French armies, to be put to death, and had him literally hacked to death with sabres before his eyes.

At all events, it is on all hands admitted, that it was not the result of a popular sacrifice. The Russian people never destroyed even a hamlet, unless accidentally, of all the thousands which were burned. Even at the present day, far from glorying in the suggestion, they are rather disposed to be offended at it. But since the people had no share in a step which proved so decisive, let us examine what credit was due to the authorities for it, if really originating with them.

In the first place, when Kutusoff retreated from the field of Borodino, he must have known, and Rostopchin should have known, that he could not venture on another battle to defend the capital. If destruction had been then decided on and announced, there would have been still time for its inhabitants to escape with all their goods and chattels; instead of which, they were so taken by surprise, that even the wealthy could not save their very wardrobes. If, therefore, it had been a means of defence, as well calculated as it proved effective, it was absurdly carried into execution, because with needless loss; but in fact, its fortunate results arose from a circumstance which it was most impossible to foresee—the irresolution and inactivity of one of the most active and resolute of men. If Napoleon, instead of wasting a month in the ruined city, had retired at the end of ten days or a fortnight, he would have found ample provisions wherewith to winter in Minsk and Wilna; and in that case, Moscow became a fruitless sacrifice.

Thus, whilst public opinion in England attributed the terrible disasters of Napoleon's army to the sagacious foresight of the Russian generals, and to the patriotic spirit of the Russian people, who had

destroyed their villages and cities rather than let them fall into the power of the invaders,—in Russia itself, this destruction, laid at the door of the French, was used as a means to rouse the nation against them ; and the incapacity of their military chiefs was so generally recognised by the higher classes, that it is commonly said amongst them to this day, that the French were not vanquished by General Kutusoff, but by General *Morosoff* (Frost).

As to the Scythian mode of defence which the Russian leaders afterwards set forth as premeditated, it was not even justified by success ; because this success arose partly from accident, and partly from the faults committed by the French emperor and his commanders, over which the defenders of the empire had no control, and which it was impossible for them to foresee.

It required that Napoleon should decline all appeal to the serf population,—that his commissariat should have been so badly organised,—that his army should have shown so little forbearance towards the natives,—that he should at the battle of Borodino, for the first time, have shown moral timidity ; at Moscow, for the first time, unaccountable inactivity ; and in addition, that the elements themselves should, against every calcula-

tion of chances, have proved so hostile. These were eventualities on which it required nothing less than second-sight to reckon. But let us see how these generals, who aspire to such miraculous foresight in their combinations acted, when ill-fortune and ill-conduct had united to overwhelm this man of hitherto indomitable fortunes.

It is necessary for that purpose briefly to investigate an episode of this war, which, though not the most important, will be immortalised in history as the most eventful—one which may be compared to the breaking up by the waves of a mighty vessel long since stranded. I allude to the retreat from Moscow, when a month had been wasted in it, through a ruined country, and a population rendered hostile, with a hungry army, in a bitter frost.

It is the less necessary to apologise for this digression, that it will give the author an opportunity of doing justice to an adoptive countryman, to whom much wrong has been done, not only by the Russian authorities, but by one of our most celebrated writers, and towards whom the author himself has been guilty of some injustice in a preceding work—an injustice rather of omission than of implication.

It is popularly believed, that if Napoleon with

his retreating army had been stopped at the river Beresina, the whole must have perished or been captured; and it is perfectly true, that if the Russians had been in force west of that river, so critical was its position, that such a result must inevitably have followed. At the same time, it is generally asserted that every precaution had been taken by those who planned this campaign, and carried it through triumphantly, to stop the retreating army, which was only saved from annihilation by the blunders of Admiral Tchitchagoff. Whilst statues are erected to Kutusoff as the conqueror of Borodino, Tchitchagoff is stigmatised as the man "*who ought to have taken Napoleon.*" Sir Walter Scott, adopting this version, says, in his life of Napoleon, that "the admiral was waiting for a wind."

Let us now put together a few facts, which may show both the extent of this misrepresentation, and whence it has arisen.

"Admiral Tchitchagoff, one of the energetic men of Catherine's school, had been minister of marine. At the outset of the campaign, he proposed to the emperor the only bold or clever plan suggested; namely, to patch up a peace with the Turks, and to lead the army then opposed to them

offensively to the shores of the Adriatic. Having been sent to take the command of this army, he received subsequent instructions to advance from Wallachia and Moldavia into Volhynia. His orders were to drive back Prince Schwartzenberg, and to push northwards when this was effected, capturing the city of Minsk, if he could, and occupying the western side of the Beresina, a narrow river, which, prolonged by a canal, connects the Dnieper and the Dwina. He was thus to cut off the invading army.

The Emperor Alexander had sent to him Colonel Tchornicheff, his aid-de-camp, (now Prince Tchornicheff, and minister of war,) to inform him that if he could take up his position on the Beresina, he should be joined by generals Wittgenstein, Steinghel, and Hertel, with forces which would raise his army to 160,000 men, to oppose the return of the French. The admiral had approached with the small force under his command, to within a few marches of Minsk, on the 31st of October, when he received an order from Kutusoff, (who was following Napoleon in his retreat, commenced from Moscow on the 19th of the same month,) to the effect that as he had reason to know that the French intended to direct their march towards the

rich provinces of the south, he (Tchitchagoff) was to retrograde, and cover the city of Kief, instead of advancing to the Beresina. Kief being now a hundred and fifty leagues behind the admiral, he disobeyed this order, which turned out, after all, to have originated with Kutusoff in the *dream of a soldier!* Continuing his march on Minsk, Tchitchagoff, who had been obliged previously to detach 20,000 men, under Sacken, to keep in check the Austrian commander, Prince Schwartzenberg, contented himself with directing a corps of recruits, which was to have been sent after him, from the south, to make for Kief. Tchitchagoff subsequently detached Tchornicheff at the head of a body of Cossacks, to forage the country; and here great activity was displayed by the young diplomatist, who had hitherto distinguished himself in the boudoirs of Paris, where he had excited considerable sensation by obtaining, through an intrigue with the wife of a great functionary, the plans of the impending campaign. He penetrated even as far as the estates of the Czartoryskis, whence he brought back a celebrated picture in their possession to his commander. The admiral then despatched him to penetrate across the country to General Wittgenstein, and arrange with precision the point

and time where the latter was to join him at the Beresina.

On the 16th, Tchitchagoff, after a series of successful engagements, took possession of Minsk, which its Polish governor, Brenikoffski, made no proper efforts to defend; and he captured in this city, which was one of the great depôts for the French army, provisions sufficient to ration a hundred thousand men for six months.

On the twenty-first, the admiral attacked and carried the fortified bridge-head of Borisow on the Beresina, the bridge, and the town on the bank beyond. The town on the eastern bank was retaken by Oudinot, on the 23rd; but Tchitchagoff broke up the bridge and retained the entrenched bridge-head on the other side.

Tchitchagoff had therefore fulfilled all his instructions; he had taken Minsk, he had established himself on the banks of the Beresina, three days before Napoleon's arrival; but instead of being joined by the forces promised him, he found himself with sixteen thousand men to oppose Napoleon's passage, instead of with the hundred and sixty thousand announced him!

The Beresina is not wide, but the steepness of its banks in some places renders its passage difficult.

When Napoleon reached it, and learned the capture of Minsk, it was natural to suppose that he should march on Wilna, another great depôt which was still held for him. In the supposition that he would take the Wilna road, the admiral acted. But on account of the nature of the Beresina's banks, there were only in that direction, three points on which the passage could be conveniently effected. That of Borisow was the best ; and if the French had been in possession of the bridge-head on the western bank, as well as of the town, they might here have got over all their artillery and baggage. South of Borisow, at a distance of about fifteen miles, was the point of Ucholoda ; thirty miles north of Borisow was that of Weselowo, both of which admitted of a passage, though both offering great difficulties for the transport of artillery and baggage. With only sixteen thousand men, it became impossible for Tchitchagoff to guard all three of these points. If he had divided his force, to occupy a position opposite either to Weselowo or Ucholoda, the French would have forced the bridge-head of Borisow ; and this the admiral resolved to defend, contenting himself with observing the other places. On the 24th, Napoleon with the *grande armée* retreating from Moscow, arrived at the Beresina ;

on the 25th he manœuvred on the eastern bank ; and on this day Tchitchagoff received from both Wittgenstem and Kutusoff the positive intelligence that Napoleon would cross below Beresino, a small town on the Beresina, about thirty-five miles south of Borisow. Disbelieving this information, which would have led him to descend thirty-five miles south of Borisow, the admiral continued obstinately to hold the bridge-head of that place ; and at last Napoleon crossed at Weselowo, thirty miles to the north, as it has been said. Two bridges were thrown across after repulsing the feeble Russian detachment which had been placed rather to observe than defend the passage. On the night of the 26th, the army commenced crossing, and continued all the day of the 27th, during which the admiral assembled all his forces and attacked the French at day-break of the 28th.

The vanguard of Wittgenstein only appeared in sight on the other side when too late to oppose the passage, but having on the 28th attacked the rear of the French army on the eastern bank, whilst Tchitchagoff attacked on the right, the consequence was that the French were obliged to abandon their baggage, their artillery, and all the camp followers.

In the first place, therefore, Tchitchagoff alone of any of the Russian generals had been three days at his post when Napoleon reached the Beresina. Kutusoff, who had several times vainly attempted to bar the passage of the retreating army, was that day only advancing upon Kopys, ninety miles off, and taking a false direction. Wittgenstein, by his gross mismanagement, instead of joining Tchitchagoff on the 21st, only came up on the 27th, and then could not cross till he had sent to Tchitchagoff for pontoons.

Secondly, if the admiral had obeyed the orders received from Kutusoff on the 31st of October, he would have been four hundred miles off, near Kief, on the 24th of November; and there would have been no one to guard the Beresina at all.

Thirdly, if Tchitchagoff had known exactly where Napoleon had intended to pass—with his limited means—he could have done no better than to maintain, as he did, the bridge-head at Borisow; because, if he had marched to Weselowo, the rear-guard of the French in the town opposite would have forced the bridge-head, and then Napoleon would have been master of the only spot where his baggage and artillery could have passed in security. In a word, it was out of Tchitchagoff's power to

prevent his passing. How was it to be expected, that with sixteen thousand men he should be able to stop the very army which, on its retreat from Moscow to the Beresina, Kutusoff failed to arrest in its progress at Krasnoi, where with a hundred and thirty thousand men he attempted to bar its passage? He therefore confined himself to the defence of the most favourable spot, obliging his adversary to resort to one less propitious, where he met with great disasters.

It is therefore plain, that if the admiral had for any purpose whatever drawn off his forces from the bridge-head of Borisow, that Napoleon's army seizing it, would have passed without the loss of baggage or artillery, and the consequent confusion which it never recovered.

Now, it is to be remembered that on the 24th both Wittgenstein and Kutusoff, either self-deceived, or deceived by Napoleon, had sent to inform Tchitchagoff that the French army was making for Beresino, thirty-five miles south of Borisow;—if the admiral had acted on these advices, he would have been thirty-five miles off, and the invaders would have passed scot free. It is therefore very obvious, that little was in the power of the admiral, but this little he did in the most effective way, and only

by following throughout the dictates of his own judgment, in opposition to the orders and advices of his blundering colleagues.

How is it, then, that when he alone of all the Russian generals did his duty, he should have been made to bear the burthen of their want of energy, activity, and talent?

We may, perhaps, find a solution to the injustice done him in the following account of his life and character :

Admiral Tchitchagoff belongs to a school which has long since ceased to be tolerated in Russia. The author, in this brief notice, is enabled to speak with the more impartiality of him, that he has no sympathy with the ideas, no respect for the opinions which characterise one of the last offshoots of the Voltarian school of Catherine, to whom that philosophic Semiramis allowed unbounded freedom of speech and action, in favour of their energy and talent, and the consonance of their opinions with her own. At the same time, he cannot, as an Englishman, but admire the love of liberty which has made him alone, out of his generation, or the one which is succeeding it, cast fortune, power, and honours to the wind, sooner than cringe to a despotism which—daily contracting—

will not, like the genius of Catherine, tolerate any departure from abject servility, even in favour of exceptional services or merits.

The Empress Catherine, the strong-headed woman who never allowed her passions to interfere with her judgments—a true Queen Bess minus her prudery, her ill-temper, and hypocrisy—was not without redeeming inspirations. Reckless of blood and crime to attain her object, she was never causelessly tyrannical or cruel. Not only did she allow more liberty than has been enjoyed within her realm before or since her reign, but, whether dictated by her head or heart—whether by her acute perception of true greatness, or by the benevolent jollity of her disposition, where it was not ruffled by a strong interest or a stirring passion,—it is certain that she once entertained some serious thoughts of attempting to elevate the condition, political and social, of her slave subjects.

The French Encyclopædists, whom she patronised, and whose patronage she enjoyed, whilst their mouths were full of phrases of human equality and fraternity, were little disposed to fraternise with the children of a race, whose character appeared indelibly branded with the vices of servitude.

Catherine is said by her apologists to have im-

bibed from them a profound disgust for her subjects, and to have learned to regard her people as one whom no human effort could redeem from their moral degradation. This may, or may not have been her conviction; and it is fitting to remark that the prize essay which she proposed to the academy of St. Petersburg, on the best means of freeing the slave population, was dated 1767. Now the subsequent rebellion of Pugatcheff, which took place in 1773, must have given striking evidence of the dangers to be apprehended from the barbarous violence of the peasantry, in any similar attempt, unless undertaken with great care and preparation; and the appetite for conquest in which she afterwards indulged, may have alone, in reality, diverted her from a project which she was then glad to find an excuse for abandoning.

Most of the remarkable men of her reign, however, were imbued with this opinion; and the author regrets to say, that the most honest and talented Russians he has known, are the most bitter in the expression of their disgust and contempt of their countrymen,—the most incredulous of their possible amelioration.

The author of these volumes has been on many occasions reproached with Russo-phobia by the

press,—an imputation which he may conscientiously disclaim ; but what would those say who lay it to his charge, if they could hear the private opinions of some of the most remarkable men amongst the Russians, who ridicule the ideas of the author as visionary, because he does not despair of the eventual progress and improvement of the Russian people ?

Where the author, in preceding works dedicated to this subject, has sketched in the boldest and most unsparing lines, the ungainly features of the national character, and the debasing nature of the Russian government and institutions,—he has spoken far less ill of them than he has heard Russians speak ; and besides being, as he believes, more liberal of praise—where praise was due—than themselves, he has always been willing rather to attribute the national condition to its government and institutions, than to consider these as the result of an inherent infirmity of character in the people.

Unhappily, however, nearly all men distinguished amongst the Russians by independence of disposition, extent of intellect, or elevation of views, have come to the desolating conclusion, that the national character of their countrymen is a barren

soil, irredeemable by cultivation. They look on them as born to, and worthy of the servitude in which they linger ; and appeal to the very existence of that servitude as a proof that their countrymen are hopelessly below the average standard of the rest of the white race. It is deeply to be lamented that this is an English prejudice too. By a strange inconsistency, it is entertained by the very writers who most readily tax an author with exaggeration on the subject. These gentlemen of the press, who often pique themselves on being pacific men of pens and ink, are nevertheless prejudiced in their judgment by ideas derived from their turbulent ancestry, whose violences they so solemnly decry. They have sympathies for a spirited and warlike race, though without another virtue ; but they have none for a people wanting in these qualities. When you show them the condition of the Russians, they turn aside with disgust and contempt, and judge that so many millions deserve, because so many millions endure it.

In a similar spirit, Tchitchagoff, the admiral, general, and minister of marine, virtually renounced his nationality some thirty years ago ; whilst, enthusiastic in his admiration of England, he made it his adoptive country, imbibing, singularly enough,

all the intolerance of John-Bullism. The Emperor Alexander, considering that the long and valuable services of the absentee entitled him to retire in peace whithersoever he chose, did not disturb him ; but Nicholas, whose arbitrary and vexatious temper is chafed and fretted at any semblance of independence, could not even allow a man who had long since seceded from the political scene, after having eminently served his country, to enjoy in his retirement his hardly-earned repose. He appears to have been long perplexed betwixt the impropriety of coming to an open breach with one of the illustrations of his predecessor's reign, and the irritation caused by finding the admiral so far behind the spirit of the time at the court of Russia, that he did not eagerly conform to a hint of the imperial wishes. The story of Tchitchagoff, and of his treatment by the Romanoffs, is worthy of being related in some detail to the reader,—not as throwing any great additional light on the character of Russian despotism, but because of a degree of authenticity in the testimony it affords, which it is so rarely in the power of a writer on Russian affairs to offer to the public.

Admiral Tchitchagoff served originally in the guards of the Empress Catherine, but after his

extreme youth, devoted himself to the naval service, for which he always retained a marked predilection, and in which he signally distinguished himself. On the accession of Paul, Tchitchagoff, then captain, was commanding one of the ships of his fleet, when reviewed in the gulf of Finland. Paul happened to be affected with sea-sickness, which drove him below, and after the manœuvres, distributed the usual rewards so much according to the arbitrary dictates of his fancy, that the best fell to the share of those who had least deserved them, and the most meritorious officers were obliged to put up with others so contemptible as to be rather marks of disapproval than of favour. The youthful captain received the third class of the order St. Ann, a little bauble attached to the sword-knot ; but as his sword was a gold sword of honour, engraved with a flattering inscription, and presented to him by the Empress Catherine for his gallant conduct at the naval battle of Vyborg, against the Swedes, he chose to regard this decoration as a mark of unmerited disapprobation. Under the plea of ill-health, he sent in his resignation ; but Paul dispatched his own doctor, to ascertain the truth of the pretext ; and it was only by the collusion of his medical attendant, that he escaped the consequences.

The emperor gave him his dismissal,—“*but without pension, in consequence of his youth.*”

Some years afterwards, Paul having determined to fit out a fleet to co-operate with the English in the disastrous expedition to the Helder, he thought of Tchitchagoff, who was sent for by Koucheleff, the minister of marine, and informed that the emperor had graciously vouchsafed to appoint him rear-admiral.—“And I suppose,” said Koucheleff, “I am to convey to his majesty the assurance of your gratitude at the favour conferred?”

“Why,” replied Tchitchagoff, “I have no particular reason to be grateful; firstly, because I am in bad health; secondly, because, though the promotion may be sudden, the undeserved slight which drove me from the service has enabled my inferiors in rank to get so far a-head of me that, though I have been appointed rear-admiral, I shall still be serving under their orders.”—“Oh!” replied Koucheleff, the “emperor, you know, has a right to do as he pleases; he is always promoting one man in the army without rhyme or reason over the head of another, and half the officers in the army might refuse to serve, if this were a reasonable cause of dissatisfaction.”—“Well, half the officers in the army ought to refuse to serve, in such a case,” replied Tchitchagoff,

with the bluntness of a sailor, and the freedom of speech to which a rising man in the reign of Catherine had become accustomed. The minister then informed the newly made admiral, that the emperor would accord him the peculiar favour of receiving him the next day, in his private cabinet. On the following morning, the admiral repaired to the palace of Pablovzk, where, waiting till he was called, amongst a crowd of admirals and generals, he was being congratulated on the favour into which he had been taken, when the minister, Koucheleff, passed to go in to the emperor.—“Oh!” said he to Tchitchagoff, “I have not seen his majesty since our conversation of yesterday ;” and a few minutes after, he came to lead the young commander into the presence of Paul. Paul was foaming at the mouth with rage.—“So, sir!” said he, “you are not satisfied,—you do not wish to serve,—you are a Jacobin,—you wish to enter the service of the English.—Hold your tongue, do not answer me. Well, we will teach you! Send him to the fortress of St. Petersburg!—but, stop;—take away his sword, strip off his orders!—no, he is not even worthy to wear his uniform, not a particle of it!” And the great functionaries of the empire there resent, having hastened to undress him, Tchitcha-

goff was forced to make his way to his sledge, through the crowded anterooms, in his shirt and drawers.

When conveyed to St. Petersburg, Pahlen, the military governor, the man who afterwards murdered Paul, and whose son, the ambassador of Alexander and of Nicholas, is well known in France and England,—Pahlen, who happened to be a private friend of the admiral's, observed to him,—“What is to be done?—you must go to the fortress; it is your case to-day, it may be mine to-morrow.” When transmitted to the fortress, the governor said:—“The order is to confine you in the secret prisons. I have nothing to do with the secret prisons; I never saw the inside of them; I only know that those who go in never come out of them. They are under the direction of Lapoukin; I will send to him; but I am sure there will be a counter-order, so you had better choose yourself one of the casemates; and on account of my friendship with your father, I will make you as comfortable as I can.”

But no counter-order came, and the governor said, “My dear sir, Lapoukin is here; you must go to the secret cells; but I have made inquiry, and they are not so bad as I thought them.”

Now, although Lapoukin also was a private friend of the admiral's, who had been singularly fortunate in falling into the hands of people who took a personal interest in his fate, it may still be supposed that he did not feel very comfortable in going to these dungeons, whence the governor had informed him that no prisoner ever returned.

The secret cells were in a raveline of the fortress. It was here that afterwards the conspirators in the rebellion of 1825 were confined. Here the noble Pestel is said to have been tortured, and hence he was led out to die on the glacis beyond. There were three distinct sorts of cells; the best were by no means to be disdained by a captive, and in one of these Tchitchagoff was located, and for several days, through the friendship of Lapoukin, was provided with an excellent table. Nevertheless, knowing the character of Paul, and that he always followed up one blow at his victims by another, he was doubtful of the continuance of this indulgence; and the emotions he had gone through, acting on a frame enfeebled by illness, led to fever. He was in bed, when suddenly the order came to drag him from it to one of the common dens, where a silent soldier stood on guard at the head of his pallet. At last he was visited by Pahlen, who

was interested in him. "If you had known this," said Pahlen, "would you not rather have served than have been thus imprisoned?"—"I had rather not have served; but of course I would have preferred serving to this captivity."—"Very well," said Pahlen, "I will arrange matters for you."

When the military governor of St. Petersburg was gone, the sick man was removed back to his first quarters, and then again he was suddenly transferred back to his dungeon,—so fearful was even Lapoukin that it might be discovered that he had shown any unauthorised lenity to his protégée, even in the depth of these silent dungeons. At length, however, Pahlen returned.—"The emperor is satisfied; I have told him you were sorry for your conduct, and that if you had known what would have happened, you would have served without reply."—"If the emperor had put the question thus,—'Will you serve or be shut up in the fortress?' certainly I would have preferred his service."—"Well, well," said Pahlen, "that will do; you must now follow me to the emperor;—I am sorry that you are in a burning fever, but it cannot be helped."

They left the fortress by a secret water-gate,—and this is why the governor or garrison never see

any one confined in the secret prisons leave them. This has led to the commonly accredited report mentioned in the "Revelations of Russia," that a whole regiment was walled up in it, because seen to enter and never seen to leave its walls. After crossing the Neva, it became necessary to send for the admiral's uniform, which had been left in the emperor's wardrobe, at the palace of Pablowski, some twenty-five miles distant.

When ushered into the presence of Paul, he appeared anxious to make amends for his former injustice, and seizing the admiral's hand, placed it next his heart. "I know you are a Jacobin," said he, "but only fancy you see a red cap upon my head, and serve me zealously."—"I know," replied the admiral, "full well, that your majesty wears an imperial crown, and not a red cap, and will conduct myself with the loyalty becoming that conviction."—"As for orders, you shall only take orders from Koucheleff, who leaves *carte blanche* to every one, and you shall sail with Popham, the English commissioner, and so not be under the orders of any one."

In the year 1800, Tchitchagoff was made minister of marine, and continued to occupy that situation till 1811.

He found the whole navy in such a condition, that he was obliged to break up numerous rotten ships, and to introduce most stringent reforms.

Aware of how useless was a Russian fleet in the Gulph of Finland, and the Black Sea, and how impossible to form sailors in those waters, he kept a fleet in the Mediterranean, to the extent of twelve sail of the line. This fleet, under the command of Siniavin, engaged and defeated the Turks at Tenedos, and was afterwards netted by the English in the Tagus.

Shortly afterwards, Sir James Saumarez was sent into the Baltic to co-operate with the Swedes, having under his command, in addition to several frigates, the *Victory*, on which he hoisted his own flag, and two other line-of-battle ships, commanded by Sir Byam Martin, and Sir Samuel Hood.

The Swedes, on their part, had fifteen sail of different descriptions, cruising in the Gulph of Finland, whilst the British fleet kept about the Sound, with the exception of a frigate or two occasionally seen with the squadron of their allies. Tchitchagoff, on receiving this intelligence, judged that if he could secretly fit out an expedition, the Russian fleet might fall upon the Swedes and get

back into its harbours before the English could come up to their assistance.

The minister of marine had made unremitting efforts to ameliorate the condition of the navy. He now promptly and privately got ready, beneath his own eye, eleven sail of the line, besides smaller vessels. Everything that the utmost care and unremitting attention could do, was done, in the selection of the crews and the fitting out the ships. This fleet, officered by the picked men of the Russian navy, and commanded by Khanikoff their best admiral, took to sea, and surprised the Swedish squadron, which fled before it,—one half running in between the rocks at Orebroe on the coast of Finland, but the other half, unable to make the same place of safety, remaining exposed to the Russian fleet. Nevertheless, Khanikoff and his experienced officers,—probably because they knew their crews so well, instead of eagerly seizing this favourable accident to attack the Swedish squadron, contented themselves with observing it, and after a time put in to the Finnish port of Hanhout.

The English admiral, however, being informed that a Russian fleet had come out, sent up two of his line-of-battle ships, which no sooner appeared

in the Gulph of Finland, than the whole Russian fleet run before them, making for the Livonian coast, and getting safe into Baltisport and Reval, with the exception of one sail-of-the-line, which was captured by Sir Byam Martin.

On learning the result of this expedition, the minister of marine communicated to Alexander his conviction that nothing could ever be made of the Russian fleet, which, not having been within the memory of man in a condition so advantageous, had proved so worthless, under circumstances so favourable. This experiment satisfied him of the folly and inutility of wasting the resources of the empire on a fleet, which a few British vessels could always imprison in its native harbours.

Admiral Tchitchagoff, however, always an enthusiast for the naval service, became inspired with a marked predilection for the first maritime nation in the world. Having obtained permission to travel, he came to England in 1811, and married a Miss Ferrers, daughter of the Rev. — Ferrers, incumbent of Bedington, in the county of Surrey. Having been recalled near the person of Alexander, who continued to repose the greatest confidence in him, he refused to have any more to do with the navy, as being a department on which all his efforts would be vainly wasted.

In 1812, after proposing offensive operations against Austria, he took the command of the army of the south, in the campaign of which a brief notice has been given. Tchitchagoff then requested permission to go abroad, and retire from active life,—a request with which Alexander the more readily complied, that notwithstanding the high sense he appeared to the last to have entertained of the value of his counsels, he found the admiral both unwilling to continue his services, and given to a freedom of speech which was highly distasteful to his favourites.

Tchitchagoff never returned to Russia, but continued to inhabit England and France till the accession of Nicholas, who assured him that the permission his brother had given him to remain abroad should be religiously respected. When the French revolution of 1830 took place, the Russian government ordered all Russian subjects to quit that country. The admiral received a letter, signed by the emperor, and conveying to him the same injunction, under the pretext, “that his loyalty would be shocked by a further protracted residence in a country in which he was liable daily to hear his government abused.”

Tchitchagoff obeyed, but remonstrated, and Ni-

cholas deprived him of his pensions, under the plea *that he was too old*. Paul, it will be remembered, having many years before done the same thing on *account of his youth*. The admiral was in Italy when the tyrannical ukase of Nicholas appeared, declaring that all nobles remaining more than five years out of Russia forfeited their rank, estates, and property. He then wrote to his imperial majesty, resigning his rank and honours, but praying, in consideration of his privilege as a noble, confirmed by solemn ukase of the Empress Catherine, —as well as out of regard to his august brother's promise to that effect, that he might be allowed to remain abroad, and occasionally visit France, on account of his family connexions in that country. The emperor accepted his resignation, but refused to exempt him from the consequences of the new law. The plain-spoken old admiral wrote to Nicholas, telling him unreservedly his opinion of his conduct, and renouncing his estates and nationality. The emperor then seized on the property of the veteran, whose well-earned pensions he had previously withheld.

Thus was the admiral treated, when blind and old, after serving not only with zeal and distinction, but with probity, through three reigns. He con-

soled himself for the honours, rank, and fortune which he would not hold at the price of his freedom, by retiring with rights of English citizenship to an English cottage.

Well known to the inhabitants of Brighton, in which place he long resided, the admiral is still living. Though deprived of his sight, he is in the full possession of his intellectual faculties,—a venerable, intelligent, and plain-spoken old man.

It must not be imagined either that he is one of those morose and disappointed cynists, who view the world and recall the past through the distorted medium of the soured and selfish feelings of a withered heart ;—on the contrary, his romantic attachment to his first and only wife appears to have filled his existence with enduring and affectionate regret.

With too much dignity to parade his grievances, he has too much independence to withhold any of the particulars of his story ; and the author, in giving them publicity, trusts not to have exceeded the liberty which a writer may take with the antecedents of every public man.

CHAP. IV.

THE SCLAVONIC RACE.

LET us now return to the Muscovite slave population, whose ignorance, prejudices, and superstitious faith in the omnipotence of their rulers, constitutes the greatest and most solid element of the colossal despotism founded in diametric opposition to the interests of so many millions. The author has endeavoured to show, that of the two classes into which it is divided, the least devoted to the Tsars is that composed of their own serfs,—and yet that even the private serfs were ready to seize with eagerness, on the only two opportunities which have offered within a century, of trampling on the yoke of servitude; that is to say, where the successful advance of a rebel chief, or of a foreign invader, shook their conviction of the omnipotence of their sovereign,—an omnipotence to which they habitually bow with humility and awe,

but to which they are bound by no ties of real or enduring affection.

He has endeavoured briefly to set forth the distinction between the warlike Ruthenian or Cossac race, and the Muscovite. Let us now suppose this Ruthenian people, composed of materials which daily grow more inflammable, acted upon by some external agency, and led to make common cause with other of its Slavonic brethren; and there can scarcely be a doubt but that, if the enfranchisement of the Muscovite slaves were proclaimed, brute and apathetic as the serf population may remain till exposed to such an influence, it would be rapidly converted from inert matter useful to the ends of those who govern, into fuel for a social conflagration, which would consume this singular despotism with a rapidity proportioned to its extent.

The Muscovite, though he dislikes the Pole, cannot be led under any circumstances heartily to face him. It was judged necessary in the last Polish war, to spread the report amongst the Russian regiments, that they were being *sent to Warsaw to drive out the French*, who were atheists, and disbelieved in God and St. Nicholas.

When it proves, therefore, difficult to excite the Muscovites even against the Poles, it may be ima-

gined how little they could be depended on to take any part against the Ruthenians, a people whose superiority they tacitly acknowledge, whose religion they share, and whose dialect so nearly assimilates to their own.

On the other hand, the Ruthenian's strong instinct of independence—the recollection of his former liberties and privileges, all associated in his songs and traditions with his Polish fraternity,—the very facilities which his language, and often his religion afford, all tend to render him as apt to receive a political or social impulse from Poland, as he is well fitted to transmit a portion of it to the Muscovite. He forms, therefore, the transitory link through which, the unquiet spirit of the Sclavonic race—not only beyond the frontiers of Russia-*Proper*, but beyond the pale of the Russian empire—may act with galvanic rapidity, at any given moment, upon the old Russian (*Muscovite*) people.

Nothing can be more fallacious than a blind confidence in the unalterable submissiveness of a slave population, based only on its ignorance and abasement, wherever the rule of the task-master has become so severe as to shew at the first glimpse, even to the grossest and most indolent natures, the pro-

spective advantages of freedom. There is no condition of humanity in which, so that man be oppressed, he is incapable of appreciating, even though he may not know rationally how to enjoy, its benefits: like the apes, who come and warm themselves at the embers of the negroes' fires, though they know not how to keep alive the genial warmth.

There is no social condition so abject that does not in some form exhibit the instinct of property, —an instinct of which even animals are not divested; —and what is more valuable to the slave than the possession of his own person, wherever he is made keenly and directly to feel that he is the property of another?

The precise nature of an equal extent of political servitude may escape the perception of a dull and apathetic race, but it is idle to suppose that the most utter seclusion from the world, or the profoundest ignorance, will prevent those who linger in the trammels of social bondage, from as early comprehending the announcement of its cessation as the child understands the uses of food when hungry, or the comforts of warmth when cold. An outbreak occasioned by political tyranny can only be the result of some extent of previous effervescence, whether open or hidden; but the

slaves who groan beneath the yoke of an oppressive private servitude, may bow to-day without a thought of resistance,—and to-morrow, if the magic words of freedom be whispered for the first time in their ear, rise in the most outrageous mutiny. The French revolution, and all other political revolutions, have been like storms, of which it is the historian's province to retrace the long gathering clouds and sinister prognostications; but the revolt of the slaves of St. Domingo was comparatively sudden as the white squall or the earthquake. The slave bends without dreaming of resistance to-day—to-morrow a flash of light breaks in upon his brain, a ray of hope upon his heart, and he rises up at once to mortal strife. There are no nicely balanced influences to be weighed in estimating such an event,—it requires no further elements than a sufficient number, and sufficient oppression. The results, as with the powder-mine and the match, are everywhere liable to be the same—one moment a dark and inert mass—the next inevitably a volcano.

The government has no counter-influence to oppose to this danger, except religious fanaticism. But religious fanaticism, as we have endeavoured to show elsewhere, and shall attempt further on to

prove more fully, has been long upon the wane. When it was last successfully aroused to oppose the French invasion, it is scarcely to be doubted that it would have failed, if Napoleon had invoked in time the spell which fanaticism alone stood any chance of weakening. But how, by any misrepresentation, hope to render this feeling against Ruthenian co-religionaries, speaking an almost common language,—how raise it in the Ruthenian against the Slavonic nations beyond, from whom he has derived his inspirations of independence ?

It is to the Slavonic family beyond the Russian frontier, as well as to the influences likely to operate on the Ruthenian, and from the Ruthenian on the Muscovite, that the attention of the reader is now about to be directed.

The popular opinion in England regards the Slavonic race as either irrevocably gathered beneath the sceptre of the Tsars, or as already Russianised. Whilst yielding the tribute of its regret to the fate of Poland, it is prone to regard its fall as a misfortune beyond the power of man to remedy, and on which it is now idle to waste sympathies which may be thus diverted from some more useful channel. It turns hopelessly from the five millions in the kingdom of Poland, to the fifty

millions of Slavonians concentrated within the limits of Russia-*Proper*, with the conviction that nothing is to be expected now, except from time; when the whole of the corrupt mass into which this last remnant of a gallant people has been absorbed, shall have gradually purified itself, like stagnant waters, which at length from the very excess of their impurity, deposit by a natural process their turbid elements.

As for such portions of Poland as are incorporated with Austria and Prussia, these feeble fragments are considered to have become long since reconciled to the paternal government of the one, and the liberal administration of the other; and at all events as irrevocably wrapped in the strong arms of an empire which reckons thirty-seven millions, and of a military kingdom which counts fourteen millions of subjects.

As to the rest of the Slavonic family, supposed to be widely scattered amongst dominant races, its origin is regarded as only worthy of recollection from motives of historic interest,—not as matter of political consideration.

Russia, on the one side, is thus thought to have absorbed and assimilated the chief part of it, whilst the scanty remainder is supposed to be lost and

confounded in the midst of that German population which occupies the centre of the European continent—as it is vulgarly believed, to the extent of some sixty millions.

But this opinion is based on a most erroneous conception of facts, which the Russian, Austrian, and Prussian cabinets have always been interested in confusing and mystifying ; an attempt in which they have been cordially seconded by the jealousies and national antipathy of the German writers. It is from these sources that our impressions have been chiefly derived, whilst the Slavonians themselves were long apathetic and silent, and even now that they are everywhere rousing, know not how to reach our ear.

But when we find, on examination, that the rapidly increasing Slavonic race in fact amounts at the lowest computation to 85 millions of human beings, whilst all the Germans in Europe do not in reality number more than 35, the question assumes a very different aspect. When we find that besides 20 millions of Poles, there are 25 millions of other Slavonians without the pale of Russia, all foundation is destroyed for the inference we have been led to draw,—that all this race who had escaped incorporation and assimilation

with the Ruisan despotism, must necessarily, to avoid a similar fate, become absorbed and lost in the Germanic multitude.

On the other hand, when we come to examine the Russian despotism, and find that the only portion of its subjects fitted to remain its passive tool, is the unwarlike Muscovite people, which numbers 30 millions,—that the fidelity of 10 millions of Little-Russians becomes daily more questionable if turned against the Poles,—that the Poles are 20 millions, whose division and bondage only whets their patriotism,—when we consider that there are 25 millions of Slavonians beyond, who are growing year by year more anti-German, and more averse to every kind of despotism,—these facts must shake the opinion, however strongly pre-conceived, that the nationality of Poland is swallowed up for ever, or that the preponderating influence of the Tsars will enable them to collect all the rest of the Slavonians beneath the yoke of their dominion, who do not cordially take refuge in the arms of Germany.

On the contrary, whatever the future may bring forth, the empire gathered round the passive Muscovites by the long successful policy of their tyrants, is at least as much menaced by the rest of the Slavonians, as threatening to them.

Far from the battle being won, the strife is only impending; but instead of being entered on by the oppressed against an overwhelming superiority of numbers, we find that in this respect the advantage—and the daily increasing advantage—is in their favour. This is a truth with which it is well that the public of England should be made acquainted, called as it must inevitably be, in a thousand modes which it is impossible to foresee, to interfere for good or evil.

Under the fallacious impression of a hopeless disparity of force, it would be natural to deplore any fermentation of the public mind amongst the Slavonians, as only conducive to fruitless resistance, and to further suffering. There would be practical wisdom in discouraging by every means imaginable, all attempts on the part of any branch of this family, on the principle which leads humane people to knock a suffering animal on the head to put it out of its misery.

But if we view the question in its true light, it becomes obvious, that the east of Europe is threatened with important changes of so vast a character as no foreign influence could avert, and in which our interests and philanthropy are alike interested.

It may, at the first blush, appear, that since this Slavonic family has remained, with the exception

of Russia and of Poland, so long quiescent, so divided in interests, and so widely scattered,—that there can be no reason to expect its political resurrection now. It is true that for centuries, with the exception of Poland, and a few unimportant branches, the rest of the Sclavonians have bowed with the same submissiveness to a foreign yoke, as the Muscovites to that imposed upon them by their princes. They were then in the condition of the Muscovites—resigned to servitude, without the consciousness that a better order of things could exist for them ; whilst besides, in the isolation of their ignorance and prejudice, each scattered fragment had forgotten its relationship to the rest. If, instead of being the most numerous race in Europe, they had been, like the Chinese, the most numerous in the world, there was nothing to be hoped from them, under these circumstances. The extent of a people is nothing, until it wills its freedom or its independence ; but then it becomes of proportionate importance in the estimation of its probable destinies.

The Sclavonians are however now unquestionably awakening from this long apathy ; and, with the exception of the Muscovites, there is no portion of their race which is not more or less agitated by new-born aspirations of independence, or at least of liberty.

Unless with the handful of unconquered mountaineers of Montenegro and the principality of Serbia, this feeling is of such recent growth, that it appears almost incredible to those a few years since best acquainted with the different branches of Slavonians, grouped within reach of each other, though divided by the frontier lines of the Russian, Austrian, and Turkish empires, and of the Prussian kingdom. It is difficult to believe, if we judge of the future by the past, that a race buried for centuries in torpor, should possibly awaken to political animation by any but the most gradual—in fact, by imperceptibly gradual stages. But the past no longer guides in estimating the present or the future, when the present or the future contain conditions for which we look vainly to the past. In the material world it would be ridiculous to limit one's opinion of the possible speed with which distance may be traversed, by considerations drawn from a period when the motive power of steam was unknown or unapplied. So, in estimating moral influences, the existence of the press may account for effects which baffle all experience. We must not forget that though several ages have elapsed since the discovery of printing, its development as a political engine is comparatively recent, and its uses in eastern Europe still more so. Th^e

Greeks of the Peninsula, for centuries abject slaves or merciless banditti, might have been judged a hundred years ago likely to continue for centuries more in their barbarism and ignorance; but—whatever traces may remain indelible in the present generation—now that the daily newspaper circulates in the remotest villages, it is obvious that the inhabitants must progress more in a twelvemonth (at least in political knowledge) than they could have formerly done through a long life of casual contact with a western people.

Let us examine for a moment how this Sclavonic family, variously estimated at from 85 to 100 millions, is divided. The Russian empire has its passive Muscovites, to the amount of from 33 to 36 millions—its 10 millions of Ruthenians. Though the kingdom of Poland has been cut down to less than a fourth of its extent, it shares with Austria and Prussia the Polish nation consisting of 20 millions, in the proportion of about two-thirds of the whole. These Poles maintain the same ardent longing for independence as when their servitude began. Besides these there are 7 millions of Bulgarians, Serbians, Bosnians, and Montenegrins in the Turkish empire; and of Sclavonians in the Austrian dominions, 18 millions more, consisting of Illyrians, Dalmatians, Hungarians, Transyl-

vanians, Silesians, Moravians, and Bohemians. Though the whole of this immense people has suffered subjugation, it has not amalgamated with its conquerors. Everywhere oppressed except in the Turkish empire, it is everywhere but there growing daily more anxious to shake of the yoke of its rulers.

The ambition of the Russian cabinet had not overlooked the identity of origin and the geographical contiguity of the provinces over which all these Slavonians were dispersed ; and founding on it the hope of uniting them beneath its rule, it took indefatigable pains to rouse these people through its emissaries. The Slavonians of Turkey were led to resist the tyranny of the Porte ; those of Austria, discontented with their lot ; but the liberal opinions disseminated amongst them—at first too slowly to suit the views of the impatient autocrats,—have now far exceeded the limits at which they were propitious to their policy ; so that with the exception of the corrupt nobility of the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia, Russia has no partisans but those who receive its gold ; whilst the first feeling distinctly evoked, is that of antipathy to the arbitrary character of its government.

Each of the branches of the great Slavonic

tree will be subsequently made the subject of detailed investigation ; at present it suffices for the author's purpose to point them out to the reader as elements of that external agency which may some day act as a rapid solvent on the very body of the Russian empire. Before turning the attention of the reader to Poland, it was indispensable—so interwoven is the future of one portion of the Slavonic family with the fate of another—to give some outline of these masses ; and it is equally necessary to remind him of what the Prussian kingdom, and the Turkish and Austrian empires, are in their reality, if compared either morally or physically to the Slavonic multitudes, though looking so imposing when dimly shadowed forth.

The Prussian kingdom, artificially compounded by the most ingenious policy from the most ungrateful materials, constitutes a state whose existence is perilled by the loss of a battle, whilst its population of fourteen millions comprises three millions of disaffected Poles on its eastern limits, and two millions and a half of discontented subjects in its Rhenish provinces. Germanic Austria with its thirty-seven millions of subjects,—of which only six millions are Germans—is a remarkable monument of what policy and diplomacy could

effect at a period antecedent to that upon which we are entering. Joseph the Second, who, like the Empress Catherine, wavered between liberal and despotic institutions, was strongly tempted to make this empire Slavonic instead of German; and there is little cause to doubt that if he had listened to both these inspirations, it might have been at the present day the most powerful and firmly-seated on the European continent. As it is, we find it an heterogenous compound of divers races, without community of interests, language, predilections, or religion,—gathered not even through the *prestige* of military successes, but by the perfidies, the marriages, and treaties where-with its cabinet repaired the incessant ill-fortune of the field, ever since with a handful of Swedes, Gustavus and his generals threatened the existence of the empire. With five millions of oppressed and exasperated Italians, with twenty-three millions of Slavonians, exclusive of the hostile Magyars of Hungary, whilst presided by a race of princes whose imbecility has scarcely been redeemed by the genius of the arch-duke Charles, the existence of the state may be said to hinge on the life of Metternich, who himself has long been prone to boast, not of the solidity of the state, but of the

tact which still keeps its discordant elements together.

If we now turn to the Turkish empire, we find its European dominions peopled by eleven millions of Serbs, Bulgarians, Wallachians, and Moldavians, and by three millions of Greeks, Albanians, Jews, Armenians, and Gipsies, whilst the Turks scarcely number one million.

There is this, however, to be remarked, that though the intolerance of the Koran has not yet allowed any Moslem people, cordially, much less eagerly, to court the light of knowledge,—and that on this account, even in a worldly point of view, Mahomedanism is more averse to progress than the most corrupted forms of Christianity,—still it has proved less oppressive in its spirit than Christian despotism.

The law of the prophet enjoined his propagandists to receive the proselyte as a brother, to slay the resisting unbeliever, and to enslave those who neither resisted nor believed, or to take tribute from them; but at the same time, it forbids all unnecessary cruelty.

Now the Ottoman Porte—though possessing its full share of Machiavelism in its conduct towards its Christian subjects—never vexatiously interfered

either in their municipal liberties, or in the exercise of their religion. All that it sought was to secure its tribute, and to crush rebellion; and as a general rule, it allowed habitual liberty by declining all attempt to govern, though it occasionally punished with indiscriminating ferocity.

Throughout the empire, local and municipal privileges and franchises had never ceased to exist, outliving the occasional violences of the Ottoman domination. On the whole, therefore, the Slavonians, far better treated by the Turkish than by the Russian, Austrian, or Prussian governments, are there less than in any other state disposed to shake off allegiance to their rulers.

It is true that, originally excited against the Porte by the intrigues of Russia, a spirit of resistance was engendered, which led to the independence of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Serbia; but as portions of this population become enlightened, they learn to discern, and rapidly to disseminate amongst the rest, the fact that of all the despotisms amongst which the Slavonic race is divided, the Porte is the most tolerant and hopeful for the governed. The establishment of tributary but independent governments within its dominions, exemplifies at once, for all its Slavonic population, the possibility

of attaining beneath its supremacy a degree of liberty which neither Austria nor Russia would for a moment tolerate. The repugnance of the Porte to allow of the self-government of its Christian subjects, has been proved to be the more easily overcome, that such concessions form no outrageous departure from the general spirit of its policy ; and that it will make no violent efforts to retrace its steps, or to avert a necessity to which it becomes reconciled by the certainty and punctuality of its tribute, which it was formerly obliged to dispute by force or fraud with rebellious pashas.

Having thus shadowed out all the gigantic elements which are silently but rapidly tending to operate a formidable diversion in favour of Polish nationality, we will turn to this branch of the Slavonic family. It is true that the reader may at first judge the opinions set forth in the preceding pages as strangely hazarded, whilst his mind is still filled with imposing recollections of the empires which have parcelled out, and brought the weight of their collective powers to weigh on the dispersed Slavonians. We are all too apt to consider any order of things which time has consecrated as immutable. A few brief years of continuance led the thinking public to regard the

principles of the Holy Alliance as unshakeably rooted, till its treaties were suddenly scattered to the winds. It should not be forgotten that the Austrian empire and the Prussian kingdom have only an artificial existence, their limits being the mere works of treaties; whilst the people which these parchments have divided by imaginary nationalities, retaining their own, remain in unreconciled millions and indestructible reality. The Polish people is every way entitled to take precedence of its Slavonic brethren in this notice, not only on account of its having made the farthest and earliest progress in civilisation of any of the Slavonic branches, but because on the one hand it forms the connecting link, which, by mingling the spirit of both, unites the west of Europe with the east; whilst on the other, predestined to an inevitable antagonism with the Russian despotism, as the primary condition of its existence, it is peculiarly, and it might be said solely fitted to work effectively on the elements which constitute all that despotism's strength. That is to say, that there is no reason to believe in the unaided self-development of any principle amongst the Ruthenians, much less the Muscovites, which might tend to the dissolution of the empire.

Still, the infection of Polish ideas (as the Russian cabinet terms it) is already gaining, and may rapidly progress amongst the Ruthenians; whilst the Ruthenian is as well calculated, and perhaps as solely fitted to convey them to the Muscovite, as to receive their impression from the Pole.

Russia, in its connection with Poland, has been compared to the murderer formerly punished by being bound to the dead body of his victim till its corruption reached his heart. The comparison is full of truth, in as far as applied to the probable subversion of the vital principle of the despotism by contact with its victim. It is from Poland that disease is rapidly gaining the strength of the Russian government; but then the corruption of that strength will be a commencement of life to the Russian people, which is now itself more comparable to a passive corpse moved to mischief by the spirit of a ghoul which has made its tenement of the unresisting clay.

In the midst of her degradation, of her sufferings and her woes, Russian Poland becomes daily, to her oppressor, more like Blue-Beard's key, from which the blood wiped on one end only appeared on the other. It is indispensable to maintain an immense force in the country, and these troops become

everywhere liberalized. Regiments are now shifted every few months from garrison to garrison, but still the canker gains,—whilst secret societies amongst the Poles become so multiplied as to defy effectual detection.

To the inhabitants of Russian Poland we shall accord, therefore, a greater space and a priority of notice in these volumes, both on account of the superior interest they inspire, and because comprising thirteen out of the twenty millions of their nation.

CHAP. V.

THE POLES IN THEIR RELATION TO RUSSIA.

WHILST in disposition the Poles bear a stronger resemblance to almost every other branch of the Slavonic family than to the Muscovites, they differ from the whole of it in one important particular, which assimilates them more nearly with ourselves, and peculiarly fits them to lead the civilisation of their race.

All the rest of the Slavonians derived their ideas and their religion from the eastern capital of the Christian world,—from that corrupt Byzantium, which degrading alike the name and language of old Greece, appeared an Asiaticised and monstrous compound of all the vices and the meannesses which had ever dimmed the chequered character of its glorious people,—their restless energy and turbulence, degraded to a treacherous and ser-

vile spirit of intrigue,—their pliancy and versatility into baseness—their chaste and marvellous instinct of the beautiful in art become a barbarous passion for the gaudy,—and with their philosophic genius and their thirst for knowledge, contracted into subtle sophistry, which spent itself in splitting theologic straws.

Tainted at the spring-head by such an association, though Christianity had prepared the social soil for better things, it had not brought in its train the dormant germ of any great or useful institution.

Poland, on the contrary, owed its civilisation and religion to Rome and to the West. All the lore and wisdom of antiquity—all those ideas of freedom and of justice which survived wherever Latinity was transmitted, together with a large share of of that chivalric element which the Norsemen spread so widely when they took possession of the thrones and lordships of so many lands,—mixed up though both might be with monkish rubbish and with feudal barbarism, hence operated on the character of the Polish nation, and have given it a deep and indelible analogy with that of western people.

Time has happily enabled us at home to disentangle and utilise these discordant materials, building up a solid edifice of greatness, to which every

preceding age distinguished by the progress of the human mind, has furnished us a stone. Greece, Rome, the middle ages, might all discover something of their genius, their experience, or their thoughts, in our civilisation; but it must not be forgotten that through centuries these elements lay in a confused and chaotic mass, from which we have not so long since disengaged them.

In France, which now rivalises with ourselves in civilisation, it is almost within the memory of man, that, by a social earthquake, some of these elements have been rescued from still hideous disorder; and we should not forget that ever since the same period, Poland has been writhing in the grasp of Russian despotism, anxious, for the purpose of securing its conquest, to demoralize and divide.

Though from the same source Poland may have inherited the feudal turbulence and the religious intolerance which, by causing her to drive her schismatic children (the Ruthenians) into the arms of Russia, and through the internal dissensions of her nobles led to her subjugation,—still there exists an identity of feeling with ourselves, for which we vainly look amongst other Slavonians.

There is no point on which a man of the West

is apt to be so much deceived as in confounding in this respect Poland and Russia.

In his own country, a given amount of education, intellect, and delicacy of manners, may be usually judged as indicative of a certain delicacy of feeling, and of a pride which preserves from derogation,—he is accustomed to see those even coarse in their habits and manners, uncompromising in their dignity as men ; and he cannot, therefore, bring himself to believe that association and education at least will not produce the same effect on a Russian.

But the Russian, when intellectual, accomplished, and accustomed even during a residence of half a life amongst us to our western institutions, is never to be depended on ; however admirable a counterfeit, he is only a Brummagem imitation of a gentleman,—less to be trusted than a French or English menial, because less sensible to the “point of honour” than even menials in France and England.

There has never existed any pride of station, any self-respect amongst his people ; he assumes them, like our fashions, as things necessary to polite life, but never to be placed in serious competition with the gratification of his passions or his interests.

He may live for twenty years abroad, scrupulous in the liquidation of his debts of honour, prompt to vindicate it, and jealous in maintaining the dignity of his position ; but the same individual, when he returns, will submit to the grossest insult, cheat at play, cringe to the basest and most infamous man in the empire raised to ephemeral power ; or if unjustly and suddenly deprived of wealth and honours, he will not blush to fawn humbly to obtain some petty favour from the enemy to whom he owes his ruin.

It is not meant to be asserted that there are no exceptional instances of men whose inherent sense of what they owe to themselves, proves strong enough to guide them, but that there is no public opinion to inoculate them with the necessary pride, which shames men from committing basenesses, and threatens them with the brand of its contempt.

This honest pride, which is apparent in its rough and homely degree in the lowest classes in France and England, is wanting in the first in Russia. The Tsars can shave the children of their bearded serfs, and give them rank and titles, education and fortune ; but they possess no means of instilling into them a spirit which has never existed in the institutions of their people.

In this respect, Poland assimilates to the West, blending in a high degree with many of the vices of feudality, the virtues of chivalry, unknown to the rest of its Slavonic brethren. And this distinction is not limited, as might be apprehended, to its noble minority ; for the recognised principle has a remarkable action even on the majority, still in many provinces victims of the feudal system. In fact, just as in France some sixty years ago, the *vilain* indirectly refracted many of the most redeeming notions of his lord, so the nobility of Poland have given their tone to the peasantry ; whereas, in Russia, there being no example of an elevating nature held out by any class whatever, none can rise in spirit as it improves in rank and fortune. The noble with fifty thousand serfs, or the imperial aid-de-camp, or the courtier powerful in his favouritism—is not in this respect one whit removed above the moujik ; and therefore nothing exists in any rank which one inferior can emulate or attempt to reproduce.

Those who have never dealt with nations wanting in this foundation on which—imperceptible as it may be to our accustomed eyes—so much of our social system in reality reposes, have difficulty in be-

lieving the chasm it leaves between such races and ourselves,—a chasm which does not the less seriously divide us, that its surface may be bridged over to deceive the sight.

But if the Pole stands in this respect on the same footing as the nations of the West, being therein distinguished from his brethren, he is remarkable amongst all people of the world for his patriotism. Notwithstanding his versatile vivacity, his strong passions, and violent animosities,—notwithstanding the division and subjugation of his country, there is none in which traitors to its nationality are so rare ; whilst even the few who ever betray it, almost without exception, expiate their treason by turning at some time or other on its enemies.

The turbulence of disposition which in Poland led to anarchic confusion in the last days of the national independence, was taken advantage of by its despotic neighbours, before—like that which for several centuries marked the character of the British nation—it had time to settle into the wholesome form of energetic activity ; but this very turbulence which led to the subversion of its freedom, has singularly strengthened the vitality of its nationality. Even in those provinces which

Austria has possessed uninterruptedly since the first partition, as well as in those which Prussia governs, more than half a century of incorporation has failed to reconcile the inhabitants to their lot.

In those that have been subjected to the cruel violence of Russia, so ineffectual appears the endeavour to terrify them into any lasting submission, that it is the common opinion of the Russian authorities, that nothing but extermination of its population will permanently tranquillize the country. And in fact, what else remains to secure a conquest over a race which no severity will reduce to resignation?—where the women alone, as long as they propagate the population, will irreconcilably instil a deadly hatred of the oppressors into the minds of their lisping children,—where the first lesson of the mother is to point out to the infant where its grandfather, or its father, or its uncle, fought and bled, or was punished or imprisoned,—where, in 1845, intermarriage between a Polish female and the most powerful and wealthy servitor of the emperor is considered in the same light as religious apostacy?

But how exterminate a people, whose number at the lowest computation amounts to thirteen millions? For, though the territory of the kingdom of Poland

has been cut down till only five millions of inhabitants are left, the annexation by ukase of Vilna, Grodno, Vitepsk, Mohilef, Minsk, Volyhnia, Podolia and Bialystok to the Russian empire, has not sufficed to Russianize them in anything but name.

After the efforts of so many years, the indomitable tenacity of national life remains not only unimpaired, but increased in its vigour; and notwithstanding, or perhaps on account of the severity of the Russian despotism, instead of making any progress towards its extinction, it finds the disaffection of its victims daily gaining its agents and its armies.

It is a singular fact, that for the last two or three years, notwithstanding the extraordinary vigilance of the police, channels of communication have been opened between the Polish emigrants and their relatives, even for the conveyance of matter of most treasonable import, through the connivance of Russian staff-officers and employés, who, originally selected for their persecutive zeal, have become gradually imbued with the popular ideas of the country.

The fact once established, of the strong vitality of the national feeling of Poland, gives an importance to the character of its people, which

renders it pre-eminently worthy of our attention amongst all the Slavonic races.

We are apt to attribute to the Pole of the present day, a turbulence of disposition, a tendency to exaggerate, and a proneness to violence, with which we should not accuse him without previously placing ourselves in his position, and considering what, under similar circumstances, our own feelings would be with regard to Russia.

Let us for this purpose briefly examine the condition of Russian Poland since its first partition.

The Empress Catherine, the least tyrannic sovereign who ever ruled in Russia, wrote fifty-one years ago to Repnin, her ambassador at Warsaw:—

“ This is why I must impress on you to cause the armies now at your disposal in Poland, to act, setting aside all illusions of humanity, (*abstraction faite de toutes les illusions de l'humanité*) with the energy necessary to deprive its inhabitants of all means, and of all hope of revolting. You must not spare any of the inhabitants of this district, even if they should allege the quiet and retired lives they have been leading, excepting always such as may be taken in arms, after giving proofs of thy valour. These you had better incorporate in my

armies, as they may prove useful in the war which, as you know, we intend to carry into the south, after the pacification of Poland."

A few days after, Warsaw was stormed; and Suwarrow, one of the great captains of his age, and by no means the most inhuman of the Russian generals, put to the sword twenty-five thousand of the inhabitants of the suburb of Praga, inclusive of its defenders, women, and children.

This unscrupulous woman made energetic and cruel efforts to secure her conquests. She prosecuted vigorously the task (which experience had then not yet shown to be hopeless) of extinguishing its nationality. She shut up the schools, discouraging all instruction; and, lastly, after declaring to the world "that whoever was attacked in his religion or his circumstances was absolved from all allegiance, and had a right to seek through mankind for guardians and protectors,"—after reaping the praises of Europe for her toleration, she entered on a course of religious persecution in Poland, which we will give in the words of Colonel Szyrma, a Polish Protestant:—

"Who is ignorant of the cruel attempts at compelling whole villages and entire districts inhabited by the United-Greeks, to embrace the dominant

religion? Who has not heard of the spoliation of churches, and of cold-blooded atrocities committed, in White-Russia, Lithuania, Volhynia, and Podolia, on those who refused to abjure the faith of their ancestors? Tradition, that million-tongued and faithful annalist of the people, has chronicled these sufferings, handing them down from father to son. Within the consecrated precincts of churches, and on their altars, in innumerable places, are pointed out indelible stains of blood—blood of those who had suffered martyrdom for the faith in which they were born. At one of these village churches (Warkobalow,) a bloody sign of the cross is still shown to travellers on the entrance door. The sign is dated from that period of religious persecution, and was made by a bold villager with his own blood. After making it, he exhorted his fellow-villagers:—‘Enter, and here let us perish for our faith!’ The government spirri, astonished to see so numerous a peasantry determined to gain the martyr’s palm, were deterred from the execution of their purpose; and that community long remained Roman Catholic, whilst the surrounding population was compelled to embrace the foreign religion. From the returns prepared at the close of Catherine’s reign it may be seen that not less

than 3,160,000 Roman Catholics were then forced to go over to the dominant church. Missions for converting Roman Catholics used to be accompanied by a military escort. Placed under such safeguard, they traversed the country, forced the doors of Catholic churches and chapels in towns and villages, and consecrated them anew as if they had been profaned. Priests who would not change their religion were expelled their parishes, and were replaced by Russian popes. Intimidation and rewards were in turn employed with the Catholic clergy, and when these failed to effect their object, many were thrown into prisons and flogged; and the infliction of corporal punishment was jocularly called '*the anointing of the dis-united brethren.*'"

The Empress Catherine caused the public libraries to be transported into Russia, those whom she suspected as political opponents into Siberia. She removed the episcopal sees from those portions of her new territory which she wished to Russianize. After violating every most solemn treaty, she did not farther respect the capitulations entered into by her generals. There was an air of philosophic liberality and of playful gallantry thrown over these transactions, which has hitherto tended to veil her religious persecution of the Poles, and

oppressive conduct towards them, much more generally from the eyes of posterity than Colonel Szyrma seems to imagine.

Catherine, at the same time that she was exercising such wholesale severity towards the United-Greeks, had undertaken to protect the Jesuits, then disgraced by the pope, and the Polish protestants, and when Prince Repnine, her former lover, forwarded to her the forced abdication of the unhappy king of Poland, it was concealed in a bouquet, and presented to her on her name's-day with grateful attention.

The reign of Catherine as empress, undoubtedly within her hereditary dominions the best and mildest of Russian sovereigns who has ruled them yet, was, in her newly acquired conquest, violent and sanguinary.

Paul, her son, a man of generous heart, but of a narrow mind, deranged by occasional insanity, governed Russia in a manner which made his subjects regret his mother's reign. But in Poland, which he ruled in the same spirit as his native country, and which she had governed so much more oppressively, his accession was felt as a comparative benefit. It is true that numerous individuals were exiled to Siberia, or punished,—the

victims of his capricious temper, roused sometimes to anger by an indigestion or a sleepless night; but the general tenor of his policy was just, and he made it his especial care to repair, as far as he was able, the injustices of his predecessor. He put a stop to all religious persecution. He re-established the bishopricks of Vilna, Luck, Kaminiec, and Zitomir. He set at liberty the exiles sent by Catherine to Siberia, and he re-opened all the colleges and schools which she had closed.

Towards the end of his brief reign, sharing somewhat of his mother's contempt for his native subjects, Paul, who was essentially a creature of the wildest impulse, seems to have conceived a peculiar affection for the Polish nation. Death cut him short in his good intentions, before he had time to prove whether, towards that country, he would have made any departure from the usual instability of purpose, which led him to prepare a splendid triumphal entry for Suwarrow, and then to disgrace him because he had violated military etiquette in employing a general out of his turn.

The Emperor Alexander, in the early part of his reign, governed with moderation, though the pressure of the Russian system of administration,

and the heavy demands for men and money, were severely felt. The successes of the French republic had, however, inspired the Poles with a hope of independence, which the subsequent victories of the empire seemed upon the point of realising. Although Napoleon, after the battle of Austerlitz, concluded a peace, without thinking of Poland, the majority of its inhabitants still continued to identify their interests with his triumphs. Kosciusko, it is true, the friend of Washington, and the Polish Washington in all but in his fortune, saw at once through the futility of these hopes, with the same sagacity as he subsequently penetrated the insincerity of Alexander. He augured that nothing could reasonably be expected for the liberties of Poland, from the man who had subverted those of France.

The tide of Napoleon's fortunes led him, however, at length, into Poland, and placed it in his power to dispose of that country, as he had of so many others.

Napoleon, as it is well known, then established the duchy of Warsaw, containing about one-fourth of old Poland.

Since its partition, Poland had never enjoyed as much freedom and happiness as in this portion of

it, when constituted under the presidency of the King of Saxony, into a nominally independent state, to which the French resident in reality transmitted his master's orders. Still, benefits were conferred upon it, which reconciled the country to its benefactor's tutelage. The introduction of his code abolished slavery and established equality in the eye of the law. He allowed a constitutional form of government, which, to be efficient, only required the removal of two clauses purposely introduced to render it illusory; viz., that though the members of its diet could vote, they were neither allowed to speak on any question, nor to take the initiative in it; and that, by the admission of unelected councillors of state to vote with them, it was always in the power of the government to swamp the national majority. But the country was administered by Poles; and though in the exhausting wars which followed, drained of its treasures and its blood, this fragment of old Poland gave them cheerfully; never showing a sign of dissatisfaction, except to see that Napoleon, after all his promises, was so niggardly in uniting to them any further portions of their territory, still in the might of the spoliating powers, although his victories made him so often arbiter of the destinies

of the whole. The establishment of the duchy of Warsaw had also the most happy effects on the condition of those parts of Poland under foreign dominion; its rulers necessarily entering on a policy of conciliation. The Emperor Alexander indeed, whose ideas appear always to have been liberal till he was called upon to put them into practice at the expense of the slightest shadow of his own authority, and who besides was never wanting in Byzantine craft, set himself up as a sort of opposition liberator to Napoleon. He held out to them the prospect of re-integrating the whole of Poland, under his dominion, as constitutional king, in which prospective arrangement, it must not be forgotten that the fact of his being a foreigner could be no serious drawback to a people who, like ourselves, had always been careless of conferring the national crown on a stranger.

It was quite natural that some of the most sensible of the Poles having convinced themselves by experience that nothing further was to be expected from Napoleon, should have turned to listen to the promises of Alexander. Not only the present Prince Adam Czartoryski, his personal friend and previously imperial minister and senator, but even the republican Kosciusko, joined in the same hopes.

The inspiring thought of Alexander's policy no doubt was that of depriving Austria and Prussia of their share of the spoil, by holding out the tempting prospect to their Polish subjects;—but the motives of sovereigns are nothing to the purpose, so that they lead to results beneficial to the governed.

His intentions in this respect were, however, frustrated; for whilst the Russian, Prussian, and Austrian cabinets seemed likely to quarrel about the spoil, after Napoleon's fall, they were suddenly startled by his return from the isle of Elba into the hurried signature of final and decisive treaties, which left Poland in its present condition.

The grand duchy of Warsaw, minus the portions restored to Prussia, was erected into a constitutional kingdom, and Alexander held out the promise that the Polish provinces which had been incorporated with the Russian empire, and which comprised more than once-and-a-half of the population of the Polish kingdom, should be eventually restored to it.

There was no fault to be found with the liberality of the new constitution, excepting that it was not beyond a few years observed. As long as it was so, it might be considered as the second boon

which had been then, or has ever been since, extended to the Poles from the time of the partition of their territory ; but like the first, only to a small portion of it.

Out of about twenty millions, Napoleon had abolished servitude amongst about six millions. Alexander gave a constitution to about four.

The abolition of servitude lasted six-and-twenty years, being destroyed by the Emperor Nicholas long after Napoleon was no more. The constitution given by Alexander may be considered to have lasted six ; after that, it was not only violated, but the government of that prince verged into a sanguinary despotism.

Let us, however, before entering on this period, give the reader some notion of the condition of Lithuania, and of the provinces which were not included in the kingdom of Poland, during this comparatively golden age. In 1818, the nobility of Lithuania, assembled at Vilna, came to the philanthropic resolution of enfranchising their serfs,—after the example of the former grand duchy of Warsaw, then the constitutional kingdom of Poland.

The liberal Alexander received their proposition with coldness, and commanded that they should proceed no further in the matter.

Khorsakof,—the same who, bringing up an army to the assistance of Suwarrow, was utterly defeated at Zurich by Massena,—being governor-general of Vilna, traced the plan of a promenade along the banks of the Vilia. The ground was, however, covered by rows of miserable houses, inhabited by the indigent portion of the population. Schlykof, the police-master, offered the proprietors of these houses from £8 to £12 to pull them down and clear the rubbish. As this offer was insufficient to cover the cost of demolition, they refused to undertake it, and the police-master had them pulled down for them, turning the houseless tenants adrift. They complained in vain to Prince Khorsakof.*

* Prince Khorsakof himself had owed much of his advancement in the time of Paul to Madame Chevalier,—if not the best, the best paid of actresses. She was the favourite of Koutaitsoff, formerly a barber, and at that time grand ecuyer and chief favourite of the emperor.

The only safe road to the emperor's favour was by obtaining that of Madame Chevalier, who vouchsafed to recommend the protégés to Koutaitsoff, who in his turn was all-powerful with the emperor. It was therefore customary, on the numerous benefit nights of the actress, to pay enormous sums for tickets. It is related that Khorsakof had an Alsatian secretary, whom he ordered on his arrival in St. Petersburg, to purchase and pay liberally for a ticket. The secretary thinking to have paid liberally, informed his master that he had given a hundred roubles. Koutaitsoff, on hearing this, accused the poor secretary of his ruin, and running to a jeweller's, purchased a set of diamonds, with which he so successfully repaired his error, that Madame Chevalier invited him to tea, and a few days after obtained for him the command of a regiment.

The same Schlykoff fell upon an expedient equally unscrupulous and tyrannical, for enabling him to demolish other portions of the city, which his chief wished to have the credit of embellishing.

Declaring that the city of Wilna had undertaken to farm the excise at a stipulated sum, a complicated document was sent round, to which the citizens were peremptorily ordered to affix their signatures. Those occupying temporary lodgings, as well as mere travellers, were equally applied to, and did not hesitate to fulfil a formality apparently imposed on every one. At the end of the year, the produce of the excise had not covered the rent at which the town was said to have farmed it, and the police made those who had signed the declaration responsible for the deficiency. The proprietors of lodging houses and divided tenements were held answerable for the travellers, tenants, and lodgers who had signed beneath their roof; and thus, most of the owners of houses about the barrier were ruined; their houses being immediately pulled down, and the materials sold to pay their debt. Thus the environs of the cathedral and of the street leading to the suburb of Antokol were cleared.

Whilst this process of destruction was going on, Schlykof was reproached with demolishing and

ruining the city, and made answer,—“ *that it was only necessary that some part of it should remain, as long as he was police-master.*”

In Volhynia, where no stone is to be found, the streets are covered by a wooden bridge, or causeway, elevated above the soil. The inhabitants are forced to keep in order the part which is opposite to their dwelling, without reference to their means or the width of the street, thus rendering it a serious, and frequently a ruinous charge to the occupants of cottages.

Andreikovitch, the governor of Grodno, having been degraded to the inferior government of Volhynia for his misdeeds, to prove his zeal, ordered all the pavement of Zitomir, its capital, to be renewed. Hundreds of families being unable to comply with this order, the police sold their dwellings and their furniture; and they might be seen reduced to beggary, seeking refuge in holes dug in the clay soil.

In the city of Luck, in the same government, may still be seen whole streets of these wretched caves, which the inhabitants then dispossessed inhabit amidst fresh vexations and oppression.

The natural independence of the Polish character, and the long vicinity of these Polish provinces to

the constitutionally governed kingdom of Poland, rendered the decisions of the tribunals of the country less flagrantly venal or unjust ; but whenever influence was used, the Russian imperial senate reversed their most solemn decisions.

Zubof, one of Catherine's lovers, and of the murderers of Paul, had vast estates conferred upon him in Samogitia, where the peasants were free. Zubof attempted to reduce them to servitude. After defending their cause before the tribunals for years, during which time the law allowed Zubof, till his right was disproved, to torture them at will, they were finally reduced to slavery.

In the district of Radomils, the Russian Kikine, secretary of the Emperor Alexander, was put in possession of several populous lordships, on which he found the peasantry either free or noble. He reduced them to servitude ; they applied to the local tribunals, and eventually obtained a decision in their favour ; but when Kikine appealed to the imperial senate, of course he had it his own way, and an armed force reduced his obstinate vassals.

The inhabitants of the district of Taraszcza likewise obtained a favourable decision against the Countess Branicka, niece of the celebrated Potemkin ; but the countess also got it reversed by the senate.

Prince Anthony Radzivil, and his brother-in-law Witgenstein, equally succeeded with the senate, after failing with the tribunals of the country, in reducing to slavery the peasantry on their estates in the government of Grodno.

On the confines of Ukraine and Podolia exists a populous village, named Podvysokie. In 1771, its inhabitants not only refused to join in the massacres excited by Catherine's emissaries, but endeavoured to put down those who did so. Their proprietor, Felix Potocki, gave them their freedom as a recompense, and presented them with a banner, in sign of their emancipation. After the death of his successor, his widow, Thecle Potocki, called in the Russian authorities to reduce them to servitude. The Polish jurisdiction protected them by its repeated decisions; the Russians then, to conquer such obstinacy, quartered on them so large a number of troops as reduced the inhabitants to ruin. Nevertheless, they held their freedom till the reign of Nicholas, when in 1831 the Russian authorities ordered even the flag which the peasantry had learned to regard with superstitious veneration, to be delivered up; and it was given up by the Greek priest, protected by an armed force, in the midst of their cries and lamentations.

Many of the commercial towns throughout the whole of Poland were ruined by the arbitrary measures of the collectors of the revenue. Although its chiefs were always in connivance with the smugglers, both to prove their zeal and for the purposes of extortion, they exercised their right of search in a manner ruinous to the honest trader.

“ An eye-witness, describing this operation, says :
“ All is tranquil and unsuspecting, when suddenly the Russian battalions pouring in from several streets, isolate a given portion of the town, and take possession of all the houses. The inhabitants, men and women, the children and the aged, are driven from their dwellings, happy if allowed to carry off a mattress on which to sleep in the open air in some street unguarded by bayonets. The warehousemen, traders and shopkeepers, are seized, and bound to posts, as if in the pillory ; as if to be forcedly obliged to witness the ensuing depredation of their property. No one is allowed to penetrate into that quarter of the town as long as it is occupied by the military. The passing traveller is obliged to make a circuit through bye-streets, filled by the families expelled from their homes. Whether or not any smuggled articles are found, the inhabitants must always compensate the revenue

agents for their disappointment and their zeal. Even when his liberty and his property is restored to the trader, the latter has always undergone so much of damage and spoliation, that this process a few times repeated tends to inevitable ruin.

Besides this highway robbery, vexatious extortions on a small scale incessantly exhausted the means of the commercial class.

Constant threats of these disastrous searches were held out to oblige its members to avert their execution by voluntary gifts to the Russian functionaries, although these are commonly themselves in connivance with the smugglers. The very governor of Volhynia, Kommebourlei, was himself the chief smuggler; and the imperial senator, Sievers, notwithstanding all his honest zeal and his severity, could never succeed in finding the really guilty parties. When the functionaries are compromised, they generally select a scape-goat amongst themselves, who comes to his death by some violent means, and on whom all the guilt is heaped. Smuggling is punished (like murder or parricide) by banishment to Siberia, and the infliction of the knout; but when a trader is detected in the act of smuggling, it depends on these functionaries to save or punish him. On one occasion, a case of smuggling

being openly detected, a public victim became necessary. Some of the authorities being in league with the smugglers, pitched upon a poor driver, who was really knouted, and conducted into exile. When at the execution, a commissary of police was asked,—“How is it that this poor driver is made to suffer, instead of the real offender?” He replied, “How could you expect us to punish the other, when I myself clear a thousand roubles a year by him?” This scene took place at Vilna, and was recorded, because some years after, in 1824, the driver’s family appealed to the justice of the Grand Duke Constantine. The police authorities, however, declared with effrontery, that the smuggler had also suffered the infliction of the knout, of which his body still bore the marks; and the driver’s family were glad to escape the penalties of a false accusation against the authorities.

Such was the condition of Poland in the golden age of the Russian domination, whilst neither exposed to the systematic persecution by which Catherine sought to strike terror, nor to the ferocious outbreaks of Paul’s gloomy temper; but during the period at which it enjoyed the countenance and favour of Alexander.

Towards the year 1818, the policy of that em-

peror had already become retrogressive ; and irritated by the constitutional opposition of the diet, which the ruinous state of the finances had excited, he abandoned all attempts at popularity ; and in the course of the three following years, had not only virtually abrogated the constitution, but commenced a reign of terror. After having, during the course of years, loudly reiterated his liberal intentions, he not only neglected to fulfil them, but gave rise to all the dangers of dissatisfaction, by openly retrograding ; and then, thrown into a state of nervous terror by these difficulties of his own creation, he was easily led to endeavour to crush all resistance by a display of merciless severity. Not only did he violate personal liberty, establish a numerous secret police, and abolish liberty of the press, but the accused were tortured at their interrogation. The Grand Duke Constantine, the prototype of his father Paul, was allowed despotically to give the rein to his temper, and let loose as an instrument of punishment, whilst an imperial commissioner was dispatched with all the powers of a Roman proconsul, uniting in the person of the infamous Novosiltsof, the utmost depravity and cruelty, to a restless activity and Machiavelian duplicity.

It will be remembered that about this period Russia itself was still full of secret societies, many of which had formerly looked forward to Alexander as their warmest friend. In Germany, previous to the fall of Napoleon, these associations had been encouraged by the Austrian and Prussian despots, as having an anti-French tendency; and in Poland, Alexander had been anxious to encourage them, when still hopeful of uniting the whole Polish nation beneath his rule. The fermentation of secret societies in Poland had not, therefore, the same rebellious or dangerous signification as might be reasonably attributed to them at the present day; as their existence had never been forbidden, it was not concealed; the secret only extending, like that of freemasonry, to their institutions. The Polish youth then congregating in great numbers at the university of Wilna, had established many of these, amongst which the public society of the "Illuminati," and the two secret orders of the Philaretes and Philomates.

Though these three societies were dissolved as soon as strictly prohibited by ukase, the mania of forming secret associations spread amongst the juvenile members of the community, and school-boys of twelve and fourteen years of age entered

into conspiracies to uphold the threatened nationality of Poland by their literary efforts.

Alexander, who had encouraged secret societies, who had used his best endeavours to keep alive the nationality of Poland, and who had spontaneously declared, on the first establishment of the constitution, in the midst of the Polish diet, that he would unite the Polish provinces of Russia to the kingdom, and that he hoped to extend the benefits of a free government to every portion of the vast dominions he had been called to govern, now allowed Novosiltzof to enter on a career of persecution which, even amidst all the Polish people has since suffered, is still indelible in its recollection.

Not only did Novosiltzoff hunt out and punish all those who had formerly belonged to these associations before they were forbidden, but he adopted the Russian mode of political investigation, by torturing the accused, to elicit the truth; whilst Alexander confirmed their sentences of banishment. Novosiltzoff filled ten monasteries in the city of Vilna alone with youthful students. In every other part of Poland, the prisons were crowded with mere schoolboys. They were tried by courts-martial, and condemned to Siberia or to the mines, to confinement in the casemates of fortresses, or to

do duty in regiments in distant parts of the empire ; and these mere children were sent off in irons by hundreds, amidst the heart-rending lamentations of their relatives. Though since that period such scenes have become common-place, the effect of this persecution has never been forgotten, and is frequently alluded to by the Polish poets.

All the normal schools were abolished. The Emperor Alexander declared by ukase, dated the 14th of August, 1824, that the condemned students had been guilty of high treason, in associating to perpetuate, by means of literature, the nationality of Poland.

From this time forward, the government, as it has ever since continued to do, avowedly identified all studious tendencies, and the spread of all instruction, with disloyalty. Any ardour exhibited in the pursuit of any kind of knowledge, or any habits of application, led directly to suspicion ; and the treatment of every suspected student was nearly as bad as his punishment if proven guilty. Long imprisonment, hunger, cold, and the infliction of the lash were used with so much severity to elicit some avowal, that hundreds sank under this cruel usage.

Thus far, it will be said, the conduct of the

Russian authorities was only a repetition of the unscrupulous and energetic means which have been employed in many previous persecutions, but we have now to notice a diabolical line of policy, which, according to the present value of words, we can only stigmatise as Machiavelian ; but which at a future day will be characterised as Russian.

To the the maxim of "divide and rule," was added that of "corrupt and rule."

The former professors and teachers were gradually removed from the universities and schools, and replaced by men, who appeared to have been chosen to give the Polish youth the example of every kind of dissipation and debauchery. Not only Novosiltzoff himself, but all the authorities to whom the superintendence of instruction was confided, seemed boastful of their crapulous orgies, anxious to propagate their degrading vices. There were no excesses, however morally and physically ruinous, to which the Polish youth were not encouraged to resort, by example, indulgence, and approbation ; whilst all who resisted the pernicious influence, or who sought, however unobtrusively, to pursue their studies, were marked out as objects of persecution.

It would be impossible to believe in the premeditation and cold-blooded execution of such a scheme,

if the evidence of its existence reposed only on the character of Novosiltsof, and of a few of his agents; but from the time of his being dispatched to Vilna this policy became general, and was too openly avowed, too long continued, and too widely attested to admit of a doubt.

Like an over-dose of poison, it failed in the effects it was intended to produce. The odium which attached to the character of these agents, on account of their cruelty, and the sudden deaths and loathsome diseases to which several of them fell victims, made their example serve as a warning instead of inducing imitation.

The university of Vilna had attained to a high reputation under the curatorship of Prince Adam Czartoryski, a warm patron of learning, whose friendship with Alexander had given him the power, as well as the will of conducting to its prosperity. It happened just then to be crowded with many of the men who have since become the most remarkable in Poland.

This episode in the history of the persecutions which Poland has endured, has acquired a great importance, both from this cause and because there began the proscription of knowledge which afterwards extended, and has been since continued

throughout the country. It was here, too, that originated the idea which is so marked a feature in the Polish mind of the present day, and which speaks so cheerfully as to the future prospects of the nation; viz., that it is through the cultivation of knowledge, and the perpetuation of a national spirit in their literature, that its existence can be secured, and its eventual enfranchisement accomplished.

In 1825, Alexander died, after virtually abrogating the constitution of the Polish kingdom. The accession of his brother Nicholas gave rise to a rebellion in several parts of Russia, the mere explosion of a long-brooded conspiracy, of which the reader will find ample details in the first volume of *Revelations of Russia*.

The Russian conspirators having entered into communication with an association of Polish patriots, the reign of Nicholas commenced with a rigid investigation. Seventeen of his Polish subjects, from the Russianised provinces of Poland, were sent to St. Petersburg, and tried by the imperial senate, which condemned them all to Siberia. Eight in the kingdom of Poland were tried by the Polish senate, by whom, under the presidency of the dying Bielinski, they were

acquitted. Four years after their incarceration, and nine months after their acquittal, these men were set at liberty; but the venerable Stanislas Soltyk never rose from his bed after this long confinement.

Nicholas, however, commenced his reign by frankly telling the Poles that they had nothing to expect from him; and indignant at the acquittal of the accused conspirators, and the opposition of the diet, he determined to continue the system of severity to which Alexander had resorted. Constantine was allowed and encouraged to give the full rein to that ferocity which, resembling his father Paul's, like his, can only be attributed to insanity; and the country was exposed besides to all the oppression of a double secret police, each arbitrary in its power, and each mistrustful even of the other. The government, in fact, by its unendurable vexatious policy, fostered the very plots against which its severity was partially directed.

The conspiracy by which it was eventually overturned was so far advanced, that at the coronation of Nicholas at Warsaw, the expedient had been adopted by the conspirators, of freeing their country by the massacre of the imperial family, of which

all the members, as well as nearly every personage of note in the empire, were there assembled, and which defiled unconsciously between the students of the cadet schools, whose muskets were loaded with ball-cartridge, whilst every avenue of escape was occupied by the confederates. At the eleventh hour, a counter-order came from their chiefs, who were unwilling, on due reflection, to sully their cause by such a massacre; and the family of Romanoff was saved.

When the intelligence of the events of the three days of July in the French capital reached St. Petersburg and Warsaw, the hopes of the Poles, and the jealous vigilance of the government were raised to the highest pitch. Nicholas appears just to have determined to open a crusade against the revolutionary tendencies of the west, when surprised by the outbreak of the insurrection of Warsaw. The city rose.

The Grand Duke Constantine, suddenly attacked in his palace of the Belvedere, by a body of the cadet school, had only time to escape to a pavilion tenanted by his duchess, a Polish lady, Jane Grudzinska, whose benevolence had long tempered his violence, and for whom he had repudiated his first wife, and renounced the imperial throne. This retreat appears on her account to have been

respected, and hence Constantine made his way in safety, returning when he had collected a sufficient force to retake possession of it.

The next day, having encamped with eight thousand men under the walls of the city, he was visited in a small inn, in which he had taken up his quarters, by Lubecki, the minister of finance, Prince Adam Czartoryski, Ostrowski, and Joachim Lelewel, the historian.

Lubecki endeavoured to persuade the duke that it was only a popular outbreak, directed against some of the public functionaries; but the sturdy republican, Lelewel, told him bluntly that it was a national revolution. Two days afterwards, the whole kingdom was in a state of insurrection.

The kingdom of Poland, and some portions of the Russo-Polish provinces, having then enjoyed a short respite from the Russian yoke, or exchanged it for the horrors of war, which are everywhere deplorable,—in setting forth their condition under the house of Romanoff, we pass over the period of her revolution, and the two campaigns, of which the fatal termination restored her to the thrall of her oppressor.

We shall only observe, that notwithstanding the dearth of energetic generals to command its armies

and to profit by their intrepidity, the newly recovered independence of the country was lost in the council and the cabinet, not the field.

The stirring, youthful, and democratic, perhaps justly reproach the cautious, conservative, and aristocratic party, with having led to the ruin of the national cause, by neglecting to rouse or succour the Polish provinces without the kingdom. But it should be remembered, that, on the one hand, men were still scared by the recollection of the French revolution, and in the next, shamefully deceived by the diplomacy of the surrounding powers, whose hostility they were unwilling to provoke by any violation of the treaty of Vienna; and by whose promises they were betrayed.

I think it is Louis Bloanc, who says justly, that they fell because they did not believe in the nation; but it is hard to reproach with this error in judgment, those who are expiating it in exile, when experience has taught them to disbelieve in all but their own exertions.

On the re-occupation of Poland by his armies, Nicholas abolished altogether the phantom of a constitution, which so many years previously had been virtually abrogated. He declared himself sovereign by right of conquest. The immediate

severities to which he gave way we shall not record, because of too common occurrence after the suppression of every rebellion.

An ukase, dated the 3rd July, 1834, condemned two hundred and eighty-six persons to capital punishments, who had been put on their trials a year before; pronouncing the same sentence on somewhere about the same number of fugitives.

This judgment was an absurd mockery, intended to deceive Europe. At the lowest computation, *fifty thousand* Poles had already by that time been sent to Siberia. The fate of all these victims generally remains unknown, but the running the gauntlet till death, of some hundreds at Cronstadt, may give some notion of the fate reserved to them.

Nevertheless, it is not with the unmerciful punishment of those who were his avowed enemies, that we shall at present interfere; it is the systematic oppression and punishment of a whole nation, carried to an extent which must defeat any repressive object, and savouring of the most inhuman vindictiveness, that we shall endeavour to stigmatise. Neither does the length of time which has elapsed since the conquest of Poland bring any alleviation of its suffering. There are two remark-

able and indisputable facts, which render the condition of this country more interesting to humanity at large, than any considerations derived either from the iniquity of its first partition, or the vindictive repression of its last attempt at independence ; viz., that in the first place, Poland has been worse treated under Nicholas than at any period of the Russian domination ; and secondly, that his rule, instead of becoming lighter, is growing daily more unendurable.

Setting aside cases of individual cruelty, the massacre of a few hundreds, or the transplantation of some thousands to the most desolating exile—abandoning them, for argument' sake, as sacrificed to the Moloch of necessity, it is to the woes of classes and masses that we would direct the sympathies of the reader.

The twenty millions of Poles, of which between thirteen and fourteen millions may be accounted as under the domination of Russia, are in round numbers divided nearly as follows :—

3 millions of nobles,

4 millions of burgers,

2 millions of Jews,

11 millions of peasants.

Let us first take the nobles, which in the Russian

dominions amount to considerably upwards of two millions, on account of their being in a much larger proportion to the inhabitants than in Russian-Poland.

It will be admitted by the most ardent levellers that a class of such numerical extent acquires, from that circumstance alone, an importance impossible to deny.

The Polish nobility is descended no doubt originally from a conquering race, so ancient that it probably belongs to a period antecedent to the diffusion of patents and diplomas, and in some of its most esteemed families is enjoyed by prescription. Amongst this people (as amongst the Spartans and Athenians) has always subsisted the principle of republican equality, though as with them, not extended to the people they had subdued. Through every change of fortune, this nobility continued inalienable; and the great majority of it had become so far reduced in circumstances, or had multiplied so much beyond its resources, that its members had become small farmers, noble peasants, or labourers.

Under the Russian domination, they had been divided into seven categories, or classes. To these, according to the number of proofs and documents they could furnish, they were adjudged to belong.

The qualification required for the first class was such as very few could unite ; the next afforded greater facilities, and in the seventh were comprehended all those which had no written documents whatever to show, but who, on the oath of twelve registered noblemen, that they belonged to the body, were themselves enregistered. This seventh class alone united, therefore, many times more members than the other six, the sixth far more so than the fifth, and so on in succession.

By one of those sweeping ukases in which Nicholas is so fond of indulging, which affect the vital interests of hundreds of thousands, and of which we have no examples out of oriental despotisms, he abolished the privileges of four out of seven classes, at a single stroke of the pen.

If this had been the simple abolition of a right, or a pre-eminence exercised at the expense of other classes, although enjoyed from time immemorial, the injustice of its principle might have been called in question ; but in fact, it reduces the nobleman (who perhaps would have been better designated as a free-man) to the condition of the serf ; that is to say, he is wholly in the power of any Russian police official. One of those men who will extort bribes of half-pence, and make

arrangements with the lowest thieves, has the discretionary power of inflicting corporal punishment on him, at any time, without being amenable to blame or punishment.

The privilege of nobility in Poland, as in Russia, exempts from corporal punishments,—theoretically, in every case,—practically, always until condemnation and degradation, unless for political offences; for it is then unscrupulously used, not only as a means of punishment, but for extorting evidence, and confession of the truth.

Furthermore, occasional ukases direct that all such ex-nobles as have no lands, shall be forcedly removed to colonise the interior of Russia, or be incorporated with the Cossacks of the lines of the Caucasus, or enrolled in the the troops of the line.

Forty-five thousand families were thus removed by one ukase. The remainder continue entirely at the mercy of the authorities. In the most legitimate exercise of their functions, according to the instructions given them, when any proprietor of a small property dies, and his property comes to be divided between several children, they may seize sons for soldiers. Now it must not be forgotten that the disgrace and hardship of the soldier's

life in Russia, are such, that degradation to the ranks is considered as a punishment only inferior to the capital punishment of exile to Siberia.

Not only, therefore, has a great majority of the nobility been deprived of its privileges, and rendered liable to every indignity and humiliation, but poverty leads at once to exile ; and this qualification of poverty the government has done its best to secure to them, by the most extensive confiscation of individual property which has occurred within many centuries, if we except the period of the French revolution.

A list of upwards of ten thousand estates confiscated, has appeared in the public documents ; and as this proscription has fallen heavy on the wealthier proprietors, they are supposed at the lowest computation to amount in value to sixty millions sterling, whilst others rate them at nearly the double.

If we now turn to the burger class, it may be sufficient to state, that as far as their trade is concerned, they are exposed to more vexatious grievances than in an earlier part of this chapter they have been described as liable to, during the last year of Alexander's reign. As to their civil rights, the equality in the eye of the law, which Napoleon

had established, and Alexander solemnly confirmed, has been abolished. There remain the Hebrews and the peasantry. The great bulk of the Jewish people still inhabits Poland, which first offered the example of civil toleration, afterwards followed by Holland and Great Britain. It is true that in these latter countries there has succeeded a toleration of opinion, which has never yet arisen in Poland. Nevertheless, though the Hebrews had not been admitted to the full rights of citizenship, they had, on the other hand, hitherto been exempted from one of the most onerous of its charges—one which their prejudices rendered peculiarly odious—the military service. The Emperor Nicholas, distinguished by his strong personal antipathy to this people, has vigorously submitted them to the conscription, making the parents responsible in their persons and property for the appearance of the children—not only without conferring on them any equivalent rights, but exercising towards them a wholesale violence, such as the utmost rigour of Mahomedan despotism has never displayed in its most virulent prejudice.

Unable to stop the smuggling in the frontier governments, chiefly on account of the gross venality and collusion of his own agents, he fell, as

is well known, on the expedient of simultaneously transplanting into the interior of Russia a hundred thousand families. Those who could not get rid of their property within a given space of time, (which how should they do where all were sellers?) were to leave it in the care of the police, *to dispose of for them*. For all who have ever been in Russia, and know that the name of every branch of the police is synonymous with the utmost depravity, and the most flagrant dishonesty, there is an appearance of the most cynical derision in such a proposition. A stranger might as well confide his watch and purse to the swell-mob in London.

The next imperial interference with the Jews was to prohibit, under the penalty of a fine, the wearing the distinctive costume and beard which they have learned to consider as symbolical of the faith they profess, and to which previous ukases had, under other penalties, confined them. It may be imagined what a means of extortion this prohibition proves to the police, who have the charge of enforcing it.

There remains to consider the condition of the peasantry. In the Russo-Polish provinces,—that is to say, in those incorporated in the Russian em-

pire,—they continue in the slavery from which Alexander in 1818 forbade their masters to emancipate them. In the kingdom of Poland, where six-and-twenty years previously they had been enfranchised for ever by Napoleon, by the first article of the constitution of the grand duchy of Warsaw, which decreed equality in the eye of the law, Nicholas, the signer of treaties for the suppression of the slave-trade, in 1833, reduced them by ukase again virtually to the condition of serfs. It is meant here literally of serfs,—that is to say, to a state of servitude as it has existed in Poland, not to the absolute slavery of Russia, where practically a peasant is gambled away at cards, and transferred like a horse.

On the other hand, however, the Polish peasant is far more oppressed by the government authorities than even the Russian. For him there is no possible redress against the lowest and the meanest of his tyrants, because even his lord is divested of all interest. On a market-day, for instance, the fruits of his produce are unblushingly confiscated by anything that wears a Russian uniform. His best poultry is seized under the pretext that it is diseased,—his finest fruit and vegetables because unripe; and if he ventures one single murmur, he is pressed into

the public service, to work at paving or sweeping the streets for several days ; leaving the remainder of his goods at the mercy of the police.

Having taken the chief classes of the Polish nation separately, to show that in the midst of its oppression, there has not been one which has benefitted by the sufferings of the other, let us now consider the conduct of the emperor towards them collectively.

In the first place, every effort is made at keeping under, and reducing the population. Every year a larger number of Poles, under different pretexts, are directed across the frontier.

No Pole, without a special permission, is permitted to marry before the age of thirty.

We have already seen that the nobility, deprived of their privileges by the sweeping ukase which abolished four out of the seven classes, may, at the discretion of the authorities, wherever destitute of competent property, be sent into the colonies, or incorporated in the Cossacks and the line.

An ukase, dated 1832, authorised the police to seize all children who were orphans, or the offspring of poor persons, to internate them into Russia, and bring them up in the Greek religion. In two

days, seven hundred were sent off to Warsaw, amidst the despair and imprecations of their parents, who followed till exhaustion obliged them to abandon the convoy.

The children of all those who had fought in the Polish armies were subjected to the same fate, and it is calculated that some thousands of those belonging to individuals who were obnoxious to the government, were seized in the bosoms of their families in a like manner.

Soon after this, a diabolical means was resorted to, of saving the police trouble, which, till known, was used throughout the country, particularly in the large towns.

Scarcity and famine, which embarrass other governments, proved a useful auxilliary to the Russian; and charity was used as the lure to reach its victims. The police declared that they were to draw up lists of the indigent, for the purpose of affording them relief in food, and remitting their burthens. All who were in that condition were invited to declare it. As soon as the lists appeared completed, the police, condemning the applicants on their own showing, relieved them indeed,—but it was of their children, who were thus collected without trouble. When this experiment was exhausted,

razzias were made in all the parochial schools of the large towns,—even in those of charitable institutions, the schools for the soldiers' children, and the foundling hospitals.

This constant drain of the inhabitants, but especially of the youth of the country, proceeds augmenting systematically. A larger number were transplanted in 1843 than in 1842, and a larger number in 1844 than in 1843. It is in pursuance of a plan for transplanting, as far as possible, the Polish population, and dispersing it over Russia. Of these children it is calculated that more than one-third never reach the place of their destination. In 1832 and 1833, before this service was organised, those that fell from exhaustion were abandoned by the road-side, with a few pounds of black bread beside them; and the number confided to the escort was recruited farther on.

All political conversation is forbidden. Even in the highest schools, it is not allowed to mention either the former or the last French revolution; they are called political changes, and *General Buonaparte* is represented as fighting under the orders of the Bourbons.

The proclamation of the vice-governor of Vilna, Doppelmeyer, says :—

“His excellency, the governor, having judged it necessary to prosecute and banish all those who become dangerous by spreading intelligence or opinions hurtful to the state, has ordered me to announce to all the authorities, that it is most essentially their duty to exercise a vigilant *surveillance* over all those under their orders, not only as regards their public or private life, but as to their connections of family and friendship. Those presiding over every branch of authority, in addressing to me such accounts as are founded on *simple conjecture*, are hereby directed to enlighten me by appending their opinions and observations on the case, so that, according to the degree of culpability of the accused, they may be either suspended in the exercise of their functions, or dismissed, tried, or merely placed under the surveillance of the police, arrested or shut up in fortresses, internated in a remote district of Russia, or sent to Siberia.

“If his excellency, the governor-general, should chance to become acquainted with the want of zeal, with the rash political judgments, or with the suspicious conduct either of a citizen or functionary, in such a case, the superiors of the accused parties, and those presiding over the branches of authority whose duty it is to look to these matters, will be severely

taken to task as to the reasons which have prevented them from hitherto reporting on such a personage. They will be removed from their respective situations, as incapable of fulfilling them, and will afterwards be made to undergo an exemplary punishment proportioned to the degree of culpability of the accused. These rules relate equally to Polish citizens, proprietors, and gentlemen."

The most barbarous and unjustifiable acts of the Russian government are commonly glossed over by the most specious pretences; it is therefore the contrary of those countries in which the bark of authority is worse than its bite; and yet, in the above public document, the principle is avowed of condemning the accused on conjecture; and the violation of all ties of blood and friendship, for the purpose of denouncing venal offences to the severest punishment, is not only openly enjoined, but enforced by the most stringent penalties. It is plain that there is danger for the authorities in not accusing on the faintest suspicion, whilst there is none in any number of groundless accusations.

Let it now be remembered, that the trial of the accused, unless by court-martial, is scarcely ever terminated before the expiration of one year, and frequently lasts four; and that for political offences,

corporal punishment is habitually resorted to, to extort the confession of the accused where evidence cannot be procured.

Let us now turn to the chapter of religious persecution. During the Polish struggle for independence, Pope Gregory the Sixteenth, losing sight of the interests and dignity of the pontiff in the anxieties of the petty prince of a turbulent domain, was induced by the representation and promises of Gargarin, the Russian ambassador, to disapprove of the revolution. Unmindful of the fact, that one of his predecessors (Paul) had said that each handful of the soil of Poland was a holy relic, because soaked in the blood of martyrs for their faith and their country; and that Clement the Thirteenth declared, while bestowing a benediction on the Polish nation, that the Catholic religion depended mainly for its security and its maintenance upon the preservation of the political existence of Poland, he issued an encyclical brief, dated the 9th of June, in which he summarily stigmatised the Polish patriots as evil-minded, enjoined the clergy to preach zealously, and to propagate the principles of submission amongst the people to their lawful sovereign, and closed with holding out to them the prospect that "your magnanimous emperor will

show you his clemency, and will listen to our representations and requests, to the manifest advantage of our Catholic religion, *which he has promised at all times to protect.*"

No sooner was the authority of Nicholas re-established in Poland, than he kept his promise, by setting on foot a system of persecution which gradually increased in intensity, till, in 1839, it was undertaken on a scale of unprecedented magnitude and severity. He determined forcibly to incorporate the United-Greeks, or Basilians, (that is to say, Roman Catholics to whom the papal see had allowed the marriage of the priesthood and other of the usages and ritual of the Eastern Church,) numbering three millions in his dominions, with the Russian Church.

Colonel Szyrma, to whose able exposition of the persecutive policy of the cabinet of St. Petersburg the reader is referred, observes very judiciously, that "the weakening of the papal power by the pope's own act, on the minds of the Poles, could not fail to prove highly injurious to his spiritual authority in Poland; it slackened the bonds of allegiance to Rome amongst the clergy, hitherto orthodox and obedient, and brought on apostacies amongst numbers of them; especially among those high prelates who had come in contact with the pope's new ally, the Tsar."

At the very moment that with fresh duplicity, Nicholas, by the hands of his son the Tsarevitch, was presenting to the pope a letter wherein he assured him of his supremest protection of the Roman Catholics in the empire, of the respect he bore for their conscience, and of his care for their welfare and peace, he had gained over their bishops to the dominant Russian church.

“They had finished,” says Szyrma, “by signing an act of union on the 12th of February, 1839, for themselves and for the dioceses entrusted to their care. At once, 13,000 priests (contained in them) were forced to abjure Roman Catholicism, and conform to the new ritual presented to them by their bishops. In most of the parishes a strong opposition was offered by the clergy, but all in vain; the recusant priests were expelled their parishes, and deprived of their livings; many were sent off to schismatic monasteries, and there incarcerated, with no food but bread and water; some had even that denied them, but remained in cold, damp dungeons, with starvation and death staring them in the face. Aged, venerable deans and canons were clad in clothes worn by menials, and obliged to do the lowest work of servants, and to eat with them at the same table. Many were thus brought to the

threshold of death, and wished for death ; but no consolation of religion was allowed them. Through the walls of their dungeon they confessed to each other, imparted religious comfort and blessings ; but when detected at this work of their faith, they were severely punished,—commonly flogged, and pitiably lacerated. Amongst these tortures, an aged abbot of eighty expired, and a venerable dean of seventy-one years of age died of sorrow and affliction.

“ Up to the 6th of January, 170 of this clergy had fallen victims of this cruel and inhuman treatment. The younger portion who would not turn schismatics, had their heads shaved, and were sent as recruits to the Caucasian army.

“ Trynkowski, the celebrated preacher, lost his senses, in consequence of the atrocious treatment he experienced at the hands of the governor of Wilna. Another, the dean Onacewich, persevered unaltered in his faith—unshaken by either the threats of Mouravief, governor of Grodno, or the penalties inflicted on him by his superiors ; and amid these feelings his end approached ; from his death-bed he cited the apostates and his tormentors to appear before the judgment-seat of God.

Besides the 170 victims recorded as having

amongst this clergy sunk beneath the persecution in Poland, the proportion of those who perish on the road to the place of their destination is very large, and their children are forced to embrace the Russo-Greek faith, (for marriage is allowed by the Church of Rome to the United-Greeks, or Basilian priests,) as in the case of Michael Wierzbicki, who expired on the road to Siberia. Of the few who reach the term of their long journey, the fate remains generally unknown; but it may be judged by one of the few instances in which any tidings ever reach their native country. The friar Sierocinski, exiled to Siberia because he would not imitate the apostacy of his bishop, was recently knouted to death at Tobolsk, when detected in secretly administering the sacrament to his fellow prisoners.

As to the congregations of these priests, the most shameless and cruel measures were adopted to force them to conform to the new faith.

The Emperor Nicholas, who at the close of the revolution, published a free pardon, with certain exceptions, to all who should return to their homes within a given time, expressing their contrition,—by a letter dated 6th of April 1832, instructed the

governor of Podolia to transport into Russia those who, trusting in his promise, had submitted.

But though so merciless towards those whom he had ranked in the class of most venial political offenders, and had allured into his power by solemn assurances of forgiveness, he offers by an ukase of the 2nd of January, 1839, *an absolute pardon to all Roman Catholics condemned for murder or theft to capital punishments, on condition of embracing the Greek faith.*

The peasantry were promised their freedom on the condition of apostacy ; and a period of famine was taken advantage of, to offer them flour on the condition of their making three crosses on a register, to acknowledge its receipt. This register contained a general recantation, to which their mark was thus surreptitiously obtained ; but as after this they were, by the terms of the ukase, considered as belonging to the Russo-Greek Church, from which any departure is capitally punished, they were thus utterly at the mercy of the authorities. In some places whole villages were driven into baths and barns, where they were smoked by lighted straw till they yielded.

A commission, composed of government agents and apostate priests, summoned the inhabitants of

the village of Worodzkof to appear before them, where they were sitting, about sixteen miles off. When before the commission they refused to sign their adherence to the new faith, they were ironed, thrown into baths filled with a fetid smoke, but without fire, in the severest weather. Here they were kept several days, without food, beaten and ill-treated, and being constantly informed that they would be sent to Witepsk, to be capitally punished. When many of them had fallen ill, they were forced to sign their adhesion; but immediately on their return exposed these facts in a petition signed by sixty-four of their number, nobles and peasants; but met with no redress; they were considered as irrevocably orthodox.

In one place, some hundreds of the peasantry having obstinately taken refuge on a frozen pond, the soldiers accompanying the Russian missions were directed to break the ice, and the unyielding wretches perished wholesale.

It was very rarely that the Emperor took any notice of the numerous petitions by which the sufferers assailed him; when he did so, it was in the spirit of his answer to the appeal made to him by a hundred and twenty ecclesiastics, which he

transmitted to their apostate bishop, with his command that he would severely punish their insubordination.

“To debar the new converts from any consolation, or return to their former religion,” in the words of Szyrma, “Roman Catholic priests are forbidden, under the severest pains and penalties, to admit to confession, or to administer sacraments to any unknown person, or to persons from other parishes, even in case of the former being on their death-bed, except on production of a certificate from local authorities.”

Against apostates, an ukase of the 21st of March, 1840, declares, besides the punishment already provided by law, that “their real, and all other property shall be confiscated; they cannot employ any orthodox peasantry, nor sojourn where orthodox people live. Their children shall be taken from them, and brought up in the orthodox church. The crime of apostacy shall not be confined to a moment, nor is it transitory, but permanent and continuous, until the apostate shall have returned to the orthodox church.”

“The conduct of the government towards the poor and simple-minded peasantry,” continues Szyrma, “was not less cruel than treacherous, and marked throughout with deceit. Entire parishes

were ordered to repair at one time to a fixed place, where commonly a Russian functionary, with a Greek priest, was awaiting, who presented them the cross to kiss, with the assurance that by the performance of that mere act of devotion, they were bound to nothing. A book was, however, kept in readiness, and whoever had kissed the cross was entered in it, and henceforth considered as a convert to the dominant church. On these occasions, no sermons, no words of persuasion were directed to the intended proselytes; but corn-brandy was liberally distributed to intoxicate them."

These religious recruits, whether drunk or sober, were as much bound as the clod who has received the queen's shilling from the recruiting sergeant.

By similar means, two millions of proselytes were enregistered as having accepted the Russo-Greek faith. Deprived of their own priests, and forced to attend the Greek service, these unfortunates meet by stealth in the woods and marshes. Whole congregations, after receiving the communion-bread, which they dare not refuse, keep it in their mouths without swallowing, to spit it out afterwards with horror. When Nicholas had produced this desired result he caused a medal to be struck, recording, in a simple and pathetic inscription, the incorporation of the United-Greeks with the orthodox church.

It ran as follows :—“ Separated by violence in 1596, *re-united by love* in 1839.”

Whilst these volumes are going through the press, a paragraph copied from the *Constitutionnel* has gone the round of most of the London papers, announcing the arrival in Paris of a nun, one of the few survivors of a Roman Catholic convent in Poland, whose remaining community had perished the victims of a persecution so atrocious, that two or three years ago it would have appeared absurdly incredible ; and even with all that has come to the author's knowledge of the barbarous rigour of the Russian government, he could not bring himself to believe it till due inquiry authenticated the horrible details, which at the close of the work will probably be given to the public.

The facts are briefly as follows. Thirty Roman Catholic nuns, living in the diocese of one of the apostate Basilian bishops, refused to embrace the Greek faith. They were seized, bound, driven before the whips of the Cossacs, and finally imprisoned in Greek convents. Here they were obliged to perform the most menial offices, starved, fed on salt food, and then given vinegar to assuage their thirst, and lastly flogged every third day. Twenty-three out of thirty expired in this manner

one of the number having her eyes literally torn out by the lash. The superior, one of the seven survivors spared by the pity of their executioners, is still at this moment in Paris, recruiting her strength in the convent of the Assumption, *impasse des vignes rue des postes*, before proceeding to Rome, where she has been called by the Pope. The reader should be informed, and bear in mind, that a rare chance revealed to the world this execrable barbarity. At the time that these harmless and helpless women were undergoing the first part of their inhuman and protracted martyrdom, the Emperor Nicholas, the author of this diabolic persecution, was received with welcome on our English shores ; and his apologists should blush to remember, that whilst defending him, these poor females (and heaven knows how many more) were expiring in the most cruel tortures, mere units in the multitude of victims sacrificed to uphold a system which is not even intended to benefit one nation at the cost of another's suffering, but solely to further the interests of one family,—the family of Romanoff, in which the father has murdered the son, the wife her husband, and the son even in the present generation connived at the assassination of the father.

It should be remembered, too, that this persecution does not originate with the Greek church of Russia, which left to its own impulses is one of the most apathetically indifferent to the conversion of the heterodox, but in the deliberate policy of its temporal head the emperor ; and that not only it could never have taken place without his knowledge, concurrence, and permission ; but that he must have sanctioned these as well as a host of such barbarities, if not by individual specification, by the general orders issued in such cases to the trembling subordinates of the church which he presides.

Such persecution, and such a state of things, which is not a matter of past history, but of present, hourly, and painful continuance, would have led to plots and conspiracies in any country. Poland is so rife with them, that it may be considered as a volcano threatening hourly an irruption. Where detected by the authorities, so numerous are they, that the detection of one or several of them answers no real purpose ; whilst, on the other hand, what the corrupt officials cannot unravel, they invent, to prove their zeal to their superiors, who are aware that the storm is gathering somewhere.

In the month of August of last year, twenty-one conspirators were condemned to Siberia ; in October,

eighty-two ; and shortly after, an attempt was made to murder the police-master of Warsaw. Many arrestations were made ; the accused were tortured in many ways, especially by giving them nothing but salted food, without water. Several were condemned to be knouted, and all died under the infliction ; the executioner continuing to strike the dead bodies. Let us close this chapter of horrors ; it may suffice to show that the Poles, without being turbulent, dissatisfied, or unruly, would be unworthy of the respect of Englishmen, if all their thoughts and energies were not directed to overthrow a domination of which they have had such terrible experience, and which still weighs like a fearful nightmare on their country.

There lives, in the very midst of our European civilisation, a class of men towards whom all eyes are turned in Poland, the representatives of its imperishable nationality,—I mean the emigrants, the last relic of the gallant defenders of its independence, whose numbers are constantly recruited in their exile by all who can deceive the Russian vigilance, and share their honourable proscription.

This body, in which every shade of political opinion is represented, from the constitutionally monarchic and highly conservative party of Czar-

toryski, to the republicanism of Lelewel, and the democratic principles of the Democratic Society, is some day destined to play so prominent a part in the east of Europe, that it is worthy alike by its antecedents, and its future prospects, of our more intimate acquaintance. For this purpose a special chapter will be devoted, by one, who, in considering its subdivisions, has no partialities for any of the parties which they represent, but for whom they derive in common their interest as forming part of a whole, united in views and opinions on the two most important points connected with the future destiny of Poland: that is to say, in their determination to achieve at any cost the independence of their country, and the enfranchisement of the peasantry throughout its whole extent.

CHAPTER VI.

THE POLISH EMIGRATION.

Former Emigration—Celebrities of the present Parties, into which divided—The *united Emigration*, presided by Joachim Lelewel—His Character and Writings—Royalist Party—Czartoryski Family; Prince Adam Czartoryski; His Claims, followers, and prospects—The Democratic Society—The Religious Party—Association of Polish Priests for the Reformation of the Polish Clergy.

AFTER the capture of Warsaw, and the occupation of the remainder of the kingdom of Poland by the Russians, above seventy thousand Poles were, at different points, driven across the frontier into the Prussian and Austrian territories. Of these, about 8,000 only succeeded in making their way westward; the rest being under different pretexts given up to Russia.

These who found refuge in the constitutional countries of western Europe, since reduced during thirteen years of exile to six thousand, now form the Polish emigration, towards which the eyes of the whole Polish people are turned, with hope and admiration.

Young men who can elude the vigilance of the Russian authorities constantly escape, to join and identify themselves with this band, whom the

opinion of their countrymen exalts as heroes and as martyrs. It should be remembered, that in Poland very different associations are connected with the name of emigration, to those which attach to it in the west. This appellation has not there been discredited by its application to a profligate nobility, abandoning without a struggle, the contest of most vital importance to their country, or profiting by its disasters to return with feelings, notions, and ideas which had become as obsolete as their knee-buckles, three-cornered hats, and queues; neither, by the appearance under such circumstances of the mere wanton and unquiet spirits of a country, driven by partial grievances to a reckless love of inconsiderate and destructive change.

Since its first partition, fifty years since, Poland has been accustomed to see all her most illustrious citizens in that condition: Kosciusko and Niemcewicz, then the first of Polish poets; Killinski the patriotic shoe-maker, side by side with the princely Potockis, only left their captivity to join the emigration.

Dombrowski, as an emigrant, had formed abroad the celebrated Polish legions, the sword of the Cisalpine republic. When the French were driven from Italy by Suwarrow, three thousand of their number

fell at the battle of the Trebia alone. Dombrowski, with the wreck of the Cisalpine legions, then began forming those which in the service of Napoleon played so distinguished a part in all his battles. After an exile of ten years, during which the Polish people had seen with pride the names of the emigrants gloriously cited in so many lands, and on so many battle-fields, they had returned to their own country as the victorious vanguard of the army which drove out the Russians to establish the grand duchy of Warsaw.

Kosciusko, whose sagacity led him to mistrust alike the intentions of Napoleon and of Alexander, died as an emigrant.

The present emigration itself contains every kind of illustration. The veteran Malachowski, and the venerable Niemcewicz, the friend and companion of Kosciusko, who recently died like him in a strange land, gave it the sanction of their historic names. Niemcewicz, the most celebrated Polish poet of the classic school, Mitzkiavitch (Mickiewicz), the greatest of the modern; and Lelewel, the first of Polish historians, besides many other distinguished writers,—so brilliantly represent its intellect, that three-fourths of the glories of the whole national literature are owing to men in the ranks of the present emigration. Abstracted and industrious

antiquarians join in it with veteran commanders, —old men averse to change, with the young and the hot-blooded. The austere Lelewel, the model of republican simplicity, is involved in a common exile with Adam Czartoryski, the intimate friend of princes, the munificent patron of learning, allied by blood to royal and reigning houses.

On the one hand, no set of men proscribed have ever so much distinguished themselves as this body; and on the other, all things considered, none have ever conducted themselves more creditably in the painful circumstances in which they have been placed. Observing a proper medium between the conduct of the French and of the Spanish emigrants, they have neither shown in misfortune the want of dignity of the former, nor the stolid pride which so often prevents the latter from seeking useful occupation. As a mass, they seem imbued with the idea of gleaning from the science and civilisation of the West, all that may be subsequently profitable to their country.

In proof of the intellectual tendency, which they regard with reason as the great antidote to the brute force which has subdued their independence, it may suffice to state that in France alone eleven newspapers are published in the Polish language, and exclusively supported by the Poles.

Wherever they establish themselves in any numbers, in the midst of all the difficulties of their position, they speedily manage to collect separate libraries for the use of those of different opinions. For instance, in Paris, where about seven hundred of the Poles inhabit, they have two public libraries, one of which contains twenty thousand volumes.

Though divided into several political parties, they are so unanimous in their confidence of returning to Poland, that although the United States offer them a refuge in which besides political hospitality they might find profitable employment, in many ways unattainable in Europe, still, so great is to them the draw-back of increased distance from Poland, that only about two hundred have repaired thither.

As regards their place of sojourn, about six hundred of these emigrants inhabit England. The facilities which their knowledge of the French language affords, and the great analogy of habits between the French and the higher classes of the Polish people, to say nothing of their frequent political and military association during the present century, have all concurred to lead the great majority to take up their residence in France, where they are computed to number upwards of five thousand.

They are, as regards political opinions, divided into four principal parties, which it is said may be numerically reckoned nearly as follows: The "*United Emigration*," under the presidency of Lelewel, 2,600; the Royalist party, presided by Czartoryski, about 700; the Democratic party, 1,000; the Theocratic party, about 50. Let us begin with the party which styles itself the— "*United Emigration*," represented by a council of eight members, under the presidency of Joachim Lelewel.

Lelewel, who had acquired a European celebrity as an antiquarian and historian, became equally renowned in Poland by his firmness as a patriot. Originally a professor at the university of Vilna, he perhaps owed his first popularity to the persecution which his uncompromising principles had drawn upon him from the Russian authorities, which led to his expulsion from his chair. The poet Mitzkiavitch, addressing him in an ode as his instructor, alludes to this circumstance.*

* The following are a few of the works of Lelewel:—Geographical and Historic Sketches.—Discoveries of the Greeks and Carthaginians on the Atlantic.—Pytheas of Marseilles, and the Discoveries of his Time.—Historic Essay on Polish Civil and Criminal Legislation.—The early Historians of Poland.—Remarks on the Polish Historian Matthew.—Parallel between

Retiring to Warsaw, he was nominated nuncio, or member of the diet, and appointed chairman to one of its committees. On the outbreak of the revolution, Lubecki, the minister of finance, (devoted to the Russians,) finding that the council of administration, which he presided, was losing all credit, called to it Lelewel and two other popular members.

On the day following the expulsion of the Grand Duke Constantine from the capital, he went in that capacity with Lubecki, Prince Adam Czartoryski, and Ostrowski, to visit the grand duke without the walls of the city, in the small inn of Vierzbna, in which he had taken up his quarters. Interrupting his courtier-like or temporising colleagues, he was the first bluntly to announce to the tyrannic viceroy, that his reign was at an end, and that the country was determined to throw off the yoke of Russia. This assurance decided Constantine to retire. The same night Lelewel,

Spain and Poland in the 16th, 17th, and 18th Centuries.—
Analysis of the Polish Constitutions of 1791, 1807, and 1815.—
The Reign of Stanislaus Augustus.—Novosiltzof at Vilna —
Diplomatic Interview between several Members of the Provisional
Government and the Grand Duke Constantine.—History of
Poland.—Numismatique du Moyen-Age.—Elements du type
Gaulois et Celtique.—Baudulfus of Autun.—Coins of the Mero-
viginans, and of the Visigoth King Swintilla.—Numismatic and
Archæologic Studies.

with Prince Adam Czartoryski and Dembinski. formed themselves into a provisional government, in which they called on Niemcewicz, Pac, Ostrowski, and Prince Radzivil to take part.

When it was afterwards decided by the diet that Poland should be a constitutional monarchy, five individuals were chosen jointly to represent, under the title of national government, the sovereign afterwards to be elected. As it was deemed most fitting to select men of all parties, Lelewel was chosen as the mouth-piece of the republicans.

It may sound strangely enough to hear of a republican of rigid principles, representing a monarch; but the Polish republic was always presided by a king, though far more limited in his power than the executive chief of the United States.

Lelewel's party was in diametric opposition to what has been termed the Diplomatic party; that is to say, to those who, deceived by the example of Belgium, hoped for the establishment and protection of the national independence from the hands of the great powers. Unwilling to irritate them, by giving any sign of revolutionary propagandism, they used all their efforts to confine the revolution to four or five millions, instead of seeking to spread it

amongst twenty. The same feeling led them to neglect resorting to the most powerful means of moving these formidable masses, that of proclaiming the freedom of the serfs in the Polish provinces incorporated with the Russian empire. It is well known that the Diplomatic, unhappily for the fate of Poland, triumphed over the Movement party. It has since been the first to acknowledge its error ; and if all things are taken into consideration, it must be admitted that the alternative offered to a Polish politician during the last revolution, was one of singular difficulty.

It was necessary either to conciliate the great powers, to quiet the fear they entertained of revolutionary tendencies, and to interest their jealousy and their cupidity,—or else to rouse the whole Polish people to a war to the knife against three powerful states at once, between which it was divided. The futility of the former line of policy had not then been proved by the event, and whilst all intermediate course was clearly useless, the alternative appeared to entail so fearful a responsibility, that it cannot be wondered at, how so large majority should have hesitated to incur it, particularly when still under the impression then prevalent, of seeing re-enacted the horrors of the French revolution.

The country was in a crisis from which only the boldest measures could have extricated it, and all the most experienced men were wanting in that requisite daring.

As for Lelewel, placed at the head of a party by the respect which his learning, his virtues, and his undaunted civil courage inspired, he proved himself evidently unfitted to lead it. His talents were those least calculated for action,—his knowledge was rather the lore of the past than an acquaintance with men and things of the present day ; and full himself of uncompromising integrity—somewhat mixed with the pedantry of the schoolman—he was unable to struggle with the cabals of faction, or to disentangle the good and evil which he found in men and measures. He might be compared to an antique patriot, calculated to shine in a Roman senate,—such as Roman patriots and senates appear in the pages of their historians, and through the long vista of centuries—suddenly transported into a modern constitutional assembly. He proved to be right in his views, but the opinions of such a man did not inspire the confidence which might have attended those of a more stirring and successful party leader, divested of his integrity, his talents, and antecedents.

It will, however, readily be understood, that Lelewel should have censured with natural bitterness those who compromised the fate of the country, by following a course diametrically opposed to that which he so strenuously advocated, and that the "diplomatic party" should feel the aggravation of failure increased by the reproaches of a man whom they looked upon as a pedagogic theorist. On this account, it is equally difficult to derive correct impressions, either of Lelewel from the accounts of the royalist party, or of the conduct of the latter from the pages of Lelewel.

After the suppression of the Polish revolution, Lelewel was placed nominally at the head of a party, the most numerous and the most comprehensive in the emigration. I say nominally, because, though perhaps the majority of his followers may entertain little confidence in his fitness as a leader, the name of this man, "*sans peur et sans reproche*," has been adopted, both as an honourable banner, and as a tribute justly due to his reputation and his services. In this respect, though no two men can offer greater differences of intellect and character, Lelewel may be compared to Lafayette.

The opinions of Lelewel, uncompromising and extreme as they may at first appear, in reality

serve as a point of union for many others, and hence the united emigration receives constant accessions to its numbers.

Though a sturdy republican and advocate of equality, the spirit of the antiquarian, who has lived chiefly in the past, preserves him from the tendencies of the leveller and experimental innovator. Wherever change is necessary, he loves rather to return to any means which can be drawn or compounded from the usages of by-gone times, than to venture on the untried and new. On this account, his veneration for all that is time-honoured, so that it be not radically bad, leads him to a toleration incomprehensible to the fiery school of French republicanism, bent on beginning everything anew ; which, confounding liberty and equality, and sacrificing the former to the latter, has never yet succeeded in attaining any great degree of practical freedom, when the opportunity has been afforded of realising its theories, abstractedly so unlimited.

Lelewel would be content to let anything stand, so that it was not in the way of the interests or the liberties of the citizens ; and his aim is the just one, of raising up the oppressed to the level of the favoured classes, instead of pulling down the favoured to the level of the oppressed.

His policy is too starched, unyielding, and artless,—he is too incapable both from principle and by disposition of bending to circumstances, and profiting by them, to render his means of action efficient ; but though his immediate views may be prejudiced and narrow, the general principles which he advocates, and the end towards which they tend are wide, comprehensive, and full of truth. He will not consent to the egotistical idea of the enfranchisement of any part of the Polish nation at the sacrifice of the remainder. He will not confine his views to Poland alone, nor secure its independence by rousing its Roman Catholic feeling to religious antagonism with its Slavonic brethren of the Greek persuasion. He will not, in his patriotism, neglect the fraternity either of the whole Slavonic family between itself, or of all nations betwixt each other. Throughout Poland, not only the enfranchisement of the serfs, but their endowment with lands, is a *sine qua non* of the principles of his party.

These opinions, professed in it, have exercised a most salutary influence on the whole emigration ; and whilst on the one hand it may be regretted that any differences should have existed in it, on the other, these have led to discussion, which has rendered the truth on certain points obvious to every

party ; as, for instance, in the last-named question, of which the importance may be judged from the fact, that it identifies with the cause of national independence, eleven millions of peasants, by the strongest of human incentives, that of becoming from the bondsmen of the soil its free proprietors.

The general tenor of these volumes, by pointing out to the reader the present spirit of so many millions of the Slavonic race, will explain the diversion which may be expected in the struggle on which Poland will sooner or later be called to enter, and the benefit which may hence accrue to her from evincing a feeling of fraternisation with the Slavonians, instead of confining the popular sympathies within the narrow pale of religious and national exclusion.

Lelewel himself sometimes relates—and the assertion from his lips, for all who are acquainted with his life and character, is the most indisputable authority,—that some time prior to the revolution which expelled the elder branch of the Bourbons from France *** was sent to him by Louis Philippe, then Duke of Orleans, to request his opinion as to the best means of conciliating republican institutions with monarchic forms ; a request to which the historian acceded. Having subsequently taken up his abode in France, he was, at the demand of the

Russian embassy, expelled from the French territory, on account of having appended his name to a protest made by a society which over he presided.

Taking up his wallet and his staff, he quitted Paris on foot, and bent his way towards Belgium. On approaching Lille, he was interrogated by a gendarme, who seeing on his passport the name of Joachim Lelewel, ex-member of the National Government of the Kingdom of Poland, could not believe that the dusty wayfarer before him was that personage, and took him into custody. He was led into the town, where he was speedily identified, and received with due honours by the inhabitants.

Lelewel now lives principally immersed in books. Incorruptible and uncompromising, the austere old man has shown the same dignity and equanimity, living in exile upon tenpence a day, as when the most popular member of the pentarchy, presiding over a nation. A party lives, acts, and thrives under the shadow of his name; and though it is neither probable nor desirable that he will ever be called to play any great political part, his country will some day raise statues to him as the Polish Aristides.

As a specimen of the style of Lelewel, when least severe and erudite ; of his mode of reasoning by facts and figures, and of his opinions, it appears to the author that he cannot do better than subjoin the preface to his "History of the Regeneration of Poland," and the address by which he concludes it.

"Ten years ago, I wrote the history of Poland, addressed to my nephews. At this period my father was still living. He expired at the moment that every Polish heart was beating high with hope, and awakening to life at the outbreak of the last insurrection. Certain companions of my exile tell me, that they have learned from a traveller of the death of one of my nephews some time since. As to the remainder of my relatives, it is I who have ceased to live for them. It would be in vain for me to address, in vain that I should write to them. Neither my words nor writings could reach them. A cruel and powerful master—arrogating to himself possession of the earth they inhabit, of the air they breathe, and of the light and darkness which alternately spreads above them,—guards jealously all avenues to them. All access to them is, therefore, closed against my narration. Nevertheless, my thoughts, inseparably identified with those of my

countrymen who have fallen in the field, who linger in dungeons, or who have sought refuge in strange lands,—revert to the youth of Poland, both to that portion which was of age to take part in the last struggle, and to those on whom the country founds its best hopes as it progresses in the course of its regeneration. No human power can sever this connection of my thoughts.

“ In briefly retracing the history of Poland since its fall, it is therefore to the rising generation that I address myself. Without knowing how, I feel convinced that somehow these pages will eventually reach it. Beloved children of my hapless country ! I feel that my thoughts will become engraven on your memories, identified with your feelings ; to you therefore I speak.

“ The following picture of the Regeneration of Poland is only a sequel to the History of the Republic, addressed to my nephews ten years ago. Some differences will, no doubt, be discerned between the former and the present portion of the same work. These have arisen because the first part was composed, so to say, under the axe of a jealous censorship, whilst in the second, I have been speaking my thoughts without reserve.

“ Another circumstance has also tended to place

me in a position different from the one I occupied in writing the history of a period antecedent to the fall of Poland. I was nine years of age at the time of the last partition of our country; its history could not therefore be really considered as contemporaneous for me. The events which I had to relate belonged, like the fall of the republic, already to the domain of past history. The actual period of the regeneration of Poland passing before our eyes, is not yet terminated. The life of the author—which has not, any more than the circumstances he is reviewing, yet drawn to its close—has been mixed up in the chain of events, as well as that of many of his countrymen who will listen to this recital. It has been my fate to play a part amongst men who were the chief actors in the last national movement, or who chiefly guided it. Amongst these there are many whose opinions differ from my own, whilst some have become my personal enemies. Now, in the following pages, it was needful for me to speak sometimes of myself, and more frequently of my adversaries. I was therefore placed in a peculiar situation, in which I had not found myself in relating the events of an antecedent period.

“ I have hence been obliged to enter into greater

details than I could have wished. If I had too far abridged them, the recital would not have been clear. Perhaps, indeed, I ought to have entered on further explanations; and at least it would not be difficult to have written, as others have done, at greater length, with the facilities which the recent nature of events afford; but then it would no longer have been the brief narration which I must confide to the west wind, so that it may reach you, oh youth of Poland!"

CONCLUSION.

"In the midst of misfortune, with a heavy heart, I relate to you, my children, the sad events of the past; yet venture in the same breath to speak of the regeneration of Poland.

"Forty years of calamity are of course no better proof of this, than the length of a patient's malady would prove of his restoration to health. But when favourable symptoms become manifest even with increased suffering, no one can doubt of proximate cure. The increased energy of the continuous efforts which the Polish nation has made to shake off the yoke imposed upon it, is a sufficient proof that some day it will rise from its abasement. When a people repeats, full of faith, 'As long as we live, Poland will not perish;'—when it does not

despair of the salvation of the country ;—when ever active, it rises after every interval of repose, redoubling in its efforts to break through its bonds, it cannot reasonably be doubted that such a people will recover its independence. Enlightened by a painful experience, it seeks to destroy the root of the evil which has caused its ruin, and to learn what is necessary to act with vigour and success ; so that when it shall have acquired fresh strength, it will know how to put it profitably forth. We hear it commonly said, that we live in an age of revolutions, of social changes, and of progress. There is scarcely a corner of the continent of Europe, which is not undermined by a revolutionary volcano. From the Tagus to the mouths of the Wolga, in France, Germany, Turkey, Greece, and Russia, everywhere a spirit of agitation is brooding, which demands reforms, the franchise of all classes, and the liberation of all nations. When such a march of the human mind has been incessantly manifested during seventy consecutive years, by reiterated commotions, which have not resulted in any definite end, others must irrevocably follow, which, sooner or later, will effect the emancipation, and establish the liberties of all races ; and it is obvious that no opposing force will have the power

eventually to stay such an event. The social amelioration of Poland had commenced before its fall. The spoilers who oppress mankind, and who divided it, have proclaimed this fact, vociferating against her the most shameless calumnies; but their clamours, far from impeding, only accelerate the advent of a new era for the country.

“For my own part, I shall confine myself to indicating the growth of the national strength in proportion to the progress of amelioration. About ninety years ago, at the time of the confederation of Bar, the nobility alone valiantly made head against the enemy. Numbering only eight thousand men in the field, it fought against several armies. Some privileges having been since accorded to the burghers, and the condition of other classes having excited some attention, Poland, diminished by its first partition, set on foot sixty thousand men. With its territory shrunk into still narrower limits, forty-three years ago, it set on foot thirty thousand men under Kosciusko, besides arming all classes of the people, and especially the inhabitants of the chief cities, for the national defence. At a subsequent date, thirty years ago, the country still further diminished, on account of the portion ceded to the King of Prussia,

raised an army of thirty thousand men ; and five-and-twenty years ago, the duchy of Warsaw, which was no larger, put on foot one of eighty thousand, full of ardour, because inspired with the spirit of social reforms.

“ In the last revolution, the Tsarian kingdom, further reduced in extent, raised eighty thousand regulars, to say nothing of the armed population, amounting at the least to fifty thousand. And yet this last outbreak covered a less extent of territory than Kosciusko’s insurrection. If Kosciusko and the Pulaskis, instead of thirty-eight thousand men, had had a hundred and thirty thousand, as in the last war, what might they not have done ? Nothing but wilful blindness can deny this enormous growth of the national strength. It is evident that in the midst of reverses, the combatants increase in number in every struggle ; and when the nation learns to comprehend its true interests, it will see that they repose on social reforms and on the progress and emancipation of humanity.”

The Royalist party of the emigration is so called, not because merely composed of the advocates of monarchic principles, but as designating the partisans of a family, who in the midst of exile,

have conferred upon it the honours of embryo royalty.

A body of the emigrants, amounting to between five and seven hundred, have fixed on the family of the Princes Czartoryski as the future constitutional sovereigns of Poland. Although in their present position they do not bruit this tacit election, they affect the same loyalty towards them as the most uncompromising legitimatists of France to the Duke de Bordeaux, or the late Carlists of Spain to the Count de Montemolin, since the renouncement by Don Carlos of his rights in favour of his son.

At the first glance, there appears something strikingly ludicrous in this Polish dynasty, which has never had existence till founded, so to say, in the streets of London and of Paris.

It may besides be added, that the Poles opposed to it aver, with perfect truth, firstly, that it was the very family of the Czartoryskis which made a fatal appeal to the Empress Catherine, and originally called in the Russians. Secondly, that Prince Adam Czartoryski, the present head of this house, is one of the few men, who, according to the old laws of Poland, cannot offer himself as a candidate for the national throne, to which any freeman, whether

foreign or native, might pretend, with the exception of such Poles as had served a foreign government. Now, Prince Adam having formerly accepted from the Emperor Alexander the dignities of Russian minister and senator, has placed himself in the category of those excluded. Thirdly, they say that Prince Adam, who has now been persuaded to accept the future crown of Poland, was already a man too old, timid, and irresolute to assume it during the last revolution, when it depended entirely on himself to have done so; at a period when, a member of the national government, his party influenced the diet to proclaim Poland a constitutional monarchy, by a decree of the 8th of February, 1831.

This man, now further broken by years of exile and disappointment, is the present chief of his house, whilst his next heirs are scarcely emerging from childhood.

All this is true, and yet perhaps, notwithstanding, neither the expelled dynasties of England, Sweden, France, Spain, or Portugal, ever stood so fair a chance of restoration, to the thrones from which they had been expelled, as this noble Polish family, represented by an old man and two children, to the constitutional sovereignty of their country.

In the first place, it is to be observed, that the idea of monarchy in Poland, where native monarchy

has often been perniciously impotent, but never despotic, does not recall the same associations as in other European countries. The most uncompromising republican can perfectly reconcile in his mind, republican institutions with monarchic forms, whilst the most devoted partisans, either of aristocratic privilege or of monarchy, never dream of it, otherwise than constitutionally and effectively limited.

The national feeling of Poland may be divided, as to whether it shall be elective or hereditary; whether restrained within the former limits of its power, or allowed a more enlarged scope of action, as in the states of western Europe. There may be even some still undecided between a native or a foreign dynasty, but there is no party seriously or radically opposed to the institution of the kingly office.

The failure of elective monarchy at the time of Poland's independence, and the success of that which has been hereditarily established in so many of the kingdoms of western Europe, has necessarily inclined the majority of thinking men to a preference of the latter. The same experience, derived from their own history, has also gone far towards imbuing them with the desire of a native instead of a foreign family, to preside the national government.

Now, amongst the Polish families, none could be, on the whole, more popular than the Czartoryskis. In point of birth, which is still something with one part of the Polish nation, whilst it is no drawback with the remainder, the princes of this house may vie with any in Europe. Descended from the grand dukes of Lithuania, and from the Jagellons,* who occupied the throne of Poland, their ancestors held sovereign sway whilst the Romanoffs, the forefathers of Nicholas, were still buried in obscurity. Allied to the Poniatowskis, who gave the last king to Poland prior to its partition—amongst their modern connexions, it may suffice to indicate their relationship by marriage with the imperial family of Russia, and the royal family of France. On the other hand, though it may be true that they first called in, and have constantly favoured the Russian influence, up to a recent period; still, even their

* Lelewel says, that with regard to the Czartoryskis, they can only derive their origin in any case from a collateral branch, the house of Jagellon having become extinct in 1572. "All who pretend to belong to it, descend therefore from Gedemin, grandfather of Jagellon. Many of the collateral branches are extinct, and others pretend to be so without foundation. I could name certain erudite genealogists, who explicitly contest the supposed descent of the Czartoryskis from Jagellon's brother, and the family of Gedemin."

This observation of Lelewel's, hostile to the pretensions of the Czartoryskis, suffices to establish the popular belief in the derivation of their origin from the Jagellons.

bitterest enemies have never accused them of any want of patriotism.

In seeking the alliance of Russia, about 1764, at the period of what was called the Czartoryski confederation, it is admitted by their adversaries, that their object was to expulse Augustus the Third, and to establish a native and hereditary dynasty. For this purpose, they thought merely to make use of Russia to forward ends, which, if selfish, were at the same time patriotic ; but, on the contrary, they were made the tools of Russia. Then already, as they have subsequently continued to do, they had endeavoured to acquire political influence, by devoting a colossal fortune, in the most noble manner, to the patronage of art, and to the dissemination of enlightenment. Perhaps no royal house in Europe, of their time, has, even with means incomparably greater at command, so munificently encouraged science and art, genius and learning. Not only their fortune, but such power as they succeeded in obtaining, was applied to purposes equally generous. Already in 1784, through their instrumentality, many laws were passed to protect the serf ; and shortly afterwards, a decree, which made it death for a nobleman to kill a peasant,—a penalty by which the latter is not yet protected in Russia, at the present hour. As

well as the Poniatowskis and the Zamoiskis, they already, at that early period, emancipated the serfs of their domains ; affording thus, half a century ago, an example which the Russian emperors have not yet followed.

The present Prince Adam Czartoryski, son of the starost-general of Podolia, succeeded in his early youth in acquiring the friendship and the confidence of the Emperor Alexander, whose minister and favourite he became. The influence thus obtained he devoted unremittingly to the benefit of Poland. He got named curator of the university of Vilna, and of all the schools throughout the Polish provinces incorporated with the Russian empire ; comprising then about a third of the whole Polish people. Through the instrumentality of his credit with Alexander, he was enabled to raise this seat of learning to an unprecedented pitch of prosperity ; and his first care was to insure the existence of the national schools, by placing them beyond the reach of Russian spoliation.

As soon, however, as Napoleon had erected some of the other provinces into the duchy of Warsaw, and that there was an independent Poland to resort to, he abandoned all the power and honours he enjoyed as friend and favourite of the youthful em-

peror, whilst at the same his father quitted the service of Austria, in whose armies he held the rank of field-marshal, and came to open at Warsaw the diet of 1812, which proclaimed the independence of Lithuania, and its incorporation with the grand duchy.

On the re-occupation of Poland by the Russians, Prince Adam prepared a constitution, which was found too aristocratic both by Alexander and by his countrymen, whose ideas were just then strongly tinged with French opinions; for it is to be observed, that a despotism is less hateful to a democracy, and the feeling of a despot becomes more easily reconciled to a democracy, than to any thing savouring of oligarchy. Prince Adam continued, nevertheless, long to enjoy the confidence of the emperor, and to use the influence thence derived in the same manner as his fortune, according to the traditions of his house, for the propagation of knowledge, and to further the enlightenment of his fellow-citizens.

There are now in the emigration many distinguished *literati*, who owe their education and acquirements to the discriminating munificence of this nobleman, who, without distinction of political opinion, always held out a hand to humble or struggling merit.

At length, however, his credit gradually diminished; and he was deprived of his curatorship of the university of Vilna. From the time that Alexander changed his policy towards Poland, and entered on a career of persecution, he may be said to have retired from public life, until the outbreak of the last revolution.

During the revolution itself, as a member of the government, it is true that his conduct was a tissue of weaknesses and blunders; but in extenuation, it must not be forgotten that an inordinate degree of moral courage was required to enter on the only course that could have saved the nation; and that in this the daring veterans of the battle-field, such as Clopitski (Chlopicki), Skrynetski (Skrzynecki), and Dembinski, were as much wanting as himself. As to the error of relying upon foreign aid, and cramping the national spirit to propitiate foreign favour, it is an error unhappily shared in common with him by all who had it in their power to influence the destinies of Poland in the senate or the field.

Prince Adam, though neither a man of genius nor of firmness, unites, perhaps better than if he possessed them, the requisites for a constitutional sovereign; and though now personally little fitted

to attend to the interests of his house, any more than his youthful successors, these are ably cared for by his nephew, an enterprising soldier in the flower of age, and the inheritor of the great name of Zamoyiski, in whose favour the only entail in the kingdom of Poland has been preserved.

The family of Czartoryski, honoured rather for its princely virtues, than for any talents, is, therefore, to those we should call in England the high Tory and Conservative emigrants, what Lelewel is to the men who gather round him,—hitherto a mere banner; and if Poland should to-morrow shake off the yoke which weighs upon it, the one may be laid aside with veneration, like a glorious, but useless trophy, in which men take pride; whilst they may plant the other, like the symbolic standard, the point of union round which a nation gathers, and the pivot on which a system more or less liberal may revolve. Amongst the distinguished partisans of this family, there immediately occurs to the author, the late venerable Niemcewicz, Colonel Schirma (Szyrma), brought up at Oxford, and who being at the outbreak of the revolution, professor of English literature at the University of Warsaw, took arms at the head of his students; the young and promising poet, Olizarowski; the

bibliophilist, Sienkiewicz, who has succeeded in collecting for the use of his countrymen in Paris a library of twenty thousand volumes ; and I believe I may also rank as belonging to this party, the savant Jastremski (Jastrzenbski), who first decyphered the celebrated manuscript book of Rheims, used at the coronation of the kings of France, which had hitherto puzzled the learned, and which he declared, and proved by translating it, to be a dialect of the Sclavonic, but written in the characters called *glagolitic*; (of which the invention is attributed to St. Jerome,) first used by those who had reduced that language to writing, and afterwards abandoned for the Cyrillian. He is now employed by the French government to make researches in the libraries of Rome. C. Hoffman, and the abbé Pranievitch, are both at least very zealous writers in favour of the same eause.

The third party styles itself the Democratic Society, and consists of somewhere about a thousand members, under the presidency of Malinoski.

They have in Paris a public library of their own ; and Mieroslavski, the author of the history of Napoleon, is a distinguished member of their party.

Their opinions are those which the liberals of

Spain, Portugal, Italy, and many other countries have copied from the ideas prevalent in the French school of ultra-liberalism. Liberty is, of course, the goal towards which, in common with so many political parties, they aspire, but inseparably with equality ; and adopting centralisation as a means of attaining and preserving both. They are, therefore, somewhat unmindful of the examples afforded them by those in whose steps they seem desirous of treading, how liberty and equality may be confounded ; and how much more easily the latter is established, in conjunction with despotism, than a state of freedom ; that there was more equality in the reign of terror, and that more exists in Russia now, before the knout, than beneath the freest governments.

They are apt to forget that centralisation is merely a means of augmenting the strength of a government, which may be useful when, from its weakness, the very independence of a country is threatened ; but can never be permanently maintained, except at the expense of some of its liberties—a means which is more favourable to the development of arbitrary power than to the administration of a constitutional or republican state,—a system which has flourished for ages in China,—which, first introduced into Europe from the necessity of

self-preservation by the French republic, prepared the nation for the ensuing despotism—which was next enthusiastically adopted by the Russian Tsars, —which of all the novelties of the West has most captivated the imagination of the Ottoman Porte, —and which, introduced into South America, Spain, and Portugal, at the same time as ideas of freedom, like the tares scattered into the furrow with the wheat, has hitherto cramped and strangled the latter in its growth, and perhaps mainly contributed to reduce those countries to their present condition.

This Democratic Society, besides, comprises all who have a tendency to communist ideas ; and it has become a refuge for the generous, who, in their abhorrence of real and deeply-rooted social abuses, are enthusiastic in their advocacy of untried and often chimerical remedies.

Prone to begin everything anew, and to sweep down and level what might be with much less difficulty applied to its own ends, this party is composed of men the least practical, if, perhaps, the most active in the emigration.

The application of French ideas of liberalism,—I mean as understood by the majority of those who profess them in that country, full of intolerance for

all prejudices and usages but their own,—would probably prove more fatal, and certainly more difficult in Poland than it did in Spain, where for so many years the constitution was identified in the minds of the peasantry with ideas of civic tyranny and of arbitrary centralisation, from which they had never before suffered in their self-governed villages; so that many a bold peasant, with the cry of Long live the absolute king upon his lips, fought and died for the freedom he had always enjoyed till liberty and a constitution were proclaimed.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that a blind bigotry to the liberalism of France, with its two or three great truths, and numerous errors, is more readily to be accounted for and excused in a Pole, both as a matter of feeling and political expediency, than in a Spaniard, an Italian, or a German.

With striking differences, there exist at the same time stronger analogies of disposition between the French and Poles (or at least the noble class of the Poles), than the former exhibit to any other people. The customs, language, and usages of France are familiar to this portion of the Polish nation. Since its first subjugation it has been accustomed to look with the eye of hope towards France, especially towards

revolutionary France. It has fought in its armies, shared in its glories and reverses; it has received some solid benefits from its governments, and though betrayed and sacrificed by all in turn, from the French people it has met with unvarying sympathy and kindness. It is not, therefore, remarkable that we may rank the partiality of the Polish people for the French beside that of the Finnish people for the Swedish, as the only two national friendships whose reality will stand the test of narrow scrutiny; nor that some of the children of the one country, oppressed and suffering, should implicitly take the tone of their opinions from the other, which is prosperous and free.

As a matter of policy, Poland has more than any other country to expect from the ultra-liberal party of France,—if only by its agency on its own government, and by the fact that its clamours may in some future struggle force it to keep two of the despoiling powers in check.

It must at the same time be explained, that although such deep sources of sympathy exist between the Poles and French, there are causes of dissonance no less profound, which must inevitably prevent the application of principles of democracy and infidelity, even by those who may adopt them in their fullest extension.

The Polish nation is more eminently aristocratic and religious than the British. In France, the middle and lower orders have far outshone the aristocracy; in Spain and Sweden, the aristocracy has sunk beneath the lower and middle classes; and in all these countries, the national contempt has killed and withered it irrecoverably; so that it is now a thing without sap, root, or life. In Poland, as in England, to glaring vices and defects, its nobility unites so much of virtue and of talent, that there are few men born out of that class, who with all its faults, can lay their hands upon their hearts and say that they would not be proud to be included in it. The Polish nobility derives, besides, an importance from the fact that it constitutes upwards of one-seventh of the whole nation, and comprises nearly all the cultivation of its intellect.

It is to this class that nearly all the members of the Democratic Society themselves belong, though I fear they may not thank me for the suggestion.

Though these nobles, three millions in number, are evidently of a race perfectly distinct from the remainder of the nation, this distinction is as completely forgotten, both by them and by the people, as that for ages lost of the Gauls and Franks in France. If there are moral as well as physical

differences to be observed between them and the bulk of the Polish people, they at least resemble it in their tendency to religious exaltation. As to the people, the author could name several who, whilst sharing the opinions of this society, are convinced that nothing in Poland itself will stir the peasantry to a unanimous effort, but an appeal to its religious feeling.

Though, therefore, many of the members of the Democratic Society may adopt with their characteristic warmth the ideas of the French liberalism of the close of the last century, the general absence amongst them of the religious indifference, and of the heartfelt love of equality on which a certain school of French political philosophy is founded, are two negative elements, which render them unfitted for successful propagandism of its doctrines; whilst the bulk of the people is pre-eminently indisposed to be acted on by such an agency

The fourth, sometimes termed the Theocratic party, is accused of being a mere militia of the Roman see. It professes to effect, through the agency of religious zeal, the regeneration of its country; and even if it were true that its eventual interests are Romish rather than national, it is indisputable that its primary object is that of shaking

off the Russian yoke, which weighs so heavily on its church in Poland, must be identical with the views of all Polish patriots. This party does not probably number fifty members amongst the emigration; and hence at first sight it may appear little more worthy of attention than the sect of Tovianski with his sixty followers, led away by the example of Mitzkiavitch (Mickiewicz) the great poet. But if it does not number fifty members in the emigration, it derives incalculable importance from its influence with eleven millions of the Polish peasantry, and by its interest with the whole Roman Catholic world.

It is a singular fact that it has derived a vast accession of power from the very acts of Nicholas himself, whose vindictive persecution of the religious faith of his Polish victims, has inspired the peasantry with a degree of exaltation which may at any moment be acted upon, to rouse them with a unanimity which could never before have been attained.

Lelewel has shown, and none gainsay the truth of his assertions, that, in the struggles which, since its first subjugation, Poland has at intervals renewed, at first only some of its nobles, and gradually other classes have taken part; but hitherto there

has been no general movement throughout the whole Polish people ; and all are agreed with him as to the immense accession of strength hence to be derived by the Polish cause. Lelewel and his followers, as well as the Democratic Society, regard the enfranchisement and endowment of the peasantry with the land they occupy, and the participation by this class of eligibility to all imaginable offices, as the most powerful means of rousing it to action.

The religious party, on the contrary, without neglecting to avail itself of, or repudiating these, consider them of insignificant importance beside their own project of making an appeal to the religious feeling of the serfs, and of beating down, with crucifix in hand, the double-headed eagle.

The Dynastic party consider each of these means as valuable to the attainment of a common end ; and it will thus be perceived that all these political sects into which the refugees are divided, are merely labourers in the same vineyard, each in his peculiar way tending to the advancement of the national cause ; and who, whilst prone to undervalue, have no cause to impede each others' exertions.

As regards the religious party, those who have had the most experience of the popular feeling of

Poland, amongst which, some, who have recently quitted that country, or who have taken part in the political missions thither subsequent to the reoccupation of the latter by the Russians, even when themselves following another banner, admit that this is the most powerful means of action on the peasantry, whilst one every day increasing in importance. "In 1833," says one of these men, "when I addressed the peasantry of the villages, I found them animated by a profound hatred to the Russians; but at the same time so daunted with the national ill fortune ever since the memory of the most aged could recal the past, that they were either without confidence in the success of insurrection, or without belief in the truth or stability of the social reform which I announced to them.

In the grand duchy of Warsaw alone, had they seen the freedom of the peasantry carried into execution. Their dependence on their former lords, and their own ignorance, had prevented them from enjoying the full benefit of the boon conferred upon them by Napoleon, and confirmed by Alexander, whilst such as it was, they had seen it abolished by Nicholas in that portion of the grand duchy which fell to the share of Russia.

I do not mean to say that a portion of them

was not everywhere willing to rise, but there was neither unanimity nor stability in their enthusiasm. In the year 1835, I was struck by seeing the whole population of a village bow at mass simultaneously, with vivid faith and unfeigned devotion at the elevation of the host. Here, thought I, is the whole mass of the people of this district moved by one idea, by which it is ineradicably possessed, why should I not seek to act by its intermedium, instead of wasting time in an endeavour to inspire them with a confidence so difficult to implant either lastingly or universally.

“Pursuing this idea, I ceased my apostleship as a propagandist of social reform, and in the next village addressed them in the name of Christ. I found the effect of this electrical, and experience soon taught me that with all this class an appeal to its religious feeling affords an unfailing lever, of which the power gains daily strength by persecution, and which is nothing impaired by the addition of such considerations as I formerly adduced.”

Besides its home and foreign influence, though so limited in number, this party boasts of remarkable illustrations. Mitzkiavitch, before the morbid turn which his religious fervour has taken, belonged to it, as still does Count Krasinski, the author of *The Infernal Comedy*.

Skrynetzski (Skrzynecki), the commander in chief of the Polish armies, and the victor of the Russians in several sanguinary battles, is one of its most devoted adherents. His name has become historic from the part he was called to play in so gigantic and important a struggle, and his talent as a tactician has been frequently lauded, though he signally failed, both in taking advantage of his victories and in his stratagetic movements; whether from want of skill as a strategist, or from deference to the opinions of the Diplomatic party, who feared successes that might have scared away the expected intervention of the stranger,—or from both these causes, it is impossible to determine.

Zaleski, another of the modern Polish poets, whom Mitzkiavitch somewhere addresses as the nightingale, and to whom the harmony of Moore and Lamartine is attributed by his admirers, is numbered in their ranks. At their head is a new religious order, hitherto consisting of a congregation of nine Polish priests, all young men, who played an energetic part in the revolution, and who having since taken holy orders, were first instigated by Mitzkiavitch, whom they look on as a fallen angel, to form the present association, for which they

received the sanction of the papal see, and of which the avowed object is to provide means for the reformation and instruction of the Polish clergy. Their superior is the reverend father Semelenko, formerly one of the Carbonari, a man in the flower of age, active, enterprising, and at least so distinguished as a theologian that when he turned his attention towards the church, he bore off in triumph the prize medal awarded for theologic knowledge and acuteness, at the great concourse held at Rome, for which the candidates for clerical honours of the whole Romish church, with its hundred and fifty millions of communicants, contend.

The Abbé Kaisevitch, whose face bears the indelible mark of a Cossack sabre, which has nearly severed it in twain, and who pronounced the funeral sermon at the burial of Kosciusko's friend,—the greatest and last of the Polish classic poets, the veteran Nemciewicz,—is the mouth-piece of the congregation for oral eloquence; whilst the layman Vielogloski, a Polish gentleman, who formerly set the example of freeing and endowing the serfs of his domain, and a contributor to the columns of the *Univers*, defends its opinions in his own pe-

cular glowing and poetic prose, from which an extract will be subjoined at the close of these volumes, both on account of its intrinsic beauty, and as an exposition of the views and feelings of his party.

CHAPTER VII.

ATTEMPTS OF THE EMIGRANTS IN 1833 AND 1836.

Attempt made by forty Polish Emigrants in 1833—Death of Zavisza, Vinitzki, &c.—Mademoiselle Kavecka hanged by the Russians—Death of the Countess Emilia Plater, at the head of a Regiment she raised and commanded—Polish Women—Address of Mitzkiavitch to the Polish mother.—Second attempt by Konarski and the Zaleskis in 1836.—Capture of the Elder, escape of the Younger Zaleski—Capture and Martyrdom of Konarski; His fetters made into rings, and worn by the Russian Officers.

IN the year 1833, a small body of Polish emigrants — forty in number—determined to attempt a fresh insurrection in Poland.

“It may be asked,” says one of them, in an unpublished M.S., “how forty men could be found at once, so rash and inconsiderate as to attempt to plunge their country afresh into the horrors of war, so short a time after the failure of a national effort, made with an organized government, and regular armies, to establish its independence,—in fact, whilst the ashes of the

villages destroyed in the struggle were scarce yet cold, the blood spilled scarce yet effaced from the surface of the soil.

“ There was, however, at that moment, every reasonable ground to believe that Europe was on the eve of a great commotion. The French ministry ostensibly encouraged a gathering on the Spanish frontier ; Italy was fermenting ; the Belgian question still unsettled ; and the political societies throughout Europe, with whom the emigrants were in communication, bent on a proximate movement, which would have rendered a general war inevitable.

“ In Poland, a sufficient time had elapsed to prove to its inhabitants that the cruelty of the conqueror was not occasioned by the intemperance common in the first flush of victory, but resulted from a system of violence and terror prospectively devised, which aimed at the gradual subversion of the national faith, language, spirit, and institutions, even through extinction of the inhabitants. It appeared, therefore, an enterprise as full of hope as it was of peril, to prepare the population so that it might be enabled to take due advantage of the great events expected.”

It may be readily imagined that none but the

most daring would undertake so desperate a mission; and accordingly, this devoted band displayed a hardihood and courage rarely paralleled in history. Their leader was Colonel Joseph Zalivski, the same who in 1830 had, with Vysocki and Urbanski, presided the conspiracy which drove the Russians from the capital. His thirty-nine associates, of whom twenty-nine eventually perished in this expedition, were chosen as uniting to mere personal courage, the requisites for enabling them to traverse hostile countries, to elude the pursuit of spies and of the police, and to inspire with confidence the inhabitants of the districts they wished to prepare for insurrection. They started after duly concerting all their plans, a few from Paris, the remainder from Avignon and the south of France. Few of them, to undertake this distant and dangerous journey of a thousand miles, were provided with more than fifty francs, or £2 each. They had not even passports in proper order; and no sooner had they started, than, through the indiscretion of their friends, the Russian government was prepared for their attempt. Nevertheless, they all succeeded, not only in reaching Poland, where they dispersed each to the portion allotted to him as the scene

of his labours, but in effecting their object, which was to dispose the population to take advantage of expected events; but these never occurring, it was not in the spirit of their plan, or of their instructions, to compromise the country by any partial rebellion. Some of their number however, isolated, tracked by their enemies, and rendered desperate, were induced to make appeals to the peasantry, and roused them to revolt.

These attempts were put down in detail, and the great majority of these daring adventurers perished on the scaffold, or were immured in dungeons; but the fate of some of them is full of such romantic interest as to be on that account worthy of recording, even if the storied memory of their gallant deeds, and of their fate, had not survived so vividly amongst the Polish people.

Joseph Zalivski himself, driven into Austrian Poland, was there captured and condemned to five-and-twenty years' incarceration, a punishment of which the reader can only duly appreciate the severity by referring to *Silvio Pellico's* account of his captivity.

So eminent had been his services to the Polish cause, at the outbreak of the Polish revolution,

that whilst he lingers in the dungeons of the Spielberg, the emigrant Poles have adopted, and support out of their slender means, his wife and children.

Volovitch, with a band of 17 partisans, was surrounded in a forest by 3,000 Russian troops, who furthermore forcedly employed an equal number of peasantry to beat the woods, though this duty they performed unwillingly, and with negligence. For several days he fought his way with his followers from tree to tree, being only captured when exhausted with cold and hunger, and after killing two hundred of the enemy. *Volovitch* was hanged.

Djevitski had always carried poison about him, which he swallowed when taken by the Russians. Mastering the pain which it occasioned, he died preaching, in every interval of agony, sedition to those surrounding him. He boasted that it was beyond the power of his captors to fetter his mind or speech. When the order was given to gag him, he was already dead.

Zawiszca, or *Zavisha*, was also hanged. He was surnamed *The Black*, from the colour of the shield and armour of his ancestors, whose name had become proverbial for fidelity and valour; since

it was commonly said that a man *was as true as a Zavisha*. He was only captured after killing seven men with his own hand. When led out to execution, he boldly mounted the scaffold, and, detaching his neckerchief, asked of the crowd who would undertake to give it his mother. None dared reply, till a Russian officer took hold of it. *Zavisha* snatched it from him with indignation, and hereupon a priest stepped forward to receive it.

Vinitski, who in the revolution had distinguished himself as captain of artillery,—a man at all times of enterprising rashness, — when driven to desperation, excited the admiration of the peasantry by some extraordinary efforts of the most daring nature, of which the following anecdote may serve to convey some idea to the reader.

He was once so closely pursued in the environs of Kalish, by the agents of *Zobolef* the governor, that he was forced to seek refuge in the city itself, which he could neither remain in, nor quit without a passport, which, in his circumstance, it appeared impossible to obtain. There was not a single house into which he could safely enter, and he therefore formed the singular resolution of going direct to the governor. Personating a spy anxious to give information, he obtained easy admission to

that functionary. "Whom have I the pleasure of addressing?" said the governor politely.—"Vinit-ski," replied his visitor.—"Vinit-ski!" echoed the governor in astonishment.—"Yes, the proscribed on whose head you have set a price. I have come to demand of you to fill me up a pass; and in return, I will give you an act of amnesty, which will save you by and bye from being hanged as you deserve."—Here Vinit-ski drew from his bosom a pistol, which he pointed at the trembling governor's head, till his passport was signed; and when he had obtained it, he would not depart till he had written and appended his signature to an act of amnesty. He then wished Zobolet good morning. If the governor had been a civilian, he would probably have called to his servants; as it was, he sent the *du-journe*, or officer on duty, to overtake the fugitive. Vinit-ski, who, had a cocked pistol under his cloak, stopped, and coolly faced the officer.—"You are mistaken; I have indeed just left the governor's, but I am not the man you seek; I hold a pass signed by him." This the governor had forgotten to mention in his agitation; and the officer was induced to turn down in an opposite direction. Vinit-ski gained the gates, and passed the posts, before a counter-order had reached them.

On another occasion, all his followers having been killed or dispersed, he was driven to take refuge in the forest of Vidava. Being traced thither, a captain of gendarmerie, with a body of Cossacs, was dispatched in pursuit of him. The captain was travelling the first stages in a britschka, taken from a country seat. His Cossacs arrested by the road side a peasant, whom they interrogated. It appeared that he was a native of the hamlet, in the forest where they hoped to apprehend Vinit-ski; he had been to seek work in the neighbourhood, and was returning home disappointed. As it was thought he might prove useful as a guide, he was told to mount the box of the britschka. Towards nightfall, the party reached an inn, where halt was made for the night; the peasant was duly questioned. When the officers sat down to supper, he pulled out his piece of black bread, asked for a farthing's worth of brandy, and having eaten his meal, went to the stable to sleep. The captain had retired to bed early; towards midnight he was awakened by some one tapping against his window-shutters, and started up in alarm. "It is I, Vinit-ski," said a voice from without; "I am come to wish you good-night—to thank you for the lift you gave me on your britschka. I have

borrowed your led-horse ; I am sorry to deprive you of him, but really you have all pursued me so hotly that I am too much exhausted to go on foot. —Good-night.” The clattering of a horse’s hoofs resounded ; the captain alarmed the Cossacs, who were soon in pursuit, but Vinitski had escaped again.

The author is ignorant of the exact circumstances of his capture, which took place in the environs of Kalish, to which city he was led.

Being condemned to be shot, when led out to execution he turned to the ready-dug grave, which was half filled with the rain-water, and of which the side had fallen in, and spitting into it (an oriental mark of contempt) said,—“ Wretched barbarians, who know not even how to dig a grave !” This was perhaps in imitation of the saying of Pestel, hanged in 1826, on the glacis of the fortress of St. Petersburg, who, when the rope broke, and that he fell from the gallows, exclaimed, “ Wretched country, where they know not even how to hang a man !

Having then turned to the priest accompanying him, he asked him for his blessing ; but the priest, in a fit of enthusiasm, fell upon his knees, crying out,—“ No, it is I who crave your blessing, as that

of a holy martyr for your country and your faith!" This scene, of which the effect may be imagined, was speedily put a stop to. Vinitzki was shot, the priest apprehended within half an hour, and almost immediately dispatched as a soldier to the Caucasus.

Of those who escaped, amongst whom were Konarski, the two Zaleskis, the Potockis, and Lubinski, the story of the latter was the most remarkable.

The palatinate of Lublin had been allotted to him as the scene of his exertions; he was driven at length across the Austrian frontier, where he was captured, and recognised on account of the description published of his person, which was rendered peculiarly remarkable by the traces of a musket-ball which he had received through the cheek at the battle of Grochow, in the war of independence.

Aware of the slowness of all legal procedure in Austria, he with great presence of mind denied his identity. Having procured a piece of packthread, he kept it bound round his right hand, till by the day of his examination he had lost the use of it.

He pleaded this lameness as a proof that he could not be the Count Lubinski alluded to, and

when the bullet mark in his cheek was adduced, he denied its being a shot mark, saying, "If the trace of a bullet, which is the corresponding hole it has come out?" When he received the wound, the ball had come out in the mouth. After a detention of three years, he was liberated for want of proof. The fate of Mademoiselle Kavecka should not be forgotten, who for furnishing food to some of Lubinski's partisans in the palatinate of Lublin, was siezed, tried, and hanged.

The Russians endeavour to palliate this barbarity by the assertion that she had also supplied them with ammunition; that the Polish women were the most difficult enemies they had to contend with,—by referring to the numerous instances of women fighting in the ranks of the insurgents, and in particular to that of the Countess Emilia Plater, who during the Polish revolution, about a year and half before, raised a band of partisans in Lithuania, and acting as their colonel, died in arms at the age of 26,—some say of her wounds, others of fatigue, on the 23rd of December, 1831, surrounded by her followers, in a wretched hut in the midst of the forest of Bialowicz. "She was mysteriously buried," says Ostrowski, "on account of the presence of the Russians in the neighbourhood. Her

grave was at first only marked by a plain wooden cross, and sometime after by a white stone, with the inscription of 'Emilia'."

Mitzkiavitch has recorded this romantic episode in a brief poem, called

THE DEATH OF THE COLONEL.

THE sentry is watching without the door, within the colonel is dying. Groups of peasants have gathered from the environs. This must be some renowned or powerful leader, whose fate the people seem to mourn so bitterly—and about whose wounds they inquire with such anxiety.

"Let my steed be saddled once more—my steed which has shared the glories of so many fields, once more let me see my steed before I die!—Bring it hither into my room, by my bedside, give me my martial trappings, my sword, my girdle, and my cartridges. Veteran as I am, I will die as Tsharnetski (Czarnecki) died, gazing on my arms!"

And when the charger was led away by the weeping bystanders, then the priest entered with the bread of angels. The soldiers' cheeks blanch at this sight, and the people pray on bended knee beyond the threshold. Even the old scythe-men of Kosciusko's time, after having from the hearts of their enemies, and from their

own veins, shed so much blood without a tear—even they now weep, as they recite the prayers of the Viaticum.

The dawn hears the chapel bell toll for the departed ; the soldiers are all gone, for the Moskal (Muscovite) is in the neighbourhood. The people in flocks contemplate the remains of the dead warrior, stretched on a wicker mat ; there is a crucifix in his hands, his head reclines upon his saddle covered with the *bourka*, his fire-arms and his sword are by his side.

But how comes it that this warlike leader, in his martial trappings, has a cheek like that of a young virgin, and a bosom so femininely rounded ? Now save us, heaven ! it is a virgin !—a Lithuanian,—the Colonel of the insurgents, Emilia Plater !

If any extenuation of such an act could be found in the patriotic enthusiasm of the Polish women, the Russians would have no difficulty in proving it from the evidence of all parties and shades of opinion. Not only the muse of Mitzkiavitch, but even the cold, stern, historic pen of the republican Lelewel, pays this tribute to his countrywomen. He says in his history of Poland :—

Passing in review the different classes of the Polish nation, I cannot refrain from consecrating a few lines to the Polish ladies.

Has it not been under their guidance that the first germ of patriotic feeling has become developed in the youthful generation, in which its country's hopes now centre. During the last outbreak, their patriotism was not confined within their own maternal bosoms ;—they offered up on the altar of their country all that was dearest to them : they sent their sons, their husbands, their betrothed, to battle ; parting from them with masculine firmness and with admirable resignation. They were seen in the hospitals tending the wounded soldiers, or those affected with contagious maladies, or fighting in the field beside their brothers. Arms were not too heavy for their tender hands, the dangers and fatigues of war did not suffice to daunt their courage.

One of the most beautiful of the odes of Mitzkiavitch is addressed to the Polish Mother ; so universally is the political influence of women recognised amongst his countrymen.

ODE.

Oh, Polish mother ! when the light of genius beams from thy son's eyes,—when his young brow is illumined by thoughts of antique virtue and ancestral pride—when quitting his childish games and young companions, he seeks out some old veteran, who sings him patriotic songs ; or when he listens thoughtfully to the record of

his forefather's death,— oh ! Polish mother, then preserve thy child from such a fearful pastime.

Cast thyself rather on thy knees before our Ladye of the many sorrows, and contemplate the sword wherewith her bosom is pierced ; for destiny has in store for thee a fate more cruel.

Yes ! whilst the world is fated to progress, to flourish in a vast union of nations, dogmas, and opinions, thy son will be called to combats without glory—to a martyrdom without hope of resurrection !

No ! sooner teach him to meditate in solitary caves, stretched upon straw, where he may learn to inhale a chill and mouldy atmosphere, and with the reptile share his couch. There let him learn how to dissimulate his anger and his joy, to make his thoughts an unfathomable gulf, to render his words mysterious and fatal as a pestilence, and to compose his whole demeanour into the cold humility of the slimy snake. The Saviour amongst the children of Nazareth, it is said, already bore the cross on which he was to save the world. Oh, Polish mother ! why not then amuse thy child with symbols of his future fate ?

Let his hands grow familiar with the chain, let him learn to draw the convict's barrow. Let not his cheek grow pale when he looks upon the headsman's axe, nor redden at the sight of the degrading rope. For it is not his destiny to go like his forefathers to plant his victorious banner on Solyma's walls ; nor like the soldiers of the

tricolor, to plough the furrows of the field of freedom, and to water it with his blood.

Some hidden spy will bid him defiance, he will have to do battle with a perjured tribunal. The lists will be a dungeon, and a merciless enemy the umpire and the judge.

Vanquished, [the withered gallows-tree will be his monument. His glory and his immortality the short-lived tears of a woman and the nocturnal whisperings of his countrymen !

In 1835, two Polish associations, the one under the title of "Young Europe," the other of "Carbonari," sent their delegates to confer in Paris on the urgency of dispatching agents to different parts of Poland, for the purpose of organising and turning to every possible advantage for the national cause, the popular feeling against Russian rule. These delegates chanced to be Konarski and the two brothers Zaleski. All three had taken part in the last attempt; and notwithstanding the dangers and difficulties they had encountered in the previous expedition, as soon as it was determined that agents should be sent to open a communication with the disaffected in their native country, all three unhesitatingly volunteered on this service.

Konarski, a Protestant gentleman, was an ensign before the Polish revolution; the elder Zaleski had held a higher military rank, and his younger brother, a student, had only taken arms during the revolution.

They reached Poland again in safety, and succeeded in their present purpose. Notwithstanding the price set upon their heads, they were enabled, by the devotion and fidelity of the inhabitants, to peregrinate from one part of the country to another, during a whole twelvemonth. At the expiration of this period, Adolphe, the younger of the Zaleskis, lost the use of his limbs, through rheumatism in the joints, arising from exposure to the cold; he was entrusted to the care of a Jew, who conveyed him across the frontier, and through Germany, without a passport, to the banks of the Rhine, concealed in a bale of goods on his waggon. His elder brother was shortly after obliged to take refuge in Austria, where he was taken and condemned to five-and-twenty years' incarceration, and to exposure in the pillory. Opening his veins with a piece of broken glass, he was found dead in his prison.

Konarski was not taken till 1839, upwards of four years after he had entered the country, and

commenced the exertions in which he never slackened, in favour of the national cause. His capture was effected at Oszmiana, the borough in which so fearful and indiscriminate a massacre was effected during the Polish war, by the Russian generals, who let loose upon this place the Mahomedan regiment, composed of Turkomen freebooters and Caucasian renegades. He had been denounced by a German named Frankenthal, who overheard his conversation with a clock maker.

He was conveyed to Wilna. Prince Troubetskoi, the governor of that place, (a relative of the cowardly Troubetskoi named Dictator in Pestel's conspiracy, still kept in exile by the emperor,) at the interrogation which ensued had the baseness to approach and box the ears of his prisoner, who was heavily ironed. The retribution was such as to satisfy all ideas of poetical justice. Konarski had strength enough to heave up and strike with his ponderous chains the shameless assailant, who staggered beneath the blow, which at first was not considered serious, but of the effects of which he died two years subsequently, when disgraced for malversation.

Konarski strenuously refused to betray any of

those with whom he had been in communication, though eight-hundred persons were arrested, and many of them confronted with him.

The greater part of what he endured, during his long incarceration, was never known; it was only ascertained, that when found to be mute under the lash, as a means of torture, he was fed on salt provision, and tempted in vain to speak in the fever of burning thirst, by liquids placed before him. The deprivation of sleep was resorted to. When he had been constantly wakened up in his slumbers, burning sealing-wax was dropped on to his flesh. When all attempts had failed, and that he was reduced to such a feeble and emaciated condition, that his life became daily precarious, judgment was passed upon him, and he was condemned to death. As soon as his sentence had been pronounced, he turned to his judges, and extending out his hands, burned to the quick; in an affecting speech, which brought the tears into the eyes of many of the bronzed officials, forgave them for all their cruelty towards himself, and prayed for his enemies.

So profound was the impression which Konarski's behaviour produced, even on the Russians, that two officers successively refused to shoot him, and from that time disappeared. His death was in this

respect remarkable, that of all the Polish victims, his fate alone elicited the sympathies of the Russians, partly, perhaps, through its being so widely bruited, and partly because of its having taken place beneath the eyes of those in whom the tendency to assimilate in feeling with the Poles had already made some progress. The Russian officers secretly purchased his fetters, which were converted into rings, and worn by a secret society, discovered shortly afterwards, in which the subalterns of a whole division of the army were compromised. Up to this moment, there are several officers of the imperial guard, who reasure up and show with mysterious precaution, the author has witnessed small rings of iron, said to be derived from the same source, and which they regard with all the awe which relics still more equivocal frequently inspire.

The survivor, Adolphe Zaleski, relates some singular facts connected with his sojourn, under such circumstances, in his native country. Having taken an active part, both in the revolution and the expedition of 1833, few could be better qualified to judge of the present state of feeling of any class, by contrasting it with the past. In 1836, he found himself on many occasions so closely pressed, that he was frequently obliged to make an appeal to

the feelings and traditions of the Cossacs, who perform the service of gendarmerie for the Russians; and this appeal he never knew to fail, when these men had spent some time in the country. On reminding them how the glory and independence of their people have been, identified in their connection with Poland,—a fact to which all their ballads and songs bear testimony,—on recalling their fraternity with the Poles, and the contrast afforded by their past and present condition, he found that he could always readily mollify the fiercest of these men, and not unfrequently make them weep like children. In one instance, having fallen in with a party of them, they avowed to him that they were taking one road because they knew some of the insurgents, with whom they would not interfere, to be upon another. Once he was fiercely detained by a rugged old warrior, who, after half an hour's conversation, wiped a rude tear from his eyes as he spoke of his wife and children, so many thousand versts away, whom he had not seen for so long a period, and despaired of ever again embracing. He ended with a curse on the Tsar, bidding his prisoner go at large, bearing with him his best wishes.

As to the devotion of the Polish population, it

may suffice, as regards the peasantry, to state, that no single instance is recorded of their betraying any of the insurgents. Of the feelings of the higher orders, the following amongst many instances, may be taken as a fair specimen. He was concealed in a country-seat; towards evening, he usually emerged to breathe the fresh air, and he was surprised to find one of the three daughters of his host returning from a moonlight walk. After jesting with her on this subject, he subsequently met in the same manner the second and the third sister; and pressing the latter for an explanation, he found that every night during his stay beneath their father's roof, without acquainting the family with their purpose, they had kept watch round the house, relieving each other, to guard him from all surprise.

As regards the Emigration, he gives the following anecdote.—An individual who could speak little else than Polish, and who, though of tried bravery and devotion, was utterly unacquainted with the designs of the insurgents, who used him only as a blind instrument, being dispatched by one of the Polish committee, to join their agent, unhesitatingly abandoned a small property which he had purchased in the south of France, and

attempted to traverse Germany, for the mere purpose of delivering into the hand of the man to whom he was sent, a card, covered with instructions in cypher; which, as far as he could comprehend, appeared only a series of the most trivial common-places. Though ignorant of German, and far from being distinguished for his quickness, after many months of the strangest adventures, he succeeded in crossing the Polish frontier. When long since given up, he traced to his hiding place the personage to whom he was sent, and delivered his credentials, making only the simple observation that he really could not for his part, conceive the use of taking so much pains to convey a thing so unimportant. On being informed that he must immediately return with the answer, he observed that he had come many miles, and begged with the utmost simplicity for a couple of hour's repose, before he set out to retrace his steps; having imagined that he was literally expected to do so on the spot.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REPUBLIC OF CRACOW.

Its establishment—Past and Present Condition—Occupation by the Troops of the Protecting Powers—The Spy Pawlofski—The real circumstances of his Death.

WHEN the last partition of Poland took place, Russia, Prussia, and Austria having divided amongst them twenty millions of its population, generously guaranteed the independence of the remainder—about a hundred and thirty thousand,—at the Congress of Vienna, by establishing the free republic of Cracow in 1815. This petty state, consisting of the city of that name, with its surrounding territory, situated at the foot of the Carpathian mountains, and containing the tombs of King John Sobieski, Kosciusko, and Poniatowski, is all that now remains of Poland wearing even a semblance of nationality or independence.

Prince Adam Czartoryski, then the friend and

confidant of the Emperor Alexander, prepared for this miniature republic a liberal constitution ; but the three protective courts, under various pretexts, soon rendered it a dead letter.

Let us cite what Marmier, who gathered his information on the spot, in 1842, says upon this subject.

“The commission (appointed by the three powers, to see the constitution put in force) spent three years in its task, and at the end of it the chamber of representatives found itself dispossessed of the right of investigating the conduct of the senate, without obtaining the consent of the senate thereunto ;—deprived of the power of discussing the question of supplies, or of impeaching any public functionaries.

“The article relative to free trade was partly omitted, partly evaded. Cracow no longer enjoyed the franchise accorded to its home produce (by the treaty of Vienna,) and oppressive duties were placed on all articles which the city imported from Austria.

“The university, endowed by the munificence of the Polish kings with property to the amount of £200,000 per annum, was deprived of the greatest part of its wealth. The Russian and Austrian

governments forbade their subjects to study in its university.

“In 1828 the legislative assembly having refused the candidate for the presidency protected by the three powers, their resident commissioners annulled the election ; and suspending the deliberations of the diet, vested all the powers of the state in the hands of the senate, till it should have made such changes in the national institutions as experience pointed out to be expedient.

“In 1833, its constitution was again remodelled so that nothing but its former skeleton remained. And in 1836, the three residents declaring that the city had become a place of refuge for democrats affiliated to secret societies, from which it was necessary to clear it, its territory was suddenly invaded by the Austrian troops, who entering the houses of the citizens, occupied them as if it had been an enemy's country.

“A permanent militia, composed of Austrians, was organised in the city, and an Austrian commissary named director of police. Then followed the false denunciations, and the inquisition of these sbirri. The whole state was submitted to an incessant and terrific system of espionage. Each day the

privacy of its citizens is violated, they are incarcerated or condemned to exile.

“ The judges of the tribunals are dispossessed, to make way for others more complaisant, and torture is used as a means of persuasion at the interrogatories.

“ It would be in vain that one would now seek for any traces of the constitution, promulgated by these sovereigns and sanctioned by a European congress. It is crushed, buried, and if it survives in a few paragraphs, these are an empty formula, which the residents of Russia, Austria, and Prussia use as a veil to give an appearance of legality to their arbitrary acts. The republic of Cracow is now quite submissive to the will of these three ministers. The legislative and judicial powers, the armed force, the finances and police—all are in their absolute dependence ; and woe to the hapless citizen who dares to raise his voice against this shameful violation of a solemn compact.

“ These inflexible diplomatists can reduce him to silence a thousand ways, and make him repent of his temerity. If a public functionary, he is immediately dismissed. If a trader, he is stopped in all his speculations by a thousand vexatious formalities. If a proprietor, he is more highly

taxed, and a passport is refused him even to go from the city to his country house. Have we not seen the house of a citizen who dared to protest against the illegal incarceration of a student, broken into, plundered, and devastated by a troop of Russians, and occupied for four months after by the military? Have we not seen an Austrian general burst open the doors of the public prison, and take out of it for the purpose of punishing, a prisoner just shut up by the authorities for insulting a centinel?

“The palace of the Piasts and Jagellons is now an Austrian barrack. The university, one of the most ancient, and not many years ago one of the richest in Europe, can now scarcely boast of seventy students. The city of Cracow, whose population formerly amounted to a hundred thousand, now hardly numbers more than thirty!”

Such is the nature of the illusory independence of the republic of Cracow, the early cradle,—and strangely enough, the last ostensible relic of Polish nationality. All that its citizens ask, is that England and France, if they will not protect the constitution which they guaranteed, should at least send each a diplomatic agent, whose presence would keep in check the three commissioners, whose tyranny

can only be compared to that of the Venetian podestas.

The chief ostensible pretext for the occupation of the territories of the republic by the troops of the protecting powers, was the murder, by the inhabitants, of a Russian spy, whose corpse was found on the high road without the city.

The death of Pawlofski, for such was his name, though in its manner repugnant to English feeling, was at once a retribution full of justice, and an act of self-defence.

After the discovery of his body, on searching the apartment he had occupied, the authorities of Cracow found many papers addressed to the Russian officials, in several of which he complained of the inefficiency of certain of his fellow-spies. It was ascertained that on quitting his lodging, he had left word that if any body called for him, he had gone to the place of rendezvous. It was hence concluded by the public, that he had fallen a victim to the jealousy or vengeance of his colleagues. This was, however, not the case; he met with his death at the hands of a refugee from the kingdom of Poland, who has related to the author all the circumstances of this transaction, as nearly as he can remember, in the following words.

“Pawlofski was one of the most dangerous of the Russian agents. United to considerable tact, he possessed a degree of effrontery and assurance, which appears to have produced an effect on my countrymen, which I was far from experiencing. For my own part, he inspired me from the first, with an instinctive feeling of aversion and mistrust.

“I first met him on my arrival in London, in 1834, at the house of an old friend and companion-in-arms, who appeared to repose in him an unlimited confidence, which I was far from sharing. He then attached himself so pertinaciously to me, that I was obliged to be guilty of positive rudeness, to rid myself of his company and of his inquisitive importunities.

“Some time subsequently, in Paris, I received intelligence from the national committee, that he was about to proceed as an agent for the emigration to the kingdom of Poland, and this was accompanied by a request that I would furnish him with the proper signals or credentials to such persons as could facilitate his entrance to the country, his egress, from it, or his concealment; and the means of travelling safely through it. I declined acceding to this demand, being unwilling to entrust

the safety of so many personages to any man of whose sincerity or discretion I knew so little. Other of my fellow-refugees were, however, less cautious than myself, and furnished him with such recommendations as they could provide, not only in Poland, but in Germany, to facilitate his passage through that country.

He had no sooner reached the capital of Saxony, than he repaired to the house of a professor, to whom he had been addressed,—an enthusiastic liberal, who, he was informed, had on many occasions rendered important services to the Polish refugees. The professor who had recently been alarmed by some investigations set on foot, was however, little disposed to incur any risk, till his visitor found means of working on his feelings, by representing himself as an exiled son called to his native country to attend the bed-side of a dying father, and unable to proceed further, unless the professor would use his influence to procure a false passport for him. The good, easy man was overcome by his pathetic story, and bursting into tears, threw his arms round Pawlofski's neck, exclaiming —“Oh! my brother, I will sooner run the risk of misfortune than see you any longer so unhappy!”

“In Saxony, as all over Germany, you know that

there exists a party affecting the most exalted liberalism of opinion, and comprising nearly all men of scientific pursuits, or literary acquirements, who have not been brought over by a place, pension, or some coloured *adler-ordnung mit eine schleife* (an order with the privilege of wearing the ribbon in a bow). When political storms are raging in neighbouring countries, whilst the revolution of July was still recent, Poland unconquered, or the Belgic question unsettled, this party took courage to pass resolutions at private meetings, over their bottles, of which the rashness filled them with awe on the ensuing morning; but at the same time they extended very seasonable aid to such foreign refugees as passed through their cities, and in this respect, we Poles have much to thank them for. Directly, however, despotic governments gained strength, their own princes, partly through the representations of the spoilers of Poland, and partly prompted by their own instincts, began to tighten the rein; and as it therefore became a matter of some danger to connive at our passage, we found very little aid amongst those, who had formerly given us so much assistance. It was hence with great difficulty that in the midst of his own misgivings, the kind-hearted professor succeeded in persuading some of his friends to procure

for Pawlofski the means of proceeding to his native country. No sooner had these been obtained, than the traitor denounced them to the Russian minister, who pointing out all concerned in the business to the court of Saxony, demanded their punishment.

“ They were all arrested; the professor ruined as well as his family, was still imprisoned several years afterwards. Pawlofski, before his treachery could get wind, then traversed Prussia, profiting in a like manner by the recommendations given him, to convict those guilty of favouring the Poles. In consideration of his services, he received an order from the king of Prussia, and another, with the rank of major, from the emperor of Russia. Proceeding to the *republic* of Cracow, he hastened to make the best use of his credentials from the emigration, for the purpose of discovering the retreat of such refugees as were concealed in that city, and of tempting as many as he could of the natives of the neighbouring territories of Austrian and Russian Poland, to compromise themselves, by engaging to join in a proximate insurrection, which he represented himself as sent to announce. The part he was playing was therefore not only that of the blood-hound, but of what in the French police was formerly called *agent provocateur*; that is to say,

the man who tempts victims to do that which he denounces when done at his own instigation.

“It happened that at this time I had myself taken refuge in the city of Cracow. A price had been set upon my head by the Russians ; and if discovered, the nominal republic had no choice but to give me up.

“I had just been made acquainted with Pawlofski’s treachery, when I recognised him seated at table in the inn where I was living, and of which the host, a freemason, was devoted to me.

“I made no observation on the subject; but a few minutes after, the inn-keeper returned as pale as death, and informed me that the stranger had named me by my real name, saying I had nothing to fear from him.

“After re-assuring him, and reflecting on what was best to be done, I desired to be led straight into the presence of the new guest.

“Pawlofski had been shown into a room, where he had come by appointment to meet several men, more or less compromised ; he changed countenance on seeing me advance towards him, but on my angrily denouncing his infamy to the company, he replied with so much assurance that several of those present were staggered. We were interrupted, and

obliged to separate, in the midst of his protestations of innocence. Satisfied with having unmasked him, and thus deprived him of his chief power of doing injury, I at first regarded his presence in Cracow, merely as a peril which known might be avoided; but on making subsequent inquiry, I discovered, that as an agent of the emigration, he had seduced a large number of families into a conspiracy, with the object of denouncing them to the vengeance of the Russian government.

“ Whilst I was regretting that we had not ensured their safety, by putting him to death, his inconceivable assurance placed him in our power. Imagining from the fact of my having let him escape so easily the first time, that I was not quite certain of his treachery, he fancied that he could still impose upon me, or at least upon my companions; and he determined not to draw close the net till he had amply filled it. Relating himself my denunciation of him, he lamented that I should be of a temper so hasty and suspicious, repulsed my accusation as an odious calumny of which I was the dupe and he the victim, and requesting an interview, declared that he could clear up every allegation made against him. The proofs of his infamy were, however, of a nature which he little suspected, and the extent of the

mischief he meditated was so appalling, that having unanimously condemned him, it was resolved that at any cost he must die.

“ Filled as Cracow was by Russian and Austrian spies and agents, and utterly at their beck and call as the authorities of the republic were, it appeared probable that whoever should attempt to carry the sentence of this new Wehmgericht into execution, could only do so at the sacrifice of his life. I was then disappointed and desperate. I had lost, as you know, eighteen of my relatives, and amongst them those nearest and dearest to me,—in the field, or on the scaffold, against the Russians ; and I had just volunteered for this sanguinary office, when I received a message from Pawlofski, urgently requesting an interview in a spot at some distance without the walls of the city.

“ I was at the same time made acquainted, through a channel which he could never suspect would be open to me, that mistrusting his persuasive powers, he had laid a snare to arrest me in this solitary place, where he could keep the circumstance concealed for a few days, so as not to scare the remainder of his anticipated victims. If I had not been already chosen as the instrument to punish his perfidy, this singular fact would have appeared

to point me out as the most fitting individual to measure out to him the meed of retribution. I resolved to waylay him, and confess that this circumstance gave a dramatic interest to the deed I was about to undertake, which cancelled much of the horror I should have felt as the mere executioner of a sentence.

“I chose ———, my relative, to aid me in my enterprise. Habiting him in the costume of a driver who plied for hire, I procured a sledge and horses. Stationed for several hours before Pawlofski's door, at the moment he appeared the sledge was to move slowly on, and I trusted that he would unsuspectingly hire it. I feared that if he took another the driver would interfere to save him; but against this there was no remedy. For my own part, I proceeded along the road, armed only with a dagger,—for I would not trust to fire-arms. At a considerable distance from the place of rendezvous, where his measures had been taken to entrap me, I sat down on the snow, and concealed myself in a ditch overshadowed by the boughs of some fir trees. I never wavered in my resolution. I considered the deed I was about to commit not only justifiable, but meritorious. My only apprehension was that I should not spring suddenly enough upon

him,—that he might shoot me before I could drag him from his sledge, or that he might have taken a strange coachman, who would interfere in time to stay my arm. My dread was that he would escape my dagger; for I thought of the ruin and desolation his denunciation would draw upon so many families.

“At length the sledge approached:—I sprang from my hiding place,—I dragged him from his seat,—we rolled together in the snow,—he seized me by the hair; and as I plunged my weapon repeatedly into his body till he was dead, he tore out a handful of it by the roots.

“Meanwhile the driver, who was my relative, looked on. I searched the body, and took from it the papers, leaving the arms of the dead man, and his money by his side. Then dragging the corpse out into the middle of the road, that all might see that it was not the deed of a robber, I took his place in the sledge, and was driven back to the city. Though the sledge and horses were noticed at the gate, and known, this circumstance furnished no clue in the subsequent investigation which followed, because the driver had gone out with one passenger, and apparently returned with the same.”

With the death of Pawlofski ceased all danger of his revelations ; for he had been too jealous to entrust his discoveries to any of his colleagues.

END OF VOL. I.

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EASTERN EUROPE

AND

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“REVELATIONS OF RUSSIA ;” “THE WHITE SLAVE.”

VOL. II.

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CHAPTER I.

MICKIEWICZ THE POET.

THE PSEUDO PROPHET TOVIANSKI, AND HIS SECT.

ADAM MICKIEWICZ (pronounced Mitzkiavitch,) one of the first, if not the first of Polish poets, distinguished in almost as great a degree by his erudition and eloquence as by his genius, was long the pride of Poland, and the glory of the emigration, which he had joined.

Exiled from the university of Vilna to the Crimea, at the time of Novosiltsoff's persecution, he was subsequently allowed to proceed to Moscow and St. Petersburg, where he became intimate with the Russian poet, Pushkin. He was thence permitted to travel to Italy, and from Italy he came to join his exiled countrymen in France, after the suppression of their revolution.

Mitzkiavitch was a favourite with his countrymen of every shade of opinion. Independent of the admiration which they felt in common for his learning and his genius, the religious party were full of sympathy for his profoundly christian feeling ; the monarchial and aristocratic portion found in him an enthusiast for their chivalric glories, and the democratic section of his compatriots were delighted with his generous and liberal tendencies. In fact, the ideas of this remarkable man, if not cosmopolitan, were rather Slavonic than Polish ; his views always extended beyond the mere Polish family, and though his attention was chiefly drawn towards the sufferings of Poland, far from ever confounding the instrument with the hand directing it, or giving way to a natural hatred to the Muscovites, he always showed himself full of solicitude as to their future.

The renown he had acquired led the French ministry (at the instigation, I believe, of M. de Montalembert) to propose to the chambers the establishment for him of a professor's chair of Slavonic literature in Paris, which was offered in the most flattering manner to the first of Polish poets.

Mitzkiavitch, setting at defiance all the peculiar

prejudices of his country, had married a beautiful Jewess. The miseries of the state of exile in which they were living before the provision appropriately and handsomely made for him by the French senate, had, however, so far preyed upon her mind that she went mad.

After watching her with unremitting care and attention, the poet, hopeless of her recovery, placed her in the environs of Paris, where he could visit her in every hour of leisure allowed by his professional duties.

Mitzkiavitch, a man of fervent piety, of critical acumen, and of unimpeachable veracity, relates, that musing in the dusk of evening, he was suddenly startled by perceiving a figure seated at the other end of the sofa upon which he was sitting. Fancying himself alone, he was surprised at the presence of another person, who proved to be a stranger, and for whose apparition, he says, that he has never been able up to this day to account. On inquiring his pleasure, this unexpected visitant replied in Polish, to the effect that he had just come from Poland, directed by the Almighty to find out the poet, and to cure the insanity of his wife.

The professor at once conceived that the stranger

was labouring under some hallucination, but his manner was so mild, his insistence so persevering, that, struck by the singularity of his announcement, and perhaps willing to obtain some opinion as to the case of his compatriot, which for him was one of peculiarly painful interest, was induced to accede to his request; and led him to the asylum in which his wife was confined.

No sooner was he introduced into the presence of the poet's lady, than he declared her to be from that moment sane; and, strange to say, her restoration to her senses became so obvious, that the delighted husband was enabled to take her home, where from that hour up to the present she has experienced no relapse.

This circumstance, attributable to numerous natural causes, produced so profound an impression on the mind of Mitzkiavitch,—no doubt already disturbed by study and misfortune,—that he listened further to the stranger, and was induced to believe in the reality of his divine mission, which was, perhaps, purposely based upon a theory his previous researches had led him to adopt.

The new prophet,—for he pretends to nothing less than to the gift of prophecy—is a Lithuanian, about fifty years of age, named Tovianski.

Unprepossessing, it is said, in appearance, and divested of persuasive power, he succeeded, by the conversion of Mitzkiavitch, in appropriating his glowing eloquence, his erudition and his poesy.

The glaring absurdities of Tovianski's system excited more wonder than ridicule, when shared by so great an authority ; whilst at the same time they were rendered plausible by the genius of his new disciple.

The studies of the learned had recently led them to rebut the opinion long entertained, that the Slavonic race only dated its settlement in Europe from a period subsequent to the establishment of the Germans. Lelewel had first shown them to have occupied Europe in the time of the Greek and Roman republic, long prior to the westward emigrations of the numerous tribes which overflowed it. Mitzkiavitch went further, for he assumed the Slavonians to be the direct descendants of the Assyrians, and proved the striking affinity of the Slavonic dialect to all that is left to us of their language ; which, at the same time, he demonstrates clearly to be totally distinct from the Hebrew or Chaldean.

This theory, into which we shall enter at greater length in comparing the Slavonic and Germanic

people, Tovianski had adopted, as well as other historic conclusions to which Mitzkiavitch had been led by his researches.

The Slavonians, Tovianski contended, were the Sur or Syrians of old, a branch of the Assur or Assyrian race, swept off from the face of Asia, at the time of the destruction of Nineveh and Babylon, and doomed (as afterwards the Hebrews were) to a long course of expiation, which they have for the last thirty centuries undergone, in the shape of incessant servitude under every form. Neither Poland at the time of its independence, nor Russia in its present ascendancy, it is argued, offer any exception; because, in neither country was the dominant class of Slavonic origin, however now blended with the people.

The term of this long expiation he declared, however, to be now drawing to a close: an announcement which appeared to meet with confirmation, in the fact that so many Slavonic nations, after remaining sunk in the torpor of apathy for centuries, seemed to be awakening to a sense of their existence, and of the confraternity of their different branches. Tovianski was the prophet chosen by Heaven to announce this truth to the world, and he had been directed in

a vision to seek out Mitzkiavitch. Very far from quarrelling with the prophets who had preceded him, this new light added many more to their number. Mankind, he declared to have been enlightened by a continuous stream of revelation; and amongst the last chosen to communicate this heavenly light, he counts Napoleon, Byron, and Pushkin; though admitting that they were not quite true to their mission.

Tovianski, a man without either imagination or eloquence, never wrote anything but a small pamphlet of about twelve pages, subjoined in the appendix,—a tissue of obscurity and absurdity, which, if at first made public, would probably never have procured him a single proselyte. He very prudently, however, at first contented himself with the conversion of Mitzkiavitch, who began to pave the way for the annunciation of his doctrine, in a series of brilliant lectures on Slavonic literature, in which he brought all his ingenuity, his learning, and his persuasive powers to bear, leading his auditors by a *facile decensus* to the point at which he thought first to allude to, and then boldly to avow his object.

It is only by recalling, that the erudition and genius of Mitzkiavitch were so generally acknow-

ledged that a professor's chair was established for him by a foreign government, and the influence of his reputation and virtue, so great that his suggestion sufficed to found a religious community, still flourishing, that one can form a fitting idea of the consternation of the whole Polish emigration, when the obscurities which had recently puzzled them in the last lectures of the professor, were solved by his distinct avowal, which left no doubt of the monstrous aberration of his reason.

Nevertheless, the new sect recruited about sixty followers, between Poles and Frenchmen.

Whilst all parties unite to regret the humiliating and painful loss experienced in him, his past life, and the sacrifices he has made in the adoption of the new creed, leave no doubt as to the sincerity of his belief, which can only proceed from that derangement of his vast and highly sensitive mind, towards which some tendency appears to be discernible in his previous writings, and which of late years appears to have been incessantly and painfully affected, both by the calamities of his country, and by those of a domestic nature which have assailed him.

As to the prophet Tovianski, some incline to

believe him to be an enthusiast ; others judge him to be a Russian agent, whose object was to work on the religious melancholy by which many of the Poles have become affected in their exile, for the purpose of throwing discredit on the Polish cause ; and in which he must in that case have succeeded far beyond his most sanguine expectations.

It is at least certain, that Tovianski, an obscure Lithuanian lawyer, was always on good terms with the Russian government, having taken no part in the Polish revolution, in which he says that he was forbidden by a celestial vision to interfere ; and throughout his conduct, there is an appearance of as much cunning as fanatical hallucination.

However this may be, the ice once broken, his partisans quickly summoned the archbishop of Paris to give up his crosier and make place for better men ; and hence from one act of madness to another, Tovianski is said to have alluded to the Emperor Nicholas as the Slavonic man of destiny, and to have proposed that his disciples should make their submission to him ; assuring them that though still wandering in darkness, he will shortly be converted to the true light.

We shall now give to the reader some account,

and extracts of two of the most celebrated poems of Mitzkiavitch, the Conrad Wallenrode, and **The** Dzijady; the one written during his exile in Russia, the other, when his reputation was at its zenith.

CHAPTER II.

POLISH POETRY.

THE DZJADY ; OR, FEAST OF THE DEAD.

BY MITZKIAVITCH.

Impression of St. Petersburg on the Exile—The Vision of the Priest Peter—The Dream of the Imperial Senator—The Delirious Improvisation of the Dying Student—The Senator and the Blind Mother.

There exists amongst the Polish peasantry, a superstitious custom called the Dzijady, derived from the times of paganism, when after the feast and sacrifice, the sacrificator was supposed to hold converse with the manes of the departed. Christianity tolerated this heathen ceremonial with disdainful indifference, being as unable to suppress it, as to eradicate from some parts of the United Kingdom, the popular traditions and belief in fairies, or to discredit, in rural districts, the horse-shoe nailed over the door for luck.

On a certain day of the year, the peasantry assemble, and having offered up meat and drink to the spirits of the departed, under the presidency of one of their number, chosen to officiate, they burn tufts of flax or hemp, and he then solemnly addresses the disembodied souls of their friends and kinsmen; inquiring whether anything can be done for them, and how they fare in the world of shadows.

Mitzkiavitch has appropriated the superstition of the Dzijady, not only as being peculiarly national, but as giving him, in the patriotic poem which bears that name, the opportunity of evoking from the graves in which their wrongs are buried, many of the victims of Russian oppression.

This poem, as original and dramatic as Dante's *Inferno*, may in some measure be compared to it for conception and design, but in execution it is full of the same wildness and mysticism as Goëthe's *Faust* and Krasinski's *Infernal Comedy*. Whilst like the *Faust*, full of that obscurity which Byron in his *Manfred* has proved to be by no means necessarily allied to the most weird and shadowy beauty in compositions of this nature, the *Dzijady* contains also thoughts and passages of the utmost sublimity. It possesses besides an interest in which the pre-cited poems are wanting, as being a sort of chronicle, not only of the

sufferings of the poet, but of his people. It mirrors in many parts the deeply religious feeling, the agony, the fears, and even the doubts of his nation. Mitzkiavitch was himself imprisoned in the persecution of the youth of Vilna, by Novosiltsof, which he describes; and the insanity to which the poet student is driven, has been afterwards so strangely realised in his own person, that one may almost doubt whether in writing the improvisation of the dying youth, he was not recording some temporary aberration of his own mind. The *Dzjady* is divided into several parts, of which the first were written during his exile in Russia,—the latter since he had joined the emigration; and these are therefore by far the most interesting, as all referring directly to subjects comparatively modern, and because he therein gives openly the impressions which, at the time of writing the first portions of his poem, he could only allow to colour it.

For instance, having led one of the exiles through Russia to St. Petersburg, he describes with singular truth, the aspect of that capital, and records the effect produced under similar circumstances upon himself. It is perhaps necessary to inform the reader, that the inscriptions

which appear upon the walls, are literally correct. Though the change of fashion since 1827 has banished these lengthy incongruous announcements from the doors and sign-boards, the monstrous inversion of all social order, according to the standard of our civilisation, which they indicate, remains unchanged. The imperial coachman, who drives the emperor in livery, is a colonel in the army; and the advancement of a professor and of a general is still obtained through the protection of a favourite's nursery-maid.

ASPECT OF ST. PETERSBURG.

I.

In the classic days of Greece and Rome, men raised
Their dwellings near the temples of the gods,
Beside the fountains of the Nymphs; amid the sacred
groves,
Or upon hills Capitoline, protective from the foe.*

II.

Thus Athens, Rome, and Sparta rose.
In the Gothic age, the strong baronial tower
Gave shelter to the neighbourhood, and the cottage
Was reared adhering to the rampart walls.
Then on some navigable river's bank

Vast cities gathered with the march of time :
But it was through the godhead or the hero,
Or through man's willing industry, they ever grew.

III.

But how did Russia's capital originate ?
Why myriads of Slavonians
Crowd they into this corner of their territory
So recently conquered from the sea and from the Finn ?
Here the earth yields not either fruit or corn,
The wind brings with it only snow or waves,
The climate now too hot, and now too cold,
Is terrible and changeful as a despot's mood.

IV.

Men did not choose this unpropitious spot,—
This morass pleased the Tsar, and he ordained
A city to be raised, not for mankind, but him.
A Tsar has here displayed his mighty power.

V.

He spoke, and in the quicksand and the bog,
They drove a hundred thousand solid piles,
They sank the bones of a hundred thousand men,
Then on these piles and Muscovite skeletons,
The surface laid ; another multitude
He yoked to cars and barges. Blocks and beams
He brought from distant shores and over seas.

VI.

He had seen Paris, and he reared Parisian sites ;
 Remembering Amsterdam, he gathered waters ;
 He had heard that Rome had gorgeous palaces,—
 Palaces rise ; Venice, which like a virgin syren stands
 In water to the waist, his fancy struck,
 And so through swampy fields he cuts canals,
 Suspends the bridge, and makes the gondola float.
 Thus he constructs a Venice—Paris—London ;
 But without their beauty, their civilisation, or their life.

VII.

'Tis said by architects, that men built Rome, and angels
 Venice,—
 But he who sees St. Petersburg, will deem
 That it can only be the work of Satan's hands.

VIII.

Streets run towards the river long and wide
 As mountain defiles. Giant houses stand ;
 Here brick, there stone, marble on clay, and clay on
 marble piled,
 But uniform as soldiers newly dressed, the roof and walls
 alike ;
 With many inscriptions on these walls in many tongues.
 Startled by all these languages, the eye wanders as over
 a new Babel.
 Here it reads : “ Achmet Khan of the Kirguise lives

here, governor of the department of Polish affairs. Senator;" — further, — "Ici Monsieur Joko donne des leçons de langue, avec accent de Paris. Il est en même temps cuisinier de la cour; receveur de la régie des eaux de vie; basse de l'orchestre, et surveillant des écoles;"* — next, — "Here lodges the Italian, Paolo Gioco, who formerly made sausages for the ladies of the imperial court, and now keeps a young ladies' school;" — or else in German, — "Residence of the Reverend Doctor Deiner, knight of several imperial orders. Notice. — In his next sermon from the pulpit, the Reverend Doctor will set forth how the Tsar and Pope derives from God his authority as autocratic master of our faith and conscience. — He invites his Calvinistic, Socinian, and Anabaptist brethren, (thereby conforming to the will of the emperor, and of his faithful ally the king of Prussia,) to accept the new faith, and to unite with him in the fraternity of religious communion."

The following extract, referring to the persecution of Novosiltzof, in some measure exposes the belief then entertained by many of the Poles, and since fervently adopted by the author of the *Dzjady*, that Poland was doomed to a long expiation.

* Here Monsieur Joko gives lessons in languages, teaching the true Parisian accent. He is at the same time court cook; receiver for the brandy farm; bass of the orchestra, and superintendent of schools.

THE VISION OF THE PRIEST.

Scene.—Cell of the Priest Peter. He is lying stretched upon the ground.

Oh Lord, what am I in thine eyes but dust and nothingness? I confess my nothingness, I confess that I am but dust; yet even that dust I am, hast thou called to hold communion with thee.

HIS VISION.

The tyrant has arisen. Herod is arisen. Oh Lord, is all young Poland given into Herod's hands? What do I see? White roads which cross each other,—unending, weary roads! Through deserts and through snows they lead towards the north.

See, see! that crowd of vehicles, like a cloud driven by the wind. They all take the same direction. Oh Lord! within them are our children,—there in the north, then is their destination, and their fate is—exile! Wilt thou permit that they be thus cut off, in the flower of their youth? Wilt thou allow even this last offshoot of Poland to be annihilated? What do I see? Oh! that child at least is saved! He grows apace. This is the avenger who shall resuscitate his people. He is the son of a foreign mother, *but his blood is the old blood of a heroic race, and his name is—Forty-four!*"

The poet here refers to the custom which deprives exiles to Siberia of their name, for which a number

is substituted. The vision then continues to typify the persecution of Poland, by the Saviour's passion.

Wilt thou not, oh Lord! hasten his advent? wilt thou not comfort my people?—No! my people must fulfil its sacrifice! I see the host of tyrants and of executioners seize and bind it. All Europe casts the stone at it. To the judgment-seat! The crowd hurries off the innocent victim to the judgment-seat. Men with mouths, not hearts, sit there; yea, such are its judges. "The Gaul! The Gaul! shout the multitude! The Gaul shall judge it! The Gaul has not found it guilty; he washes his hands of it; but the princes shout, Condemn it! Let it suffer! and be its blood upon our heads and upon our children's! Crucify the Son of Mary, and deliver Barrabas! Crucify him! for he has offended Cæsar.

The Gaul hath delivered him up. My people is led away. It rears its innocent brow, wreathed in derision, with a crown of thorns.

Its cross has arms which are the width of Europe. It is formed of three withered people like of three dried up boughs.

The poet, after making allusion to the illusory independence of the crown of Poland, here points to the three Polish people,—the Poles, the Lithuanians, and the Little Russians.

My people is dragged away, behold! Behold it on the throne of expiation! It says,—I thirst! Rakus (Austria) gives it vinegar, Borus (Prussia) gall; whilst Liberty, its mother, sobs at the foot of its cross.

Behold! the Muscovite soldier cometh, lance in hand! and he sheds the innocent blood from the side of my people.

What hast thou done, oh most barbarous and stupid of executioners? And yet he shall become converted, and God will accord him pardon.

In thus apostrophising the Muscovite people, Mitzkiavitch, besides distinguishing between the despotism and its instrument, already expresses the conviction, from which he has never swerved, of its eventual regeneration.

We shall now introduce the Russian pro-consul, Novosiltsof. He is asleep, and the demons torture him with tantalising illusions:—

VISION OF THE SENATOR.

A dispatch! addressed to me? In his imperial majesty's hand! An autograph! Ah! Ah! a hundred thousand roubles; or an order. Here, hand it to me, lacquey. How! The title of prince! What will you say to that, grand marshal? They will all die of envy (*He turns on his bed*). So we are in the emperor's

antechamber! They are all waiting too. They bow low to me, they fear me. The marshal, the chief controller is hardly to be known, with such a face. Oh! what a grateful murmur,—what a grateful murmur to my ear, is that I hear around me. Here is the senator, the senator in favour—in favour—in—favour. Oh, to die in such an ecstasy would be like reposing within the arms of my courtesans. Every one bends humbly to me,—I am the soul of this assembly. All eyes are on me, all hearts envy me. (*He turns.*) The Tsar. His imperial majesty. Here is the Tsar. Heavens! Not a glance for me! Yes, he frowns! He looks askance at me. Oh, sire! Oh! I cannot speak, my utterance fails me. Oh, what a shudder comes over me! What a cold sweat I am in! a death-like chillness. Ah, marshal! What! The marshal turns his back upon me. Senator! Officer of the court! Oh I am dying! more than dead,—I am dust, eaten by the worms, devoured by sarcasms. Ha! every one avoids me! What a solitude! That rascally chamberlain smiles in my very face. That smile of his was to me like a spider creeping into my mouth! Ah, what was that, a pun on my misfortune? Oh tormenting fly, it buzzes round my nose like a wasp! (*He endeavours to drive the fly from his nose*). Ha! epigrams, railing sarcasms! insects that rush into my ear. Oh, my ear, my ear! (*He scratches his ear*). What is that? The very gentlemen of the bed-chamber hoot at me like

owls. The ladies' trains rustle like the rattle of the snake. Oh, what a hideous outcry! What bursts of laughter! What are they shouting out? The senator disgraced! disgraced! disgraced!

(He rolls in anguish from his bed upon the ground.

* * * * *

The next scene is the rhapsody of a youthful poet, driven to delirium by the persecution he has experienced. It is sublime as a mere composition, representing a poetic imagination, broken from the moorings of reason, and tossed about by all the fitful fancies of insanity—by the ambitious pride of the poet, and the harrowed feelings of the patriot, and exhaling itself in the wild and unmeasured melody of the æolian harp.

It derives, however, a fearful and permanent interest, which can never attach to fiction, in being the representation of a terrible reality,—as expressing a state of mind which was common amongst the Polish youth of that period.

Young men of ardent temperaments, pious, generous, studious, and devoted, witnessing so long the cruel persecution of the virtuous, and the triumph of glaring vice and oppression; when wearied out with humiliations and barbarous treatment, were driven to doubt and blasphemy;

betwixt which, and a sense of the impiety of their despair, the noblest minds oscillated and were shattered.

The poet-student is dying in his dungeon at Vilna; on each side of his pallet is a good and evil spirit; in his delirium he makes the following

IMPROVISATION.

Solitude! yet why the crowd! what is mankind to the poet?

Where is he who will ever comprehend the full thought of my song;

Whose glance will ever compass all its meaning?

Oh, my song, — unfortunate! wasting thy voice and language upon men.

Thy voice wants words, and yet thy voice suffices not to thy thought.

Thought wings its way entire out of the soul, before it scatters into words;

And words only engulfing thought, quiver over it,

Like the vaulted earth above a subterranean and invisible river.

What know men of the depth of these dark waves, by the tremor of the earth above?

What know they thus of the direction of the unseen torrent?

II.

For feeling vibrates in the soul, blazing from a spark,
 As the blood circulates in the hidden veins of the body,
 And so much of my blood as men can see by looking in
 my face,
 So much will they see of my feeling in my song.

III.

Yes, thou my song art the star, beaming above the world,
 Which the terrestrial glance when seeking
 Even with wings of glass*
 Fails to attain. It only just discerns thy milky way,
 And judges it to be a crowd of suns ;
 But it cannot count, it cannot measure them.

IV.

To thee, my song ! man's eyes and ears are needless.
 Flow on in the depths of my soul, illuminate its heights,
 Like the subterranean rivers, or the stars of Heaven.
 Oh God ! Oh nature ! listen to me both, my strain is
 worthy of you !
 My song is worthy of you !
 I, the master.
 Hark ! I extend my arms, I stretch my hands upon the
 stars,

* The telescope,

Like on the glasses of the harmonicon,
 Now with a motion rapid, and now slow,
 I make my soul's star vibrate,
 There flow from it a million tones, and of this million
 tones,
 'Twas I drew every one! Each one I know;
 I accord them all, I divide, I mix them,
 I pour them out in harmonies and streams of lightning.

IV.

I withdraw my hand, I raise it far above the world,
 And the harmonicon's glasses cease in their vibration.
 I sing alone. I listen to my own strains.
 They are long and gushing as the motion of the winds,
 They blow over all the human race,—
 They moan, they roar like to the tempest,
 And the age hoarsely accompanies the sound,
 And every tone resounds and bursts,—
 Freezes within mine ear, strikes frozen on mine eye.
 Even as the winds which rock the waters,
 By its whistlings I discern its flight,
 And I see it clad in clouds.
 Oh yes, of nature's God my song is worthy,
 It is a mighty strain—the lay of the creation.
 This song is power, it is valour!
 This song is immortality!
 For I feel immortality—I create immortality!

And what canst thou do more, oh God ?
See how I draw these thoughts from my own being,
How incarnated in words they fly,
How they scatter themselves abroad beneath the hea-
vens ;
How they whirl round, disport, and lightan.
Far off already, but I feel them still, delectating in their
beauty.
My soul divines their motions.
I love you, my poetic children !
Thoughts of my own ! my stars ! my sentiments !
Storms of my soul ! I stand amongst ye like a father
midst his children.
Ye are all mine own !

v.

Ye poets all, ye sages, and ye prophets,
Worshipped through this wide world,
I trample ye in scorn !
If all the praises, all the loud applause
Which greet ye, ye could recognise as meet
With every burst of glory of each day,
Which ever has flashed ray-like from your crowns,
With all that melody, and all the splendour of those
crowns,
Gather'd through countless centuries, and from innumer-
able generations,

Still ye would not possess as much of happiness, as much
 of power,
 As I feel in this solitary night,
 Thus breathing out my song within myself,
 Breathing my song out to myself alone.
 Yes, I am mighty, sensitive, and wise ;
 Never did I feel stronger than this hour ;
 This is my zenith, and to-day my power is self-surpassing ;
 This day I shall learn whether I am the most great or
 the most vain ;
 This day is the predestined moment ;
 This day I strain the strength of my whole soul ;
 This is Sampson's hour,
 When blind and captive, he leaned against the pillar in
 meditation.
 Casting off the body, sprite-like will I wing my way,
 Because I long to soar ;
 And soar I will up midst the planets and the stars,
 Until I reach the bourne, where creation touches its
 Creator's feet !

VI.

And they are mine ! Those all-sufficient wings spread
 east and west ;
 The right wing strikes the past, the left wing strikes the
 future ;
 And thus they bear me within love's boundary—up to
THEE ;

There will I scrutinise what Thou feelest—
Thou of whom 'tis said that thou dost feel in heaven.
Lo! I am here, I have reached thee, see how great
 my power ;
My unwearying wing hath borne me up to thee.
But I am only man, and in my country I have left my
 heart behind.

VII.

And if my love hath not embraced the world,
It hath not, like an insect on a rose-leaf,
Reposed upon one human being,
Nor on one family, nor on one age ;
My love is for a nation, I embrace
Its generations past, and those to come,
And press them to my bosom,
As lover, spouse, friend, father, all in one.
I would uphold them, I would yield them bliss ;
Make them a marvel to the wondering world ;
And as I have not the means, I seek it here.
I have come armed with the strength of thought,
That thought which stole the thunderbolts from heaven,
Which followed in their motions all thy planets, and
 dived into the abyss of thy deep seas.
Moreover, with that power not often man's,
That inborn sensitiveness self-condensed,
Which sometimes burst volcano-like into words.

VIII.

This power I did not snatch from Eden's tree,
The tree of conscious right and wrong ;
Neither from books, nor from traditions,
Nor by solving problems intricate,
Nor from the science of the astrologer.
Born to create, this power come unto me, as thine to

THEE,—

For thou didst never seek it.
Thou hast not feared it should depart,
Nor do I fear to lose it.
Was it thou who gavest, or did I draw from the same
source as thee,
That rapid glance, so mighty in my hour of strength,
That when I look into the vapoury clouds,
And mark the wild birds skimming by,
With wings in the distance scarce perceptible,
At will my gaze arrests them like a net ?
Staid in their flight, they may raise the note of woe,
But thy winds waft not on, if I say nay.
Into the comet I gaze with my soul's strength,
And till I cease the comet, there is fixed ;
There is only man degraded and defiled,—
Man, who is nothing,— weak and mortal man,—
Who disobeys,— who will not recognise me,—who will
not recognise us,—
Thee and me,

'Tis against man, I come to seek a power,
Up here in heaven,—
That power which over nature I enjoy.
I wish to act upon the soul of man,
As I control the planets and the birds,
Through my steadfast gaze ;
Thus I would rule my fellow men ;
And not by arms, for arms by arms are shivered ;
And not through the effect of song, for that is slow ;
And not through science, which rots within itself ;
And not by miracles, which speak too loud ;—
I would govern them through the power I feel within me,
And like thee, govern in an occult way.
That which I will, it shall be man's to guess ;
That let him do, and happy he shall be ;
But if he dares neglect it,
Then let him suffer,—let him perish.
Mankind shall be to me like the thoughts and words,
Which when I will, I blend into my song.
And so 'tis said thou governest.
Thou knowest I have not wronged my thoughts or voice,
And if thou givest me power like thine, over souls,
I will create my nation like a living song ;
And working out a greater miracle,
Make it a song of triumph and of joy.
Give me the rule of souls ; for I despise so much
The inert creation which the crowd calls " world,"
Which it is wont to praise, that I disdain to try

Whether my word cannot wither it.
 But this I feel,
 Were I to concentrate and strain my strength, sending it
 forth at once,
 Who knows but I might quench or light a hundred stars ?
 I am immortal, in creation's range ;
 Other beings are immortal, but I have met none greater.
 The greatest is in heaven ; and I have come to seek thee,
 I the most great of those who have suffered in this
 terrestrial vale.
 I have not met thee yet. As yet I only guess thou art ;
 So let me see thee, that I may recognise thy superiority ;
 It is for power I ask thee, give it me, or point me out
 the way which thereunto leads ;
 For I have heard of prophets, and of men who guided
 souls,
 And I believe in them ; but that which they could, that
 I too can do.
 It is power like unto thine own I crave of thee—
 To govern souls like thee that I aspire.

A long silence.

(Ironically) Still silent ? silent still ?—but now I know
 thee, I divine thee ;
 I have fathomed what thou art, and how thou rulest ;
 Thou false one, who didst say that thou wert Love,
 And who art only Wisdom !
 Men know thee through the brain, not through the
 heart,—

Through thought, not love, they reach thine arsenal.
The man who hath immersed himself in books,
In numbers, metallurgy, or in corpses,
Alone hath gained some fragments of thy power :
He will find poisons, gunpowder, and steam ;
He will find the smoke, the explosion, and the roar ;
He will discover legitimacy and perfidy,
To use against the ignorant and the learned ;
Thou hast given this wide world to the uses of thought,
Leaving the heart to do eternal penance.
Even to me thou hast given the shortest life,
And sensibility the most acute.

(Silence.)

What is that inward feeling of my soul ?

Only a spark.

What is my life ?

Only an instant.

What are those lightnings which will blaze this day ?

A spark.

What is the course of all past centuries ?

An instant.

Whence comes man—the microcosm ?

From a spark.

What is that death which will destroy the wealth of all
my thoughts ?

A moment.

What was HE when the world was in his bosom ?

Only a spark.

What will be the eternity of the world when he destroys it?

An instant.

THE EVIL SPIRIT.

I bestride his soul
Like a flying steed,
On, on,
Speed, speed!

GOOD SPIRIT.

Oh in his delirium
Shield him now !
Let me flap my wing
O'er his burning brow !

KONRAD *continues.*

The moment and the spark prolonged or kindling,
Are that which creates and destroys.

Well, well ! let us prolong the instant, give it room.

Well, well ! let us blow the spark into a blaze.

It is done. Yes, now once more I summon **THEE** —

Once more as to a friend I lay thee bare my soul.

What silent still ? yet thou didst personally combat Satan.

Solemnly I adjure thee !

Despise me not ; I am not alone, though I alone am here:

My heart which is on earth is the brother of a people,

And were I to become blasphemers, [Satan's.

I would engage a struggle with thee more terrible than

He assailed thee with the arms of reason, I would assail

thee with the arms of love ;

For I have loved and suffered, I have grown indeed

'midst love and pain.

And when thou didst ravish from me all my happiness

I beat my hands on my own breast till they were bloody,
But raised them not up in reproach to thee !

EVIL SPIRIT.

The steed to the bird
I am changing ;
Up, up, let him soar
On the eagle's wing.

GOOD SPIRIT.

Falling star !
What delirium sinks thee
Into the abyss so far ?

KONRAD *continues.*

Now my soul is incarnate in my country,
The body hath devoured the soul ;
I and my country, we are one,
My name is million. Because for the million
I love and I endure ;
I regard my country
As the son his father stretched upon the rack,
And I feel all the woes of all my nation,
Even as a mother suffers with the pains of the unborn.
Oh, I endure until my reason totters, whilst THOU
wisely and placidly,
Thou governest on !
Thou judgest on !
And it is said unerringly.
Hear me ! if it be true
That which with filial faith
I listened to, and believed, on coming into life,
That thou lovest, that thou didst love whilst engendering
this world,

That thou hast paternal love for that thou hast engendered.
 If thou didst show this love by shutting up that number
 of created things within the ark,
 Saving them from the deluge,—
 If thy heart be not a monster,
 Chance-born, which never can attain maturity—
 If beneath thy rule the feeling of the heart be not disorder,
 If in millions of men, appealing to thee, crying to thee
 for succour,
 Thou dost not look as on an arithmetic problem,—
 If love be of any worth,
 Then love is not an error of figures.

EVIL SPIRIT.

I change the eagle to a hy-
 dra,
 I pluck out his eyes
 Midst the blaze and the
 cloud,
 Midst the thunder loud
 Up, up, to assail, let him
 rise!

GOOD SPIRIT.

Comet of error,
 Whither wending?
 Where detached from the
 pure sun
 Where will cease thy
 course of terror?
 Never ending! never end-
 ing!

KONRAD *continues.*

Still silent! well, I have laid thee bare my heart to its
 profoundest depths,
 Give it that power I do implore thee; only its poor share,
 That share which upon earth ambitious pride inherits.

Oh how much happiness will I therewith create !
 Thou answerest not, thou wilt not give it to the heart,
 thou reservest it for reason,
 And yet dost thou not in me see the first of men and
 angels,
 Who knows thee better than thy archangels know thee ?
 Worthy that thou shouldst with him share thy power ?
 Say have I not divined thee ?
 Answer me ! what — still silent ? I say truly,
 Thou art silent, because confiding in thine arm !
 Beware ! love will consume what reason cannot blast ;
 Behold the focus of this inward feeling ;
 See how I gather it up, condensing it to render it more
 burning !
 Well, I can scatter it, terribly expanding, like the black
 charge in the destroying tube.

EVIL SPIRIT.

On ! on !

GOOD SPIRIT.

Mercy ! pity.

Answer me, or I will discharge this engine against nature ;
 And if I cannot lay thee low in ruin,
 The powers and dominations shall all tremble ;
 My voice shall ring through all the spheres of the creation,
 My voice shall go from generation to generation,
 Thundering out that thou art not the Father of the world,
 but

EVIL SPIRIT (*suggests*) The Tsar ! !(KONRAD *at this moment totters and falls.*)

FIRST OF THE EVIL SPIRITS.

Strike ! trample !

SECOND OF THE EVIL SPIRITS.

Still he breathes.

FIRST SPIRIT.

He faints, he faints ! let us strangle him ere he recovers.

GOOD SPIRIT.

Back ! He is being prayed for.

EVIL SPIRITS.

Lo ! we are driven away !

The last scene which we shall cite from the *Djady*, is chiefly remarkable for the picture it gives of the persecution of the Polish youth. The correctness of the details have led the Poles to regard its dramatic character with an admiration to which it is perhaps hardly entitled ; though with a foreign reader, the circumstance of the acknowledged accuracy of the portraiture, by an eye-witness, may replace it by as profound an interest. The very episode of the death of the Doctor struck by lightning, beside a pile of roubles extorted from his victims, is literally true, as well as the whole scene in all its details.

*Scene.— Vilna. The apartment of the Russian Senator,
Novosiltzoff.*

Dramatis Personæ.

NOVOSILTZOFF.

GENERAL BAYKOW.

PELIKAN, *rector of the university of Vilna.*

DOCTOR and SERVANTS.

PELIKAN *to the* SENATOR.

Sir Senator, what do you intend to do with Rollison ?

SENATOR.

With Rollison ?

PELIKAN.

Yes, with the political prisoner, who was scourged to day at his examination ?

SENATOR.

Well ?

PELIKAN.

He has fallen ill.

SENATOR (*laughing.*)

Why, how many lashes did he receive ?

PELIKAN.

I cannot say though I was present. They were not counted. It was Mr. Botvinka who presided at his interrogation.

BAYKOW.

Botvinka, was it? Ha! ha! ha! He has had enough of it then, I warrant me. When Botvinka sets to work, I will pound it but he has taken villainous care of him. Let us bet that he was not let off with less than three hundred lashes.

THE SENATOR (*laughing*).

Three hundred lashes! Three hundred lashes without dying? Why what a Jacobinical back! Even with us, cutaneous toughness does not reach so far. The rogue must have a well tanned hide, my friend! ha! ha! ha! ha!

(*Enter a Lacquey, who speaks to the Senator.*)

Sir, will you give audience to these ladies your excellency knows,—those who drive up here every day,—one is blind, and the other—

SENATOR.

Blind! Who is she?

LACQUEY.

Madame Rollison.

PELIKAN.

The mother of the rascal we were talking of.

LACQUEY.

They come daily, sir.

SENATOR.

You should have told them——

DOCTOR.

Go ; and the Lord help you.

LACQUEY.

Yes ; but then she sits down at the door and sobs. We have had her taken up ; but one cannot have a blind woman borne away by force. In fact the crowd was ready to set upon the soldiers. Shall I show her in ?

SENATOR.

What, you are embarrassed how to act in such a case ? I will show you :—Let her get half up the stairs,—you understand me ? Well, then, so—you will kick her all the way down ; and take my word for it, she will not trouble you again. (*Another Lacquey enters, and gives a letter to Baykow.*)

BAYKOW.

She is the bearer of a letter. (*He shows it.*)

SENATOR.

From whom ?

BAYKOW.

Perhaps from the princess.*

* Allusion is probably here made to the Princess of Lovicz.

SENATOR (*reads.*)

From the princess ! and how comes she to saddle us with her ? Show her in. (*Two ladies and the priest Peter are shown in.*)

SENATOR to BAYKOW.

So that old hag is his mother ? (*He turns politely to the ladies.*) Which of you is Madame Rollison ?

MADAME ROLLISON (*in tears*).

I am. Oh, my lord, my son !

SENATOR.

Allow me one moment. You are the bearer of this letter ; but why come to me so many ladies ?

SECOND LADY.

We are only two, sir.

SENATOR.

And what has procured me the honour of your visit, madam ?

SECOND LADY.

Madame Rollison could not find her way alone,—she does not see.

SENATOR.

Oh, she does not see? She finds by the scent then, I suppose; for every day she hunts me out.

SECOND LADY.

It is I who lead her here, sir; she is blind and ailing.

MADAME ROLLISON.

Oh! in Heaven's name!

SENATOR.

Hush! (*To the second lady.*) But what is your name, madam?

SECOND LADY.

Kmit.

SENATOR (*sternly*).

Madame Kmit, you had better stay at home and keep an eye to your own sons. Already some suspicion——

MADAME KMIT.

Oh heavens! what do you mean? (*The Senator laughs heartily at his joke.*)

MADAME ROLLISON.

My lord! in mercy! I am a widow, sir Senator; tell me, is it true that they have murdered him? Oh good

God! have they murdered my son? The abbé says that he still lives, but that he is expiring beneath the lash. My lord! who can have the heart to treat mere children so? Oh mercy! they tell me he is expiring beneath the executioner's hand. (*She sobs aloud.*)

THE SENATOR.

I do not understand you. Speak plainly, woman.

MADAME ROLLISON.

My son! Oh! my lord, I am a widow! how many years of tender watching it takes to rear a child! Already he gave lessons. Every one will tell you how good he was, how well he taught. I am but a poor woman, he supported me with his little earnings. I am blind, and he was eye-sight to me. My lord, I am starving now.

THE SENATOR.

If I can find out who spreads any such false reports, I will take care of him, I warrant you. Who told you, madam, that your son was being tortured?

MADAME ROLLISON.

Who told me? Have I not a mother's ear. And then sir I am blind, and all my soul is in my hearing. Yesterday he was taken to the Town-house. I heard his voice.

THE SENATOR (*to his servants.*)

Fools, did you let her in ?

MADAME ROLLISON.

Oh no, sir ! they drove me from the ante-chamber, from the door, out of the very yard ; but I sat me down outside, against the wall. Against the wall I leaned my ear. I was listening there from day-break. At midnight the city's hum was hushed. I listened still, and at midnight through the wall, I heard his voice ; as sure as there is a God in Heaven, I heard his voice, hollow and hoarse, as if it issued from the bowels of the earth. Oh, through the dense wall, where the most piercing eye could never penetrate, I heard his voice, and they were torturing him.

THE SENATOR.

She talks nonsense. Her head wanders. Why, madam, that place is full of prisoners.

MADAME ROLLISON.

What ! would you tell me that voice was not my child's ? Does not the ewe know well the bleating of her own lamb in the midst of the most numerous flock ? Oh sir ! if that sweet voice had ever rung in your ears as in mine, you would never more know rest.

THE SENATOR.

Your son must be in vigorous health, since he cried out so lustily.

MADAME ROLLISON (*falling on her knees*).

Oh sir! if you have a human heart!

(*At this moment the door opens, and a young woman in a gay ball dress comes to tell the SENATOR that the music is waiting for him in the drawing room.*)

MADAME ROLLISON.

Oh sir! leave me not in my despair, I will not let you go.

(*She siezes his knees.*)

THE LADY.

Why do you not grant her what she wants?

SENATOR.

Curse me if I know what the fury wants of me.

MADAME ROLLISON.

Oh I want to see my son!

SENATOR.

The emperor will not allow it.

MADAME ROLLISON (*to the Lady*).

Oh! my good lady, intercede for me! In the name of the Saviour's wounds, intercede for me! My poor son, he had already been twelve months on bread and water, hungry and naked, in his dark, damp dungeon.

THE LADY.

Is it possible ?

THE SENATOR. (*embarrassed*).

What, already a year ? I really did not know it.—(*To Pelikan.*) You must look into this business, and if it be really so, you must rate the commissioners soundly. (*To Madame Rollison.*) Set your mind at ease, madam, and return at seven o'clock.

MADAME KMIT.

Come, dry your tears, you will shed no more ; you see the Senator did not know your son's position ; he will now look into the affair, and doubtless cause him to be set at liberty.

MADAME ROLLISON.

He did not know of it ! He will now seek out the truth ! may God reward him for it ! Oh no, he is not as cruel as they say. How should he be ? for after all, God made him. He is a man, he had a mother who fed him with her milk.—Oh, they spoke falsehood, I was sure they did.

(*To the Senator.*)

You were then ignorant of what was going on. These assassins concealed it from your knowledge ? Believe me, sir, you have about you a set of monsters. Oh, why not always address yourself to us ? From us you would learn the truth—the whole truth.

THE SENATOR (*smiling.*)

Well, well, we can talk of that hereafter ; to-day I have not time. Fare you well ! Tell the princess I will do for her sake, all that lies in my power. (*politely.*) Good evening, Madame Kmit ; good evening, I will do all that lies in my power. (*Exit Madame ROLLISON and her friend. The Senator severely reprimands his domestics, for having allowed Madame ROLLISON to enter.*)

PELIKAN (*to the senator.*)

Well, my lord, what have you really decided about this Rollison ? If he should die

SENATOR.

Then bury him, my friend. I give you leave even to embalm his body, if it please you.

* * * * *

(*The scene has changed to a ball room. Suddenly piercing cries are heard, and the doors are thrown open.*)

MADAME ROLLISON (*at the door.*)

Let me go !

THE SECRETARY.

It is the blind woman again.

A LACQUEY (*without.*)

No, you cannot go in. Bless me how she climbs the stair-case ; how she clings to the bannister. Stop her ! stop her !

ANOTHER LACQUEY.

Stop her ? I cannot hold her.

MADAME ROLLISON.

He is here ! I shall find him out, the drunkard and the tyrant.

THE LACQUEY.

Ah, she is possessed by the devil—a raving maniac !

MADAME ROLLISON.

Where art thou ? ah, I will find thee out, I will crush thy head upon the stones. Tyrant ! my son, my son is dead !

(The unhappy mother has fainted at the conclusion of this scene ; she is supported by the priest Peter, and by a Starost, when a tremendous clap of thunder shakes the walls.)

ALL.

Good God, the lightning has struck the building !

SEVERAL VOICES.

The lightning ! the lightning !

THE PRIEST.

Not here.

One of the company, looking out of the window.

No, but a step from hence, it has struck the corner of the university.

CONRAD WALLENRODE.

THE SENATOR *advancing to the window.*

Those are the apartments of the Doctor.—Hark, do you not hear the screams of a woman?

A Passer-by in the street, exclaims, laughing.

Ha! ha! ha! The devil has carried him off!

PELIKAN *the rector, who had gone out to see what was the matter, bursts into the room in breathless agitation.*

THE SENATOR.

Our good doctor is hurt?

PELIKAN.

He is killed, blasted by the lightning.—By some unaccountable phenomenon, though there are ten conductors on the roof, the lightning penetrated to him. It has done no further damage,—it has only molten a few piles of roubles beside the desk which he was leaning on. No doubt the metal must have acted as a conductor for the electric fluid.

THE STAROST, *aside.*

There was always danger in these Russian roubles.

CHAPTER III.

CONRAD WALLENRODE.

The Conrad Wallenrode is not entirely a national poem, since only relating to the nationality of that portion of the Polish people contained in Lithuania.

Its object, at the time it was written, was no doubt to inspire his countrymen through the example of Conrad's irreconcilable enmity to the oppressors of his native land, with a similar feeling. But the treachery of Conrad has been censured as being essentially un-Polish in spirit, and one must render the Poles the justice to say, that they have been always more prone to open rebellion than to hidden conspiracy. Even in the most turbulent and lawless period of their history, assassination remained almost unknown; and even recently, when it had been proposed at the time of the emperor's coronation at Warsaw, to rid themselves of the whole im-

perial family, the members of a patriotic association would not resort to such a means.

The scene of Conrad Wallenrode is laid in Lithuania, at the time that the Teutonic knights of the sword were struggling to convert the aboriginal Letti to Christianity, as through the medium of that persuasive instrument, the Lives and Koures of the Baltic provinces were proselytized, or at least reduced to subjection.

Conrad is one of these Letti, or Lithuanians, who has been brought up from his youth by the crusaders who had massacred his parents. An old Lithuanian captive acquaints him with his real origin, and inspires him with sympathy for his countrymen, and with hatred for the Teutons. He escapes with his mentor, and finally marries the beautiful daughter of the Lithuanian king.

Here, where most authors would have terminated the poem, Mitzkiavitch only places its commencement; and, on reflection, we shall find this departure from the natural course, apparently traced out by the construction of his story, to be eminently characteristic of the Polish poet, and of the time in which he writes.

The intrusion of the intolerable woes of his country on the domestic happiness of his hero, must

have found an echo in thousands of Polish hearts. He cannot enjoy this unambitious felicity, because the sword and flame of the sanguinary Teutons comes unsparingly, to rouse even the unresisting.

His bride imagining that a world of unoccupied forests lies before them, proposes that they should fly eastward, and still eastward, as the enemy advances; till Conrad despondingly informs her that the Tartar and the Muscovite will soon in that direction arrest their retreat; and thus driven to despair in the terrible vengeance which he meditates, he returns to the crusaders.

Following some renowned knight to Spain, in combating the Saracens he acquires among the chivalry of that period an illustrious name, in consideration of which, he is received by the Teutonic knights of the sword, and elected their grand master. It is, in fact, with this election that the poem opens; the antecedents of the hero being developed as it proceeds.

Conrad has of course only sought the presidency of the order, to conduce to its eventual confusion and destruction.

The subject of his poem, that of a distinguished champion of a cause obtaining its confidence to betray it, recalls the plot of one of Frederick Soulié's

remarkable fictions, called, I think, the "Comte de Toulouse."

At the time of the barbarous crusade undertaken against the heretics of the south of France, under the command of the famous Simon de Montfort, a knight widely renowned for his valour has just returned from the Holy Land, and is introduced, as he approaches his father's castle, in conversation with his squire, a certain Goldery, half knave and half buffoon. Using the jester's privilege, he ventures to doubt of the existence of his master's castle, knowing what value to place on the asserted possessions of Gascon knights.

They are turning the angle of the road which the knight knows will open a vista of the feudal hold, when lo ! instead of the castle towering on its eminence, nothing meets his eye but the still smoking ruins of the razed building, amongst which several figures flit about in a state of bewilderment. One of these figures proves to be his dying sister, who has been dishonoured by the destroyers of the castle ; another is his aged father, whose tongue has been cut out, and who has been left amidst the dead bodies of his slaughtered vassals. This is the work of the crusading army. The fiery and impetuous knight, face to face with so sudden a misfortune takes his resolution with a calmness which is more

frightful than any violence in a man of his disposition, suffering so irreparable an injury. He goes to the crusades, and submits himself, consenting to have his sword broken, and his spurs chopped off, and to live as a *chevalier faidit*, or a dishonoured knight. This submission appears under the circumstance as incredible to the hesitating crusaders as to the reader. It is with the knight, however, the result of a deeply meditated plan of vengeance, of a diabolical malignity commensurate with his wrong. For this purpose he subsequently acquires the confidence of the crusaders as their champion against his heretic brethren. After the labour of years, when on the point of carrying his terrific projects of vengeance into execution on the family of the unsuspecting Simon de Montfort, he is unaccountably baffled in his attempt, and his intentions are discovered. To avoid the public scandal of exposing the duplicity of one become the right arm of the orthodox faith, his death is reported; and Simon de Montfort, to be revenged in turn, causes him to be bound and gagged so as to deprive him of the power of making the slightest motion, or of uttering the faintest sound; and in this position his living funeral takes place amidst all the pomp befitting so distinguished a soldier of the church. The very family of the Montforts, in simulated grief, scatter flowers upon

his pall, and he is left alone in the cathedral of Toulouse, to expire without power of sound or motion.

Nevertheless, he still congratulates himself that there exists a terrible document signed by the unworthy son of de Montfort, whereby consenting to his own father's death, which he still counts on as a terrible means of vengeance when it comes to that leader's knowledge.

The solitude of the cathedral in which he is left to die in so much ceremony, is disturbed by the arrival of Goldery, his page, who lifting the pall, comes to gaze at his master, and to triumph over him. Through him the deeply laid schemes of his lord have been baffled. All the irony of the knight, when he formerly treated the squire as his buffoon, all the blows his irritable and hasty temper had formerly caused him to inflict, long since by him forgotten, had been treasured in the squire's malignant soul. Whilst his master was pursuing his deeply laid schemes of vengeance, Goldery had achieved his own. Through him his master's plans had recoiled on his own head, and the squire had come to enjoy the gratification of taunting him in his last agony, and of destroying his last hope. Drawing forth the damning bond which Montfort's son had signed, he destroys this last

document by burning it to tinder on his master's heart. "The moral of all this," said the squire to the motionless and speechless knight, "is simply, never to make a confidence of your vengeance to another."

"Not even to the dying!" replied a voice behind him, and at that moment he was stretched dead by a descending sword. One of the confederates of the knight's treachery had come into the cathedral to relieve him, but when, having slain the squire, he came to unbind the knight, he found that he too was dead; his heart had burst with the violence of his emotion, when Goldery had burned the bond upon his chest.

In the Conrad Wallenrode, the daughter of the Lithuanian, whom he has abandoned after converting her to christianity, has found her way to Marienburg, the chief seat of the Teutonic knights. There she has caused herself to be walled into a cell in the flank of a tower, divided for ever in this living grave from all the world beyond, by a heavy grating; according to a custom sometimes adopted by ascetics in the middle ages. It is not, however, utterly in despair that the recluse has sought this awful refuge, but because in pursuance of his project of revenge against the Teutonic order, she is aware

that Conrad will some day return to Marienburg ; and accordingly, the new grand master is made nightly to visit her cell, strangely divided betwixt his affection and his hatred.

This woman, voluntarily immured for ever in a hideous cell, calls at once to mind the mother of Esmeralda in Victor Hugo's *Nôtre Dame de Paris*.

Thus the Conrad Wallenrode irresistibly reminds us of the striking features of two remarkable fictions, the *Comte de Toulouse* by Soulié, and the *Nôtre Dame de Paris* by Victor Hugo ; and as it is marked by many inconsistencies, which do not mar the interest of the two latter productions, the Conrad Wallenrode is presented to a western reader under singular disadvantages. In fact, however, it was written several years before either the *Comte de Toulouse* or the *Nôtre Dame de Paris*, though these have become generally known, long before the productions of the Polish poet.

The foundation of the Conrad Wallenrode is partly historical : a grand master of that name, being reproached in the chronicles of the house of Wallenrode with having surreptitiously assumed that character, to accomplish the destruction of the order, he being himself a pagan.

In the fiction, Conrad, after ruining for ever the cause of the Teutonic knights, is judged by the *Vehmgericht*, or secret conclave, and put to death by a body of the knights, exulting in his treachery as he expires.

The grand master, in an earlier part of the poem, in the midst of a revel, sings to his knights a ballad he has learned when combating against the Moors in Spain, which perfectly embodies the spirit of the poem, and the part which the hero is playing. It runs as follows :—

THE MOORISH BALLAD OF THE ALPUJARRA.

Juz w grwzach leza maurow posady
 Narod ich dzwiga zelady
 Bronia sie jeszcze twierdre Grenady
 Ale w Grenadzie Zaraza.

I.

The Moorish towns are in ruins all,
 Their people are led in the Spaniard's thrall ;
 There is only Grenada he cannot win,
 And Grenada's walls hold the plague within.

II.

Almanzor defends Alpujarra's tower,
 With the last of his warriors bold ;

The town itself 's in the Spaniard's power,
And to-morrow they storm its strong-hold.

III.

The day-light dawns, the cannon roars,
The rampart wall gives way ;
The cross above the minarets soars,
And Spain has won the day.

IV.

Almanzor from the murderous fight,
Through serried spears and sabres bright,
Alone, his safety finds in flight.

V

The conqueror now in the midst of the dead,
On the ruins his festive table has spread ;
Drown'd in wine, as he rests from his toil,
He divides the captives, and deals out the spoil.

VI.

Whilst the spoil and the wine is handed about,
The guard doth intelligence bring,
That a stranger with tidings is waiting without ;
The stranger is Almanzor, the Moorish king,
Who has come at the close of this bloody day,
His life at the feet of the victor to lay.

VII.

“ Spaniards ! behold on your threshold, low,
Prostrate and humble I sink to the sod ;
How to the faith of your prophets I bow ;
How lowly I bend down to worship your God.

VIII.

“ Know all the world how a monarch bold,
With his victors kneels as a brother,
And himself a king, consents to hold
As a vassal his life from another.”

IX.

When the valorous prince they recognise,
One and all the Spaniards rise ;
Their chief in his arms doth enlace him,
The rest with joy and with rapturous surprise,
In martial friendship embrace him.

X

Almanzor embraces each in turn,
Nor one of the crowd he misses,
But doth then to the chieftain's arms return,
Pressing his hand with palms which burn,
And covering his lips with kisses.

XI.

Then his pallid lip, and livid cheek,
Strike all with terror and surprise ;
Ghastly he smiles as he strives to speak,
And the blood rushes up to his glaring eyes.

XII.

“Ye Giaours accursed ! I charge ye let
Your eyes repose on my visage pale,
As it changes from blue to violet ;
You are all deceived by a specious tale ;—
I come from Grenada,—I come and bring
The poisonous plague, black and withering.

XIII.

“Caught from my kisses, into your veins
Already the venom doth glow ;
Note well my torments ! mark well my pains !
One and all ye are doom'd to die so !”

XIV.

He writhes, he shrieks !
He spreads his arms wide.
In his last throes he seeks
That death shall not divide,
From an embrace eternal,
The foe at his side ;
And he laughs a laugh infernal !

XV.

He laughed and died.
The unclosed lid, the lip, grown rigid,
Still looks as if to laugh it tried,
Though now for ever fixed and frigid.

XVI.

He died, but o'er the host of Spain,
Its wing avenging Djuma* waves,
And few can ever reach to graves
Beyond the Alpujarra's chain.

Though this poem is one of the most celebrated amongst his countrymen, it is far from being the most beautiful of the author's productions, or indeed from resembling in spirit his other writings. It has been also translated into English by Leon Jablonowski, and published in Edinburgh, in 1841, —which would be of itself a reason for not dwelling at greater length upon the poem.

It must not, however, be imagined that it contains nothing but images overstrained, gloomy, and terrible; as in all this poet's compositions, there are scattered through it, passages full of beauty and pathos.

* The black plague.

There is in particular the last scene between the grand master and the recluse, in which he tries to persuade her to violate her vow, and fly with him from her voluntary dungeon. She answers :

“ If, yielding to thy entreaties, I were mad enough to leave these walls, to throw myself with delight into thy arms,—thou wouldst not recognise, nor embrace me ; but, turning away thy sight with disgust, wouldst ask,— ‘ Is this hideous wretch my Aldona ? ’ ”

* * * * *

“ No ! never let the wretchedness of the recluse disfigure the features of the beautiful Aldona as they still live in thy memory.

“ Pardon me, my beloved ! but I myself confess, that when I hear thy voice, and the moon beams brightly, I retire so as not to see thee too closely.

“ Thou, too, perhaps, art changed from what thou wert when years ago arriving at our castle ; yet in my heart thy first image has been preserved unchangeable,—the same in eyes, in feature, in thy garb and gait,—just like a beauteous butterfly ; which, imbedded in a piece of amber, remains for ever bright.”

* * * * *

There is also the song of Halban, of which we quote a few stanzas from Jablonowski’s translation :

The Wilia queen, amongst her rushing daughters,
 Has sands of gold and waves of deepest blue :
 The Lithuanian girl who draws her waters,
 Has heart yet purer, lips yet fresher too.

* * * * *

The Wilia scorns the valley's loveliest flowers ;
 To seek her cherished Niemen she flows on ;
 The fair girl wearies 'midst her country's wooers,
 For a young stranger's love her heart hath won.

* * * * *

'Tis vain to warn the heart or the swift river ;—
 The young girl loves,—the Wilia onwards sweeps,—
 Within her Niemen Wilia is lost for ever,—
 Within her lonely tower the young girl weeps.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PHARIS; OR, THE KNIGHT-ERRANT OF THE
DESERT.

BY MITZKIAVITCH (MICKIEWICZ.)

AH! who can tell the delight of the Arab, when descending from the rock into the plain, he spurs his steed through the desert sands, in which its hoofs sink with the sound of red-hot steel dipped into hissing water?—Behold him swim over that barren ocean, breasting its dry waves dolphin-like. On! on! already he seems scarcely to touch the sand as he skims over it. On! on! he is enveloped in a cloud of dust.

My charger is as dark as a stormy cloud. Upon his forehead gleams a star, fair as the star of morning. He spreads to the winds his plummy mane, and his white feet seem to lighten as they move. Fly! fly! my gallant white-foot! Forests and mountains make ye way before

us! In vain the green palm-tree offers us its shade, I tear myself away. The palm-tree in its oasis seems to laugh with its rustling leaves at my rashness.

The guardian rocks of the desert's border scowl on me with their dark and gloomy brows, and echoing the sounds of my charger's hoof, seem to threaten thus :

“Insensate! whither speeds he? Where his head will find no shelter against the shafts of the sun, neither beneath the green-haired palm-tree, nor under the white shadowing tent. There whereunto he is speeding he will find no tent but the sky, no sojourners but the rocks, no voyagers but the stars.” Still I fly! I fly! I turn back my glance, and the rocks seem as if in shame, they hid one behind the other.

But a vulture has heard their threats. Thinking to prey upon me in the desert, it sails through the air upon my trace. Thrice hath it described a crown around my head in its gyrations:

“I snuff!” screams the vulture, “I snuff a corpse-like odour. Oh rash horseman! oh rash steed! doth the rider seek a path, or his courser the pasturage? The wind alone hath here its path, and the ground gives food to nothing but the serpent. Dead bodies alone find rest, vultures only travel here.

As the bird screams, it threatens me with its shining talons. Thrice our eyes have met, and which of us shrinks back affrighted?—It is the vulture.

On! on! I fly! and as I turn back my glance, the vulture is far behind me, suspended in the clouds, now the size of a sparrow, now of a butterfly, then of a gnat, at last effaced as it melts in the blue sky.

On! on! my gallant white-foot, ye rocks and vultures make us way!

But a cloud has heard the threats of the vulture. Spreading its white wings across the azure vault of heaven, it pursues me. That cloud seeks to speed as lightly through the skies as I do over the earth's surface. Sweeping above my head, such is the threat it whistles out with the wind.

Insensate, whither speeding? Where the heat will split his bosom, where no cloud will wash with its rain his head covered with a burning dust, where no streamlet will call him with its silvery voice, where never a drop of dew will reach him, for before it falls an arid blast will have caught it as it flies.

In vain it threatens me,—on, on I fly,—the wearied cloud begins to quiver in the heaven,—it hangs its head and rests it on a rock. When I turn back to look, the whole horizon is between us, yet I scan in its aspect what is passing in its thought. First reddening with anger, then turning yellow with envy, it becomes at length dark as a corpse, and buries itself behind the rocks.

Fly, fly my gallant white-foot! ye vultures and clouds, make way before us!

Now, like the sun, I look around the horizon, and I am alone.

Here slumbering nature has never been wakened yet by man. The elements sleep here in their repose around me, like animals which in a new-discovered isle fly not from man's first glance.

And yet, oh Allah! I am not the first to tread these solitudes,—I am not alone. Afar, I see a whole host glitter in an entrenched camp of sand,—are they travellers, or robbers watching for the traveller? How white are those horsemen,—how fearfully white their steeds!—I draw nigh, but they make no motion,—I challenge them, and they reply not.

Oh Allah! they are the wreck of living things. It is a caravan, long since overwhelmed, which the winds have unburied from the sand. On the skeletons of camels sit the skeletons of Arabs. Through the holes where once were eyes, and through the fleshless jaws the sand streams liquidly, and seems to murmur out a threat.

“Whither speeding? To meet the simoom?” But still on, on I fly! make way ye skeletons and ye simooms!

The simoom,—the terrible simoom of Africa,—is wandering alone upon the ocean of sand, and perceives me from afar; it pauses in astonishment, and rolls upon itself, saying:

“Which of the young winds my brother is this, who with so frail a stature, and a flight so slow, dares thus intrude in my hereditary deserts?”

And with a roar it rushes towards me, like a moving pyramid. Finding that I am a mortal, and yield not, it stamps in fury on the ground, scattering devastation throughout half Arabia.

It seizes on me, as a vulture on a sparrow, and it strikes me with its whirlwind wings; it burns me with its scorching breath, it lifts me up into the air, and casts me down upon the sand!

CHAPTER V.

THE INFERNAL COMEDY,

BY COUNT KRASINSKI;

WITH COMMENTARIES BY MITZKIAVITCH.

THE *Infernal Comedy*, by Krasinski, is one of the most remarkable productions, not only of the Slavonic muse, but of modern literature.

Wild, weird, and mystic, it can only be classed with the *Manfred* of Byron, the *Faust* of Göethe, or the *Dzjady* of Mitzkiavitch.

There is no great aptness in the title of *Infernal Comedy*, in mere contradistinction to the *Divina Comedia* of Dante. In form it is irregular, in execution unequal, and at times obscure, but filled at others with sublimity, and full of grandeur in its conception as a whole.

This composition has been criticised by Mitzkiavitch himself; the only other living, and indeed

the only Polish poet who can be compared to Krasiński. No apology need therefore be offered for quoting largely from such a commentator throughout this notice.

“The time, place, and personages of this poem,” he observes, “are all essentially of poetic creation. The time has not yet arrived—it is to come. The poet has placed his drama in the future. For the first time an author has attempted to create a prophetic drama, to describe scenes and to bring forward characters which do not yet exist, to relate actions which are still to happen.”

The poet supposes the world to be, somewhere about the year two thousand, divided into two vast camps. On the one side has found refuge, all the wreck of an outworn civilization, grown decrepid in its egotism,—with all its old institutions, usages, and traditions,

Princes, priests, nobles, capitalists, and men of science, without the virtues, but with all the narrow views and vices of their respective castes, are assembled beneath the banner of the past, whose associations keep them still together, though its spirit has departed.

On the other side are gathered the long oppressed and suffering millions and masses of mankind.

Full of strength, energy brutality, and savagery, and disgust, they are animated by an irreconcilable enmity to every form and institution connected with society as it was. These *new men*, as they are called, have risen to overwhelm the *old or old world*, as it is denominated by the poet; and they have swept away all vestiges of the past, with its customs, laws, and prejudices, from every portion of the earth, excepting one remote corner of Poland. Here the last relics of the world of former days still make a desperate stand under the guidance of Count Heros, the hero of the drama, and the son of a long line of illustrious sires—a man whose intellect would have led him to turn willingly from the lifeless forms of things that were into a career of progress, but whose feelings and whose recollections connect him indissolubly with the past.

The men of the new world—the coarse, brawling, active communists,—the waves of the social deluge which has submerged nearly all the earth, are blindly directed by a terrible leader, called Pancrates.

“This man of the people,” says Mitzkiavi, “this leader of the society of a new era, is drawn in a masterly manner. The poet has been happy in seizing the negatives of the revolutionary tendencies of modern Europe. These tendencies he

identified in the person of one individual ; an individual called only to destroy. He is gifted with nothing but intellect. It need not be observed, that all the reforms of this last century sprung from the camp of the philosophers. This man of powerful intellect has succeeded in obtaining unbounded authority ; but is, according to the poet, inaccessible to all the feelings of humanity. His very physiognomy accords with such a character. His broad high forehead—his bald head—his cold and impassible eye, and his features which never relax into a smile, recal to one's recollection the portraiture of some personage of the Reign of Terror. He is called Pancrates, because in Greek this name implies the concentration of brute strength of every kind. *κρατια*, in all its derivations, signifies an outward material strength, just as *ενεργια* indicates internal force."

This Pancrates—a sort of compound of Cromwell, Danton, and Robespierre,—full of confidence in his power to destroy, doubts sometimes of himself, when he reflects on the re-edification of a new social structure.

" The reader may be reminded of the doubts of all those men, who driven only by fatality, have achieved great things : Cromwell was anxious

to conceal the doubts which constantly assailed him. This is why he sought so often to see Charles the First whilst living, and descended into the vault to visit him in his coffin, and to contemplate the physiognomy of the man whose death he had occasioned. Danton is well known to have uttered terrible self-reproaches. And I remember to have read, in the memoirs of Robespierre, that at the period of his utmost power, he was annoyed because he could not convince his cook-maid of its extent, and especially of its duration. These men, sent by Providence only to destroy, bear within themselves the gnawing worm, which announces to them in the form of a vague presentiment, their own destruction."

Pancrates is a Communist and Pantheist. Count Henry, adhering to the dead and withered institutions of the past, remains true to the undying faith of his fathers. The poet, whilst he draws the characters of the two leaders full of grandeur, depicts in equally sombre colours both their camps. When he describes the coarse brutality of the triumphant masses, the reader cannot help thinking them vigorously painted by the prejudices of a hater of the people; but when in turn the *men of the dead world* are

brought upon the scene, they are made to appear so contemptible and odious that he can only conclude the writer to be a cynist. Such is not, however, the case; *The Infernal Comedy* has a profoundly religious tendency, which is clearly developed in the catastrophe of the drama.

Whilst all Polish poetry of the present day is characterised by reflecting the national feeling, it is notwithstanding, strongly affected by the individuality of the poet. Just as we discern something of the sufferings and hopes of the nation in the tone of the composition, so it conveys much of the history of the poet's mind.

The author of *The Infernal Comedy*, a scion of one of the most illustrious Polish families, is at the same time the son of the most unpopular man in Poland. Vincent Krasinski, who had formerly commanded the Polish lancers of Napoleon's army, famous for the celebrated charge on the heights of the Somo Sierra, was a member of the senate of the kingdom of Poland, which under the presidency of Bielinski, at the commencement of the reign of Nicholas, acquitted the Polish conspirators implicated in the rebellion of Pestel and Troubetskoi.

This assembly was unanimous in its decision,

with the exception of one voice, and that voice was Krasinski's. Branded by his country as a traitor, it was with difficulty that, in the subsequent revolution, he escaped with his life; and his son, whose sympathies were patriotic, found himself unjustly, but indignantly repulsed from all fraternity with his countrymen, in their ill-fated struggle for independence.

The estimation in which the drama is held, notwithstanding the cruel prejudice of which he is, or was the victim, speaks loudly as to its merits.

Whilst his liberal tendencies, and patriotic feeling, render all compromise with the foreign despotism weighing on his country repulsive to him, he has not been frankly admitted into the ranks of the patriots; and having thus no reason to view either party with undue partiality, he has fallen into the opposite extreme of drawing both with bitterness and exaggeration, and has accustomed himself to look beyond the pale of any political opinions, to a purely religious influence, for a solution of the national and social question. In fact, the last of Krasinski's publications—a book of psalms—is said plainly to exhort his countrymen to a religious war.

To return, however, to his *Infernal Comedy*: the first portions of it are devoted to a development

of the character of his hero, whom he first introduces to the reader in the retirement of his domestic life, and in the midst of his domestic sorrows. As a Pole, he has placed the scene in Poland,—but Poland long since independent, and restored to its integrity, as every Pole would consider it blasphemy to doubt that it will be, long before the year 2000.

“There is, however, no local colouring to indicate this,” says Mitzkiavitch; “what points it out to us as Polish, is the fearful contrast exhibited between the condition of the nation, (felt and implied rather than seen,) and the character of the personages introduced.

“All those which figure in this drama, at another epoch in another country, would have proved useful or agreeable members of society; but brought forward in the midst of a nation laden with all the weight of a painful past, and from the bosom of which so strange a future is to burst forth—these personages enveloped in their respective prejudices, with their narrow views of things, and contracted judgments, strike us as living caricatures.

“In the midst of this society, a man is presented to us, whose mind belongs to the future, and who is endowed with greatness, fire and energy of soul. He

seeks to penetrate the secrets of providence; he can no longer breathe in the atmosphere of commonplace life, and thus he sheds a sinister light on all surrounding him.

* * * * *

“ He is a poet in the vulgar acceptation of the word, because the vulgar confer the epithet of poet on every man who leaves the common rut in his progress along the road of life, or who shapes his actions by a sublimer truth than that which the vulgar recognise as the law governing their daily actions.”

At length Count Henry marries. The poet espouses the past in the person of a woman, kind, gentle, pious, but who cannot comprehend him. When he says to her enthusiastically, “ Thou shalt now be the living song of my life !” she answers placidly :—“ I will always be to thee a submissive and faithful wife, as my mother has taught me, and my heart dictates that I should be.”

He lives with her for months and years an ordinary and commonplace life. His soaring spirit is fettered. In his person he renews the old story of Prometheus bound. At length, however, he is roused :

THE HUSBAND.

Since the day of my nuptials I have done nothing but eat and sleep. I have lived a life of idleness, I have slept the heavy sleep of German journeymen.

I have spent my time in paying visits to our relatives ; in accompanying my wife to make her purchases, in seeking out a nurse. (*The clock strikes midnight.*)

Oh ! come come ! return to me, ye former populous kingdoms of my fancy, so full of life and of variety, so obedient to my thought ! This is the witching time of night, at which formerly I was wont to ascend my throne !

* * * * *

THE WIFE.

To-day and yesterday have passed—a week—a month has flown by, and you have not, I believe, so much as once addressed me ! Everyone tells me how ill I look.

THE HUSBAND.

You are not ill, I hope ?

THE WIFE.

That is indifferent to you. How should you see whether I look ill or well,—you turn aside your head whenever I appear, or you cast down your eyes ;—I have just returned from confession ; I have mentally thought

over all my sins, and I cannot conceive in what I have offended you.

THE HUSBAND.

You have not offended me.

THE WIFE.

Oh God!

THE HUSBAND.

Indeed I feel that I ought to love you.

THE WIFE.

That saying that *you ought* is the last blow;—rise up and say *I do not love you!* Then at least I shall know the worst. But oh, do not abandon this child, let me alone suffer from your anger! but this child, Henry, this child is yourself!

At this moment a vision of the ideally beautiful such as his fancy had formerly conjured up and personified, appears to him and beckons him away, and thrusting back his imploring wife, he says:—

“Groveling child of clay! be not envious, blaspheme not! That which I follow is the ideal, after which God conceived your sex, which letting itself be deceived by the serpent, has become that which thou art!”

The neglect of the husband, and his cold contempt prey on the mind and spirits of the wife, she

is led keenly to feel her inferiority, and the want of genius which leaves her hopelessly in an inferior order, without the pale of his love and sympathy. At the subsequent christening of her child, she awakens from her sad reverie to say,—

“ I bless thee, oh my child ! may the angel of poesy watch over thee, and inspire thee, that so thy father may love thee !”

“ At this christening are introduced the friends, the godfather, and the priest. It is an admirable portraiture of a society decomposing and tending towards its end. He who should represent its spiritual principle, the priest, plays but an insignificant part : he is only an automaton, a thing which signs the cross, and recites a hacknied formula of prayer. He has not understood the relative positions of that husband, whose mind is irresistibly drawn towards the future, who has still a long career to pursue, and of his wife, whose suffering spirit is enthralled by the past. He has not sought to bring them together. He has not looked with a spiritual eye on that cradled child, whose character and destiny its father has already comprehended.

The priest jogs on, indifferent, and unconscious

of the impending struggle betwixt the past and future.

The Count himself, the chief actor in this story, so accessible to the most profound impressions, and so given to commune with things superior, is intended as the representative of the past. He aspires indeed, towards the future, but he is still of this present world, which yields beneath his footsteps, because God in illumining his reason has not inspired his heart, but left it cold."

Having left his wife in her brooding melancholy one day, the Count returns. He asks of her servant.

Where is your mistress ?

THE SERVANT.

My lord, the lady Countess is not well.

THE COUNT.

Not well ! why she is not in her apartment ?

THE SERVANT.

The Countess is out.

THE COUNT.

Where is she then ?

THE SERVANT.

She left yesterday.

THE COUNT.

And whither is she gone ?

THE SERVANT.

To a mad-house.

THE COUNT.

Oh, it is impossible ! Mary, surely you only hide to frighten me ? say only that you are doing so to punish me ! Oh God ! it would be too horrible.

No, there is no one ! The house is deserted ! She to whom I had vowed fidelity and happiness, I have then driven, whilst living, into a sojourn of the damned. All that I touch seems to wither,—I will destroy myself. Hell has surely cast me up to mirror it on earth !

Oh, on what a pillow does she recline her head to-day ! What sounds at this moment greet her ear ! The howling of the maniacs ! That calm and placid brow, which seemed to smile in the face of nature, is darkened now. Striving to follow me into wild deserts with her thoughts, she has bewildered them !

(He hurries to the mad-house to seek out his wife.)

The ensuing scene is intimately connected with the working of the drama. The society of the

period, monotonous and cold, though apparently happy, is represented as really on the point of breaking up.

“ This mistrust of the future, which the poet shows us in the mad-house, already troubling and agitating it, resembles those springs upon volcanic hills, which become turbid before the eruption. The cries and expressions of the maniacs resemble those columns of smoke which escape from the creviced sides of the volcano. All the most disordered, hideous, and diabolical features of the new and coming world, are represented as existing in the germ, amongst these raving madmen.

“ There are voices from the left, and from the right, which represent political parties ; and voices from above and below, which represent religious parties, and the actual feeling of society.”

Voice from the right.

You have dared to bind your Creator, to crucify Jesus Christ.

Voice from the left.

To the guillotine ! *à la lanterne*, hang up all kings and nobles !

Voice from the right.

Kneel ! kneel ! I am your legitimate sovereign ! !

(These exclamations are overheard from the patient's chamber.)

THE COUNT.

Mary, do you not know me ?

THE WIFE.

I will always be faithful to thee.

THE COUNT

Come, take my hand, and let us leave this place.

THE WIFE.

Oh no, I cannot ;—my soul has left my body ; I feel it all concentrated in my brain.

THE COUNT.

Come, the carriage waits us.

THE WIFE.

No, leave me ; I shall be worthy of thee bye and bye.

THE COUNT.

What do you mean ?

THE WIFE.

Since I have lost thee, a change has come over me ; I have cried out to the Lord,—I have offered a taper

on the altar of our Lady of the Purification, and on third day I awakened the creative intellect of ge
Now thou wilt no longer slight me ; thou wilt not
me to-night, is it not so ?

THE COUNT.

Neither by night nor day.

THE WIFE.

See, am I not now thy equal in power ? It is given
to understand all things, to find inspiration ; and I
burst forth in words and songs of triumph. I will
of the seas, of the thunder, of the firmament, o
stars, and of the storms. But there is a strange
troubles me. . . . the struggle. Oh, let me see,—lea
where I may witness that struggle.

THE COUNT.

Come, will you not see your child ?

THE WIFE.

Oh ! my child is not here,—it has flown away
I gave it wings,—I have sent it through the univer
imbue itself with all that is beautiful, and great,
terrible ; and when it returns, it will understand thee

(The voices of the patients without intrude again.)

A voice from the left.

I have slain three monarchs : ten are left, and that may not be..... There are some hundred priests too remaining ; I hear them at their mass.

THE WIFE.

Oh ! what an atrocious amusement !

THE COUNT.

True.

THE WIPE.

What would happen if God should become mad too ? Each worm would cry out, I am God, and one after another perish in its pride ; so would the comets perish, so the sun. Then even the Saviour could no longer save. Behold him take into his hands the cross, and cast it into the abyss. Hearest thou that cross, the hope of the wretched ? Hark ! how it crashes as it bounds from star to star, and scatters through the universe the fragments of its wreck !

There is but the Holy Virgin who still prays, and the stars, her servitors, remain faithfully to her ; but she too will go whither the whole universe is going.

THE COUNT.

You suffer ?

THE WIFE.

Oh yes! I feel as if an oscillating lamp were suspended in my brain,—'tis insupportable.

At length the wife dies in her husband's arms, and of this fated family there remains only a child, destined to die prematurely,—a child whose vivid imagination has destroyed its physical strength.

* * * * *

This drama is not intended for representation,—it contains descriptions and discourses.

Child, why neglect thy toys and dolls? King of the flies and butterflies, the intimate of Pulchinello, what mean thy blue eyes so downcast, yet so bright and pensive, though thou hast only seen the flowers of so few springs? Already dost thou bow thy young brow down, and lean it on thy hand as if in reverie, and thy little head seems filled with thoughts as a flower with morning dew.

When shaking thy fair curls aside, thou lookest up to Heaven, tell me what seest thou there, and with whom dost thou converse? for then thy little brow becomes clouded. Thy mother weeps, and deems thou dost not love her; thy little cousins, and thy friends, are hurt that thou neglectest them; thy father alone says nothing, he looks on gloomily, and silently, till his eyes fill with tears, which he suppresses and turns back into his soul.....

And yet thou growest and becomest fair, though

without youth's freshness,—without the delicate whiteness of milk,—the blush of the red strawberry. Thy beauty is the beauty of mysterious thought, which breathes upon thy brow, like the shadow of a world invisible; and though the lustre of thy eye is sometimes dimmed,—though thy cheek is sometimes pale,—thy little bosom oppressed, still all who meet thee, pause, and observe, “How beautiful a child!”

If a flower when it begins to fade, had a sparkling soul, a breath of Heaven to animate it,—if on each of its petals earthwards borne, there weighed, instead of a drop of dew, an angelic thought, then such a flower would resemble thee, fair child!

The next scene is where the Count leads his child to pray on the grave of its mother. Here the first traces of incipient insanity, inherited from its parent, are discovered with singular truth and pathos, in its wild and beautiful departure from the formula of its usual prayer, the Roman Catholic “Ave Maria,” derived from the salutation of the angel Gabriel to the mother of the Redeemer, and running—

Hail Mary! full of grace; our Lord is with thee,—blessed art thou amongst women, &c.

THE FATHER.

Take off your hat, and pray for the repose of your mother's soul.

THE CHILD.

Hail Mary! full of grace! queen of the spring
and of the flowers.

THE FATHER.

What do you say?—do you forget your prayers?

THE CHILD.

Hail Mary! Queen of angels! When thou traverses
the heavens, each angel plucks a feather from its glittering
wings, and scatters it upon thy path.

THE FATHER.

George! you are growing mad.

THE CHILD.

Oh, these thoughts assail me;—they ring through
brain, and I must speak them out.

THE FATHER.

Rise! God does not accept such prayers. Alas,
you never knew your mother, how can you love her?

THE CHILD.

Oh, but I often see her!

THE FATHER.

Where, my child?

THE CHILD.

In my dreams;—that is to say, the moment I fall asleep,—for instance, yesterday....

THE FATHER.

Child, what are you talking of?

CHILD.

Oh, yes, I saw her! She is pale and very wan.

THE FATHER.

Did she speak to you?

THE CHILD.

She was all in white, and said,—“Still I wander, still I penetrate amidst the song of angels, and the music of the spheres, and for thee I gather forms and harmonies. Oh my child, from the higher and inferior spirits I borrow melodies and sounds, shadows and rays for thee, so that thy father may love thee.

THE FATHER.

Can it be that the last thoughts of the dying follow them into eternity?—are there blest spirits—for assuredly she is blest—are there then blest spirits touched with earthly madness?

“ I know of nothing,” says Mitzkiavitch, “ more painful than this drama. Its author could not have sprung from a nation which had suffered centuries long. On this account, it is eminently Polish.

“ Grief in this poem, is not expressed in pompous phrases ;—I can cite no tirades from it, its incidents are only shadowed out. All this gubrious drama of domestic life, is really contained in about a hundred lines. It is as it were related in the space of a single page, but every word therein recorded, is a concentrated drop, extracted from a mass of suffering and of sorrow. Its personages pass like the reflections of a magic lantern on a thorn,—we see their profile—seldom more. They leave only a few passing words ; but in weighing and examining these it is easy to complete the intended image.”

The child is afterwards struck with blindness and there follows a consultation between the godfather, the father, the godmother, and the doctor.

“ This scene recalls that passage of Shakespeare, wherein Lady Macbeth, after committing the murder, walks about in her sleep, attempting to wash her hands. It is rendered more terrible still, by the contrast offered by the doctor, who

watches the malady, and judges quite professionally.

* * * * *

“Whilst the father seeks to penetrate the degrees of Providence, and asks God how and when his child can have merited such a punishment, the doctor is admiring the strength of the muscles and nerves of the poor child’s eyes, which he has just pronounced to be stricken with blindness ; and he complacently asks the father whether he would not like to know the scientific name of this infirmity, which is called *αμαυρωσις*.

“One humble personage alone, is shown full of kindness ; a woman, a servant girl, who falls upon her knees, and prays to the Holy Virgin that she will take out her eyes, and restore them to the poor blind child. But this is a daughter of the people, amongst whom traditions of feeling have been handed down.”

At length the social storm has burst forth in all its fury,—the well-springs of society broken up, have overwhelmed the world ; there is only one town in which its wreck is gathered beneath the banner of Count Henry, and under the protection of his ancestral castle, which is already beleaguered by the multitude.

Panocrates, the all-powerful, — the sovereign

master of the new world, demands admission to converse with the count. He is astonished that there should exist upon earth, any one who does not fear him, or who has retained a real faith in the traditions of the former world.

“Pancrates is curious to carry his scrutiny into the very soul of such a man ;—for the repose of his conscience he is rather anxious to convert than to destroy him. It will be understood, that he must feel uneasy as long as there exists a being capable of resisting his ideas. The Count himself is awaiting this interview with his terrible enemy.”

The theatre represents an old feudal castle, and the scene opens with the following monologue.

THE COUNT discovered in a Gothic hall, hung round with ancestral portraits, trophies, and banners.

Of old, at this same hour, in the midst of a like danger, and inspired by thoughts like mine, the last Brutus saw his evil genius! I am awaiting here a similar visitation ;—I shall soon be face to face with a man who has no father,—who is without a name,—without a guardian angel,—one sprung from nothingness ; but who may become the founder of a new era, unless I can crush him back into the nothingness from whence he springs.

Oh, my ancestors ! inspire me with the spirit which gave you the world's dominion ; and in my bosom plant your lion hearts ! Let the austerity of your unyielding brows be pictured on my care-worn temples ! Oh let your vivid faith in Christ and his Church—your blind and burning faith—the main-spring of mighty deeds—be such lighted up again in me, so that I may waste with sword and flame these sons of the soil !—I ! who am the son of a hundred generations,—the last heir in spirit of your faults and virtues !

A SERVANT.

Please your excellency, the person expected waits without.

THE COUNT.

Let him enter.

“ This scene,” says Mitzkiavitch, “ recalls an historic anecdote. Charles the Twelfth, after having vanquished and dethroned Augustus, king of Poland, had the courage to visit him alone in the castle of Dresden, without consulting his counselors ; and to the great surprise of his mortal enemy, who nevertheless allowed him to retire unharmed,—“ a forbearance which was perhaps as much the result of astonishment as of generosity, as conjectured either by Charles, or by one of his

followers, who observed, when spurring av
the walls,—“ Let us wager that they are
council now on what they ought to ha
yesterday.”

Enter PANCRATES.

Hail! Sir Count! That title of Count
strangely from my lips. (*He sits unbidden.*)

THE COUNT.

I thank you for your confidence in the penates
feudal hall. True to old national customs, I drin
and happiness to you. (*Offers him the cup.*)

PANCRATES (*looking round him.*)

If I am not in error, these emblems red and
the language of the departed world are called
arms. Already these baubles are disappearing fr
earth.

THE COUNT.

God willing, they will be soon restored to it.

PANCRATES.

That is what I call answering like a gentleman
olden time—always positive. Full of pride and
nacy, and puffed up with hopes, though without m
arms, or warriors. Feigning a faith in God, be

without faith longer in themselves. Why do you not let me see something of those thunders which you threaten to launch at my devoted head? Are legions of angels to descend and make us raise this siege? where are they then?

THE COUNT.

You are jesting. Atheism is a hacknied formula. I had hoped something less stale from you.

PANCRATES.

My formula is more vast and mighty than your own. The cry of agony and despair of millions of men,—the misery of the poor,—the sufferings of all humanity fettered in its prejudices,—exhausted by its doubts and fears, and chained down to its bestial habits. Such is the symbol of my faith. My God of the present hour is my own thought, and that power which will achieve for mankind glory,—give it bread.

THE COUNT.

And my strength I derive from Him who conferred power on my fathers.

PANCRATES.

Yet you have rather served the Devil. But let us leave these discussions to theologians, if there be any left. Let us come to the point, sir Count.

THE COUNT.

What seekest thou of me, Saviour of nations, Citizen-god?

PANCRATES.

I have come, because I longed to know thee, and that I wish to save thee.

THE COUNT.

Thanks for thy first intention. As to my safety, believe me, I shall find it in this sword.

PANCRATES.

Your God! your sword! Chimeras! millions of anathemas already menace—myriads of threatening arms surround you. What have you to oppose to them? Some scanty acres, which will scarce afford you graves. And how resist? Where is your artillery, where are your stores? Above all, where is the valour on which you may rely? If I were in your place I know how I should act.

THE COUNT.

Go on, I listen,—you see with how much patience.

PANCRATES.

Well, were I count Henry, I should say to Pancrates, Let us make peace; I disband my army, and I keep my titles and estates, of which you, Pancrates, guarantee me the possession. What is your age?

THE COUNT.

I am six-and-thirty.

PANCRATES.

Fifteen years more of life at the utmost. Men of your stamp do not last long. As for your child, it is nearer to its grave than to its manhood. One exception may be tolerated without prejudice. Remain, therefore, last of the counts, reign over your possessions peaceably, cause portraits of your ancestors to be painted, sculpture their coats of arms and shields according to your pleasure, only give up the wretches of your caste, making way for the justice of the people.—I drink to your health, last of your order!

THE COUNT.

Thy words are insults;—Dost thou think to attach me to thy triumphal car? Enough, Pancrates! I cannot answer thee fittingly. The providence of my plighted word protects thee.

PANCRATES.

Thy knightly word! thy knightly honour, forsooth! Thou art unrolling there a faded rag which is scarce discernible, contrasted with the gorgeous colours of the banner of mankind.—Yes, now I know and curse thee. Full of life, thou art voluntarily wedded to a corpse! Thou seekest vainly to believe in castes, in relics, in a

country! But in thy inmost heart thou knowest well that thy fellows have deserved to perish—to perish and to be forgotten!

THE COUNT.

And you and yours, what have you deserved?

PANCRATES.

Life and victory! I know only one law to which I bow, that law by which the world passes from one sphere to another. It is destructive of your existence. It tells you through my mouth, "Oh you all—old, corrupt, and bloated, filled to satiety, with meat and drinks, and with destroying worms; make way for the young, the hungry, and the healthy! But I wish to save thee, and thee only.

THE COUNT.

Now Heaven confound thy pity! I know thee, thou and thy followers. I have penetrated to thy camp by night, I have noted well the revels of the multitude, whose head thou usest as thy footstool; I have recognised amongst it all the crimes of the old world dressed up anew, singing to a new tune, but one which will end in the old chorus—flesh and blood!

But thou wert not amongst them, thou didst not design to commingle with thy own children, because thou despisest them at heart. Wait only awhile, and if thou becomest not mad thou wilt despise thyself.

PANCRATES.

My world, it is true, is not yet developed in its reality. The giant child has not attained its growth, it still wants to be fed and cherished. But the time will come, when having grown self-conscious, it will say, I am; and there will not be throughout the universe an other voice to echo,—I am too!

Here Panocrates draws an inviting picture of the happiness of this future world, according to well-known Pantheistic ideas; or at least all who have read the publications of the *Fourierists* and *Saint-Simonians*, will easily form an idea of the state of things which Panocrates dreams, and here depicts, terminating his description with these words:

PANCRATES.

The earth will become one vast flourishing city, one immense house and home, one wide laboratory of industry and wealth.

THE COUNT.

Thy voice expresses well the falsehood, but thy features, motionless and pale, cannot succeed in aping inspiration.

PANCRATES.

Interrupt me not! myriads of men have on their

bended knees craved of me words like these, and I have been chary of them.

Then in that future world there will appear an imperishable God, a God whose existence the suffering and toil of centuries will have succeeded in laying bare at last—a God who will have been drawn down from Heaven by his own children, whom he had banished to the earth, but who having grown apace, felt that they were entitled to the truth. The real God of humanity will be then revealed.

THE COUNT.

Ages have elapsed already since he revealed himself.

PANCRATES.

Let him delight then in the fruit of that revelation, in the misery of two thousand years which have flown by since he died upon the cross.

THE COUNT.

Blasphemer! I have seen that cross, I have seen it in the centre of old Rome, of the eternal city, planted upon the wreck of a mightier power than thine; and the unpedestalled heads of gods by hundreds, such as thine are, were scattered in the dust around, shivered and trampled, where Christ was triumphing.

PANCRATES.

Thy God imposes on me no more than the clattering

of those trophied arms. But I read thy thoughts. **Listen** to me: If thou art capable of aspiring towards **infinity**, if thou hast a real thirst of truth, and hast **even** sought for it sincerely,—if thou art made after the **likeness** of thy kind, and not after the image of some **hero** of a nursery tale, then hear me! Let not the hour of **salvation** pass. I speak for the last time. If thou **art** what thou seemest, rise! quit these walls, and follow **me**.

THE COUNT.

Younger brother of the old serpent! (*aside*) No, these **are** dreams which man may never realise! The first of his race died in the wilderness, and he can never **re-enter** Paradise.

PANCRATES.

(*Aside*) I have made the most sensitive fibre of his **heart** to vibrate.

THE COUNT.

Progress and happiness! I too had dreamed them **once**. During past centuries, a hundred years ago, a **compromise** might have been perhaps still possible; now **nothing** is left us but to combat, for you design the **extermination** of a race.

PANCRATES.

Woe to the vanquished! shout with us: **Woe** to the **vanquished**! and be with us a victor.

THE COUNT.

What! hast thou so accurately followed the map of the mysterious future? Has Fate communed with thee in visible form? Has it stood in the lonely night at the entrance of thy tent; or hast thou heard its voice at drowsy noon, when thou alone wert watching, and all around thee slumbered, outworn with fatigue and heat, that thou darrest threaten with such certainty thy future victory? Man as thou art, moulded like myself from clay, and liable to be the prey of the first bullet, or the slave of the first sabre's edge.

PANCRATES.

Illusion, vain illusion! Lead will not harm, steel injure me, so long as one of you resist my will. That which may chance when you have been swept away, concern you not. (*The clock strikes.*) Time is mocking us;—if thou art weary of thy life, still save thy son.

THE COUNT.

The salvation of his pure soul is assured in Heaven, on earth he will share his father's fate.

PANCRATES.

Thou dost refuse, and meditate?—'Tis well, meditation is befitting him who sits beneath the shadow of the tomb.

THE COUNT.

Begone ! Disturb no longer the mysterious working of my soul, bent upon things above the sphere of thy terrestrial thoughts. Begone ! live on in thy groveling world ! enjoy it ; but seek not to rise above it. Leave me ! leave me !

PANCRATES.

Slave of a thought—of one idea ! Warrior, poet, pedant ! out upon thee !

THE COUNT.

It is in vain ; thou couldst never understand me, never ! Thy sire and his sire disappeared,—they died, and they were buried *pêle-mêle* with the people, like common-place things without worth or value. There was not one *man* amongst them ; that is to say, not one being gifted with the strength of a superior and undying mind. (*He points to the portraits of his ancestors.*) Look at those venerable images.—A thought patriarchal, social, patriotic,—an idea antithetic to thine own, dwell in the lines severe which mark those pensive brows. That thought has passed to me—lives in me. Now thou, oh man, art even without a birth-place. Each night thy tent is pitched upon the ruins of thy neighbour's dwelling, and each succeeding morn it is struck to wander farther. Till now thou hast not even found a

hearth and home, nor wilt thou, so long as a hundred men of the old world remain to shout with me,—“ Glory to our fathers ! ”

Here Pancrates satirically relates, the history of the original of all these portraits with all the scandal attaching to the lives of those they represent.

THE COUNT *at length interrupts him.*

Son of a plebeian ! Thou and thine would not exist, if our sires had not fed you with their bread, and made a rampart for you of their bosoms. When from a herd of animals they humanised you, building you churches, rearing you schools, sharing all with you but the perils of war, for which you were unfitted.*

Such bitter words, Pancrates ! fall edgeless from their glory, as formerly the pagan lance rebounded from their armour. Thy voice cannot disturb the repose of their ashes. It will waste itself like the howl of a mad dog, which slavering from its fangs the foam, tears as it rushes past, and passes on to die, no one knows whither.

And now, my guest, it is time that we should part. Thou art free to go !

* The nobility of Poland were alone entitled formerly to bear arms.

PANCRATES.

Then fare thee well, until we meet upon the rampart of the Holy Trinity! but when thy ammunition is exhausted?

THE COUNT.

We shall meet at our swords' length.

PANCRATES (*departing*).

We are two eaglets of one brood, but thine eyrie is lightning-stricken. Before I cross this threshold, I leave my curse upon thy senility, and I devote thee with thy seed to ruin.

THE COUNT.

Lead this man to the out-posts.

“The poet,” continues Mitzkiavitch, “pictures to us the theatre of events, and describes the scene. A magnificent landscape, such as art in our days would be impotent to reproduce, more melancholy than the paintings of Ruysdael, more sombre than those of Salvator Rosa. We are shown vast plains mist-covered, and bounded in by rocks, which, at an antediluvian period must have served as places of refuge to men, and have overhung seas, now become continents.

The old tradition of the Deluge naturally occurred to the mind of the poet, when about to describe another popular inundation, and political deluge.

The sun rises, and dispersing the mist, shows the waves of dark human heads, and further on, other waves of glittering steel, which flow over the surface of the country.

* * * * *

Within the beleaguered fortress, "already the famished people murmur; the soldiers want for ammunition. Their leader is obliged solemnly to adjure them in the name of his former services. He succeeds once more in repressing their internal sedition, and he forces every one, the clergy, the nobility, the capitalists, and the learned, to defend their last hold, and to perish at least with honour.

The Count then seeks a last interview with his son. Here the author leads us again into the supernatural world. The child, gifted with the ecstatic faculty of second-sight, descends into the castle vaults, and there beholds the shades of departed generations, oppressed and tortured by his ancestors. He witnesses there the scene of the last judgment. In the midst of these terrible images, he recognises his own father, and foretells to him his doom.

The count, however, cursing this prediction, hurries to the castle rampart, where he arrives just as all is lost. A bullet strikes down his son beside him. He presses the blade of his sword to his child's lips, but he sees upon it no traces of respiration. His faithful servant, his last survivor is next killed by his side,—he dies, abandoning his faith, and cursing the obstinacy of his master. The master himself, having no further hope on earth, flings from him his sword, and making a last effort on himself to contain the malediction of despair arising to his lips, plunges into the precipice and disappears.

The triumphant host enters the fortress from every side. The globe is now conquered by these men, whom the poet calls the *new men*.

Panocrates then re-appears upon the scene, surrounded by his followers and confidants; but in the midst of his triumph he is still anxious to know the fate of Count Henry, his antagonist.

“Where is Henry?” he exclaims. “A sack full of gold for Count Henry, dead or alive,—a sack full of gold for his body!”

A soldier acquaints him with the mode of his death, and delivers up to him his sword.

PANCRATES.

Ah ! I recognise his arms ; it is his blood-stained sword ! He has kept his word,—glory to him ! To you (*turning to the prisoners*) the guillotine !

Panocrates then causes the list of prisoners to be read over to him. Each word he utters, is a condemnation.

Here the author imitates the style of the revolutionary tribunal, in the Reign of Terror.

Being now the conqueror of the world, his friend and confidant, Leonard, addresses him :

“ Master ! after so many sleepless nights, thou shouldst take some repose, thou seemest wearied.”

PANCRATES.

Child ! the hour of sleep is not yet arrived. The last breath sighed out by the last of my enemies, marks only half my toil. Behold those tenantless plains, which stretch like a gulph betwixt me and my intent ! Those plains must yet be peopled, those rocks dug out, those lakes united. Those plains must be divided out amongst you, so that they may rear twice as many living men as there are now dead bodies stretched upon them ; otherwise the work of destruction would not be redeemed.”

This man, now the lord of generations, here exposes the system of the Fourierists and Owenites.

In his enthusiasm, he finds consolation in the thought, that he will be the purveyor of this innumerable people which he rules ; that he will achieve the happiness of the world, distributing equally to each individual, possessions and-lands.

LEONARD.

And the God of liberty will give us strength to achieve this gigantic work.

(At this moment the Man of Destiny becomes troubled at the name of God, pronounced for the first time by his friend.)

PANCRATES.

Why dost thou talk of God ? It is slippery here with human blood. Whose blood ? Behind me I see nothing but the castle yard. We are alone, and yet I feel as if there was some one near me.

LEONARD.

Do you mean that mutilated body ?

PANCRATES.

The body of his faithful servitor,—that is lifeless.—No, some spirit—whose I know not—hovers here. See Leonard, that dark point of rock which juts out from the precipice, 'twas there his heart burst into fragments.

LEONARD.

Master ; thou growest pale !

PANCRATES.

There ! seest thou not, above us, there !

LEONARD.

I see nothing but a cloud, red with the sunset, and stooping towards the summit of the rock.

PANCRATES.

Oh ! a fearful sign gleams there !

LEONARD.

Lean on my arm ; what ails thee, master ? thou art deadly pale.

PANCRATES.

A million of men—a people obeys me ! where is my people ?

LEONARD.

Why its shouts are audible from hence. Thy people waits thee, it is calling for thee now, no doubt ; but, oh in mercy, avert from that point of rock thine eyes, which look as if their light was going out !

PANCRATES.

Oh ! he stands there upright before me, with his three nails, and his three stars ! His arms spread out like lightnings.

LEONARD.

Master, compose thyself !

PANCRATES.

Vicisti Galilæe ! (*and he falls back dead.*)

Mitzkiavitch winds up his appreciation of this performance, as follows :—

“The termination of this drama is so fine, that I know of nothing comparable to it. Truth was neither to be found in the camp of the Count, nor in that of Pancrates ; it was above them both, and it shone forth to condemn them. Pancrates, after vanquishing all opposition, becomes suddenly troubled, and discovers that he has been nothing but an instrument of destruction.

“Then appears to him on a cloud a sign, imperceptible to all other eyes, and he dies uttering the well-known word of a Roman emperor, who after vainly endeavouring to suppress Christianity, exclaimed as he was expiring, ‘Oh ! Galilean, thou hast conquered.’”

CHAPTER VII.

LORD DUDLEY STUART.

It is impossible to conclude even this incomplete, and hasty notice of the Polish emigration, without allusion to Lord Dudley Stuart, its warmest and most enduring friend. If some of its members—his lordship's adoptive children—occasion him trouble and anxiety, his exertions are at least not met with ingratitude. A short time since the author found himself in company with two of the most anti-English Poles in the emigration.

They were loud in their dispraise, alike of our climate, our cookery, our manners, and our institutions, till at length one of them suddenly bethought himself, and exclaimed : “ Yet, after all, these English are a wonderful people,—there is a solidity and earnestness in their friendships, as in all connected with them. I cannot endure their

country,—France is at once my glory and delight. We meet in France with generous support and universal sympathy, but where, except in England, find a friend so unwearied in his devotion to a cause as Lord Dudley Stuart? It is not the fitful enthusiasm of days, or weeks, or months, whilst our condition was invested with a certain novelty—it is not through occasional eloquence or contribution, that he thus, courtier of misfortunes, (*courtisan du malheur*,) serves us, but by a whole life dedicated to our cause. The monotony of a grievance of thirteen years' duration has not damped the fervour of his interest in us. He is to be seen in London, in the midst of its yellow November fog, attending to the concerns of those thirteen years proscribed, and he is actually learning our very language, so difficult to attain beyond the days of childhood."

CHAPTER VII.

RUSSIAN LITERATURE.

THERE is no subject connected with Russia, on which it is more difficult for any one who has not the opportunity of judging for himself, to form an opinion, than on its literature. And yet no literature in the world, if translated for a foreign reader, could be appreciated more rapidly or decisively. With the one exception of Kriloff, the fabulist, who represents the caustic humour and allegoric wit of Russia, all it has hitherto produced is essentially imitative. But amongst the mass of imitators and plagiarists, there is one, Alexander Poushkin, who has, indeed, followed, and often paraphrased Shakespeare and Byron; but who is to them what Virgil was to Homer; whilst the productions of the rest, with reference to their originals, can only be compared to the Latin verses of our school-boys.

The public opinion of his country places Poushkin as far above any other of its writers, as in England we do Milton above Montgomery. But then Poushkin was a rebellious spirit, out of favour with Nicholas; and although the latter tacitly recognised him in many ways as the first of Russian poets, all praise to this stiff-necked writer was supposed to be distasteful to the ruling powers. On this account, those who have given to the western world such brief notices of the literature of Russia as have hitherto appeared, have always hurried rapidly over his merits, whilst they have passed extravagant encomiums on generals, senators, or ministers, their patrons in *esse* or in *futuro*; mere dabblers in letters, whose unknown names they unblushingly place beside the name of Poushkin, and from whose paltry effusions they cite so copiously, that it is natural for foreigners to believe that all these authors rank either with him or before him. Such is, for instance, the account of Russian literature given by Gretch, the unscrupulous Russian employé, and formerly by Dupré de St. Maur, in his indiscriminating gratitude to the drawing-room *littérateurs*, into whose circle he had been admitted. It is not, however, those only who are connected with the secret police,—the censor-

ship, or the imperial service who propagate these false impressions.

Literary strangers visiting Russia, are seized upon as the especial property of a *coterie*. Being usually unacquainted with the language, they acquire their ideas of the state of Russian letters, as they do of Russian institutions, from their hosts. They have no reason to doubt of the celebrity of their entertainers' reputations, which gratitude prompts them to spread, whilst, as the former know that they may be made to a certain extent responsible for what the stranger writes when he has left the country, nothing can be more guarded than they are in imparting any information which might compromise them.

Hence such a man as Marmier, a shrewd and observant writer, visiting St. Petersburg in 1842,—and by no means scrupulous in expressing his marked disapprobation of much which he observed,—falls into the double error, in the sketch he gives of Russian literature, both of over-rating the merits of many of the authors whom he cites, and of gravely repeating, with regard to Poushkin, the sycophantic falsehood of his servile informant.

He says, on the authority of a certain Prince Wiasemsky, that Nicholas having found Poushkin in exile, on account of some imprudent writings,

recalled him ; that without solicitation, he restored him to liberty,—called him to him,—undertook to be the only censor of his works, and gave him the history of Peter the Great to write ; after opening the archives of the empire, and assuring him a salary of 5,000 roubles (about £190 ;) that when the fatal catastrophe occurred which deprived Russia of Poushkin, it was in the middle of the night that the emperor heard of it. He instantly sent to him his own doctor, with a note written in his own hand, in which he expressed himself nearly as follows :—“ If we are not to meet again in this world, receive my last farewell, and my advice to die as a Christian. As to your wife and children, do not let the thoughts of them disturb you ; I will look to them.”

“ The sovereign faithfully observed the engagements which the man had made in so humane and touching a manner. The infant sons of Poushkin were named pages (which ensures them a government education, and an advantageous entrance into the service,) Poushkin’s debts were paid, his widow and all his children received pensions, and a complete edition of ten thousand copies of his works were published and sold for the benefit of his family.”

The above, and a brief allusion to some of his works, is all that Marmier says of Poushkin in about forty pages devoted to Russian literature. It may therefore be presumed to be all he gathered about him during his intercourse with the Russian *literati*.

Notices somewhat similar in extent and nature to that which Marmier has given, and probably derived from the same source, are occasionally to be met with in French and German works.

Some translations of passages of Poushkin's poetry have recently appeared in the pages of Blackwood, gracefully rendered into English rhyme. And at least, here the only great or popular poet of Russia has not been confounded with writers whose productions would scarcely in England find a place, through the indulgence of the editor, in the remotest county paper.

The translator, a Mr. Shaw, who professes English in St. Petersburg, gives also some account of the life of Poushkin, as well as a narration by Joukoffsky, of his dying moments. Entering into such minute details on some points, he omits the most important particular of the poet's existence, and only alludes to the manner of his death, by saying that, "It is, we believe, gene-

rally known even in England that Poushkin was mortally wounded in a duel, on Wednesday 27th of January, and that he died after lingering in excruciating torment two days and nights."

"Respecting the causes which led to this melancholy conclusion of a great man's life, &c., it is not our intention to speak. * * * * * To dwell on so lamentable an affair would serve no good purpose, and rather minister to a morbid curiosity in our readers, than illustrate the life and character of Poushkin."

Now if Othello had lived and died historically, as he was conceived in Shakespeare's brain to have lived and died, a biography of him without mention of his jealousy, or of the catastrophe on which the tragedy is based, would less completely paint his character, than a portraiture of Poushkin, which omitted this all-absorbing passion, or failed to record its fatal result.

Mr. Shaw proceeds to excuse his silence, on the plea, "that it was the poet's dying wish that the whole circumstance should be buried in oblivion," and through "respect to the prayer of a great genius, whose lips when quivering in the last agony, murmured the generous words, 'pardon and forget.'"

This respect to the dying wishes even of a public man, would have been laudable in the extreme if his biographer had not lost sight of the poet's generous object in desiring oblivion, which was simply to avert the stigma which might attach to the wife, whom he doubted of having wrongfully suspected.

But after passing over on this pretext, in the few words which have been quoted, all the circumstances of this melancholy event, he cites a letter from Joukofski, (a celebrated translator and paraphrasist of French, German, and English authors,) to Poushkin's father, describing the last moments of his son, which he had just witnessed, wherein is mentioned that the dying man exclaimed in allusion to his wife,—“Poor thing ! she suffers innocently ; the world will tear her to pieces !”

Now, when it is considered that shortly after this event there was no individual in the Russian empire acquainted with the name of Poushkin, who was not aware that he had died by the hand of his brother-in-law, whom he had challenged in a fit of jealousy, is it not apparent, that, oblivion of the whole transaction being impossible, to give these few words to a western public, exciting its sus-

picion, is to act in diametric opposition to the wish ; and that it would have been more respected in its spirit, by rendering public such circumstances as might serve to clear the character of his wife ?

The silence of Mr. Shaw is, however, fully accounted for by his position ; but who, in referring to his narrative,—and he says even more upon the subject than can be found in the accounts of other writers,—could gather that the death of Poushkin had rung from one end of the empire to the other ; whilst the popularity of the poet has caused all the circumstances of his fate to remain as indelibly impressed on the recollection of the Russian public as that of Byron on the public of England ? Who, when they read in the narrative of Joukoffski, which he cites, that Danzas sat by his bedside, that he spoke affectionately to him, and that he wrote to his dictation, could conjecture that he was the very brother-in-law by whose hand he fell ? But above all, on reading Marmier's account of the emperor's kindness to Poushkin, or Mr. Shaw's citation of Joukofski, that he exclaimed upon his death-bed,—“ Tell the emperor that I am sorry to die ; I would have been wholly his,”—who could suspect that the disaffection of Poushkin to Nicholas and his predecessor was as notorious as

that of Junius, or of Peter Pindar, to George the Third; and that the antipathy which Nicholas entertained towards him was as obvious as that of George the Third towards Wilkes? Who could believe that one of the last, and of course unpublished productions of Poushkin, contained two lines which translate nearly as follows:—“*The palest lamp that sheds its dingy influence, would grow into a glorious light, illuminating all humanity, if the Tsar dangled from it?*” Even the fact of Poushkin’s having perished in a duel, is one upon which writers in Russia will not venture, though it will naturally be asked, what motive could the Russian government have in concealing that Poushkin perished in a duel with his brother-in-law? To this it may be answered,—an interest so indirect as scarce to be conceivable, but still the same which makes the government bulletins publish the most palpable falsehoods in the face of the whole capital, to extenuate every serious accident which happens beneath its very eyes; as, for instance, since the accession of Nicholas, when the storm in the Gulph of Finland capsised hundreds of boats returning from Peterhoff; when the great booth at the Easter fair was consumed, with a large portion of the spectators in it; and when a fearful collision took

place upon the Zarskoe-Zelo railway. On all these occasions the government papers stated the loss with units instead of scores. These accidents were a reflection on the vigilance of the authorities, which in that country affects to care for everything; and the duel of Poushkin, like all other duels, was against the imperial ukase; therefore the scandal of this violation must not be popularised. It may, however, hence be judged how far the Russian cabinet may have succeeded in mystifying truths important for it to conceal, when it has been so easy for it during eight or nine years to keep in obscurity a fact so remarkable and public, relating to a man who holds the same place amongst the national writers as Peter the Great amongst the Russian sovereigns and administrators, or Suwarrow amongst Russian commanders.

Let us now briefly sketch the life and death of Poushkin, as gathered from those who lived in his intimacy, and as given by them,—not to some travelling *littérateur*, for whose impressions they would have been responsible,—not as policy, or regard for the poet's family, or the jealousy of the censorship would lead them to misrepresent facts; but as they are current in their private conversations

Poushkin was born in 1799, either at Moscow,

or at Pskov. He studied in the Lyceum of Zarskoe-Zelo, near St. Petersburg, and like every scion of a noble family, entered the government service. His early associations caused him to imbibe, like all educated Russians, a profound disgust for the institutions of his country, in addition to a boldness in expressing it, far more unusual.

Though Poushkin began to write in the mildest part of Alexander's reign, it is in vain to seek anything which bears even a semblance of direct hostility to the government, in his writings; for the simple reason, that then, as at the present hour, no printer dare, under pain of capital punishment, print anything which has not the written approbation of the censor. Nevertheless, he was so free in his conversation,—so bitter in his epigrams, which flew from mouth to mouth, that as the rule of Alexander grew daily more severe, about 1820, he was banished to the Crimea. In 1823, he was allowed to retire to Pskov, his native place. About this period, in common with thousands of the nobility, he joined, though without taking any prominent part, in the secret societies, presided by the heroic Pestel. On the accession of Nicholas, when the insurrection broke out, Poushkin determined to draw the

sword and join the conspirators, being only prevented by the obstinate superstition of the slave, his coachman, who alarmed at some unusual omen, or perhaps aware of his master's real destination, threw himself down upon the road, telling his lord to punish him as he thought fit, but resolutely refusing to proceed. Through this incident, which the poet often related to his intimates, and which made a profound impression on his mind, he was delayed till the hour the rebellion had been quieted, and was consequently saved, being only compromised in the same manner as thousands, whose participation was too vague, and whose number too formidable for punishment to reach.

About 1828, Poushkin was banished by Nicholas to the Caucasus, during the campaign of Paskevitch; and it was in this exile that he wrote the ode to the Caucasus, cited by Mr. Shaw, who of course forbears all mention of the circumstances under which he gathered his inspiration.

On the whole, the reader could, however, only imbibe erroneous notions of the character of the author, and the spirit of his writings, from the selection made by Mr. Shaw. Poushkin was not allowed to publish anything which had a liberal

tendency, so that it was only here and there that an allusion could escape the vigilance of the censorship, and only wrapped up with many orthodox opinions. In one of these few instances, in Poushkin's ode to Napoleon, in which Mr. Shaw sees nothing but *the exulting inspiration of a Russian poet*, he allows all the part that was dangerous in the original to evaporate in his translation, rendering the last verses :

But shame and curses without number,
 Upon that reptile head be laid ;
 Whose insults now shall vex the slumber
 Of him—that sad discrowned shade !
 No, for his trump the signal sounded,
 Her glorious race when Russia ran ;
 His hand, 'mid strife and battle, founded .
 Eternal liberty for man !

Now Mitzkiavitch, the personal friend of Poushkin, thus translates this passage :

Let him be branded with the stamp of shame, who shall breathe one reproach against his discrowned shade ! Glory to him ! for he revealed to Russia its mighty destinies, and from his prison-house announced an era of unending liberty.

*Imiru vecznuji svobodu
 Iz miriaka ssylki zavetil.*

During the exile of Poushkin, however, his popularity had so far exceeded that of any writer who had preceded him, that it was evident that the nation had already judged him as the first of its poets. From the palace of the noble to the shed of the trader, wherever men could read them, his works found their way. Eventually, it is said, that as many as five-and-twenty thousand copies of his complete works were sold, an amount which appears prodigious in a country where assuredly fewer of its natives are acquainted with the use of letters, than would be found in the United Kingdom conversant with the French language.

At length it became so obvious, that Poushkin was the greatest of Russian writers who had hitherto appeared, that Nicholas could no longer fail to perceive that, like Karamsin, he must reflect more credit on his reign than the *littérateurs* who were declared to have rendered *Augustan* the age of his grandmother Catherine.

When the poet could do honour to the emperor, the emperor prudently delighted to honour the poet. He called him from exile, appointed him to write the history of Peter the Great, with a pension of about two hundred pounds per annum,

which sounds magnificently in roubles ; and exempted him from the censorship, by declaring that he would personally be his censor. It may readily be imagined, that the necessity of submitting his writing to the emperor before publication, who, not being literary in his taste, referred them privately to the censor's office, laid an embargo still more strict upon his pen. Poushkin, who dared not refuse these honours, felt offended, rather than flattered by the gross attempts to cajole him. Neither could Nicholas conceal his contempt for the man, on whom he now chose to confer his favours ; it soon became bruited about, how disdainfully he had expressed, that Poushkin, in consideration of his talent, was to be allowed all the unbounded freedom of speech which may be allowed to one poet, or to one jester, but which was to constitute no precedent for others.

Poushkin, like Alexander Dumas, was a mulatto. His grandfather had married the daughter of the Negro Hannibal, long the buffoon of Peter the great, who, at length great in his master's favour, had without difficulty allied himself to a great Russian family, founding the house of An-nibaloff, and acquiring eventually the command of fleets and armies ; and this allusion stung him

to the quick. His pen was bound by a double censorship, and when he attempted to use the liberty of speech accorded to him, he found that no one dared listen to him, for his hearers were not exempted from the penalties of lending ear to his remarks. Poushkin often complained in bitterness of heart, of this tantalising restriction. Like Demosthenes, and alas, like the majority of those who have been gifted with eloquence of the pen or tongue, Poushkin had no enduring resolution. He was, besides, essentially a creature of impulse; though on the spur of the moment he had resolved to risk his life in the rebellion, and though frequently afterwards he circulated epigrams, which, according to the humour of his sovereign, might have doomed him to the mine if they had reached his ear; still, he sank into despondency, and learned habitually to bow to the restraints surrounding him.

When in a moment of excitement he had given vent to his feelings, he seems often to have become alarmed at his own rashness, and subsequently to have endeavoured, like Krilof in his fables, to deprecate the wrath of the despot, by some productions which might meet favour in

his eyes. Such, for instance, was the case with his ode on the capture of Warsaw by the Russians, which is said to have been written to avert the consequences of some lines which had been bruited abroad, somewhat similar to his epigram on Nicholas and the lanthorn.

Poushkin died the victim of a domestic tragedy, occasioned, perhaps, solely by the inconsiderate jealousy which he seems to have inherited with the blood of Africa mingled in his veins with the Slavonic; or at least, like Othello, from the malignity with which this feeling was worked upon.

So universally known, and popularly related in its minutest details, is this unhappy episode, throughout the Russian empire, that referring as it does to so remarkable a man, the author conceives himself at liberty briefly to recall the many features of the story, without incurring the imputation of indecorously overstepping the circle which divides biographic or historical narration from private scandal.

Poushkin, according to the current version, had married one of two fair sisters. A M. Danzas, the connexion of a foreign diplomatist at the court

of St. Petersburg, and who had taken service in the imperial guard, was a constant visitor in the poet's family, and on terms of the strictest friendship with himself, when his jealousy was roused by an anonymous communication, reproaching him with blindness in not perceiving the intimacy which existed between the young foreigner and his wife.

Poushkin called on Danzas for an explanation, and was met by the defence, that the visits of the latter were addressed to his wife's sister. "Then marry her," said Poushkin; and the young guardsman married her; thus restoring harmony to the family whose quiet he had disturbed, and of which he now became a member. But this state of things did not last long, for the anonymous Iago of our poet, poisoned his repose with letter after letter, reproaching him with complaisance, till goaded into madness by his jealousies and doubts, in one of these paroxysms, he hit upon an expedient to test the fact of his wife's guilt, which, whether borrowed from the plot of a French vaudeville, or occurring spontaneously to the jealous poet and the farce writer, or borrowed by the latter from the story of Poushkin, the author has no means of determining; though distinctly remembering that an

identical incident furnishes the plot of a comic piece, and of the tragedy of real life which deprived Russia of its greatest literary illustration.

Poushkin, having dismissed the attendants, rose from the meal at which he had been sitting with his wife and brother-in-law, and snuffing out one of the tapers by design, purposely extinguished the other in his attempt to light it. He then hurriedly blackened his lips with a burnt cork, and kissing his wife in the dark upon the lips, quitted the room to seek a light in the apartment beyond. On returning with a light he found the lips of M. Danzas blackened.

The violence of his ardent temperament now knew no bounds. Deaf to all protestations of innocence, he proceeded to such extremities as left his brother-in-law no choice but to meet him. The poet fell by his adversary's pistol, but, though mortally wounded, is said to have raised himself up, to aim steadfastly at his relative, before he sank insensible. Such is the popular version of this story, true in the main particulars.

Poushkin lingered a few days, and became reconciled both to his wife and to Danzas, who always strenuously denied all foundation for the

suspicious of the hapless poet, and is said to have declared that in his agitation, Poushkin had hurriedly kissed his lips instead of those of his wife.

When it was ascertained that his wound was mortal, the emperor wrote to him the letter cited by Prince Wiasemski, advising him to die as a christian, and alluding to the future of his children. So notorious was the mutual aversion of these men, that the interpretation of this unexpected note by the dying Poushkin, was considered as a means to influence him in his last moments.

It was obvious that the last words of such a man, whose fate could only add to his celebrity, would obtain publicity unusual in Russia, and it was to be dreaded that the poet, who had so often spoken out whilst still exposed to all the terrors of the despot, now that he was rapidly escaping from the power of all human potentates, would bequeath to his countrymen some of those withering epigrams, or bitter curses, which slaves gather up with such avidity and repeat in whispered tones from mouth to mouth.

The last hours of Poushkin, after he had forgiven his adversary, were spent amidst the

endeavours of his friends to reconcile him, not with heaven, but with the emperor.

The emperor, who at all hours of the day or night is urged by his restless temperament to hurry to the scene of any accidental fire in the metropolis, did not so far conquer his aversion as to come to the bedside of the dying poet, but when he was safely dead, he gave him a magnificent funeral, and honoured by every imaginable device the clay which, less than the jealous vigilance of his imperial mourner, imprisoned the spirit of the departed.

The appreciation of men of literary talent by Nicholas, resembles that of a companion of the author's in a certain hunt, who after saying that nothing delighted him like the sight of a boar, shut himself in a hut when the game was on foot, coming out to gloat over it when it was laid low,—explaining that he loved to feast his eyes on such a beast when dead—the stuff for brawn and hams,—not when alive and dangerous.

Thus the only real benefits and honours Nicholas has conferred on the writers of his reign, were on Poushkin when he was a corpse, and on Karamsin when dying. In fact, no sooner was Poushkin laid in his grave, than one of his youthful admirers, seduced by the honours which

his imperial majesty now vouchsafed to Poushkin, addressed an ode to the departed poet. That it contained no political allusion or impropriety, is evident from the fact that the censorship allowed it to be published, but its effect was far from answering the expectations of the author of this innocent lucubration; for the emperor's irritation was such when he found an embryo Poushkin aspiring to fill the place of the deceased, that he caused the ill-starred youth to be banished forthwith to the Caucasus. The poet's memory was already identified with the glories of the present reign; all danger from his sting was over, and so, like a collector of natural history, who has safely bottled a dead scorpion, but who unmercifully crushes one of its spawn, the emperor displayed a severity which had the intended effect of deterring all imitators.

Whilst still on the subject of Poushkin, it may be worth while to enumerate a few of his works, which are chiefly as follows: The Rouslan and Ludmila; The Prisoner of the Caucasus; Count Noulne; Boris Godunof, a Shaksperian tragedy; The Hurricane; The Grabovnik; The Revolt of Pougatcheff, an historical work; The Queen of Spades; and The Oneghine, in eight cantos, an imitation of the Don Juan, in which he seems

in the manner of his hero's death, to have singularly prognosticated his own fate.

Elsewhere we find Marmier prefacing the arguments of Prince Wiasemsky, whose words have been already quoted, by observing, "that the accusation of *obscurantism* is unjust as applied to the Russian government, and that though it be true that it seeks to limit the manifestation of public opinion, to domineer over the press, to mutilate it when it takes too bold a flight, to gag it when it expresses an opinion which it reprobates; still it encourages works of science, and of serious literature. It has caused great and important voyages of discovery to be undertaken, and it has liberally rewarded the scientific expeditions of Krusenstern, Davidoff, and Wrangel." In all this passage, as throughout the chapter, a singular confusion is made, which shows how the author has been mystified. When he talks of the Russian government, does he mean that of Catherine, of her two successors, or of Nicholas? for the policy of the Russian cabinet, with regard to the enlightenment of the nation, is now diametrically opposite to what it was in the reign of Catherine, and very different from what it has been in those intervening between hers and the

present. It is obvious that this confusion must convey an impression utterly erroneous.

Catherine, who governed for herself, was at least during the greatest portion of her life, sincerely desirous of fully raising her subjects to the intellectual condition of those in the most civilised countries, for the simple reason, that yet unscared by the effects of the French revolution, she saw nothing perilous to absolutism in the most complete enlightenment, whilst it appeared alike more glorious and more profitable to rule millions of civilised men, than an equal number of human brutes.

From her reign to that of Nicholas, the tendency of the Russian government changed in this respect, that without relinquishing the idea of gradually enlightening its subjects, it became very jealous of the political effects of education and the press. Hence it encouraged scientific works, whilst prohibiting all social or political discussion. With the reign of Nicholas commenced, however, a distinct period, of which the tendency is decidedly and unequivocally *obscurantism*.

The principle has been recognised, that instruction is dangerous. Whilst the political censorship grows daily more exclusive, literature is in the

most marked manner discouraged. Not only is Poland deprived of her universities, and of her chief means of instruction ; but in Russia Proper an ukase of Nicholas has deprived the lower classes of the faculty of entering the superior schools.

The empire, so far from being in a state of progress as regards public education, or intellectual advancement, is under Nicholas decidedly retrograding from the position it occupied under his predecessors, humble as that may have been.

Marmier, in citing the works annually published, observes, that in 1820, 3,800 books appeared (an unparalleled year in the Russian literary annals) ; in 1824, only 264. This was the close of Alexander's reign, just as he had established a secret police, a vigilant censorship, and was alarmed by the secret societies of the nobility. In 1831, which Marmier seems to have chosen as one of the favourable years of the reign of Nicholas, 479 books were published. On the whole it exhibits a vast and increasing diminution from the amount issued from the press in that part of Alexander's reign which intervened between the cessation of the war, and the period when that sovereign abandoned his liberal theories to surrender his power into the hands of violent and sanguinary advisers. The

prodigious increase of all kinds of publications in free countries during the last five-and-twenty years should be taken into account in estimating the significance of this retrogression in Russia.

The author cannot help here noticing an ode which Marmier translates and gives with considerable *naiveté*, as indicative of Russian feeling. It is headed—

ODE TO ENGLAND.

Isle of wonders, isle of pomp, thou art an ornament to the universe,—the brightest emerald that gems the seas

Dreaded guardian of liberty! Destructer of thy foes, the ocean wraps thee in the immensity of its waves.

That ocean bottomless and boundless, and inimical to the earth, but submissive and loving unto thee!

Sacred home of freedom, blessed land that thou art, what life in thy teeming populations, what freshness in thy wealthy fields!

How radiantly the crown of science glitters on thy brow! How sonorous and noble are the accents of thy lyre.

Glittering with gold, and beaming with intelligence, thou art happy and wealthy, nursed in luxury, and arrayed in strength!

Even nations the most distant turn towards thee
their timid thoughts, and ask what new laws thou wilt
prescribe for them!

When the poet has written thus far, he is well aware that one-fourth part of the allusions he has made to liberty would suffice to send him to the Caucasus, if not to Siberia, and that without the satisfaction of even seeing them pass the censor's office to publicity.

He therefore resorts to the stratagem of the Parisian journalist during the Hundred Days, who, anxious to announce the landing of Napoleon from Elba, and his progress towards the capital, published, "that the foulest monster that ever disgraced humanity was again let loose on France; as Napoleon advanced nearer to the capital, and its police became more alarmed, he made known successively that the Corsican ogre—that the usurper,—that Buonaparte had reached such and such a place, and lastly, that the emperor Napoleon was within a few days' journey of Paris."

So in all productions of a similar nature, we must understand, that the Russian writers have no means of giving publicity to one cry of freedom, or of making one appeal to their countrymen, unless

garbled by some qualifying conclusion in the spirit of their government. They know, besides, that no attention whatever is paid by the public to anything adulatory of a despotism, or vituperative of its enemies. They are aware that the idea of inspiring the Russian people with a thirst for universal conquest, is a chimera which exists only in the brain of Nicholas, and on the lips of his courtiers, who simulate an enthusiasm for it, in the same breath that they assure you that Paul died of apoplexy, or that Siberia is a second Sybaris, and with as much sincerity as they would affect to believe, if the emperor so desired it, that the nation wished to embrace and propagate Mahomedanism. Thus, in the commencement to the Ode to England, the author has addressed her as the sacred home of freedom; he has reminded his countrymen how free and happy and how powerful this land of independence is; and then, for the double purpose of escaping condign punishment, and of being allowed to make public his effusion, he continues his lyric from where we left it off.

But, because thou art perfidious, because thou art full of pride, because thou hast cherished terrestrial glory above the commands of heaven,

Because with sacrilegious hand thou hast bound God's church to the foot of a perishable and terrestrial throne,

A day will come, and that day is not distant, when thy pomp, thy purple, and thy gold will vanish like a dream.

Thy lightnings will be extinguished in thy hands, thy sword will cease to glitter, and the gift of luminous thoughts will be withdrawn from thy children.

Then, reckless of thy regal flag, the sounding waves unbound, will career again according to their wild caprice.

And God will choose a humble people; (The Russians,) full of faith and miracles, confiding to it the destiny of the universe, the thunders of the earth, and the inspirations of heaven.

The spirit of the Russian breathes in the first part of this ode—that which his Tsar would wish to animate him with in the second; and it will be at once obvious to the reader, that the poet with sufficient cultivation to know that the church of England was presided over by the sovereign of that country, could not seriously have set forth this circumstance as a reason for the providential transference of the power of England to the Russian empire, whose church is not nominally, but despotically ruled by a temporal prince in the person of the emperor.

Kriloff the fabulist, (who, to the best of the author's belief, has been translated into English by Doctor Bowring), during some forty or fifty years which have elapsed since he first commenced his literary labours, has passed through periods when the censorship has been indulgent, compared to its present vigour. There have even been times when the Russian satirists have been encouraged to attack the venality of the smaller fry of office, and Griebogiedeff, Kapinst, Gogol, and other petty writers, have followed in this respect in the footsteps of the veteran Kriloff. But though the genius of Kriloff is essentially caustic and satirical, he has always been restrained by prudential considerations; and ever alarmed at his own daring, where he has shown any boldness in one of his fables, he directly publishes another which contains some common-place moral, palatable to the absolute spirit of his government. The author has not Kriloff's fables before him, and speaks only from recollection in instancing the following:—

Krlioff is in a dream transported to the gate of Heaven, where the good and evil spirits are disputing for the soul of a senator. The evil spirit claims him, because justice has been basely

sold in his office,—because of the tears of the widow and orphan. Hereupon the good spirit proves that the judge, a foolish easy man, knew nothing whatever of the merits of the cases, which his secretaries and underlings had in reality sold and decided ; and because the fault was rather in those who had made him judge, than in the senator, admits him through the sacred portals. “ I know many a senator,” concludes the fabulist, silyly, “whom I devoutly believe will at that rate go to Heaven.”

But directly after venturing on a fable somewhat to the effect of the above, he publishes another showing how the man slackened the horse's rein, and how by degrees the horse taking greater liberties threw his rider to the ground.

Peter the Great printed the first Russian book, and attempted to found a Russian literature ; but though it was easy for him to create generals and admirals, to build fleets and cities, he could not succeed in making an author. The works published in his reign were all translations. Lomonosoff, in the reign of Elizabeth, was the first who could ever by courtesy be termed an original writer, thus far that he paraphrased and imitated, instead of invariably translating.

Derjavin, who flourished in the reign of Catherine, more pompous and harmonious, is scarcely more original than Lomonosoff, yet was cited till the time of Poushkin as the first of the Russian poets. In this reign too appeared Karamsin the historian, one of the few prose writers ; for the Russian, like every literature in its infancy, was then, as it is still, chiefly confined to poetry. Karamsin is principally remarkable as having fixed, reformed, and extended the Russian language, which till his time could scarcely be regarded as a written tongue, so inadequate was its vocabulary to the expression of abstract ideas. His history of Russia is a work of research and merit ; the credit is due to him of having spoken with some impartiality of Russian sovereigns, wherever the period was not too near our own. Karamsin enjoyed the private friendship of the Emperor Alexander, which did not, however, relieve him from his penury or embarrassment. When on his death-bed, he was at length noticed by Nicholas, who conferred a handsome pension on his family. Joukoffsky is a mere clever translator of poetry and prose, who sometimes rises to the rank of imitator, and plays in the reign of Nicholas, the part of Lomonosoff in that of Elizabeth.

Kriloff the fabulist, Karamsin the historian, and Poushkin the poet, are therefore alone worth citing in the literary annals of Muscovy.

The besetting sin of all its productions is a want of originality, in which they differ singularly from those of the Polish muse. Their merit must, however, be perhaps considered rather as relative than positive,—rather as indicative of the vigorous and healthy intellect, which like a plant piercing the surface of the icy soil, makes us, instead of seeking for the fruit it bears, marvel that it should flower in the frozen air at all.

It is to be judged less by its performance than its promise, and that it must be confessed is so great, that whenever any social or political changes take place in the Russian empire, we may confidently look forward to see it assuming a station as important in the literary, as it does now in the political world. Hitherto we must bear in mind the very restricted extension of education, which under any circumstances would limit to so small a number those who could devote themselves to the pursuit of letters,—everywhere unprofitable, but in Russia so dangerous that few of the Russian popular writers have escaped disgrace or exile, at one period or another of their career.

But independent of this circumstance, the inexorable censorship must be taken into account, which effectually cramps and limits every flight of genius, smothering it in the bud for the want of that liberty which seems to be its vital atmosphere. For it must be remembered that the severest penalties to restrain the press bear no analogy to such an institution as the censorship as used with varying rigour in Russia, Austria, and Prussia. The general tendency of the most elaborate work, or the minutest article,—whole volumes, a page, a sentence, or a word objectionable to the opinions or prejudices of those who govern, are duly weighed, and debar the whole or the part from the possibility of publicity ; since nothing can be printed without the censor's sanction. With this restraint, exercised with more or less severity, the literature of Russia has struggled since its first birth ; and in comparing it with that of Poland, it is only fair to bear in mind that nearly all the most remarkable Polish authors have been inspired during a period when free from this enthrallment.

Niemcewicz and Kozmian, the epic and pastoral poets of its classic school, had both attained their manhood before the first subjugation

of Poland by the Russians. Lelewel and Mitzkiavitch began to write before Alexander had virtually abolished the constitution of the kingdom of Poland, and before he had established the Russian censorship, which has been ever since continued with more rigour than even in Russia. But all the most remarkable works, not only of Mitzkiavitch and Lelewel, but of Krasinski and Zaleski,—in short, all the most glorious portion of the Polish literature,—has been written in the unbounded freedom of exile. Though the whole modern literature of Russia is essentially imitative, the songs of the people, full of originality, are not to be confounded in this category. Commonly wanting in elevation, they are distinguished by a simplicity half quaint, half touching, which I know not how to characterise, excepting by the French epithet of *naïf*. They are evidently, however, the production of a people divested even of the most distant traditions of individual pride or warlike spirit; but it must always be remembered that allusion is here made only to the ditties and ballads of the Muscovites, not of the Ruthenians, once the bulwark of Poland, and who emancipating themselves from the feudal tyranny of their Polish lords, after long social wars, achieved

their freedom only to fall into the arms of a benumbing despotism; but without forgetting these eventful antecedents in their popular songs. This Ruthenian literature of the people, which the author may have elsewhere the opportunity of examining with the reader, is constantly confounded with that of the Muscovites, of which latter, two of the ballads cited by Marmier may be taken as characteristic specimens: the one as a tradition of the past, the other as an impression of the actual feeling of the people.

SONG OF THE CAPTIVE ROBBER.

Hush! hush, oh green forest my mother, trouble not my thoughts, for to-morrow I must appear before the terrible judge, before the Tsar himself.

The Tsar will say to me: "Answer me, my child; tell me, oh son of a peasant, with whom thou hast led thy robber life? how many were thy companions?"

And I will answer him: "Oh Tsar, my hope! most Christian Tsar, I will tell thee the whole truth. Companions I had four. One was the dark night, another my steel blade, the third my good steed, and the fourth my bended bow. My messengers were arrows hardened in the fire."

Then the Tsar, my hope, the most Christian Tsar,

will say to me : " Honour to thee, my child, who knowest how to rob and how to speak so well. For thy recompense I will give thee a good present. Thou shalt have a palace in the open fields, a gallows and a hempen rope."

THE RUSSIAN MOTHER.

(*Whose child is taken as a soldier.*)

Oh! you my dear children, I love you all with an equal love. Behold my fingers : if one is hurt I feel it through my whole body. So with you, my children, my heart trembles for you all ; but thou, oh my darling, who art doomed, why art thou so unfortunate ? Better would it have been that thou hadst not been born, that I had never fed thee from my bosom—better would it have been to have crushed thee at thy birth. I should have grieved less to bury thee by the hill-side, and to have covered thee with the yellow sand. Now, bereaved mother, I may sing like the cuckoo. Oh ! what troubles await thee, my beloved ; thou art young and tender, and thou wilt feel the pangs of want, thou wilt suffer cold and hunger, and thou wilt call thy father and thy mother Tartars. When we are keeping holiday all my children will be near me, only thou wilt be absent, my beloved child. Write to me, not with pen and ink, but with thy tears, and seal thy letter with the stamp of thy exceeding grief. Spring will return, and as thy companions go to sport in the green

meadows, I, poor mother, startled by their merriment, will look out into the wide road,—I shall see all thy companions, and my eyes will fill with the hot tears.

Such, with regard to all military avocations, are the sentiments of the Muscovite people, whom their government seeks to inspire with martial ardour; and one million of whose number is perpetually forced into this hateful career, to gratify the ambition of a foreign family, and to serve as instruments for subverting the happiness and independence of their neighbours.

Hence there is always one million of families whose breavement this ditty faithfully records, whilst it images the incessant fear which oppresses the remainder.

CHAPTER VIII.

FINLAND AND ITS LITERATURE.

Swedish feeling in Finland—Attempt of the Russian Cabinet to neutralise it by the resuscitation of a Finnish Nationality and Literature—Famous Epic Poem of the Kalevala—Collection of the Kanletetar.

THE principality of Finland, inhabited by an aboriginal race, extends from within a few hours' sail of Stockholm up to the gates of St. Petersburg.

Its population received its laws, civilisation, and religion from the Swedes. Its higher classes are all of Swedish origin; but as complete an amalgamation has taken place as between the English population in Wales, or the French amongst the Celts of Britany.

The Swedish language is used in precisely the same manner as the English or the French in those Celtic countries. Finland was, as it is well known, lost to Sweden under the last but one of the

dynasty of Vasas, an obtuse and hasty, but well-meaning sovereign.

It was occupied by Alexander when he had been forced by Napoleon to join with him against the allies with whom he had begun the war, and lost to Sweden by the only monarch who remained faithful, in the continental struggle, to his engagements with Great Britain.

Alexander retained possession of Finland, notwithstanding his private assurance at the time that he had no intention of appropriating it.

The Finns have never ceased to regard with affectionate regret the period of their union with Sweden. In Sweden, the loss of Finland rankles so profoundly in every Swedish heart, that from Gottenburg to the borders of Lapland you cannot name the subject to the humblest peasant in the remotest hut, without seeing that the prospect of its recovery would reconcile him to any sacrifice.

Finland, from the origin of one part of its population and the predilection of the remainder, from the nature of its surface, so chequered by rocks, lakes, defiles, forests, and rivers, and peculiarly unfitted for the action of Muscovite masses, is the most favourable ground the Swedes could choose the theatre of a successful struggle.

Sweden is every day more likely to increase its power by incorporating the sister population of Denmark) with its comparative wealth and excellent sailors) in a common union.

The Danish and Swedish people, long divided by the consequences of a family feud, are identical in race and language; and their interests are the same. The prejudice which blinded them to this fact has recently been rapidly clearing away, and they are awakening to a conviction of the truth. It is to be doubted whether at the present day any political combination can eventually prevent two neighbouring people, bent on fraternising, from uniting. This Scandinavian union of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, which the author believes first to have noticed publicly in the Revelations of Russia, and which will become imminent on the death of the present king of Denmark, is gradually occupying more attention in the north. The students of the universities go across in increased numbers to visit each other; and the consummation so much to be wished for has become a universal toast.

In Denmark, where all public demonstrations have rather reference to the destiny of that kingdom after the death of its present sovereign than to any violent changes during his lifetime, a growing spirit of liberalism manifests itself.

It is only a few weeks since that a journalist being condemned for a severe article against the absolute monarch of Prussia to a fine of near £500, on the seizure-sale of his library to defray the amount, a gentleman stepped forward and bid the amount for the first book put up for sale.

The eventual results of a Scandinavian union, must undoubtedly lead to an attempt at the recovery of Finland by Sweden; but should its accomplishment be long delayed, the feeling of the Swedes upon this subject furnishes Great Britain with the means, in the event of war with Russia, of dealing at slight cost or hazard, a serious and irrecoverable blow at that empire.

Whatever may be the political condition of Sweden, if, in event of war between Russia and Great Britain, the prospect of the recovery of Finland were held out to its people, no government could resist the popular movement, which would impel it to join with England, and invade that principality. A British fleet, and a Swedish army subsidised by England, could undoubtedly effect the conquest of this territory, in spite of every effort the Russian cabinet could make; and having occupied, permanently retain it.

Cronstadt is built on a Finnish island, and

though fortified with every care, being wholly artificial, can make no permanent resistance against the newly introduced means of destruction at the disposal of a victorious navy. The only defence of St. Petersburg, is Cronstadt; and its occupation, together with that of Finland, leave the capital itself at the invaders' mercy, and must lead to its abandonment.

War with Great Britain would, besides, at any moment rouse Poland, which is hourly drawing nearer to the renewal of a single-handed struggle with the Tsar; Turkey would at all times be eager to profit by such an eventuality; an English fleet in the Black Sea could play the same part as in the Baltic, and a small military expedition might deprive Russia of her Georgian provinces, from which she is almost cut off by the Caucasian mountaineers, and where it is four times more difficult and expensive for her to send a soldier, than it would be to Great Britain.

The author, who is prepared to enter elsewhere into military details to prove the practicability of the aggressive means to which he makes here allusion, wishes it to be understood that he is no partisan of war, which cannot in his estimation be sanctioned

on any grounds of national interest, jealousy, or aggrandisement; which even the pretence of injured national honour will not justify, and which ought never to be undertaken except in self-defence, or for the common-weal of humanity.

There are many with whom this consideration would weigh in their judgment of the conduct to be pursued by Great Britain towards the Russian despot, if it were not for the popular idea that he is as inaccessible to us as the tyrant of Bokhara. It is to assist in removing this strange misconception that the author is led to dwell on this vulnerable point which the mutual relations of Finland and Sweden offer in the panoply of that gigantic Russian despotism, to which might be so appropriately applied the epithet conferred in the whispered murmurs of the crowd, on its imperial representative when passing through Germany, of *Der Menschenfeind*, or the "enemy of humanity."

On the national feeling of the Finns of themselves, whose character the author has sketched elsewhere,—a patient, hardy race, distinguished for loyalty and fidelity,—naturally depends much of the facility which an invasion of their principality might offer. If they had been as well treated by

their new masters as by the Swedes, the course of time would have reconciled them to the change. The author has had occasion to show elsewhere how Alexander and Nicholas swore successively the maintenance of their constitution, and how both violated this oath by never allowing a representative body to assemble. This circumstance recalls too another instance of the misrepresentation prevalent in the public press, out of compliment or through fear of the Russian cabinet.

A Monsieur Leouzon le Duc, a modest and timid writer, has recently published a work on Finland, in which he gives a translation of the Kalevala, whether from the Finnish, or from the Swedish translation of Castren he does not mention. In his account of the government of Finland, he states that Alexander promised to maintain the Finnish constitution, and cites his manifest to that effect; he further mentions with apparent approbation, that Nicholas graciously confirmed it at his accession to the throne, and also gives the text of his ukase.

But he utterly omits to say that this promise was never fulfilled,—the grievance of which the Finns so bitterly complain; thus naturally leav-

ing his reader to infer that these two sovereigns had respected, instead of virtually abrogating the Finnish constitution, in the face of a pledge so solemn. Alexander otherwise pursued towards that country a system of conciliation; the exemption from duties was guaranteed for a certain number of years, and the vexatious tyranny of the bureaucracy and police restrained within tolerable bounds. The impatience of Nicholas soon began to tighten the rein. Directly after his accession, he abolished the committee for Finnish affairs, and from that moment the country was gradually Russianised, that is to say, that all the corrupt and arbitrary mechanism by which the remainder of the empire is administered, was introduced by slow degrees.

The long peace succeeding to so many years of war, the exemption from duties, and the trade with the capital, consoled the Finns for their political restrictions by an unusual increase of material prosperity. But this has been over-rated; and if we compare the progress of semi-republican Norway, a poorer country, divested of many of the same advantages as Finland, we may infer that this would have been at least the same if still united to Sweden. On the other hand, it must not be

forgotten that the exemption from heavy duties, by rendering it a vast free port, was the chief cause of its increasing wealth ; but these were only guaranteed for a certain term of years.

This term expired since the author had last occasion to advert to Finland, and as he prognosticated, the first step taken by Nicholas was to deprive it of these advantages. After taking this step, which practically taught his Finnish subjects the value of the representative forms withheld from them, it was discovered that the expense of a sufficient custom-house establishment along a coast of a thousand miles, would exceed the incomings of the customs, and the rigidity of the tariff was again relaxed. This has not been the case with the increasing severity of its administration, and aware of the danger of indisposing this population, the plan has been devised in the imperial cabinet, of resuscitating and playing off the nationality of the Finns against that of the Swedish middle-class, and of neutralizing thereby the Swedish feeling, still so obstinately prevalent in that country.

It is thus, that on the other side of the Finnish gulph, the Lettonian peasantry, and their German priesthood and nobility, are skilfully made to keep

each other in check. But there is only an apparent similitude in the two cases. In the Baltic provinces, the Teutonic knights reduced the conquered inhabitants to private servitude, and shared them out like cattle; as in parts of Ireland, a fierce animosity lurks in the bosoms of the peasantry against this strange race of oppressors, and may be easily worked upon.

Finland, on the contrary, was equitably governed as a Swedish province,—all the recollections of her civilisation and her glories are identified in her happy association with the mother country. It is therefore as idle to attempt to detach the affections of Finland from Sweden, by reference to a nationality lost in the night of time, or to traditions connected with paganism, as it would be for the French, if in possession of Cornwall, to make its inhabitants forget their separation from England, by encouraging homely songs in their native dialect, or popularizing a poem filled with the mythologic legends of the Druids.

That the reader may be enabled to judge of the nature of Finnish national literature, a brief analysis with extracts from the *Kalevala* and *Kanteletar* is herewith given,—the one an ancient epic in two-and-thirty books, the other a collec-

tion of the lyrics of the people. The former, which is in many respects a singular and interesting production, may gratify, as a literary curiosity, at the same time that it serves to illustrate the author's argument.

The Kalevala—so called either from Kawa the father of the Finnish gods, the gigantic Saturn of its mythology, or from Kalewala the Finnish Olympus—is a collection of poetic myths, gathered like the songs of Homer, or as those of Ossian were once supposed to have been by Macpherson, from the oral traditions of the people, by the indefatigable Doctor Lœnnroth, and published by him a few years since. The antiquity of the whole of it is very great, as it winds up with the legend of Mariatta the gentle virgin, who swallows a berry, and conceiving, brings into the world a child, which usurps the empire of the god Wainamoinen.

It is impossible in this to mistake the Virgin Mary, and the first tradition of Christianity, dispelling the darkness of heathenism ; and therefore it is obvious that the last portions of the poem can have been composed no later than the twelfth century, when Christianity was introduced into Finland. There are allusions made in other parts of it to the invasions of Russia by the

Northmen, which occurred in the ninth century; and some even see cause to retrace the origin of the first portions of it beyond the birth of Christ.

There is, of course, no substantial reason to be given, why these traditions, orally handed down for nine centuries as they contain incontestible proofs of having been, may not in a like manner have commenced and been transmitted from mouth to mouth nine centuries previously.

This poem of the Kalevala, though singularly disjointed, obscure, and confused, may be termed an epic, because all the episodes which it contains refer to the adventures of the god Wainamoinen, of which the thread is never entirely lost from the commencement to the termination. It is, however, an epic almost wholly mythologic, or at least human personages are only casually introduced, and chiefly in the character of sorcerers.

It is compared to the Odyssey by some of the learned Finns, who in their patriotic enthusiasm even give it precedence. Though it is difficult for any one but a Finn to acquiesce in this judgment, the Kalevala must be admitted as an interesting monument, of a distant age and of a numerous people, which probably overspread a large portion

of Europe long before it was occupied by its present races, and of which the only notable remnant is now to be found in Finland, though slender branches separated from it, and plunged in barbarism, still exist, scattered over Siberia and the north-east of Europe. This poem is also peculiar, and original, though in some passages its style is biblical, and seems to point to an oriental origin.

It is therefore not without striking beauties, and many more are probably lost to the modern reader, through the unintelligibility of the allegories and allusions with which it is filled, whilst in a translation the harmony of the versification, one of its chiefest charms, is necessarily lost upon a stranger. It is impossible to give any outline of the construction of this poem, without some slight explanation of the Finnish mythology, which is peculiar, though bearing some traces of having been derived either from that of the Greeks, or from a common source. We must however admit it to be less poetical than that of the Greeks, and less gloomily grand than that of the Scandinavians.

It mixes up the weird with the terrible, and though we have no right to condemn the most

gross apparent absurdities, which may be full of meaning lost to us, its most solemn superstitions are often chequered by images irresistibly ludicrous.

All the Finnish gods, whenever their deeds or history are recorded, appear so frequently in the character of sorcerers, that the attributes of the godhead seem inextricably confounded with the power of the magician.

They blend in a far greater degree than the gods of the Greek mythology, or of the Scandinavian Edda, the weaknesses of the man with their god-like character; rather wizards than deities, the art with which they use their spells and incantation seems chiefly to enable them to struggle with, and triumph over mortals and inferior spirits.

There is, besides, so much of contradiction and obscurity in all the Finnish myths; there appear to be so many words of which the signification is either changed or lost, that a perfectly distinct idea cannot be formed with certainty, even of the attributes of the principal deities, respecting which, the notions of the singers of the runes themselves differ perhaps as much as those of their modern commentators.

Jumala is the god of clouds and thunder; Wainamoinen of poetry and music. They represent the Jupiter and Apollo, but it is uncertain which of the two was the supreme being.

Kava the giant, the father of the gods and giants, bears some analogy to Saturn. Illmarinen the eternal blacksmith to the Vulcan of the Greeks and Romans. Tuoni is the god of death, the giant Hisii, of evil; Akto is the king of the waters; Tuopio, of the woods; Matha-Teppo, of the roads. The storm is represented by an eagle. Mehilainen is a beneficent bird, small and frail as the humming-bird, but ever bearing on its tiny wings the balm and antidote for sickness, suffering, and the spells of evil.

Besides these, the mighty sorcerers and wizards, there are numerous other gods; and every lake, stream, hill, or valley,—in fact, all animate or inanimate things have their good and evil spirits.

On this account everything is personified in their mythic poetry. The boat laments upon the shore,—the lonely tree, isolated in the clearing, mourns and complains,—the road converses with the god,—the iron in the furnace has a voice, and in its uses a volition.

But besides these passages, full of originality and

beauty, we find the witch of Pohja, whose spells can baffle the gods, sweeping up the dust upon her floor into a brazen pan. The god Wainamoinen cocks his hat gaillardly upon one side,—he laves his thumb and purifies his fingers before astonishing all nature with the harmony of his song.

The goddess of the woods draws on her blue stockings, and arrays herself in red ribbons, when irresistibly attracted to listen to the melody of the god.

Illmarinen, another divinity, in the spirit of Hudibras, seriously declares that a man is safer cased in steel, and that he prefers to go by land rather than risk himself upon the water.

It may be asked whether Nicholas or his advisers think these images calculated to efface from the minds of the Finns the recollection of the freedom they enjoyed, and the glories they achieved, when, united to the Swedes, they fought in the front ranks of the armies of the great Gustav Adolph for the civil and religious liberty of the north.

The Kalevala is divided into two-and-thirty *runes*. Like all Finnish poetry, both ancient and modern, its verse is alliterative instead of being in blank or rhymed; but from the nature of the

language, this singular kind of versification is full of harmony ; and, to judge from the facility with which it is improvised by the peasantry, must be of easy construction. For instance, the following passage from the first *rune* of the *Kalevala*, where the Lapland wizard lies in wait for the god Wainamoinen, and shoots the blue elk on which he is riding :

“ And he shot his shaft ; but it rose too high. The sky was rent, the arches of the air were shaken. He shot a second ; but it fell too low : it sunk into the depths of earth—the mother of men—down to *Manala*, whose vaults it made to tremble,” &c.

It would be versified in the Finnish by making most of the words in one line begin with the same letter. As for instance :

Shooting a shaft it soared so high,
That it smote the sky and severed its arch ;
Then speeding a second it sunk too low,
And deeply descending down through the dark earth—
Of mortal man the mighty mother—
Made *Manalas'* murmuring vaults to quiver ;
Then, with truer aim, his third shaft he shot through
The blue bounding elk by the hero bestridden.

The first *rune* of the Kalevala opens with the birth of the god Wainamoinen, after having been thirty years imprisoned in his mother's womb. He immediately creates himself a courser—a blue and gigantic elk—on which he rides towards the sea-shore. But there a Lapland wizard lies in ambush for him ; and discharging his fatal arrows, kills his strange steed ; and the dismounted god having fallen into the sea, wanders for seven years about the waters.

 FINNISH POETRY.

THE KALEVALA.

First Rune.

“ A Laplander—he of the obliquely glancing eye, filled with a malignant hatred which had long rankled in his breast,—cherished dark thoughts against the venerable Wainamoinen.

“ Skilled in the craft of fashioning deadly weapons,—he prepared a bow by means of fire.

“ Gold, silver, iron, and steel lent to his work in turn their lustre and their power. Thus did he prepare a bow, bright to the eye, and costly in its price. Inlaid upon its back a horse bristles up

its mane ; another speeds along on that part which the arrow traverses. A bull reposes on the two wings of the bow, and a hare crouches near the notches.

“ Then he prepares a sheaf of arrows, adorning each with a triple row of feathers. He cuts them carefully, and his sons attach thereunto the light wing of the sparrow, the swallow’s tiny feathers.

“ But these shafts, who will harden them, what balsam will anoint them with its power ?

“ The black venom of the snake, the atrocious poison of the adder.

“ Wouldst thou know, too, how the feathers are attached to the shaft wherewith the bow is strung ?

“ With hairs from the mane of the hell-horse Hisii—of the stallion Lemmo.

“ The shafts are ready ; with bow in hand, and quiver resounding on his shoulders, the Laplander wends his way.

“ He reaches the cataract of the fiery torrent, the whirlpool of the sacred stream. There he watches at morn, he watches at even, he watches at mid-day. He waits the venerable Wainamoinen, the friend of the waters.

“ One day, one morn, he lifts his eyes towards the west, he turns his head towards the sun, and he sees the venerable Wainamoinen advancing toward the dark sea-waves.

“ Seizing hurriedly his bow of fire, his beautiful, his iron-bound bow, he draws from his quiver a feathered shaft, a shaft unerring and fatal, and aims at the death of Wainamoinen, at the death of the friend of the waters.

“ His mother, his wife, two sprites, and the three daughters of nature cry out together : Stay ! slay not Wainamoinen ! Waina is thine own aunt’s son !

“ But the cruel Laplander remains inflexible ; he replies : If I raise my hand, and aim too high, may the shaft fall lower ; if I lower my hand too far, may it rise higher.

“ And he shot his shaft, but it rose too high ; the sky was rent ; the arches of the air were shaken. He shot a second, but it fell too low ; it sunk into the depths of the earth, the mother of men, down to Manala, whose vaults it made to tremble. He shot a third, but this shaft pierced the blue elk through the spleen, and transfixed it through the left leg and shoulder.”

Wainamoinen falls into the waters from the back of his strange courser, the blue elk, and the obliquely-visioned Laplander says :—

“ Now, oh venerable Wainamoinen, as long as centuries roll on their course, as long as the moon sheds out its light, thou shalt never tread again the fields of Wainalen, the plains of Kalevala !

“ And Wainamoinen the venerable and the valiant, wandered for six winters, for seven summers, for eight years, on the plains of the waters, and the wide straits of the ocean, with the waves boiling beneath, and the sky stretching out its boundless blue above him.

“ Already the hero has numbered all the seas,— seen all the waters. Wherever he raises up his head he creates an island ; where he touches with his hand he forms a promontory ; where his feet indent the sands he digs a grave of fishes* : when he moves towards the land he enters the nets of the fishers ; when he plunges into the deep, rocks rise upon his path, and he gives birth to

* By this, no doubt, is meant one of those creeks, inlets, or deep shallows, in which the fishes are either netted or left impounded, if the expression may be allowed, by the retiring water.

shoals on which ships are wrecked, and where mariners find their graves.”

Wainamoinen, in the course of his wanderings, is carried to the region of Pohjola, where the sorceress Louhi hospitably receives him, and invites him to remain.

“Times sad and sorrowful have fallen on the antique Wainamoinen. He is wafted about like the withered bough of a pine,—like the shivered trunk of a decayed tree, on the billows which he has raised, and amidst the isles which he has created,—even as the poor man is driven hither and thither by the rich, whose path he crosses.”

And he mourned :

“Woe to me, unfortunate, woe to me bowed down by evil ! Alas ! what is my fate to be ; into what abyss have I fallen ! Night and day I wander ceaselessly beneath the blue vault of heaven ; pursued by the tempest, tossed by the waves in these wide straits, or on these shoreless seas.

“I know not, unfortunate that I am, in these days of sorrow, in these hours of anguish, where as my life draws to its close, I should fix my

dwelling. Shall it be in the air? shall it be in the waters? If I seek to build it in the air, where shall I lay its foundation? if I fix it in the waters, it will be swept away by the currents."

"Suddenly the south wind blows up the storm, and the waves roll in from the west; they upraise the venerable Wainamoinen, and cast him on the shore of Pohjola, the dark region where men are devoured, where heroes are swallowed up.

"And he said:

"Woe to me, unfortunate, woe to me! borne by the waves so far from my native land, into strange and fatal regions, into unknown paths. Here all trees wound, boughs tear, and branches lacerate,—here all the evils of the world roam loose.

"What road must I follow? I know not that which leads back to my home, to my beloved land. The path on which I am leads to a forest. Onkelvoinen hath bewildered me.

"Oh, Matha-Teppo, god of pathways, come to my aid! mark out the road with posts, carve signs upon the trees, so that the lost hero may regain his way, and return in safety to the home of his country.

“ Louhi, the hostess of Pohjola, the toothless crone of Pohja, had risen early.”

* * * * *

“ Suddenly she pauses and gives ear, she looks afar into the plain. A plaintive wail is wafted from the sea shore.—It is not the cry of a child, nor the sorrowing voice of a woman.

“ It is the cry of a beared hero, the cry of Uvontolainen (*another name for Wainamoinen*).

“ Louhi the hostess of Pohjola Louhi the toothless crone of Pohja, launches her three-planked bark upon the water and rows up to Wainamoinen.”

“ She finds him weeping, overcome with pain. His mouth is contracted, his beard quivers, his lips are closed, his teeth clenched.

“ Louhi the hostess of Pohjola, Louhi the toothless crone of Pohja consoles the hero. She makes him sit in the bark next to the rudder, whilst she plies the oar, and makes for the entrance of Pohjola.”

“ There she feeds the hero, she pours him out drink, and when he is saved from death she speaks to him and interrogates him :

“ Why dost thou weep, Wainamoinen ; why dost thou complain Uvontolainen ?

“ Wainamoinen, the venerable and the valiant, replies : I am sad and weary, strange, in a strange land, unknown upon an unknown path. I weep ceaseless tears ; in sighs I consume my existence, because the waves have borne me far from my home, far from my beloved regions, towards this unknown threshold of a strange land.

“ Then Louhi said : Weep not, oh Wainamoinen ; weep not Uvontolainen ! it is meet that thou shouldst spend here thy life in this pleasant dwelling, in the midst of the daughters of Pohja, eating the meats which are offered thee, and drinking ale from the cup.

“ But the venerable Wainamoinen made answer : The food of a strange land tastes without flavour to me, even under a hospitable roof. Man is better, greater in his own country. Oh Creator ! permit me thither to return. In one's native home, water drunk from the bark of the tree tastes sweeter than the ale of the stranger sparkling in the cup.

“ Well, said the hostess of Pohjola, what wilt thou give me if I lead thee back to thine own country ; back within the boundary of thine own field ; back within the walls of thine own dwelling ?”

“And the venerable Wainamoinen answered: What wilt thou require of me, for leading me back to the regions where I can hear the note of the cuckoo, where I can hear the crowing of my cock, and see the steam of my bath up-rising from my native hearth?”

The old crone then asks the god-hero to make for her a *sampo*,—an article which has puzzled all the ingenuity of the most learned commentators. Doctor Lonnrot himself supposes it to be an image of the god Jumala; others variously conjecture it to signify a magic amulet, a new Pandora's box; or simply one of the hand-mills still used in Iceland, Norway, and Finland.

Wainamoinen being unable to forge the *sampo* himself, promises to cause it to be made by Illmarinen. He says: “I cannot construct you a *sampo* with a lid adorned with a thousand colours, but there is in my country a worker of iron, who forged the covering of the skies without leaving thereon either the marks of his pincers, or the traces of his hammer's blows.”

Wainamoinen is on this promise allowed to depart, when he perceives the old crone's daughter.

“ Oh, she was beautiful, the virgin of Pohjola !
an honour to the earth, a glory to the waves !
She drew upon her legs a red tissue, and shod
her feet with precious sandals. She arrayed
herself in her most costly habits ; her neck she
encircled with a brilliant necklace, and a jewel
beams upon her bosom. All her person is radiant.
She sits upon the vault of the air, borne aloft
by the rainbow, where she shines sun-like from
afar.

“ Wainamoinen the venerable and the valiant
was hastening rapidly with a lowering brow from
the dark region of Pohjola. He raised his eyes
towards the heavens, and saw there a luminous
arc, and thereupon a beauteous virgin sitting.

“ In her hands were a golden shuttle and a
silver comb, and she was weaving a gold and
silver tissue.”

* * * * *

The god-hero, who becomes upon the spot
enamoured, entreats her to accompany him ; but
the disdainful beauty refuses, unless he will give
her proofs of his skill ; and at the third trial
Wainamoinen, having wounded himself in the
knee, can find no means to staunch the blood.
When all his enchantments fail, in the fourth

rune he seeks out the aid of a sorcerer, but the sorcerer cannot shape the requisite spell because he has forgotten the origin of iron.

“The venerable Wainamoinen made answer : I can tell thee the origin of iron ;—I know the origin of steel. Three children derive their origin from a common source,—water the elder born, fire the younger, and iron which is aged between.

“Fire displayed its fury ;—the imperious flames shot forth, spreading horror through the world. In that year of desolation, the lands were all burned up, the marshes all consumed ;—in that fearful summer which devoured with fire whose traces are indelible, all created things in nature, fire sought a refuge wherein to hide.

“Then the old man roared out from the depths of his smithy, and said :

“Where did iron hide—where did it find a refuge in that year of desolation—in that fearful summer which devoured all created things in nature?”

Wainamoinen having shown the numerous places in which the iron found refuge, amongst which he names a cloud, the summit of an oak, and lastly a marsh, in which it was found by the Finnish Vulcan, continues :—

“ It was taken into the workshop of the great artisan, of Illmarinen the eternal blacksmith, who said: If I put thee into the fire—into the furnace of my forge, thou wilt become more arrogant, more great; thou wilt spread abroad terror, thou wilt kill thy brother, thou wilt shed the blood of the son of thy mother!”

Then the iron in the furnace of the forge, beneath the blows of the hammer, swore as follows:—

“ I have trees to split—I have the heart of rocks to hew; no, I will not kill my brother, I will not shed the blood of my mother’s son.

“ And the workman Illmarinen the eternal forger of iron, threw the iron into the hottest part of the furnace, he fashioned it when soft upon his anvil; but before he dipped it into the water to temper it, he tasted with his tongue the creative juices of the steel—the water hardening the iron, and said:

“ This water is impotent to create steel, or harden iron. Oh! *Mehilainen* — friendly bird; fly hence on thy light wings! traverse all the nine seas which divide us, and half the tenth; fly over the lands, the marshes and the ocean-

straits bring back in thy bill, and on thy feathers, the honey distilled from seven blades of grass, from the petals of six flowers, that I may therewith make the steel and give the iron hardness. But the bird of Hisii (the hell-bird) took wing, and lingering round the dwelling, and beneath the eaves, watched whilst the steel was being made,—the iron hardening.

“ It brought the poison of blood,—it brought the black juices of the worm, which its lizard-like eyes had seen crawling, and the hidden venom of the snake, for the steel which was being made, and for the iron which was hardening.

“ Then the artisan Illmarinen, the eternal blacksmith, thought that the bird had brought the honey and the sweet juices he had asked for; and he said: This is good for the preparation of steel, for the hardening of iron.

“ But after a moment,—a brief moment, the iron quivers with anger—it roars—it writhes; and forgetful of its oaths, devours like a dog its plighted faith. It kills its brother,—it destroys its mother's son,—it plunges into palpitating flesh, and demeans itself so furiously that blood overflows in torrents.

“ The old man roars out from the depths of his

smithy; his beard bristles up with a rustling sound, and he shakes his head, saying:—

“ Now! now! I know the origin of iron, and its fatal destiny. Woe to thee, wretched iron! woe to thee, vile Scoria! Art thou so haughty that thou hast outraged nature and destroyed?”

“ Thou wert not so mighty,—thou wert nothing, when thou wert stagnant water,—when thou wert reposing in the mud of the boundless marsh, or on the summit of the rock.

“ Thou wert not so mighty,—thou wert nothing, when drawn from the morass, sifted from the clay of the earth, and dried from the dampness of the waters; thou wert not so mighty,—thou wert nothing, vile Scoria, when bubbling in the furnace, or when beneath the hammer’s blows thou didst swear thy oath. Thy heart has become bad, — suffering hath corrupted thee. Wretch that thou art, thou hast violated thy oath and devoured like a dog thy plighted faith! Who prompted thee to such a crime? Who persuaded thee to an act so fearful? Was it thy father, was it thy mother? Was it the eldest of thy brothers, or the youngest of thy sisters?

* * * * *

“ No, thou alone hast done the evil,—thou alone committed the crime of *Kalmā!*” (carnage).

Having discovered the origin of iron, a knowledge which was a necessary ingredient of his charm, the old sorcerer proceeds to stop the hemorrhage of the god-hero's wound.

He calls on Lempo to place his broad finger on the opening; "to place a door on the fearful doorway; and he says:

"Pause, oh blood! cease in thy flow,—suspend thy rapid current,—coagulate into a wall."

* * * * *

"If thou art irresistibly hurried forward, then dash on through the flesh and bones; it is more meet and fitting to flow through the flesh, to fill the swelling veins, and to bubble in the bones, than to run on the ground and be in the dust defiled.

"Thy place is in the heart,—thy seat beneath the lungs. Oh blood! without delay turn back thy current thither,—cease, oh my beloved, cease to waste abroad thy purple.

"If nevertheless thou wilt not tarry, then remember that the falls of Tyrian paused,—that the torrent *Juurtunan* staid its rushing waters,—that sea and skies were dried in the great year of desolate sterility, that year of inextinguishable fire.

“ If all this will not persuade thee, then I know another charm. I will take a vase of Hisii, the cauldron of Helvetti, in which blood is boiled, and made solid, so that it may not flow upon the earth or escape in streams.

“ Then the old man seized the extremities of the veins and counted them.”—*Fourth Rune.*

There are two things remarkable in this tradition of the origin of iron; firstly, the proof it affords, that the volcanic formations of the earth had not escaped the notice of the Finns, though most other people appear in their traditions only to have observed the Neptunian; and secondly, the progress they had made in surgery, evinced by binding up the arteries, and the conjecture of the circulating of the blood.

Wainamoinen being cured, seeks out Illmarinen, to send him to construct the *sampo*, which he has promised to the crone of Pohjola. Illmarinen refuses to venture into that dreaded region, and Wainamoinen therefore raises a whirlwind by his enchantments, which carries the eternal blacksmith thither. Illmarinen becomes enamoured too of Louhi's daughter; and works at the *sampo* day and night.

Another suitor—a mortal—the rash young

Loumikainen, however, seeks her hand, in spite of all the prayers of the witch his mother. The cruel beauty sends him to undertake labours in which he too succumbs like Wainamoinen, but he is killed, carried into the depths of the waters, and dismembered by the children of *Tuoni*.

His sorrowing mother seeks him out, she asks tidings of him of the mountain path, of the sun and of the moon. They answer her : and through their directions she gathers up his limbs, and by the help of the beneficent bird *Mehilainen* infuses into them fresh life.

Meanwhile Wainamoinen is wending his way towards *Pohjola*, to seek the hand of the daughter of *Louhi* ; but he has forgotten the three magic words which can lead him thither, and he wanders vainly about seas and different regions. At length he bethinks him that they are known to the giant *Wipunen*, but the giant *Wipunen* has been long dead and buried. His bones are rock, his mouth and entrails a cave, his beard a forest. He will not answer till Wainamoinen enters into his body and tortures him, and then gives up his secret.

Wainamoinen, by means of the spell he has acquired, reaches *Pohjola* ; but the daughter of

Louhi prefers Illmarinen to his brother, and gives him her hand.

Loumikainen, the third suitor, whom the skill of his mother has recovered from death, arrives too late, and is detained at his return on an enchanted island.

Illmarinen returns with his bride, and buys a slave, Kullervo, who when three days old had rent his swaddling clothes, and climbed upon the house-top. Kullervo is sent by the wife of Illmarinen into the woods and fields to tend the flocks ; she makes him a loaf, the upper part is of wheaten flour, the under of barley, but in the middle there is a stone. The slave, to revenge himself, instead of driving home the cattle, calls the bears, the wolves, and the lynxes, who devour his mistress.

The widower Illmarinen laments his loss, and to console himself forges a wife of gold and silver ; but he cannot confer upon her the gift of speech, and when he takes her to his couch she imparts to his bosom a death-like chillness.

The stone in the bread of the slave, and the cheerless frigidity of the gold and silver spouse which the Finnish Vulcan makes to himself, are both full of significance as allegorical of the

danger of harshness and cruelty towards dependents, and of the discomforts of an interested union.

Illmarinen and Wainamoinen, learning the happiness which the *sampo* they have made for Louhi confers upon the region of Pohjola, determine to carry it off.

“The workman *Illmarinen* then puts on his armour. He dons a hauberk of iron, and girdles himself round with an iron belt. He says: Man is better in a cuirass, mightier in an iron tunic, more powerful in a belt of steel.”

* * * * *

“As they follow the road through the solitary forest, they hear the moans of a vessel,—of a bark lamenting.”

“*Wainamoinen* the venerable and the valiant, said: I hear a vessel’s moans, I hear a bark lamenting. Shall we use that bark to cross the waters, or shall we traverse on our steeds the sea-shore’s sand? And the artisan *Illmarinen* replied: The route by land is most safe. The sea is the sojourn of death, there may the tempest overtake, the gush of the winds overturn us, and our

fingers may be changed to oars, our hands to rudders.

“ And the venerable *Wainamoinen* made answer: Though the land route may be more safe, it is longer and more tedious. Joy tenants the bark when it careers on the wild waves, when it breasts the open seas, or tempts the dangers of the narrow straits. The light wind wafts it, the zephyr plays with it, and it is urged onwards by the blast of mid-day.

“ He threw his reins from him and drew near unto the bark, to the bark that was lamenting.

“ And he said: Why dost thou mourn, oh bark of wood? Is it because thou art too heavy,—because thou art ill-constructed?

“ And the wooden bark replied: The bark sighs for the wave as the bride sighs for the house of the bridegroom. I do not mourn because too heavily fashioned, or because ill-constructed, but I mourn because when men built me it was promised me that I should roam a gallant war-boat, that I should be led to distant combats, and brought back laden with rich spoil.

“ But I have never been led to combat; I have never yet been launched upon the seas; and yet other barks, worse constructed, are being led con-

stantly to battle, and return laden with more corn than a king gathers in six harvests ; with more gold than the blacksmith earns in seven summers. And here am I the boat of Wainamoinen, left alone to rot and perish on the spot where I was built. The gnawing earth-worm eats into my timbers, and every foul bird of the air within me builds its nest.

“ Ah ! it would have been a fate far better—a thousand times better for me if I had been left still a pine upon the hill, or a birch-tree in the valley, with the squirrel disporting in my branches, or the birds fluttering joyfully amidst my leaves.”

They embark in the boat, and steer towards Pohjola. On their way thither they meet Loumikainen, who joins in this expedition.

Their boat is suddenly stopped ; they discover that they are aground on the back of an enormous fish.

“ Wainamoinen having severed in twain the monstrous pike, on which his boat was stranded, says :

“ What could be made of the teeth of this mighty fish, if given to a cunning artificer ?

Illmarinen asks :—

“ What could be made out of such a worthless thing, even by a skilful workman ? ”

The venerable Wainamoinen replies : “ A skilful artificer would therewith construct a chantal ” (musical instrument.)

But no artificer was found skilful enough to make the chantal.

“ Then the venerable Wainamoinen set to work himself. Whence hath he drawn the stuff whereof to make the sonorous body of the instrument ? From the forest filled with the wild plum-tree, and with the resounding timber of the pine. Whereof hath he made the pegs of the chantal ? From the teeth of the monstrous pike—of the fish which is already the slave of *Tuoni* (death.) Little is now wanting to complete the chantal. A nerve and a couple of silken strings. Wherewith will Wainamoinen contrive these chords ? With hairs from the mane of the hell-horse ; from the hide of Lemmo’s stallion.

“ The instrument is complete ; the chantal is ready.

“ Wainamoinen the valiant and the venerable now orders the old men to sing. They sing, but

their heads shake with a palsied motion ; joy is not re-echoed by joy ; the song is not re-echoed by the song.

“ Wainamoinen the valiant and the venerable orders the young men to sing. They sing, but their cramped fingers draw from the instrument inharmonious tones ; and mournful sound the joyous accents of the song.

* * * * *

“ Then Wainamoinen the venerable and the valiant laves his thumbs and purifies his fingers ; he sits him down by the sea-side, upon the stone of joy, upon the silvery hill, on the summit of the golden mountain, and taking up the instrument, he says : Let those who have never known the joy of the *runes*, nor the melody of the instrument, let them draw near and listen.

“ And the old Wainamoinen begins to sing ; his voice rises clear and liquid, his fingers play lightly over the strings of the chantal ; joy answers joy ; the song responds unto the song.

“ There is no beast in the forest, no living thing in the air, which does not hasten up at the singer of runes, to listen to his melodious voice, to revel in the harmony of his song.

“ The wolf quits the sedges in which he was prowling, the bear emerges from his den in the

roots of an overturned pine-tree, they climb a hedge,—the hedge is borne down and broken by their weight; the one ascends the trunk of a pine, the other climbs a birch-tree, whilst Wainamoinen sings and gives birth to joy.

“ The black-bearded old man, the noble king of the forest, all the host of *Tapio* hasten up to listen. The very hostess of the woods herself, the fearless woman of *Tapiola*, dons her blue hose, arrays herself in red ribbons, ascends into the trunk of a hollow birch, lending a wondering ear to the god’s song.

“ There is no beast of the forest—no bird of the air, which does not hasten to hear the marvellous art of the musician, the melody of the singer,

“ The eagle descends from the clouds, the falcon swoops down through the air, the sea-gull wings its way from the sullen marsh, the swan from the bosom of the limpid waters; the lively linnet, the swift-winged lark, and the merry goldfinch, come to perch upon the shoulders of the god-hero.

“ The beauteous virgins of the air, the sun dazzling in splendour, and the soft-rayed moon, have alike paused to listen at the further end of

a long light cloud, in the luminous vault of heaven. There they were weaving the wonderful texture of the skies, with a golden shuttle and a silver comb, when astonished by the strange voice and the melodious accents of the hero's song.

“The comb of silver fell from their hands, the golden shuttle breaking the threads of the woof, escaped from their fingers. All the living things of the waters, all the fishes waving at once their myriad fins, swam up to hear the voice of Wainamoinen, to listen to the harmony of his song.

“The salmon and the trout, the pike and the seal, the large fishes and the small, draw as near as possible to the voice of the charmer.

“Ahto, the king of the waves, the old man with the green beard of weeds, rises up on a water-lily to the surface of the deep.

“The fruitful hostess of the seas was combing her long hair with a comb of gold. She hears the song of *Suomi*, and the comb falls from her hands; wondering and agitated, she can remain no longer in the deep, but makes for shore; there with her breast against a rock she listens, panting, to the sounds of Wainamoinen's chantal, wherewith the hero's voice mingles its melody. She listens because the sounds were so sweet, the voice so full of harmony.

“ There is neither woman nor hero, nor man
so hardened, as to hear them without tears.

* * * * *

“ Old Wainamoinen himself felt the well of
his tears overflowing. They soon fell from his
eyes more numerous than the berries on the hill.

* * * * *

They fell from his cheeks on to his breast,
from his breast to his knees, from his knees on to
his feet, and from his feet they rolled in the dust.

* * * * *

“ The tears of Wainamoinen flow in a stream
to the sea-shore, from the sea-shore into the
depths of the ocean, where they sink in its dark
sands.

“ There flowering, they were changed to pearls,
the pearls which adorn the diadems of kings, and
become the delight of warriors.

“ Whereupon the venerable Wainamoinen said :
Is there amongst these youths, or these daughters
of illustrious lineage, any one who will dive into
the deep sea, into the region of its dark sands, to
gather as they fall those tears of mine ?

“ But young and old made answer : There is
none amongst us who dare dive into the dark deep
sea, in the region of its dark sands, to gather up
thy tears.

“ Then, a sea-mew with blue-tinted plumage dipped its bill in the cold waters, gathering the pearls into which Wainamoinen’s tears had grown, from the deep sea, in the region of the dark sand.”—*Twenty-second Rune.*

It is impossible not to be struck with the close resemblance of this legend, to the myth of the Greek Orpheus.

These new Argonauts seize the sampo, and bear it off in their boat ; but the sorceress Louhi appeals to Ukko, the god of the waters, who raises a tremendous tempest, in the midst of which she pursues them. Wainamoinen hurls at her a rock, which splits her bark. She then changes into an eagle, and seizes on the *sampo* with her talons. Wainamoinen lays about him with an oar, and crushes all her claws, excepting one, in which she bears off the lid of that mysterious article yecept the *sampo*. The remainder falls into the water. The sorceress then buries the sun and the moon in the side of a mountain. In vain Illmarinen forges one of gold and another of silver, they give no light. At length he makes an iron collar for the crone ; and then, alarmed, he replaces them in the heavens.

“Oh fair moon!” says Wainamoinen, “thou art now delivered from the bondage of the rock. Resplendent sun, thou art arisen from the inside of the mountain!”

* * * * *

“Thus rise each day, giving fertility to our fields, good fortune to our nets, and success to our hunters. Go onward in thy glory! Proceed in thy bright career, describe thy splendid arc, and when the night approaches set gloriously!”—
Twenty-seventh Rune.

The struggle between good and evil, the gods and the magicians, is over.

Wainamoinen returning from a vain search after his lost chantal, pauses before a burned forest.

“There he looks round him, he listens, and he hears the birch-tree mourning and lamenting. And he said, Why dost thou weep, why dost thou complain, oh tree of the green foliage, tree belted with white bark! Is it because thou art not led to battle?”

“The birch tree replies with wisdom: There are many who laud my happiness, who speak only of my joys. Alas! unfortunate that I am,

I rejoice even in my sufferings and my sorrow ; it is only when pain grows unendurable that I complain.

“ Oh, now I deplore my unhappy fate, for I find myself without support or help on this accursed spot, in this unsheltered clearing. Cruel and pitiful is my fate. The shepherds tear me in the summer, they cut through my white robes, and drain out all my sap.”

The songster here makes allusion to the custom prevalent throughout the north, of making in the spring an incision in the bark of the birch-tree, and extracting from it the sweet juices, then abounding, which when fermented constitute the native wine of these hyperborean regions.

“ Often too,” continues the birch-tree, “ in this accursed spot, in this burned field, I am deprived of my small boughs, and cut up piecemeal.”

“ Thrice during this summer, beneath the shade of my branches, men have sat sharpening their axes and conspiring against my head.

“ This is why I spend my life in weeping and lamenting, for I am helpless, I am unprotected against the tempest, against the storms of winter.

“ Each year grief changes me before my time. My head is bowed down with care, my bark grows white when I think on the frost, and on the accursed times. The storm brings me suffering, the cold brings fatal days. The tempest tears my flanks, strips me of all my leaves, and leaves me thus nakedly exposed to all its rigour.”

“ Then the venerable Wainamoinen said : Oh green birch tree, weep not, for I will change thy mourning into joy, thy days of sorrow into days of happiness.

“ And the venerable Wainamoinen cut the branches of the birch, and of their wood he made him a new chantal.”

* * * * *

He is seeking chords for his instrument.

“ A young virgin was weeping in a burned forest, she was the most beautiful girl in the whole vale. She was not overwhelmed with grief, but only oppressed with melancholy, and she sang to beguile the weariness of the hour whilst waiting for a suitor.

“ The venerable Wainamoinen saw the tears of the gentle girl, and he said : Oh virgin, make me a gift, give me five of thy beauteous hairs, give me six of them, so that I may therewith make sweet strings for my chantal.

“ And the virgin gave him five of her beauteous hairs, and she gave him six ; and Wainamoinen made with them sweet strings for his chantal.”

* * * * *

The Finnish Orpheus sings to his new instrument :

“ And when he went out into the woods the pines bowed towards him, the firs saluted him, and the birch-trees inclined their summits to the earth. When he walked out into the fields, where all was charred with fire, the flowers sprang up, and the grass grew green beneath his footsteps.”—*Twenty-ninth Rune.*

Wainamoinen becomes enamoured of the virgin ; but her brother, the young Joukahainen, defies him ; he struggles with him in enchantments, and succumbs to the power of the god-hero. In his agony he offers him his bow, his courser, and at length his sister, which the god accepts.

“ The sister of the young Joukahainen went into the woods to cut some branches and to gather leaves.”

* * * * *

“ Then the venerable Wainamoinen said to her :
Grow up, bearing me, and not other men, in thy
thoughts. Grow in thy gorgeous vestments, in thy
tunics of fine wool, and eat of bread kneaded from
the purest wheat.

“ The virgin hied her home, sobbing and weep-
ing. Her father said to her : Why weepest thou,
my child ? why art thou sorrowful, my gentle
daughter ?

“ And she replied : I weep, oh my father, because
I have lost the silver *cross* suspended from my neck,
and the buckle of gold which bound my girdle.”

* * * * *

“ And her mother said to her : Why weepest
thou, my poor child ?

“ Oh, my mother ! I have cause to weep ; I
went into the forest to cut branches and to gather
leaves. Suddenly *Osmonen* rose from the valley,
Kalevainen from the bottom of the marsh. Young
girl, said he, grow up, bearing me and no other
men in thy thoughts.

* * * * *

“ After three nights her mother came for her, and
said : Why weepest thou, my child ? why dost
thou mourn, my daughter ?

“ I weep, oh my mother, because I do not

wish to marry Wainamoinen. I do not wish to become the stay of a decrepid old man,—the companion of his heart. Oh! I would sooner plunge into the deep waters and become the sister of the otter, or of the fishes. It is sweet to dive into the sea, to inhabit under the wave, to live as the sister of the otter, and of the fishes.

“And the young girl entered her wardrobe, and she opened her richest presses, and arrayed herself in the most gorgeous attire, and then she plunged into the deep waters to become the sister of the otter, and of the fishes.

“Three nights after her mother came into her chamber: Oh! where is my daughter? My poor child is dead! She has gone into the deep waters to become the sister of the fishes and of the otter, and the otter and the fishes are now devouring their sister.”—*Thirty-first Rune.*

* * * * *

The last rune introduces Mariatta.

“The beautiful child who grew apace in her lofty hall. The door-frame delighted in the contact of her soft vestments, and of the long ringlets of her silky hair; whilst the ground felt flattered by the tread of her light feet.

* * * * *

“ On the hill a little berry hung suspended to a bough,—a small red berry :

“ Come, oh gentle virgin, it said, and pluck me ; oh young girl bedecked with a tin buckle, come before the worm hath destroyed, or the snake defiled me.

“ She plucks off the berry, which rises from the ground to her waist, from her waist to her bosom, from her bosom to her lips, and thence it is taken into her breast. She conceives, and brings it into the world a child.

“ She laid it in a manger on the hay, dried in the summer’s sun.”

* * * * *

Such were evidently the first confused traditions of Christianity, which penetrated amongst the pagan Suomi.

“ The venerable Wainamoinen, the eternal singer of runes, approached and said :

“ Take out the child into a marsh, crush its head, and bruise its limbs with a sledge hammer.

“ But the child a fortnight old, said to him : Old man who comest from so far,—rune-singer of Karjala, thou hast pronounced rash judgment, and hast unjustly interpreted the law.

“ And the priest christened the child, and crowned it king of the forest, and gave it the custody of the isle of treasures.

“ Then the antique Wainamoinen reddening with shame and anger, sang the last song; he built himself a boat of bronze,—a bark with a keel of iron; on this bark he steered away into ethereal space, up to the regions of the lower heavens.

“ There his boat anchored,—there his voyage ceased. But he has left upon the earth his chantal, and his mighty runes, to the eternal delight of Finland.”

So, after these confused allusions to the Virgin Mary, the infant Jesus, the manger in the stable of Bethlem,—the visit of the wise men, and the persecution of Herod, the *Kalevala* concludes, typifying the disappearance of the old gods of its mythology before the new light which had arisen.

The *Kanteletar*, so called from the instrument denominated chantal, is a collection of fugitive pieces, composed long since the introduction of Christianity, down to the present day, by the Finnish peasantry, and gathered during five years

of exertion, by Doctor Lænnrot, the editor of the Kalevala.

Every event of the peasant's life, his joys, his hopes, his sorrows, his fears, his rural occupations, and the pastoral scenes in which his existence passes are all chronicled in these disjointed fragments, which, imbued with a profound tinge of melancholy, are more remarkable for harmony and fluency, than for originality or depth of thought.

The following may be taken as a fair specimen.

THE LAMENT OF THE BRIDE.

“ When I return from the fountain, I hear the song of two birds. If I were a bird, if I could sing, I would sing on every bough, and give life to every bush.

“ Above all I would sing when the poor or sorrowing passed me, and I would be silent when the happy and the rich went by.

“ How is grief to be known? Oh, grief may easily be told! Those who suffer timidly complain, whilst the happy are triumphant.

“ What was thought and said of me, when I chose a bridegroom out of my native land, and turned my back upon my home?

“ Now I am in a strange land, and on an unknown spot.

“ Better is a little water in one’s own country than ale drank from a silver vessel in the land of the stranger.

“ If, as so many others have, I had only a horse to harness in a sledge, the trappings and the reins, I would take the reins lightly in my hand, and I would speed,—speed without tarrying, till I saw the the fields of Savolax, and the smoke uprising from my father’s roof.”

THE LOVERS.

“ Wilt thou come with me, oh my beloved ?
Wilt thou come and be happy with me ?

“ What happiness canst thou offer me ; thy hands are empty, thy pockets are empty ?

“ But, with these empty hands I can bear thee off into the forest shade, into the silent plains, far from the world and its envious eye, and there watch tenderly over thee.

“ But, whither shall we go, and whither wilt thou build our dwelling ?

“ There is still room enough in our own Finland. Wilt thou come with me into the uninhabited fields ? Wilt thou follow me into the

forest like a joyous bird? There I will raise thee up a dwelling, where the wind shall rock thee, and where I will delight thee with my song. I will build thee a bower of fruit-trees, a bed of ash, and my song shall nurse thee to a slumber of sweet dreams.”

No doubt innumerable volumes of such poems as abound in the *Kanteletar*, might be collected in Finland; for whatever ideas we may form of the south, as the fitting home of the muses, it is worthy of remark, that two of the northernmost countries of Europe are distinguished beyond all others in the world by the passionate devotion of their inhabitants to some of the pursuits of these divinities.

No people in Europe are so fond of dancing as the Norwegians, or of song as the Finns. Every hamlet in Finland has its one, or many poets, who improvise on every incident; writing their effusions down when they can write, and transmitting them orally when unacquainted with the use of letters.

It may, however, be doubted, whether this universal passion for improvisation, and the facility for succeeding in it, afford any great promise of poetic talent. Amongst the lower

order of Spaniards and Italians, who possess it in a less degree than the Finns, it appears, as with the Finns, rather a result of the love of song, that is to say of the harmony of unmeaning words, than of any poetic gift.

We are often struck with surprise at the utter want of sense, coherence, or elevation of sentiment, expressed in the songs of these natural improvisators, which, if conveyed in sounds that strike the ear, are treasured up by them.

Few that have travelled in the south of Europe, have not been woefully disappointed with the common-place vulgarity of the thoughts expressed by these spontaneous songsters, or can fail to have been struck with the indifference and obtuseness to anything but sound, of the populations amongst whom they abound. These people, in fact, are rather musicians than poets; and though music is classed as a sister art with poetry, ought we not to consider it as a very childish sister?

Is it not the lowest expression of human mind, since it may be only indicative of a sensation, not of an idea; like the sounds which animals emit, however harmoniously, as in the nightingale?

The national fondness of the Finnish nation for versification, to which it is farther tempted

by the exceeding harmony and softness of its language, affords, therefore, no reason why we should expect any remarkable beauty or sublimity in its compositions.

The higher, middle, and learned classes amongst the Finns, the clergy, and the inhabitants of the coast, are of Swedish name, origin, and aspect; they write and speak in that language. In all other respects, thoroughly identified with the population, they occupy in that country the same position as the English race in Wales.

These classes have indeed furnished two distinguished poets, Franzen and Runeberg, who have written in Swedish, besides several of minor merit.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SCLAVONIC AND GERMANIC RACES.

THE origin of the Slavonians, and their dissemination over Europe, as will be seen in a subsequent chapter, is much more ancient than was formerly supposed; but this consideration is of little importance in treating of the present condition of this family, at the moment when everywhere rising in antagonism to the Germanic race, with which it had been so long violently blent, repudiating its influence and its civilization, and threatening perhaps a struggle, and certainly vast political changes, throughout all that portion of Europe which these two races occupy.

The author is not amongst those who, blinded by the fact that a strong instinct of nationality has often preserved the liberties and existence of

a people, view such national feeling with unqualified admiration, whether it relate to an innumerable people, or to an insignificant tribe. On the contrary, he regards it only as one of those barbarous means by which beneficial results have been produced in a comparatively barbarous age, as it is to be hoped even our own will rank by contrast with succeeding centuries; a means which, if not eventually laid by, will prove more fatal to the advance of human progress, than it has ever been restrictive of those despotisms so pernicious in all ages to the enlightenment of mankind.

This principle of nationality and patriotism is not one of those immutable truths, which, like parallel lines, produced as far as the human mind can imagine, still remain unchanged; but if adopted without limitation, narrows into evident absurdity. If abstractedly correct, Wales, England, and Scotland, would be better separate and independent. By the same rule every county in those countries, and all the former provinces of France might be beneficially divided. Districts of these,—towns, villages, and sections of cities, might find their individual advantage in disunion. From the parish, the circle would diminish to the family, and thus society return to a savage state,

from which it is obvious that it has only emerged by the adoption of the diametrically opposite principle of fraternisation.

The wise and salutary limitations which have been opposed to the extension of this principle, owe their origin to causes which are daily disappearing; and their present boundaries, fixed contrary to the spirit of the gospel (which only tolerates them on the plea of self-preservation,) must be incessantly removed as that necessity becomes more distant. Though, therefore, the national feeling of the Greek mountaineers, of the Albanians, the Servians and Montenegrins, has proved beneficial as arresting the progress of the Ottoman despotism; though the patriotism of the Circassians and of the Swedes bounds on two sides the march of Russia's desolating rule, whilst the unquenchable nationality of Poland threatens its vitality;—such a feeling derives its relatively beneficial importance only from the uses to which it happens to be turned. It is a hurtful arm, which tyrants have often successfully wielded, here applied against tyranny; but which, when not so employed, or when its uses shall have passed away, can prove only injurious to the interests of humanity.

Entertaining these convictions, the author must necessarily consider the amalgamation of all distinct tribes, races, and nations, as a happy event, and regard every nationality buried as a benefit to society. But it must be fairly dead before inhumed; else notwithstanding all the earth heaped upon it, it will rise in sanguinary resurrection from the grave in which it has been violently laid, to commence a fearful struggle with its oppressors. Such has been the case betwixt the Germans and Slavonians. Whilst the races previously occupying Great Britain have been mingled into one harmonious whole with the Saxon and the Scandinavian; in France, the Frank in a like manner with the Gaul, the Burgundian with the Provençal and Breton; a considerable portion of the Slavonic people has been mixed for ages with the Germanic, or since submitted to German influence or domination. Divided, unconscious of its own existence, and plunged in barbarism and ignorance, it afforded the fairest chances to the dominant people of assimilating this foreign element which has ever yet been offered in the history of the world. And yet, what do we find with the first faint gleams of enlightenment breaking in on these Slavonians? a tendency of repulsion

so inherent, that ages have not modified it, at once exhibiting itself, and urging them irresistibly to separate from the ungenial union into which they have been forced.

The present Sclavonic family, with its 85 millions, including 30 millions of Muscovites,—which may give some idea of its former proportionate extent,—cannot be said, with the exception of the Poles, ever to have trod within the pale of civilisation; and amongst the Poles, its benefits were confined to a turbulent and exclusive nobility, which, even now, numbers only three millions. The Germans, on the contrary, were one of the earliest European nations who enjoyed its full advantages. During a thousand years, in common with France and England, they have basked in all the light which knowledge has shed upon the world. The Sclavonians are only now awakening from the darkness of past centuries. The Germanic race has hence been enabled to assume a superiority which nature has not given it, over the Sclavonic; and which the latter now indignantly rebuts as an unjustifiable usurpation. It emerges from its ignorance in a spirit of antipathy to its late lords, and turns from them with a withering contempt, to seek its civilisation from the west.

This contempt for everything Germanic, universally prevalent amongst all branches of the Slavonic family, is expressed in all its modern literature, whether Polish, Russian, Ruthenian, Serbian, or Bohemian. It is not the hatred engendered by the instinct of political antagonism, because the Slavonians of the Turkish empire have felt and expressed in very different tones their hatred, unmingled with contempt, towards their Turkish rulers. It arises not from the adversity of interest, but from an antithesis of character, and from the indignation natural to a sense of moral and intellectual superiority, which had long bowed to an arrogant mediocrity.

The intrinsic superiority to which the Slavonians pretend over that which civilisation has adventitiously enabled the Germans to assert, appears to the author to be full of reality; and perhaps the reader may feel disposed to share in his conviction, when he briefly contrasts the condition of the Slavonic family, scarce emerging from barbarism, with the state of the German people, on whom civilisation has lavished all its advantages. It is however imperative on the author to say a few words on the popular ideas entertained in England, with regard to Germany,

before entering further on an ungrateful theme, which in treating of the Slavonians it was nevertheless impossible to avoid ; firstly, because the western public has derived its notions of the Slavonians principally through the intermedium of German jealousies, political, national, and literary ; and secondly, because of the prodigious importance of the growing antagonism, and the increase of the repulsive instinct between these races.

A strange concatenation of prejudices,—in which the author, whose education was partly German, once shared,—has led the English to imagine analogies, and has given rise to predilections which have no foundation, and therefore vanish on more intimate acquaintance.

Through the ignorance of our historians, the popular belief attributed to the Germans a relationship with ourselves much more close than had any real existence. The nation boasts even now (under the name of Saxon) of its supposed German origin. This historical misconception has been strengthened by a political prejudice. The Saxon blood is supposed to flow in the veins of the people, and to have inspired through ages its sturdy independence, whilst the progeniture of the

Norman is looked upon as an obtrusive element linked with every un-English feeling.

Our writers, filled with prejudice, and irritated at the French names and language of the Normans, (who little more than a century before had come from the north to conquer Normandy,) resorted to the lying chronicles of the Saxon monks, whose monstrous exaggerations contrast so disadvantageously with the truthful records of the Scandinavians.

The Saxons being first converted to Christianity, had naturally been initiated into the mysteries of the cloister, then the chief depository of the rude learning of the day; and the Saxon monk who had first practised a pious fraud in recording the struggle of his countrymen with the pagan Danes, afterwards, in the manuscript which occupied his hours of leisure, avenged the obscurity of his humble station on his illiterate Norman prior.

The ignorance of our own historians, partly excusable from the want of materials, to which access is now easy, has on this point been fully shared by the French. Napoleon, as first consul, when meditating the invasion of England, caused the celebrated tapestry of Bayeux, re-

presenting the battle of Hastings, the work of a female relative of William the Conqueror's, to be publicly exposed, with the view of inspiring his countrymen to a similar conquest; a mode of encouragement which would have proved more than equivocal, unless its effects had been calculated on the popular ignorance. With our English writers, it has hence occurred, that the Danish element has been lost sight of, notwithstanding the admission that the Danes conquered and settled so large a portion of the country, and that a Danish dynasty for so many reigns governed the whole island.

This Danish, like the Norman element, was indisputably pure Scandinavian; and it is more than doubtful whether the Saxon was not so. If, however, it was not, the striking resemblance of the English, in feature, character, and language, to the Scandinavians of the present day, (the Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians,) proves that it must have far predominated.

As regards personal appearance, the Scandinavians of various ranks, alone of any people in the world may be constantly mistaken for Englishmen. In point of character, the Scandinavian is still rather the man of action than of

speculation. The adventurous spirit of the stock of which he comes, termed, as his people were, "The Arabs of the sea," points to an identity of origin with the most enterprising nation in the world, upon the ocean; whilst the Germans, who for a thousand years have scarcely crossed their frontiers, are the least so in Europe. But this identity with the Scandinavians is further proved by the analogy of their language with the pure English, and with all the dialects of the Scotch Lowlands, of the North of England, and of its eastern shores.

The author remembers, in a remote Swedish island, where he first heard Scandinavian spoken, being startled by sentences of north-country, or quite pure English, in the mouths of the Swedish fishermen: For instance, "Cook a potatoe," spoken exactly as an Englishman would pronounce it; whereas in Germany, the same phrase would be, "Koch ein Kartoffle," or, "Kochen sie ein kartoffle."

Predominance of language becomes almost an incontestible proof of predominance of blood, when adopted by the conquered from the conquering people, especially when this people, like the Scandinavians, came by sea usually unaccompanied

by its women, and was so careless of its native tongue, that the followers of Rolf the rover, who knew not a syllable of French when they conquered Normandy, had, in the persons of their grandchildren, forgotten their own language a century after. What an increasing stream of Scandinavian emigrants must therefore have poured in, during several centuries, before their language could become so prevalent.

There is another fact, which the author has elsewhere mentioned, but to which he cannot forbear making here allusion: viz., that the names of the Saxons, even before the first invasion of the Danes, are many of them, not German, but Scandinavian. The Saxons are also frequently mentioned as Saxons and Jutes, and the Jutes or Jutlanders of the present day are Scandinavians. Whether, therefore, the Saxons were absorbed by the Scandinavian influx, or whether in reality a Scandinavian tribe established about the mouths of the Elbe, our relationship to the German people is equally destroyed, unless we refer indeed to that remote identity which at some antecedent period existed between the Germanic and Scandinavian branches; the same as betwixt the Germans and Sclavonians, as indeed between all people of Cau-

casian origin. The French are, therefore, quite as nearly, and more certainly allied to the Germans through the Franks, than ourselves. Originally all these boughs, no doubt, branched off from one parent stem; but, if a race sometimes maintains its characteristics for centuries unchanged, we sometimes witness these undergoing rapid modifications. The Frank, Helvetian, and Batavian branches have exhibited striking differences to the main Germanic stem, whilst the Scandinavian has shown itself in many things the very antipodes of the German race; it must be, however, distinctly understood, that the author in speaking of the Germans of the present day, makes no inclusion of the Dutch or Swiss, to whom the Tyrolese may be reckoned as belonging. Since, however, the only justifiable pride of a people, like that of an individual, is to be derived from its own merits, not from those of its ancestry; it would not, in the author's estimation, have been worth while to digress thus far, even to prove a national descent from the most glorious barbarians, instead of a relationship to the most vain-glorious of civilised people, unless this erroneous notion had so strongly influenced our partialities. In addition to the favourable prejudices arising

from this source, England had Protestant sympathies with the north of Germany, at a period when religious zeal was mixed up with social and political interests of the gravest import.

To these succeeded all that were negatively derived from the national hatred towards France, engendered during a long rivalry and a portentous struggle. In this blind enmity everything German found favour in our eyes, as anti-French; and everything un-French is even at the present day regarded in the popular estimation as almost English in its character. A fallacy generally received, attributes to us a popularity in Germany which is quite ideal. The dissimulation which in the German character is the consequence of arbitrary government, confirms the notion by causing persons to profess a friendship for us before our faces, whilst behind our backs, the envy which seems inherent in their dispositions makes them the most bitter of our detractors. The great majority of the French entertain a feeling of hostility towards us, which happily a very small minority amongst ourselves now reciprocate; but the French are ostentatious of their hatred, which before increased intercourse eventually gives way to cordiality and esteem. The Germans, on the con-

trary, meet our advances with an insidious show of partiality, whilst a rancorous jealousy is brooding in their hearts. A more intimate acquaintance with them has usually the effect of disappointing all the predilections of Englishmen in their favour; it gives rise on the one side to contempt, whilst on the other its expression occasions an increased aversion. The author, of course, here only deals in generalities; and besides, does not mean to assert, that, entertaining all the dislike which they do towards us, the Germans might not be notwithstanding very admirable people. He has, therefore, only adverted to the circumstance in allusion to the prepossessions which we have founded on the supposed frankness of their character, and their imaginary partiality towards ourselves, whom they assuredly hate more cordially than any other people. There is therefore no reason for any amiable weakness on our part in judging of them, particularly when in reference to a people full of life, vigour, and promise, whom they have hitherto much contributed to keep in obscurity.

The author must here express his appreciation of certain qualities, negative and positive, which the Germans generally possess,—their humanity, their laborious if not active industry, their orderly be-

haviour and reflective habits. Far from not wishing them well, he trusts to see the whole 30 or 35 millions of the German people freed from the yoke of its great and petty princes, and united as it eventually must be into one prosperous state. Of this indeed it is impossible to despair whilst such men as Heinzen, Freiligrath, and Herwegh redeem its apathetic heaviness, and give an impulse to its slumbering patriotism. The contiguity of the territory which it occupies facilitates this arrangement to which its interests point, whilst the prudent timidity of the national character, and its orderly habits, fit it beyond any other in Europe for the enjoyment without abuse of the most unlimited freedom, if not for its attainment. Indeed in support of this argument cannot be adduced too often the example of its emigrants to the United States, transplanted from the despotism of home to the liberty of a turbulent democracy, disproving by their exemplary conduct the intolerant dictum, that those only who have courage to achieve are capable of enjoying freedom.

It is of course impossible to determine how far the national character is acted on by the nature of its government and institutions, or to what extent these are to be considered as the exponents of the

national character ; and it is therefore impossible to foresee what a nation may become under a total change of circumstances ; but as it is absurd to reason on a hypothetical future with a positive past and present before us, whatever hopes we may entertain for Germany, it is of course only on her past and actual condition that our judgment with regard to that country must be based.

Let us examine, as the Slavonians do, the real political and intellectual position which the Germans occupy in Europe.

On the one hand, we find that though an active spirit of investigation has always been characteristic of that people, and though it has been as familiar as any other with all the forms of liberal institutions, ancient and modern, which it has been in the habit of canvassing perhaps more than any other,—though it has been in contact with every species of free government, still it has either positively retrograded, or at least remained stationary where France and England were a century or two centuries ago, whilst advancing on a par with them in intellectual enlightenment. In 1845 these thirty-five millions, identical in habits, interests, and language, and divided only by fictitious nationalities, still linger under the dominion of

arbitrary governments, which, whether avowedly absolute or nominally constitutional, keep the states over which they preside in a political condition which at best can only be compared to that of the British people at home under Queen Elizabeth, and the French under Louis the Fourteenth, but without the *prestige* abroad of their influence or their glory. This people, it must be remembered, is not, either like Spain, Portugal, or Italy, in the decrepitude of an outworn civilisation, which religious bigotry or other causes have forced to retrogression. Neither, keeping pace as it has done in this respect with more favoured countries, is it blind to the manner of its government.

Daily and hourly the German people has for half a century past, shown, as a reference to the whole spirit of its literature will prove, that it was keenly sensible of its condition. None who are thoroughly acquainted with Germany can doubt that now, as ever since the first dawn of the French revolution, the great majority of those who think at all upon this subject are averse to the rule which they so pacifically endure; and yet where do we find one effort made to shake off this yoke beyond the occasional uproar of drunken students, or the nightly conclaves of secret associations, whose conspiracies never explode into action?

It is not only that so vast a nation should not have achieved the freedom it aspires to, which justifies in some measure the contempt of the Slavonians, but that it should never seriously have attempted it. Its blood has not flowed readily, either on the scaffold or the battle-field, for the national regeneration. Even the ill-combined efforts of restless Italy have been tragically serious compared to all that the whole of Germany has ever done.

If we now turn to the Slavonians, it is true that for ages, all except the Polish portion of this people, whilst plunged in barbarism and darkness, endured in abject servitude the yoke of the Tartar, Turk, and German, or the tyranny of its domestic princes. The Polish republic, with its freedom fatally anarchic, lasted as it is well known till little more than half a century ago. It is true that this freedom, like that of Sparta, Rome, or the southern states of the American union, only extended to one favoured class which kept the remainder in a state of Helotism; and it may be further urged, that, like the Spartan or Athenian citizens, this free Polish nobility probably belonged originally to a distinct race. This Polish and Ruthenian pea-

santry, however, unequivocally Slavonic, became equally inspired with the spirit of independence of their lords.

The bloody wars they waged with the Polish patricians—their emigration into the dominions of the Tsars, and the detachment from their parent stem of the different tribes of Cossacs which now stud at intervals the territory which lies between the Baltic and the Pacific ocean,—were all the consequences of their earnest craving for freedom. The Muscovite people itself, in whom the Slavonic blood is probably much mixed with the Finnish and Mongolian, and which is certainly the most servile and abject of any of the Slavonic branches, may plead in extenuation of the domestic yoke to which it bows, the profound ignorance of its masses ; whilst its only enlightened class has not submitted without one desperate effort, of which the sincerity has been sealed by the blood of so many victims, and is daily testified by the groans of so many captives in the distant solitudes, or fearful mines of the Siberian deserts.*

In Turkey one portion of the Slavonians, the Montenegrins, have long since held in absolute in-

* The conspiracy of Pestel and Troubetskoi.

dependence the fastnesses of the Black mountain, whilst after a sanguinary struggle, began by Czerni George, and continued at intervals, Serbia has succeeded in obtaining a government under the protectorate of the Porte, which may be considered as licentious free compared with the least arbitrary of German constitutional states. In Hungary we find the Slavonians already enjoying immunities which are not accorded to the German subjects of Austria's Germanic government. "In fact," said a Slavonian to the author, "if we have not as a race been inspired by the intuitive instinct of freedom, so as to pant after it in the ignorance of our servitude, still, directly the contact with a free race, or the spread of knowledge has taught us its existence, like a caged bird to whom the open skies and the beaming sun is shewn, we have always broken through our prison bars, or beat our breasts against them, regardless of all suffering, in unceasing efforts to bear them down. With the exception of a turbulent class in Poland absorbed in its warlike avocations, it is but a very few years since the first faint gleams of knowledge dawned upon us. In comparing us to the Germans you must remember, therefore, that the growth of

ten centuries has given its cultivation to the soil from which their illustrations have sprung, and added to their stock ; whilst our own are the produce of less than fifty years, if we except one solitary caste of one branch of our numerous people."

Let us, notwithstanding the advantages above cited, now examine the intellectual condition of Germany ; for a nation as eminently speculative as the German, though proven to be little fitted for action, may be expected to have achieved those triumphs of science, art, and genius, which the national mind, like that of individuals, though incapable of practically applying, often successfully elaborates, and of which the idea inspires others far and wide to action.

The tendency of the Germans to philosophic disquisition, their laborious patience as commentators, their perseverance as compilers ; the abstruse learning which, through indefatigable and often indiscriminating diligence, they have succeeded in accumulating, have really enabled them to contribute much to the common stock of human knowledge ; but the nature and gravity of their avocations, the confusion of ideas, rendered more impenetrably obscure by the diffuseness of their

manner of expressing them, together with the great ignorance of their language in France and England, has led the public of those countries to award to the intellect of Germany a much higher place than its merits deserve.

Wherever genius and originality, correctness and profundity, instead of diffuse quantity of thought, have been required, the more narrowly we become acquainted with the reflective or creative mind of Germany, the farther we shall learn to rank it from that of Greece, Italy, England, and France.

The German philosophic system, to which much ephemeral importance has been attached, will be seldom found to contain any new idea by those who have courage enough to wade through the ocean of words into which every thought is diluted, and to penetrate the obscurity in which it is enveloped.

Though more has been spoken, written, and published in German on this subject than perhaps in all the world besides, it is impossible to point out one philosopher who will be remembered fifty years hence, or one of her inquiring spirits whose name will go down to posterity in company with Locke, Newton, or Descartes, to say nothing of the ancients.

In England, where we are apt to judge of their celebrities by their reputation at home, those to whom a name like Hegel's is familiar as that of one of the sages of his country, would scarce believe that the last of this man's philosophic labours were consecrated to prove the perfection and immutability of the French monarchy as established under Charles the Tenth, a demonstration in which he was unfortunately interrupted by the revolution of July, which broke his heart.

Hegel had already satisfactorily shown that the Russian rule in Poland (shortly afterwards overturned) could never change, and he had made it clear that the most liberal and hopeful government which had ever existed was the model government of Prussia.

“Would you believe,” says a Slavonic professor, “that Hegel, after professing philosophy during ten years at Berlin, left his auditory uncertain as to whether he believed in the personality of God, the immortality of the soul, or in the existence of an invisible world? What had he then taught them?—and yet it was not chemistry, or natural history, but philosophy which he professed.”

If we compare the produce of the German and

Sclavonic intellect,—fallow as till the present period the latter has everywhere lain, except amongst a single caste in Poland, and recently in Russia one more contracted still,—we shall not find that of the Sclavonians contrast disadvantageously.

Copernicus the Pole may be alone opposed to anything the German scientific world has produced. In literature, assuredly Kozmian the pastoral poet, still living at an extreme old age, and Niemcewicz recently dead, may rank with anything Germany has produced, before the times of Schiller and of Goethe. Will not the works of both Mitzkiavitch and Krasinski bear favourable comparison with the *Faust*, which is lauded as Goethe's most remarkable production?

Is there any other of the German poets or dramatists who could be ranked before Poushkin, the Russian? or does any fabulist of Germany approach the Russian Kriloff? All these questions we must answer negatively.

The obscurity and diffuseness alike characteristic of German works, whether philosophic, scientific, or poetical, are so extreme in their degree as eminently to puzzle an English reader, who cannot, after the comparative concision to

which he has been accustomed in his own language, believe that he has ever seized the full sense of the celebrated German writer he is reading, who, whether prosaist or poet, expressed so little in so great a flow of words. He is hence led to conclude that, as in the oracles of the Sphinx, some hidden meaning which has escaped him, must lurk in the barren sentences of his author; an error which is encouraged by the difficulty of disentangling every thought which they contain from the lumbering periods in which it is conveyed. If gifted with a warm imagination, in endeavouring to divine his author, he not unfrequently invests unmeaning phrases with poetic thoughts of his own creation. The *Faust*, for instance, a remarkable work, contains numerous passages which appear to the ordinary reader trivial and unmeaning, but which the admirers of Goethe, whether native or foreign, regard as pregnant with profound sense, only that unhappily the vagueness of the text allows these enthusiasts to attach to it ideas often very beautiful, but which being utterly contradictory of each other, must be in every case but one clearly imaginary. The fourteen English translators of this *chef d'œuvre* of Goethe's, thus differ in their interpretation of many parts of it, so that thirteen of the fourteen must inevitably attribute

to him thoughts which are their own. The usual vagueness both of the connection of German ideas, and of the mode of expressing them, has on the minds of Englishmen an effect similar to that of an elaborate piece of music on a German enthusiast, who declares it to describe as eloquently as words, some natural scene, such as the clearing up of the storm. For him the notes represent the dying tones of thunder, the pattering of the rain-drops, the opening of the clouds, the genial sunshine, and the fragrance sent up from the moistened vegetation of the earth.

You are led by his ardour to believe that music must really have a minutely descriptive power for those gifted with the sense of understanding it, till, to convince yourself, you induce another of these amateurs to listen to the same piece, telling him that it represents another subject, such as a pastoral scene in a Swiss valley. You will then, as the author has done, hear him declare that this mysterious but unmistakable language of harmony tells all the tale. He hears the lowing of the cows, the footfall of the milkmaid as she trips along. The sounds paint to him, he says, more clearly than words, the hues of the sunset, the greenness of the grass, or the sombre shades of the mountain pines.

It is however obvious, that to constitute any species of literary merit, whether poetical, scientific, or philosophical, it is not sufficient to possess great ideas, vast imagination, strong reasoning, or perceptive powers, without the faculty of intelligibly expressing them. Mankind cannot recognise the existence of thoughts, which dying unborn within the recesses of the brain conceiving them, have never given evidence of their being. The obscurity of expression which leaves various and contradictory interpretations even to the good-will of enthusiastic admirers, amounts therefore to an unintelligibility, which must leave us sceptic of the inspiring thought by which we have never been gratified or benefited.

We shall find this on examination to be more or less the distinguishing characteristic of all German writers.

Hitherto the criticism of England has taken too much for granted, and been too easily led astray by the predilections of great authorities, and by the prejudice of some of our most able writers. Byron, Coleridge, and Bulwer, (who, in accordance with the fashion of the day, shapes his poetry into prose) have found in the indistinctness of Germanism a

field in which to let their imagination roam ; and like the hoar frost which, crystallizing, figures minarets and gothic pinnacles about wisps of straw and shapeless faggots, so they have revelled in the common-place of Teutonic authors, taking licence from it for the flights of their own poetic fancy.

The "Foreign Quarterly," which may be regarded as the chief authority in the whole circle of English criticism with respect to German literature,—notwithstanding all its German predilections, seldom reviews any work which lays claim to more than erudition, classification, or research, which does not seem to fall piecemeal in the disappointed critic's fingers.

Let us take for instance the Messiah of Klopstock, once popularly regarded as another Milton, in whom there remains, as the "Foreign Quarterly" admits, when stripped of his plagiarism, of his inflation, and bombastic phrase, nothing worthy of our admiration.

The author has found this inclination to philo-Germanism as common to every educated Englishman, as rare in its continuance on more intimate acquaintance with its object.

Even the amiable prejudices of the Howitts do not seem to have resisted such a test, and they

appear to have transferred their sympathies and labours to the more congenial field of Scandinavian literature.

If we now turn to the German prose writers, we shall find their style still more barbarous, compared with that of the English, French, Italians, Spaniards, and Poles. The Schlegels, whose name is familiar to English ears as classic writers, need alone be cited; it is common to find in their works one and even two whole pages of close print, consisting of a single period. Like the poets, the prosaists are neither clear nor harmonious. The German language, which is harsh, verbose, and lumbering, does not appear to admit of harmony; but as, on the other hand, it does not want for richness, its obscurity is wholly due to the taste of those who use it.

In this respect the Germans offer a strange contrast to the French. The former, whose tongue does not tend to double meanings, write in a manner which is singularly vague, whilst the French, whose language so readily falls into equivocation, perhaps on this very account have the most perspicuous style in Europe.

On sifting, in the works of German writers, the positive merit from that which only exists in our own pre-impressed imaginations, we shall learn

to judge them very differently; and though we may accord a respectable place to their celebrities, it is probable that we shall no longer think of classing any men they have hitherto produced alongside the chosen few who occupy the first places in the cosmopolitan pantheon. It is therefore an absurd error to rank intellectual Germany in a triumvirate with France and England. The equality which it has hitherto successfully arrogated, has till the present time no existence, though hopes of its eventual realisation may be entertained, from the unwearied perseverance which has already enabled the German mind to realise the fable of the tortoise and the hare with regard to Sweden, Italy, and Spain.

The Slavonians, whom necessity has brought far more in contact with Germany than its western neighbours, do not share in their illusions on this subject. For them Germany represents no idea, literary, social, or above all political.

They have only taken up the pen, and they feel justly convinced of the superiority of their muse over the hacknied muse of Germany. Wherever they have awakened to a sense of their political condition, they have not confined themselves to barren speculation, but have sought to

attain energetically, gloriously, and often successfully, practical and positive results. These writers justly and frequently observe, that the little liberty which German states possess, they owe to France, and partially to Slavonic Poland. Some of the states were founded after the fall of Napoleon, in more or less complete imitation of the French constitution. The French "*Code Civil*" has also modified the legislation of several provinces of the Russian monarchy; but we cannot either discover any traces of German origin in these ameliorations, nor aught which German philosophy has done towards them.

Whilst there is thus no consciousness of inferiority to inspire the Slavonians with deference towards the Germans, there are many causes, both in the antithesis of character of the two races, and in their political relations, to fill the former with antipathy. Even the Muscovites, who must be ranked as many degrees beneath the lowest of their Slavonic brethren, possess certain qualities in common with these which induce them to regard the German character with contempt. The time-serving spirit of the latter people ripens in the atmosphere of Russian despotism, to such a

degree as to allow even the abject Muscovite to reproach them with servility.

The Muscovite too, whose occasional prodigality, and whose commercial enterprise, contrast so strongly with his habitual penury, scorns the meanness and timidity of the Russo-German.

The Pole and the Ruthenian, the Serbian, Transylvanian, and Hungaric Slavonian, rapid in their perception, and reckless in their impulses, all mock the barren enthusiasm, the dulness, and the want of spirit of the German, whose thirst of knowledge, and persevering patience, they forget to appreciate.

It is curious to note how, whilst in England we regard the German mind as somewhat wild and visionary, but at least prone to forget material interests in its intellectual tendencies, the Slavonians with one accord attribute to it gross materialism.

“ I am not a pope or a German, to eat a second dinner,—I do not make a god of my belly, like a German,” or, “ Are you a German, that you cannot let your cassia cool before you eat ? ” proverbially exclaims the Russian Moujik. He calls the Finn a Swede, the Frenchman godless, but

the German he nick-names, *Kalbashnick*, or, sausage maker.

In the Russian tales, as for instance, in that entitled "The Queen of Spades," by Poushkin, the first of Russian poets, the German, like the Hermann of the story, always plays a part in accordance with this prejudice.

Krasinski, in the "Infernal Comedy," when the count expresses his disgust at the material life he is leading, makes him say,—“I have slept the sleep of a German artisan.”

Hundreds of examples, instead of these which immediately occur to the author, of this deeply rooted opinion in eastern Europe, might be adduced.

As to the social and political relations of the Germanic and Slavonic races, the Muscovite, the Ruthenian, and the inhabitant of Russian Poland, have alike learned to attribute to the Germanic spirit all that was most oppressive in the rule of Russian despotism. The sovereigns of the house of Romanoff, either wholly German, or if not so issuing from a stock which had been for many generations replenished from the princely families of Germany, has almost always administered the empire by German

favourites, who prove tools as pliant and less dangerous than the Muscovites.

Where Germans have not filled, or do not fill the offices of trust, in whatever department it may be, German ideas still preside over the administration.

The Pole, where not under the dominion of Russia, is governed and oppressed by the cabinets of Vienna and of Berlin, whilst in the Austrian empire, in its Polish provinces,—in Hungary, Transylvania, Illyria, Dalmatia, Moravia, and Bohemia,—twenty-three millions of Slavonians have long learned to detest its German rule.

In the Turkish empire, the Slavonians of Montenegro are as frequently at war with Austria as with the Porte, and the Serbians have learned to dread the fraud of the Austrians more than Ottoman force. There remain therefore only the Bosnians and Bulgarians who have no grounds for the antipathy which pervades the rest of the vast family to which they belong.

The Slavonic race constitutes the chief bulk of the subjects of the three empires of continental Europe, and a large share of the population of its most extensive absolute monarchy.

At the lowest computation, 55 millions out of 63, in the Russian empire,—23 out of 37 millions in the Austrian, and 8 out of 13 in the Turkish empires, are pure Slavonians.

In the Prussian monarchy, upwards of 4 millions out of 15 belong to the same family.

In Turkey, Austria, and Prussia, this proportion to the remainder of the population assumes an increased significance when we consider that the Germans in Austria are only 6 beside these 20 millions, and the Turks scarcely 1 million to control these eight millions of Slavonians ;—that in the Prussian kingdom, on its eastern boundary, between four and five hostile millions of the same race are only divided from their brethren by a fictitious frontier, whilst on the west its unpopular dominion is insecurely established over the inhabitants of the Rhenish provinces, numbering two and a half millions ; and that of the remaining eight which complete the population of this monarchy, nearly four and a half consist of the inhabitants of Pomerania, Saxony, and Westphalia, profoundly indifferent to their new Prussian nationality, and partially of Slavonic origin.

We have long been accustomed in the west to

regard the Slavonic family as either already absorbed in, or undergoing rapid assimilation with the Muscovite, and at least this question has been considered as chiefly affecting Russia; but in reality, any sign of agitation amongst the Slavonians is full of even more vital import to the Austrian, Prussian, and Ottoman states, threatening as it directly does their very existence, whilst the Russian government is still seated on the broad basis of its thirty-five millions of the passive Muscovite branch, accessible only to indirect action.

This Slavonic race, the most numerous on the earth but one, has remained for so many centuries passive and quiescent, though distinct, that its existence has been almost forgotten; but like the waters of a mighty ocean, which have long been sleeping in a sullen calm, they are not the less formidable when they shew signs of awakening to tempestuous life.

Whatever theory we may adopt as regards the ancient history of this race, according to every version, it has undergone centuries of persecution, which indeed the largest portion of it still endures. Whilst constituting, as we have just

seen, the great majority of the population of the three continental empires, it is nowhere governed by a native family. Whilst certainly comprising more than a third of the whole population of Europe, and according to the estimation of some authorities one whole half of that of *continental* Europe, it has furnished only one reigning family in the house of the Grand Dukes of Mecklenburg, who rule over another people. Until within the last century, with the exception of the Lithuanians and Poles, the Slavonians, wherever they settled, appear, without giving evidence of either corruption or cowardice, to have been the most unenterprising, and easily subdued of any numerous people. This was apparent even before so much light had been thrown on their history, and whilst the ignorance or vanity of national writers sought to identify it with that of strange warlike tribes which at different times conquered and ruled over various portions of the Slavonic family.

Subsequent investigation has, however, shown too clearly that all the glories which attach to the early history of every portion of it, are chiefly due to some foreign element. The republic of Novgorod, the duchies of Moscow, and of Kief, were

founded by Varangian, or Norman invaders. As long as their blood predominated in the veins of the great lords and princes, they led these conquered vassals alike to plunder the shores of the Black Sea, and to repulse the Tartar. The Lithuanians, whose annals are adventurous and warlike, and whose ranks were chiefly filled with Sclavonians, repulsed and defeated the Teutonic knights, and extended their conquests as far as the Crimea, but they too were a strange people, who led the vanquished Sclavonians to conquest, and whose warrior caste of *Witi* or *Witing* (probably from the viking of the Northmen,) belonged to that wonderful Scandinavian people which had previously subjugated these Lithuanians.

The noble or warrior caste of Poland was either derived from Lithuania, or belonged to a distant and conquering tribe, probably the Sarmatian, or the Lech, inextricably ingrafted on the remaining population.

In prosecuting the researches by which these facts were established, it was discovered that the Sclavonians were not one of the races that over-run Europe towards the decline of the Roman empire, and that they had been confounded with the various Asiatic tribes, who, after conquering, made them

march beneath their banner, and finally were merged in the people they had vanquished.

To the best of the author's belief, it was Lelewel whose profound and varied erudition led him first to contend that the Sclavonic race had occupied the territories it now inhabits, certainly before the influx of German tribes, and probably from most remote antiquity.

Gatterer, of the university of Gottingen, Sza-farzik in his encyclopædia, and a host of savants, have since established beyond all doubt that the ancient Thracians, Venedæ, Dacians, Mœsians, and Triballi, were Sclavonians. Certainly settled in all that part of Europe which their race at present occupies, and probably beyond it extended up to the right bank of the Elbe, where the Venedæ were established in the locality of the duchy of Mecklenberg, and so obstinately resisted the cruel persecution of Charlemagne. There is even much reason to believe that La Vendee in the west of France, derives its name and population from a colony of the Venadæ, traversing France, or coming round by sea, or cut off and surviving the destruction of a Sclavonian population scattered over France, as over the remainder of the central continent of Europe.

The author, who has traversed La Vendee, and is well acquainted with its people, was struck by analogies both of character and feature between the Slavonians and Vendean, of which those appear to have been ignorant who grounded their conjecture of this relationship on book-lore, and thence deduced their arguments to prove it.

At all events the labours of certain of the learned may be considered to have established that the Slavonians, if not aboriginally settled in Europe, were so as anciently as any people of whom we have any record or tradition. Others, and principally Mitzkiavitch, have gone beyond this, and pretend to retrace the Slavonic origin to the Assyrians.

He explains and translates all the Assyrian names, by words derived from the different dialects of the modern Slavonic.

By means of these dialects he read the numerous inscriptions on the tombs in Asia Minor, which are neither Chaldean, Hebrew, Greek, nor Persian. The proofs he adduces are so convincing, that all our scepticism, if not removed, is silenced, notwithstanding all the fertility of imagination, and the ingenuity of mind which we are prepared to

find him bring to bear in the defence of any favourite hypothesis.

But Mitzkiavitch has gradually mixed up these convictions, the fruit of deep study and arduous meditation, with the ideas derived from that religious exaltation to which his countrymen are nationally subject, and which too often morbidly affects them in misfortune.

He had long asked himself how this innumerable people could have been for so many centuries doomed like the Hebrew race to ceaseless suffering and humiliation? How it had offended? But when he had retraced its parentage to the Assyrian, a fancied light burst in upon him, and he hurried to the conclusion that the Slavonians must be the descendents of the Sur and Assur, Syrians and Assyrians swept from the face of Asia, and driven into an exile and bondage of three thousand years, because, as he supposes, of the crime of having first deified man in the persons of Nimrod, Bel, and Ninus.

“This race,” he says, “first submitted to the passions of an individual. Used as his instrument, it enslaved a portion of the world, and has become a symbol of material force opposed to the power of mind.”

He shews that Nebukadnesar, like all other

Assyrian names, may be explained as composed from Slavonic words, and that if written Nebuhodnotsar, it is a plain sentence in that language, signifying "There is no God but the king," a version which exactly agrees with what is said of that monarch in the Book of Judith, *Non est Deus nisi rex.*

It was when his mind, affected alike by his exile, his domestic sorrows, and his arduous studies, was urged by religious melancholy to found on the result of his researches this gloomy hypothesis, which supposed him to belong to a race beneath the ban of Heaven, that Tovianski announced himself to him as a prophet, and confirmed his theory, declaring that he was sent by Heaven to remove this celestial malediction from so many millions.

We will subsequently cite some of the arguments of Mitzkiavitch from the course of lectures in which he gradually strove to impress his own convictions on his auditors, in the order in which they had been forced on his own mind. They are taken from that portion of his course which reflects his intellect before its subsequent offuscation.

The historical truth of this long humiliation of the Slavonic race, not only Mitzkiavitch, but

other writers belonging to it equally avow. But in the same manner as we have seen mighty nations once wield the sword and pen, and then appear scarce fit to hold the distaff,—so may a change as favourable take place in the character and destiny of others, and this appears to have been gradually the case with at least a large portion of the Slavonic people.

In Poland it prepares for another episode of the often renewed and bloody struggle, in which it has been often baffled—never subdued. Like the gladiators of our pugilistic ring, stretched prostrate in successive rounds, it is perhaps gathering up its strength to triumph after all.

In Austria and in Prussia the murmurs of these Slavonic millions awakening from their long torpor are heard as they startle their oppressors from security. In Turkey they have already conquered their civil rights and independence in several provinces. In arts and letters, they have recently made gigantic progress. So that this people, so long threatened, has in its turn grown threatening; and if almost everywhere still oppressed, it yet gives evident signs that it will not long remain so.

Of the four existing powers beneath whose dominion the Slavonians still linger, it may appear

strange, but it is nevertheless true, that they have always been ruled most gently by the Turks. In Turkey they are still most mildly governed, even where they have not secured self-government and franchises.

At a moment when a prospect of retribution against its task-makers is opening to this people, it may not be uninteresting to investigate its feeling towards them.

It thus happens that this eminently religious race—as, whether of the Greek or Latin communion it may be considered to be,—is growing daily more hostile to the three Christian powers,—Greek, Lutheran, and Roman Catholic,—betwixt which it is divided, than towards the Ottoman Porte; and this hostility to the former daily increases with the spread of knowledge, which modifies the antipathies of the Slavonians to their Turkish masters, both by teaching them to contrast their condition with those of their brethren, and by pointing out to them a prompt and practical remedy to their condition in the establishment of self-governed states, beneath the protection of the Ottoman Porte.

The Turkish empire presents the strange picture of a people scarce amounting to a million, ruling in Europe fifteen millions, distinct from themselves in origin, language, and mostly in religion.

Seven millions of Slavonians, four millions of Moldo-Wallachians, or Roumani (a people of mixed Slavonic origin), two millions and half of Greeks, a million of Albanians, and three quarters of a million of Jews, Gipsies, and Armenians, complete in round numbers the population of European Turkey, governed by or tributary to a race which on this side of the Bosphorus does not amount to half the population of London.

Without the intellect of the Greek, the valour of the Albanian, the industry of the Slavonian, the thrift of the Armenian or Hebrew, this Tartar tribe governs them all; though according to its own tradition, only encamped instead of settled in Europe, it prefers to bury its dead beyond the strait which divides its European possessions from its Asiatic home.

How did these unintellectual Osmanlees first usurp the power bequeathed to their successors by the Arabian caliphs, and afterwards maintain that supremacy which, though partially shattered, still endures? These are historic and political enigmas, difficult to solve unless by more or less arbitrary suppositions.

Is there not distinctive of certain races an inherent genius for government, which gives them

presidence over others of their superiors in talent, courage, or acquirements,—a genius perhaps consisting in the tact which enables them when they seek to do so, to discern and bend these to their purpose ?

The Roman possessed neither the intellect nor taste, and scarcely the valor of the Greek. Rome had no philosophers, poets, orators, or dramatists,—no sculptors, architects, mathematicians, or engineers,—no captains or devoted patriots, whom she could place above those of Greece ; few whom she could even compare with them. Yet Rome progressed rapidly towards dominion, whilst Greece became an apanage of her mighty sovereignty.

In the British empire, is not the English mind peculiarly endowed, beyond that of Ireland or Scotland, with this genius for government—this tact of domination, which without shaping itself into any special talent leads to indisputable precedence and incalculable results ? For though at long intervals England has produced men so unparalleled in the empire, as Shakspeare, Milton, Newton, and Byron, still it must be admitted that two-thirds of our celebrities,—of our distinguished jurists, writers, orators, or captains, are Scotch or Irish.

If this peculiar adaption of the national mind, which made Rome the universal mistress, and has

rendered Great Britain the most powerful empire in the world—which in the history of the latter we find expressed in the rule of Elizabeth, of Cromwell, and of William Pitt—have any but a fanciful existence, we may attribute this faculty to the Osmanlees, with whom, though unaccompanied by any other qualities which stamp the British character, it may account for the spread or maintenance of their rule. At least, we can trace in the Turk no sign of any other superiority over the Arab, whose sceptre he usurped.

Supineness and inactivity have now notoriously succeeded the former energy, both of the Turks, and of their government. Long zealously propagandist, and restlessly ambitious, this people and their empire, after having been successively progressive and stationary, then entered on a career of full political retrogression and decay.

Perhaps, indeed, only the constant intermixture of the Circassian breed with this race preserved it from the decrepitude into which the blue blood of the nobility of Spain has fallen, where “little,” as a Spanish grandee applied to mind and body, has passed into a proverb. It is worthy of remark too, as another strange anomaly, that, if we examine into the birth of those who within the last

century have risen into power in the Turkish empire, or any of its dependencies, we shall find them chiefly Caucasians or Albanians. For instance, Ali Pacha of Janina, and Mehemet Ali belonged to the latter, the Mamelukes of Egypt to the former.

When retracing the history of this strange empire beyond the period of its decline, to the days of its progress and success, we are led to suspect that religious zeal, instead of solely inspiring its ambition, was rather its instrument, and not the most effective. After the fashion of Nadir and of Timur, (who led another Tartar branch of the same people,) the Turkish sovereigns principally achieved their conquests by following a singular system which consisted in seeking and raising merit wherever it could be discovered, and in the juxta-position of the most terrible punishments, and of the greatest immediate rewards; thus securing the strongest incentives to human exertion.

On the other hand, like the Romans before them, when they had once subdued a conquered people, and struck terror into them by occasional acts of severity, they neither interfered with the municipal privileges nor the religious faith of their vassals.

We cannot reproach them with the bigotry which expelled the Moors with all their arts from Spain, which made the American continent a vast Golgotha, which drove the industry of Flanders and of France successively to a foreign land, or which opened wounds and raised animosities in Ireland, still unhealed and unextinguished at the present hour.

The Ottoman empire never possessed the art of centralisation, in which the Russian and Austrian empires have made such progress,—an art which rendering available all the resources of state, is at the same time dangerous to the liberties even of those that are free, but which increases a hundredfold the oppression of a despotism.

The Turkish administration even to the present day may be described by the pithy definition applied to it, of a power which does not govern, but occasionally chastises and extorts. The condition of its dominions, contrasted with those of the Tsars, points out, however, to us, that no government at all is preferable to the miseries of bad government.

From whatever cause arising, whether from an instinct of the genius which has been suggested, or merely from the indolence of the Turkish cha-

racter, and the incompleteness of the machinery of its power,—it is nevertheless indisputable that rights, privileges, and immunities amongst the heterogenous populations which yield obeisance to the crescent, have everywhere survived partial instances of oppressive cruelty.

The gradual extinction of the ambitious energy of the Turks, and their weakness growing both from this cause and by contrast with the increased strength of their neighbours, gave to a portion of its vast Slavonic population the means of securing all the franchises which had survived from the violences and spoliation to which they were formerly exposed.

They were indeed first roused by the intrigues and the ambitious policy of Russia, which since the time of Catherine has looked forward to that Slavonic union which its sovereigns have always hoped to see effected beneath its rule, and which in every human probability will at least morally take place, but only to shiver the sceptre of the Tsars, and perhaps of other potentates, instead of bowing under it.

The inhabitants of Moldavia and Wallachia, called Roumani, numbering near four millions and a half, are Slavonic, though their aristocracy

may belong to another race, and though its ruling and powerful families are the corrupt and intriguing Greeks of the Fanar.

The Serbian people are pure Slavonian. Both were originally filled with enthusiasm for their Russian co-religionaries, aided by the suggestions, funds, and policy of Russia, and taught to look towards her as a liberating power.

But the independence of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Serbia having been effected, recognised, and honourably respected by the Porte, their people have ceased to fear its violence, and to transfer their dread to the Russian protectorate. Their experience of its influence, their contact with the Russian armies in the last campaign, the increasing inter-communication and the spread of knowledge, have all tended to render it unpopular. The conviction is becoming daily more prevalent, that even their brethren in the Turkish empire who have not yet secured self-government, are far better off than the Slavonians in the Russian or Austrian empires. Whilst the youthful, amongst whom enlightenment is rapidly spreading, learn, in their acquaintance with the condition of western Europe, a profound antipathy to the policy of Russia and Austria; their somewhat exalted and theoretic

notions readily seem to sober down to the practical views of those who see an immediate and less perilous mode of securing the liberty of all the Slavonians in the Turkish empire, by forming federal states, self-governed and tributary to the Porte, as a common centre. The moderation of the Slavonic character, its natural veneration for that which has been long established,—the examples which Wallachia, Moldavia, and Serbia afford of the pliancy of Ottoman policy in that respect, and the consideration of the advantages to be derived when enjoying as a free state the real protection of the Porte, from the *prestige* of long dominion which it possesses,—have all a tendency to reconcile the Slavonians of the Turkish empire, under certain modifications, to its rule.

The Turkish empire may therefore be now considered as somewhat in the condition of a parent, who having, albeit with some severity, nurtured and protected a numerous progeny, is reduced in the decrepitude of its old age to seek subsistence and protection from the traditionary respect of filially grateful descendants.

CHAPTER X.

TREATMENT OF POLISH NUNS.

There is nothing more difficult than to substantiate any charge of cruelty within the Russian dominions. The press dares not even mention a crime indifferent to the government, or an accident beyond the control of all human authority, much less any fact which might reflect upon it. This despotism does not choose to see its subjects imbibe a thirst for any kind of news, or any habits of discussion. It is difficult for the inhabitant of a constitutional country to conceive the extent to which grows the popular discretion, nurtured by this terrorism. A Russian subject will scarce relate to his immediate friends a murder which has happened at his own door, or communicate to his own family the fact of any of his acquaintance having been arrested by his side. Hence

reigns a silence far more absolute than even the absence of a free press would occasion, and thus horrors which in other countries would be bruited far and wide, remain unknown beyond the walls of a prison, a barrack, or a convent yard.

On the other hand, such few cases out of the many as come to an investigator's knowledge, where none seek to inquire and fewer to communicate, can never, however notorious in the Russian empire, be substantiated beyond its frontier, in the same manner as similar facts occurring in another country.

Almost every accusation must rest upon the personal testimony of the accuser, he can call no witnesses to establish even incidents known to the whole Russian people,—for who would dare answer his appeal? most frequently he must conceal even names and dates, not to draw down notice and ruin on individuals in attempting to circumstantiate his tale. All these difficulties are duly taken advantage of by those who direct the secret influence which controls the press, often unconsciously, and through channels occult to itself,—not to defend or praise the Russian government, which is as impatient of praise almost as of blame, but to cast discredit and doubt on such statements as expose its cruelties.

Though it might sound harsh to assume that a government, or a nation, any more than an individual, should not be held innocent till proven guilty, still, where from the very nature of the offence, or from the offender's position, evidence is obviously most difficult of attainment, we should at least visit with increased severity the crime when at length established, after the example of those laws which chastise in it when detected, a host of similar transgressions which must go unpunished for one dragged into light.

Such an instance is afforded us by the singular escape of four of the victims, in a case of such unheard of barbarity that it could never have met with credit unless reposing on the testimony of witnesses and sufferers, whose character placed them above suspicion, and who have repeated to hundreds in their minutest details the diabolical persecution they have witnessed with their own eyes, or endured in their own persons.

The writer must, however, premise his brief narration of the main points of the story, by expressing his belief that the spirit-broken church of Russia—one of the most apathetic existing—must be absolved from all general participation in the crimes he is about to lay before the

reader; and that even the immediate actors in these scenes of unparalleled barbarity must be considered not as the instruments of a religious fanaticism, which destroys the body in the belief that it is saving souls, but of a reckless political ambition, bearing down all resistance to its will at any cost of suffering, blood, or tears, and provoked to ferocity by the resistance of a few women, when kingdoms and empires have given way in awe, or truckled to the imposing power of the authority which their enthusiasm set at defiance.

The account about to be given may be gathered from the lips of one of these women at Rome, where she is now living; from every individual of the numerous company assembled on the 9th of October last, in Prince Adam Czartoryski's drawing-room, where a deputation of the youth of Rome waited on her to convey the expression of their sympathy; or from the nuns of the convent of the Assumption, No. 75, Rue Chaillot, Champs Elysees, Paris, where she resided during her stay in that city. A detailed account of her sufferings has been published by *Gaume, freres, Rue Casette*, due (to the best of the author's belief) to the pen of M. Buchez, the most distinguished advocate of the new school of French religious philosophy. It

exactly tallies in all main particulars with the following narration, received from a person who gathered it from the lips of Irena Miesceslas, and of which the writer has duly compared all the fearful incidents with other and earlier depositions.

In the city of Minsk, in 1837, there still existed a convent of humble nuns of the order of St. Bazilius. Their time, like that of the "sisters of charity," was divided between their religious duties, attendance on the sick, and the education of poor children. Their order had been founded in 1826, by one of the princes Tapiiha, a family to which the Czartoriskis are allied.

Far and wide through the surrounding country, the suffering and needy had learned to bless their unassuming benevolence, and people of all ranks regarded with veneration a community, distinguished not by ascetic practices, but through its active and unwearying philanthropy.

The very popularity of this order, and the estimation in which it was held, marked it out for a persecution, so atrocious that I know of nothing more harrowing, in times ancient or modern.

The cruelties of Nero, Domitian, and Caligula,

Here she was led to give all the sad details of her harrowing story, whilst the scars which mark her body added their dumb eloquence to her recital.

Irena Mieceslas had been thirty years renowned for her charity and benevolence throughout the government of Minsk, as head of the Basilian convent, consisting of thirty-four nuns, in the city of that name. It will be hence at once perceived that she is advancing into the vale of years. The aspect of her countenance, according to the portrait which the writer has before him, is at once noble and indicative of determination. It derives the first expression from the position of the eyes, which is such as we rarely meet with out of the Scandinavian or Anglo-Norman race; viz., obliqued upwards from the outward corners; that is to say, in a direction precisely contrary to the eyes of the feline species, of all Mongolian races, and of many of the inhabitants of southern countries. The finely chiselled corners of her mouth seem to mark a decision of temper, of which she has given the most heroic proofs in her conduct.

The substance of her narrative, which the other

on that weary road, which the ten unhappy creatures left behind by the fugitives, are at this moment being dragged or driven over, all lamed, blind, or ailing.

Nothing in that case would ever have reached our ear of the incredible sufferings of these poor victims, whose fate would silently have contributed to swell those statistics of proselytism which the Russian government gives periodically to Europe, and which Nicholas has commemorated by the famous medal, inscribed with the motto, "Separated by violence, and reunited by love."

Of the four fugitives, two, the sister Wawrzecka and Irena Macrina Mieceslas (Mieczyslaska,) succeeded in reaching Posen, in Prussian Poland, where the Roman Catholic archbishop, having taken down their circumstantial deposition of the facts about to be narrated, sealed them with the arms of the archbishopric, and forwarded the document to Rome.

An order consequently arrived for the superior to repair to Rome, by way of Paris; in which city she took up her abode till the 10th of October last, under the same roof with one near and dear to the author.

Here she was led to give all the sad details of her harrowing story, whilst the scars which mark her body added their dumb eloquence to her recital.

Irena Mieceslas had been thirty years renowned for her charity and benevolence throughout the government of Minsk, as head of the Basilian convent, consisting of thirty-four nuns, in the city of that name. It will be hence at once perceived that she is advancing into the vale of years. The aspect of her countenance, according to the portrait which the writer has before him, is at once noble and indicative of determination. It derives the first expression from the position of the eyes, which is such as we rarely meet with out of the Scandinavian or Anglo-Norman race; viz., obliqued upwards from the outward corners; that is to say, in a direction precisely contrary to the eyes of the feline species, of all Mongolian races, and of many of the inhabitants of southern countries. The finely chiselled corners of her mouth seem to mark a decision of temper, of which she has given the most heroic proofs in her conduct.

The substance of her narrative, which the other

three sisters corroborate in the minutest particulars, is to the following effect:

The Emperor Nicholas having profited by his influence and privileges in nominating corrupt and ambitious tools to the bishopric of the Basillian communion, (that is to say, the Roman Catholic with Greek forms,) amongst these Semiasko, the bishop of the diocese in which the convent of these poor nuns was situated, had apostatised to the Greek, from the Latin church. Finding that the great mass of the clergy, and the whole of their congregation, refused to follow the examples of their chiefs, Nicholas ordered forcible means to be resorted to, and set on foot a persecution, which caused the females of this religious association great alarm, and induced them to use the private influence of their friends in the Russian capital, to be allowed to retire from their convent into the bosoms of their families.

This boon the emperor refused, referring them to their apostate bishop.

Semiasko, after vainly using all his persuasive powers with this community, to induce them to pass over to the Russian church, showed them alike the threats and promises he was empowered

from Minsk, met with fourteen more of their order, transferred from another convent to this abode, where for two years they were kept at hard labour, chained in couples, and exposed to all the malignity of the depraved associates with whom these women of gentle birth were thus forcibly mingled.

In 1839, all other efforts having failed to shake their resolution, they were transferred to another Russian convent of black-sisters, in the city of Polock. Here they met with ten more nonconformist nuns of the same order. The whole number of these women—fifty-seven—were now brought up twice a week, on Wednesdays and Fridays, before a commission of the Russian authorities and clergy, and flogged before them, receiving fifty strokes a-piece.

This was continued for months together, till the wounds upon their backs was an open sore, and that pieces of the scabs and then of the raw flesh adhered to the instruments of torture. Three of their number died beneath this infliction.

They were then fed on salt herrings, and refused drink (a favourite Russian mode of torture), except on the condition of apostacy. This punishment, which it appears they found the most difficult

him, between the threats and the promises of his bishop, he was influenced to desert to the Russian communion, and he was afterwards frequently obliged to take his seat as a member of the tribunal which attempted to subdue the obstinacy of these women. It is, however, probable, that he yielded more to terror than seduction, for he strove apparently to bury his remorse in incessant intoxication; and in this condition he afterwards fell into a pool of water, where he was drowned.

Three days after the insulting refusal of the superior to apostatize, Semiasko came with a detachment of soldiers to turn the sisters out of the convent. Such was the violence employed—such the terror inspired by the account of universal persecution, that a sick nun of their number fell and expired upon the pavement of the chapel.

The remainder were heavily ironed hand and foot, and marched to Vitepsk, where they were placed in a Russian convent of “black-sisters.”

These black sisterhoods, which may in some measure be compared to our penitentiaries, are places of refuge for the widows of private soldiers, and receptacles for the most disorderly prostitutes.

Here the thirty-three nuns of St. Basilus,

from Minsk, met with fourteen more of their order, transferred from another convent to this abode, where for two years they were kept at hard labour, chained in couples, and exposed to all the malignity of the depraved associates with whom these women of gentle birth were thus forcibly mingled.

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They were then fed on salt herrings, and refused drink (a favourite Russian mode of torture), except on the condition of apostacy. This punishment, which it appears they found the most difficult

to bear, was superseded by a system of starvation. They were only fed once every other day, and driven to eat nettles and the fodder of the convent cattle.

They were employed to dig out clay, and not understanding how to conduct an excavation, the earth fell in and buried five of their number. With incredible barbarity the Russian authorities not only refused to dig them out, but prevented the nuns from attempting to extricate their companions. They perished in this self-dug grave.

The next labour in which the survivors were employed, was to aid the masons in constructing a palace for the renegade bishop.

Some of the Polish gentry, whose spirit no terrors will quell, coming to look on,—one of their number addressed some words of consolation to these poor women. Within four-and-twenty hours, not only this imprudent individual, but all those around him had disappeared.

The falling of a wall in the midst of the nuns injured many and killed eight of them outright. A ninth and tenth soon after perished.

These ten bodies were carried off by the people, and hidden where all the efforts of the Russian authorities failed to discover them.

About this period, several monks of Saint Basilus were brought to the same convent. Their treatment is described as having been more barbarous than even that of the nuns. Four of these men, Zawecki, Komar, Zilewicz, and Buckzynski by name, all upwards of seventy years of age, were at last, in the full severity of winter, stripped and placed under a pump, where as the water was poured over them, it gradually congealed into a mass of ice, and froze them to death; another, named the Abbé Laudanski, aged and infirm, whilst staggering beneath a load of fire-wood, was struck upon the head with such violence, by a drunken deacon, that his skull was fractured, and he died upon the spot.

It must here be explained, that all the lower, or *white-clergy* in the Russian church is very ignorant and depraved, and that the deacons are the lowest amongst them.

In the present instance, however, the refusal of the great bulk of the Basilian clergy to pass over to the Russian church, had obliged it, in these forcibly converted provinces, to fill up those gaps in the lower ranks of its hierarchy with boors of the most illiterate and dissolute character.

It happened that one of these surviving monks

of St. Basilius succeeded in making his escape, and Samiasko, irritated at this incident, resolved to conquer the obstinacy of the nuns; and publishing that they were about to read their recantation, caused them to be forcibly led by the soldiery to the portals of the Russian church. The curiosity which this announcement caused, led the whole population of the city of Polock to assemble; notwithstanding the examples which had been made of those who had expressed their sympathy with the sufferers.

The apostate bishop, in his episcopal garments, advanced towards the nuns, and bidding the soldiers leave his dear sisters at liberty, spoke to them with paternal kindness, then offering his hand to their superior, prepared to lead her into the church. Irena Mieceslas then seizing one of the hatchets used by the carpenters who had been working at the reparation of the church, called out to all her nuns to kneel, and addressing Semiasko, told him: "After having been their shepherd, to become the executioner of those whom he had not already done to death, and to strike off their heads before the threshold of that temple, which their footsteps would never voluntarily cross."

So galling was the provocation of this rebuke to

the Russian bishop, that unable to contain himself, he struck the superior on the face, and then flung the axe indignantly from him. It chanced in falling to wound one of the nuns in the foot; and a moment after the superior having put her hand to her mouth, which was filled with blood, drew out one of her shattered teeth, and holding it up to him, said: "Take it, it will earn you some fresh order from the emperor."

Such was the effect of this scene, that nothing could restrain the enthusiasm of the people; and as the nuns were led back by the soldiery, the crowd followed them singing with one accord Hallelujahs, and Te Deums.

Such, notwithstanding all the repressive terrors of the Russian authorities, became the feeling of the population of the city of Polock, that it was found unsafe to continue the persecution of the nuns within its walls, and they were ordered to be removed to the borough of Medzioly, in the province of Minsk.

This public defeat of the Russian bishop and authorities was, however, revenged on these poor women by an act of such diabolical malignity as only the most undeniable evidence can render credible.

When the Russian soldiers, and the newly-made deacons, had been rendered drunk with brandy, all these helpless nuns were turned out amongst them as incurably obstinate, to treat as they thought fit. Then commenced a scene worthy of Pandemonium, —the shrieks and prayers of the victims mingling with the oaths, blasphemies, and ribaldry of the crowd to whose brutal lust they were abandoned.

When the fury of these demons in human form had been exhausted, it was discovered that two of these unfortunate females were quite dead. The skull of one had been crushed by the stamping on the temples of an iron-plated heel. The other was trampled into such a mass of mud and gore, that even its human character was scarce recognisable. Eight others had one or several bones or limbs broken, or their eyes torn or trodden out. Of the whole number, the superior, a woman of iron frame as well as indomitable resolution, fared the best ; but she was not allowed to attend or console her mutilated sisters except on the condition of apostacy.

They were afterwards marched out of Polock by night on foot, and chained two by two,—even those whose eyes had been torn out, and whose hideous wounds were festering. Those whose legs were broken, or who were lamed, were sent forward in carts under the care of Cossacs.

shepherd ; but even then was not in security, as the cowardly government of Prussia gives up even its own subjects to the Tsar.

It was not until she had reached Posen, in the midst of a Polish population, that she felt in security ; and here she had unobtrusively withdrawn to a convent of the sisters of charity, but she was considered too precious, as a living testimony of the horrors daily perpetrated in that Golgotha which the frontier of Russia encircles, to be left in her retirement. With her scars, wounds, and personal evidence, she has been wisely forwarded to Paris, where a deputation recently waited on her, to express their sympathy with her cruel treatment. From thence she proceeded on the 10th of October to Rome, where she was received in the most distinguished manner by the pope and cardinals. In Posen she had been joined by the sister Wavrzecka, and shortly afterwards learned that the other two had in like manner escaped the pursuit of the Russian authorities, and been safely forwarded by the zeal of the inhabitants to the Austrian frontier.

and which afterwards becoming filled with worms, from want of dressing, caused her intense agony.

At length some relaxation of vigilance having opened a prospect of escape, this courageous woman persuaded three of her companions to attempt it with her. In this enterprise these four women all succeeded, enfeebled by disease as they were, and without money or passports, at a distance of between two and three hundred miles from the Austrian and Prussian frontiers.

At the commencement of the present year, profiting by the scene of riot and drunkenness to which the saint's-day of the *protopope* of the convent had given occasion, they effected their escape. Leaping down a high wall into the snow, they alighted in safety, and immediately fell on their knees in thanksgiving. They then separated, to facilitate their flight. The superior, in the midst of all the severity of the season, was driven to hide for days together in the woods, without other food than berries, or any thing to quench her thirst but the snow. Once, driven to extremity, she knocked at the door of a wealthy-looking house, and being received with veneration by its owner, was provided with money, provisions, and a correct map of her route. She crossed the frontier disguised as a

duces the writer, from the like reason which occasioned it,—that of these two volumes being given to the public whilst the third is going through the press,—to subjoin here some observations which have reference to the sketch of the Polish emigration attempted in the first volume. These observations having been put together too late to be added to the chapters devoted to that subject, it had been his intention to append them to the third volume, but he has thought fit to subjoin them here, fearing that an impression might be imbibed respecting a personage therein mentioned, which they are calculated in some degree to modify, inasmuch as the author there described him in the words of his political opponents, whereas here will be given that part of the apology for his conduct made by his partisans and friends, which appears to be founded on facts and reason.

A person better acquainted perhaps than any other in this country with the Polish emigration, though perhaps insensibly influenced by the partiality of private friendship, has favoured the author with some remarks on his estimation of Prince Czartoryski's character, which must be admitted to be full of truth.

He observes that justice is hardly done to

CHAPTER XI.

PRINCE CZARTORYSKI.

IN the last chapter, from unavoidable delay occurring in the publication of the third volume of "Eastern Europe," the author was forced to interrupt the continuity of his chain of argument, to introduce the episode of persecution therein related, which it was judged inexpedient further to withhold, on account of its incredibly revolting character, of the testimony on which it reposes, and of its comparatively recent dates—or perhaps it should rather be said of its present continuance, for can it be reasonably hoped that anything but death will alleviate the sufferings of the ten poor victims who had survived the cruel treatment of seven years, and whom the four fugitives left behind a few months since, in the power of their exasperated tormentors?

This interruption having once taken place, in-

by the love of his country, always sacrificing to it every other consideration. He has endeavoured to serve its interests in different ways as circumstances would best allow. When there was no chance of obtaining for it all he wished, or all to which it was entitled, he did not give up its cause in discouragement, but strove unwearingly for *all that was possible*. In early life he was captivated with the liberality—which he had helped to inspire—of the Emperor Alexander, then perhaps sincerely expressed, and sought to secure every attainable advantage for Poland when its independence was out of the question. At the congress of Vienna he laboured successfully to establish for his country at least a semblance of independence, and such an approach to it as promised to leave an after-chance of something better.”

In his capacity of President of Public Instruction, he laboured so assiduously and successfully to instil true patriotic feelings into the minds of the Polish youth, that Novosiltzof charged him, in a despatch to the emperor, with “*having retarded for a century the amalgamation of Poland with Russia.*”

It is further certain, that if Prince Adam was sometimes mistaken in his views of the best method of serving his country, he was at others exclusively

Prince Adam's high and unsullied character and antecedents, or to the services he has since rendered to the emigration.

This is true. It should not have been omitted, that having spent a portion of his early youth in England, studying the spirit and effects of constitutional government in the school of Pitt, Fox, and Burke, he returned to Poland in 1791 to take arms against Russia; and after receiving several marks of distinction for his gallantry, continued to fight under the banner of his country till the suppression of its independence. Such of his vast estates as were within the Polish territory appropriated by Russia, were in consequence confiscated; and it was only through the intercession of the Court of Vienna with the Empress Catherine that these possessions were restored; but on condition that Prince Adam and his brother should reside as hostages in St. Petersburg. Once there, she peremptorily insisted on their entering the service; and the former was attached as aide-de-camp to her grandson Alexander, whose favour and confidence he then acquired, and continued long afterwards to enjoy.

“He has throughout his life,” says the correspondent above alluded to, “been steadily guided

by the love of his country, always sacrificing to it every other consideration. He has endeavoured to serve its interests in different ways as circumstances would best allow. When there was no chance of obtaining for it all he wished, or all to which it was entitled, he did not give up its cause in discouragement, but strove unwearingly for *all that was possible*. In early life he was captivated with the liberality—which he had helped to inspire—of the Emperor Alexander, then perhaps sincerely expressed, and sought to secure every attainable advantage for Poland when its independence was out of the question. At the congress of Vienna he laboured successfully to establish for his country at least a semblance of independence, and such an approach to it as promised to leave an after-chance of something better.”

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It is further certain, that if Prince Adam was sometimes mistaken in his views of the best method of serving his country, he was at others exclusively

successful in so doing, since during the years 1803-4-5, when even the Polish legion had ceased to exist, he alone had the good fortune of rendering it eminent services.

To the impetus and direction which he then imparted to public instruction is probably owing much of the intellectual and patriotic tendency which now jointly distinguishes the emigration. Most of its celebrities studied like Mitzkiavitch, or taught like Lelewel, in universities and schools founded by his influence, and under his immediate direction.

The partisans of Prince Adam dwell with pride on the display of civil courage made by him in 1826, when after the revolt on the accession of Nicholas to the throne, the senate of Poland was convoked to constitute a supreme court of appeal for the purpose of trying the Poles implicated in the conspiracy. Czatoryski was at the time travelling in Italy, where he had retired when Alexander began his reign of terror in Poland, but he instantly returned to take his place in the senate. This body, it is well known, with a single exception to its unanimity, acquitted the accused, and made a bold report to the emperor, in which it recalled the stipulations of the treaty of Vienna, the official declarations of the

Emperor Alexander, and his speeches to the diet, whereby he had declared the kingdom an independent state, and that the Polish provinces were intended to treble the extent and importance of the *nascent* kingdom. It recalled to the emperor the terms of the constitution, and of the oath to maintain it, which he was violating together. This report, made in the name of the dying president Belinski, was written by Prince Adam.

“ When the revolution of 1830 broke out, he entertained the conviction that the moment chosen was upropitious, yet sooner than neglect any opportunity which might possibly lead to the emancipation of his country, he joined the patriots heart and soul, utterly regardless of the princely fortune and the high position he was sacrificing.”

When called to the presidency of the executive pentarchy, he was frequently in the field during the sanguinary campaign, or as it might perhaps more properly be termed, campaigns, against Diebitch and Paskevitch; he was present at the battles of Wawre, of Dembé, and Iganie; and after he had abdicated his office, took part in the last success of the Polish arms at Miedzirzecz.

When Warsaw was attacked, he marched up with the army of Ramorino, vainly attempting its

relief. When this corps was forced by treble forces to seek refuge on the Austrian frontier, Prince Adam crossed the Vistula with a few officers, and succeeded in joining General Rozytski in the palatinate of Sandomir. He had thus successively when their cause was desperate, joined the last wrecks of the national army; and at length, driven with Rozytski on to the territory of the republic (!) of Cracow, he only quitted that city when the Russian troops were entering it.

He thus commenced his public career at twenty, fighting against the enemies of his country, and the age of sixty overtook him in the ranks of those who were striking the last desperate blows for its freedom against the same oppressor.

Since the expulsion of those who constitute the present emigration, it ought not to be forgotten that Prince Czartoryski has either been chosen, or tacitly allowed by its members of all parties to act in its name for their common interest, and he may be said assiduously, skilfully, and successfully to have assumed the direction of all relations entered into for the general weal of this body, and of the country represented by them, with foreign governments and parties.

The emigrants of all shades of opinions seem

to have left this duty to him, in the full conviction that he would do all that could be done in this respect ; and it would appear that their flattering confidence in his patriotism and activity has not been misplaced. Through his exertions the representative assemblies of France and England have been urged to protest against the Russian occupation of Poland, and ministers to commit themselves upon this subject. His efforts have contributed powerfully to the dissemination of the anti-Russian feeling which is now rising amongst the Slavonians beyond the Russian boundary, and particularly amongst those of the Turkish empire. Czartoryski, in his younger days, when minister of foreign affairs to Alexander, and full of faith in the sincerity of the youthful potentate's liberalism of feeling, had entertained the thought—by no means novel in Russian policy—of gathering all the Slavonic nations beneath the sceptre of the Tsar, who then promised to devote his power to the glorious task of civilising and enfranchising so large a portion of mankind. With this view he had formerly opened channels of communication with these Slavonic branches, and acquired a knowledge of their feelings and condition, which proved highly useful to

him when he sought to expose to them the nature and objects of the Russian cabinet.

The correspondent already cited, strongly objects to two passages in the account given of Prince Adam's character in the first volume, the one stating his conduct to have been during the late revolution "*a tissue of weaknesses and blunders,*" the other observing him to be "*neither a man of genius nor of firmness.*" These sentences the author must admit to resemble those strokes of the brush unnecessarily harsh and glaring, which, ungracefully introduced into a portraiture, will not bear judging without reference to the whole, and which if isolated, and from the general sense, might be undoubtedly condensed and overstrained, inapplicable and unjust. The impression they were intended to convey, when taken in connexion with following passages, was far from absolute in degree, and could scarcely be considered as invidious in application. It was neither want of accomplishments, nor of ability,—of the firmness of the patriotic citizen, nor of the courage of the soldier—which was meant to be attributed to him either in the text or by the words of his political opponents, which it repeats.

No positive deficiency was implied in the

qualities requisite to constitute an able ruler in average circumstances, but the assertion was simply made, that they fall short of the vast exigencies of a perilous and distracted period, when only shining genius could have steered the boat of state in safety.

It is no reproach to the prince, to contend that, like all the most distinguished men then called to represent Poland in the field and cabinet, he should have failed in the extent or nature of the requisites which constitute an energetic dictator in a time of imminent peril, or of unparalleled difficulty; and all the meaning that the author intended to convey, was that of which the truth has been tested by the event; viz., that such a part the president of the national government was not fitted to play. It is to be hoped, however, that a saviour who might prove so dangerous to the public liberties as one formed of the stuff of which such dictators are made, will never be needed, through the greater unanimity and good sense of the Polish people. It is to be hoped that it will triumph, not through the genius of an extraordinary leader, but through the general energy and unity of the mass; and then it would be difficult for the nation, if it chose a constitutional chief, to do otherwise, from

his unexceptional position, than select Prince Adam for that office. For whom else could they choose, at least out of his family, even if his virtues, services, experience, and abilities had been far less than they have been officially pronounced to be by the enemies of his country, who in the contumacious trial by special commission which confiscated all his property and condemned him to an ignominious death, declared in the counts of his indictment :

“ That the exalted station of the prince, the illustrious name he bore, his vast fortune, his widely extended influence, *and the great abilities commonly attributed to him*, had been the cause why, at the moment of insurrection, a great many persons had watched the conduct of the prince, and found example in it.”

In the same manner that Prince Czartoryski has since successfully directed the foreign relations of the Polish emigration, did he unsuccessfully manage the diplomatic intercourse of the country during its short-lived independence ; but his friends and partisans strenuously and emphatically deny that he ever trusted to diplomacy alone, instead of arms, and that, on the contrary, whilst neglecting no imaginable means which might conduce to

success, he placed his faith chiefly in the result of battles. In proof of this they cite one of his speeches to the diet, advising it against all negotiation, after a combat of which the results had proved doubtful, lest the enemy should consider it a victory. On the other hand, it is of course natural, and perhaps unavoidable, in all popular representation, even for men the most honourable, not to gloss over the errors of their party and of its leaders; but on the other, the author recalls the title of a pamphlet hostile to Prince Czartoryski, published at Warsaw during the revolution, and of which the very title suggests a corroboration of the present assumption of his partisans. It is entitled, "Czartoryski general, and Skrynetski (Skrzynecki) diplomatist," or something to that effect: being satirically intended to point out the interference in diplomatic affairs, and the reliance on foreign mediation attributed to the latter, (then commander-in-chief,) and the part taken in military matters by the former, who was at that time president of the executive government.

Justly or unjustly, however, the prince was very popularly confounded with those who, reading the spread of Jacobinism, and trusting to the intervention of foreign powers, were as much alarmed at

the revolution as at the Russians. The fact, not of his having entertained such ideas in common with the majority of the military and senatorial celebrities of that period, but of their being commonly attributed to him, is confirmed in a pamphlet laudatory of Prince Adam, by that most distinguished of his partisans, the venerable Niemcewicz, the friend and companion in arms of Washington, and of Kosciusko, and the first of Polish poets, of the classic school.

“As to that with which the prince has so often been charged,” continues the pre-cited correspondent, “his *diplomatic negotiations*, it is quite a mistake (though one sedulously encouraged by men of parties opposed to him), to suppose that he relied upon these in themselves; he knew, and always inculcated the opinion, that they could only avail if supported and strengthened by success in the field. Over and over did he exhort the generals in command to trust to arms alone.”

It is, besides, only fair to state that the diplomatic negotiations into which Prince Adam entered—as mere auxiliary means, according to his declaration,—though unsuccessful, were far from being ill-judged in their direction; and with a little better fortune, or if pushed a little further,

might have led to very different results. "*Durez, faites justice au printemps,*" said the French minister, holding out a prospect of intervention; whilst the correspondent above quoted says,— "In 1836 when I was at Howick with Prince Czartoryski, Lord Grey declared to him that had he been as well versed in Polish matters at the time of the revolution as he was then (in 1846), the government of Great Britain would not have remained aloof." He further remarks as follows on the expression, *non esse fides in the interests of his house*:

"He is, it is true, seventy-five years old; but his is a *cruda robora, et senectus*. He is in the enjoyment of excellent health, rides often on horseback, and in mind is as active and vigorous as ever. He belongs too to a family remarkable for longevity. His father was past ninety when he died; his mother, the famous Princess Czartoryski, died only ten years ago, aged ninety-six."

The most green old age however, when seventy-five years have overtaken a man in exile, must convince even himself that it is rather through the weight of his name and antecedents, or the influence and activity of his family, that he must hope to serve his country, than by any exertions which he may personally be able or called upon to make in its service.

Whilst still upon the this subject, it has struck the author that he ought to have mentioned amongst the illustrations of the prince's party, Count Valerian Krasinski, the author of the "Progress of Protestantism in Poland," whose name is familiar in the literary world of England; Mr. Budzynski, Prince Saphiea, Count Louis Plater, Count Malachowski, the senator Castellan, Count Olizat, General Sierawski, General Dembicki (famous for his retreat from Lithuania,) General Chrysanowski, attached to the British embassy at Constantinople by Lord Palmerston, who had so high an opinion of his military talents, that he caused the command of the Turkish army of operation against Mehemet Ali, in Asia Minor, to be offered him in 1840; and lastly, amongst those who have died in exile, the veteran Kniasewicz who served as general under Napoleon in the Italian campaigns, and whose name is inscribed on the triumphal arch in Paris. The contemporary and friend of Niemcewicz, he died the same year; and having been buried in the same vault at St. Germain, shares a common monument with the departed poet, soldier, and patriot.

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EASTERN EUROPE
AND
THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
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CHAPTER I.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS AND HIS ADVISERS.

Russia is not a country commonly visited by tourists. The traveller who attempts to quit the beaten track of communication between St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, or Odessa, is soon turned back in disgust by the inconvenient formalities which at every step arrest his progress, whilst there is nothing to excite the adventurous spirit whose energy positive prohibition or actual danger might have roused.

Natives, and resident foreigners, habitually cautious in expressing their opinions, become doubly guarded in their intercourse with strangers, whose indiscretion may prove so dangerous. It is absurd, therefore, to look to any but residents for a true picture of the condition of that country; but residents having usually acquired such knowledge as they possess in the government service, or in a diplomatic

or commercial capacity, are nearly always restrained by prudential considerations from incurring the enmity of the Russian government, by publishing to the world the results of their experience.

The same causes which long deterred those who could have thrown light upon the subject from writing books, and which prevented Russians from exposing the character of their government, naturally operated to hinder them from vindicating by their testimony the truth of the first writers who undertook the task ; and hence it became easy for the agents of the Russian cabinet to involve in doubt the veracity of statements which the public mind of Western Europe was unprepared to receive, and which were of a nature so startling as to require corroboration and evidence.

When the Marquis de Custine first endeavoured to raise the veil which misrepresentation had drawn over the condition of the Russian empire, he conveyed to the world the impressions of a traveller to whom some of the imprisoned had ventured to confide the secrets of their prison-house, —to whom they had shown the barbarous reverse of the scenery so plausibly imaging civilisation ; and with the horror and alarm of one startled by discovering beneath a kid glove, the bloody hand of the

executioner pressing his own, he hastened to communicate his discovery to the western public ; but incoherently, and incompletely, as it had been made.

These imperfections were taken advantage of to turn his book into ridicule ; and the comments which it called forth from the press served to show what silent progress had been made since 1831, 2, 3, 4, 5, in dissipating the unpopularity of which the Russian government was then the object.

A very high literary and political authority did not even hesitate to pronounce the Emperor Nicholas "one of the best and wisest princes who had ever ruled over any people,"—an assertion which it is to be presumed that the periodical in question would not now care to repeat, — at least if we may judge from its long subsequent silence.

At this time, confirming in detail the general denunciations of the marquis, appeared the "Revelations of Russia," which, as the author has had occasion to observe elsewhere, was at first received with mistrust, but acquired, and continues (to a third edition) acquiring, authenticity by the investigation to which it has led. Since that period many books have become popular, or have been published, tending to throw light on a subject to

which the writer trusts that he has not vainly devoted his exertions. Each one of these publications has in some measure tended to confirm the revolting picture drawn by those preceding it. A remarkable change has in consequence taken place in public opinion respecting Russia. There are now few men in constitutional countries who do not admit the existence of a reprehensible system in that empire: but as too many are still prone to underrate the monstrous extent of the evil, and to judge that an afflicting picture has been drawn in exaggerated colours, it becomes necessary to call public attention to the corroboration which so many recent works afford of the very worst charges brought against that despotism, which the author conscientiously believes to be the most extensive and demoralizing that ever weighed upon humanity. This is the more necessary, as it is the only direct evidence which can be afforded of the truth of a charge of the utmost gravity;—indeed the only evidence besides that furnished by the absence of all contradiction of statements, which at least derived importance from their popular dissemination.

If hitherto it has almost exclusively fallen to the author's share to unmask the Russian despotism with the public of this country, many writers in

France and Germany have recently contributed to throw light upon the subject; and these the writer is anxious to introduce to the notice of two categories of his readers—those who feel sufficient interest in the question to consult all that has been written upon it, and those who may very naturally have been induced to consider that the author of these volumes has conducted his exposure of the Russian government with intemperate severity, or indulged in unmerited animadversions on its imperial head.

Three years ago the Russian government, profiting by certain facilities which its peculiar position afforded, had by its occult but unremitting efforts succeeded either in concealing the condition of its subjects, or in awing into silence those who could have laid it bare. Thus far it had been incredibly and unprecedentedly successful in averting the gaze of that spirit of inquiry which civilization has fostered in Western Europe, which the increased facilities of locomotion, and the growing extension of the press, have so effectually served. But that period of possible mystification is past, and truth is fast triumphing over misrepresentation. It is no longer one or two writers, but a growing host who direct converging rays of light into the dark

precincts of that mysterious empire; and its government may now with reason despair of shutting out the searching rays which no longer intrude through a single orifice, but beam in through innumerable and unthought-of chinks and crannies. Even its Russian subjects are beginning to overcome their awe of the supposed omniscience and omnipotence of their cabinet, and either furnish materials to popular writers, or boldly appeal to the world against their tyrant. A short time since such was their dread of his long-reaching arm, that when by refusing to return within his power they had incurred hopeless and perpetual exile from their native land, they were still timorously respectful in all their allusions to the very power which they were thus practically setting at defiance. The author knew one instance of a Russian for many years attached to the legation, who having secured some property abroad, and being advanced in years, refused to return to Russia on the summons of his cabinet, and was consequently condemned to the extreme pains and penalties in such case provided by the present emperor. He applied for the purpose of obtaining naturalization as the subject of a foreign state to a distinguished fellow-countryman, who had publicly renounced his allegiance to the Tsar; but

after profiting by his assistance and advice to attain his object, when he had done so, he was careful to avoid all further connexion with a man whom he esteemed and admired, and to whom he was indebted, on the plea that this personage was so much more obnoxious to his government than an humble individual like himself, that he was fearful of needlessly increasing its irritation by frequenting his society.

The author was not long since introduced to a Russian, who had been accidentally discovered by a Slavonian, and on one of the Parisian bridges follows the avocation of "*decrotteur*;" that is to say, cleans the boots and shoes of the passers-by who need his services. This man, on the occupation of Paris by the allies, had deserted from the Russian army, and married a French wife; since which period he has gained his livelihood by individually imparting to a portion of the French people some of that polish which his countrymen collectively have acquired, in a manner quite as superficial, from the civilized nations of the west. Thirty years' residence in France, during which he had almost forgotten his own language, together with all the jeers of his wife and his neighbours, had not sufficed to persuade him that the Russian

emperor would not get at him if his retreat were known; and the poor man was in a paroxysm of terror at the discovery of his nationality.

But it is a fact full of significance, that this mysterious discretion, which from long association formerly survived in the minds of Russian subjects and servants even their loyalty and obedience, is now beginning to thaw into communicativeness.

In exemplification of this change, since the denunciations of Custine, two books have been published on a subject a short time since so utterly unexplored,—the one entitled, “*Persecutions et souffrances de l’église catholique en Russie*,” by a Russian ex-counsellor of state; the other, an account of the Russian Empire under the Emperor Nicholas, by Ivan Golovine, a young Russian of a family as well known in his native country as that of the Percys or Talbots in England.

Besides these have appeared the letters of Marmier on Russia; “*The National Church of Russia*;” and the “*Mystères de Russie*,” by M. F. Lacroix.

All these are works well worthy of perusal, and which those ought to consult who reject as over-coloured, or doubt as unsupported, the most salient features of the accusation brought against the Russian government by the author of these pages.

The "Persecutions et souffrances de l'église catholique en Russie," by a M. d'Horer, published in the French language; and the "National Church of Russia," ("Die Staatskirche Russlands von einempriester aus der Kongregation des Oratoriums,") in the German language, by a M. Thenier,—of semi-Polish parentage, and a member of the religious association named in the first volume of this work, which treats of the Theocratic party of the Polish emigration,—though both filled with many valuable facts, are books apparently written for Romish churchmen. The first indulges in a controversial dissertation on the Greek church, the second devotes his attention to its statistics; and it is only incidentally that facts and details of so much importance are brought to light, that it becomes matter of regret with the reader that these men should not have written for a general public.

Marmier, who has been already mentioned, is a professional "*littérateur*," and for a period of his life at least might have been denominated a professional traveller. His letters, written in a spirit favourable to Russian institutions, are chiefly valuable for his admissions as he proceeds into the empire. Though a shrewd and observant man, his

opportunities, like those of the Marquis de Custine, did not suffice, even when he quitted the country, for the acquirement of any but a very superficial knowledge of it ; sometimes he even falls into absurd errors, such as mentioning a nobleman accustomed to hunt the boar on the present site of a portion of St. Petersburg. He might as well have talked of a tiger hunt in an English rabbit-warren. He says somewhere that the Russian traverses the Frozen Ocean in boats which a good Norwegian seaman would think unfit to rig, and at a season when all other mariners seek refuge in the ports. In reality nothing can be more awkward and timid than the Russian sailors ; and the Norwegians, to whom he compares them, are, after the Deal boatmen, the most daring men to be found on any coast in Europe.

The form of his book is also, like that of the Marquis de Custine, objectionable, when applied to the description of a country or a people ; since consisting of a series of conclusions based upon the impressions of the hour, and conveyed to paper as received upon the author's mind. But the opinion of a traveller can never be so well worth recording as, when summing up, he deduces it from numerous instances, duly compared and weighed, instead of prematurely

estimating generalities from incidents which often prove exceptional. Thus, Custine, because arriving in dull weather, inveighs against the sombre sky of the north, usually so cloudless ; and this false idea of hyperborean gloom hence remains on the imagination of his readers. So Marmier, on reaching St. Petersburg, observes, that “ though people of the country have avowed to me the existence of venality amongst the officials, and of a vexatious spirit in the police, and that these pervade the core of Russian administration and magistracy, still I am bound to say that I have not experienced any attempt at extortion from the bureaucracy ; and that I have not found it necessary to have recourse to any pecuniary means of seduction to obtain from it what I wanted.”

Marmier,—as it has been observed before,—a professional *littérateur*, probably bearing according to the French custom, the designation of *homme de lettres* upon his very passport,—at all events well known as such,—was not allowed to disembark till the matter had been discussed in Benkendorf’s office ; and once allowed admission, all due provision made for influencing him as much as possible in favour of the government, and for concealing from him all that it was not desirable

that he should know. The watchful eyes of the secret office were upon him, and on the minor employés in every one of his transactions with them. But when he has travelled further into the country, and that his natural shrewdness has given him glimpses of the truth, notwithstanding the prepossession with which the attentions of higher functionaries have inspired him,—notwithstanding that he is still in some measure the apologist of slavery in the serfs, and of despotism in the government,—notwithstanding that he is full of respectful deference for its imperial head, whilst he fulminates against those more than Pariahs of Eastern Europe, the wretched Hebrews, persecuted and reviled even by those most cruelly oppressed,—still he has seen reason to change his opinion of those who administer the empire; and he observes of this body, “that it is in general one of the most venal, and to speak plainly, of the most scandalous, which has ever existed. Corruption is its normal condition, not exceptional with it. It is useless to enter the public offices without purse in hand, and no solution of the most legitimate demand can be obtained without paying money down. The greater its importance, the greater number of offices it must filter through, and the more it

costs to obtain any decision. Venality extends like an infection from the highest sphere of government down to the lacqueys who act as porters of the antechamber doors. Even the magistracy,—that noble body in France so justly venerated, so solemn in its deliberations, so austere in its decisions,—is in Russia deeply sunk in the slough of sordid calculation and corruption.

“ I have heard related in Russia infamous collusions,—infamous arbitrary acts committed by those to whom the defence of the weak and the protection of the orphan is intrusted ; and these things were related to me by Russians, with glowing cheeks, and indignation in their hearts ; for they were men, who having travelled in France, had witnessed the dignity with which our courts fulfil their imposing duties.”

He quotes the words of a young Russian landed proprietor, who informed him “ that the hideous wound which afflicts us (the Russians) is not only owing to the inadequate remuneration which our magistracy and administrative officials receive, but it has eaten like a leprosy into the very muscles of the Russian people. It is no longer an accidental condition, but a chronic malady. I know a judicial district consisting of forty officials, between whom

as salary the government distributes £220 per annum. Yet each of these officials keeps a droshky, and drinks occasionally his champagne at twelve shillings per bottle. If the government were to raise their pay five-fold, it would not enable them to continue upon that alone their present mode of life. They therefore plunder right and left as much as they can. If they are called into a village to take cognisance of a robbery or murder, they always begin by incarcerating the wealthiest peasant in the parish, and never release him, till, like the alguazils of Gil Blas, they have extorted from him a good share of his property. If he resist or protest, they apply torture; and torture is a terrible power. Sometimes in the long run they reach the real culprit, and if he possess any ready-money, they politely ease him of it, afterwards relating to each other with exultation in satanic orgies the stratagems they have devised, and the means they have employed to increase the amount of their revenues."

"But," asked Marmier, "when you have been subjected to such extortion, can you not appeal from the secondary official who has been guilty of it, to his chief, whose duty it is to watch over the administration of his department?"

“ Ah,” replies his informant, “ you do not know our administration ; it is at once a compound of the most continuous illegality, and the most tedious formula. Should we venture on reclamation, even supposing its admission by the superior to whom it is addressed, an inquiry would be set on foot—and what an inquiry ! Evidence must be invoked, audiences must be solicited ; and official barriers arresting the plaintiff’s progress could only be removed by the most profuse bribery. Sometimes promises, at others presents must be lavished to obtain a quarter of an hour’s interview with a judge ; and all this trouble would he incurred only to be eventually nonsuited, after drawing down upon our heads the inextinguishable hatred of a whole cohort of officials, in whose power we are daily placed.”

The author will have occasion to return to Marmier, in treating of the Hebrews in the Russian empire.

Let us now pass to the “ *Mystères de Russie*,” by M. Frederic Lacroix, which appeared in numbers shortly after the publication of “ *The Revelations of Russia*.”

Its object is chiefly, by means of anecdote, to illustrate the condition of that country.

A portion of these anecdotes refer to a period too remote, considering the rapid growth of the Russian empire, to afford any argument on the present condition or character of its people. The mutual cruelties of the loyalists and rebels in the last Irish rebellion, or the conduct of the Sansculottes in the French revolution; the enactments even of the British parliament against papists, or of Louis XIV. against the Huguenots, are features in the histories of France and England which would afford no guide in estimating the popular ideas of the present day, in those countries; or the actual civilization and feeling of their inhabitants. And yet many of the incidents related in the book alluded to date from a period either actually as remote, or comparatively as distant, if we consider the rapid growth of the diseased and hollow civilization of the Russian empire.

Besides such unmeaning anecdotes, it contains many others identical in form or substance with those given in the "Revelations;" but there is a third portion which are new, and apply to the living generation.

Though the author, or rather editor, of the *Mystères*, has been in Russia, his personal acquaintance with that country does not appear extensive;

and he professes in his preface to compile in a great measure from the notes and communications made to him by Poles and Russians. Many of his assertions are in fact subsequently repeated in Golovine, the last published of these works. It is not meant to be asserted that the instances or anecdotes cited in the "Mystères" are all true : to this infallibility no writer on that subject can pretend, but they are at least all current in the country of which they treat, and could naturally only have secured belief or popularity by their plausibility ; or, in other words, by the experience which the Russian public has had of analogous occurrences.

If in England there were no free press, a fictitious account of the establishment of a railway branch, or of a steeple-chace, would find ready credence. So would an instance of Lynch law in the western states of the Union, if they could be supposed deprived of publicity ; but a report of Lynch law execution, or of a steeple-chace, or of the progress of a railway, could never have gained ground in Prussia, because such things are either so unprecedented, or so unusual there, that only direct and undeniable evidence would suffice to confirm their existence.

The popular belief, in a despotic country, of an anecdote really fictitious, is therefore often far more

significant than would be its authentication if it were not generally disseminated. The latter, though true, might be an exceptional case; but the credibility accorded to the imaginary fact stamps it as illustrative of a widely recognised generality.

In this respect the "Mystères de Russie" are valuable; though, as the author of these pages had occasion to observe elsewhere, the nature of his compilation has inspired M. Lacroix, like many others, with a disgust so profound of everything Russian, that he involves the people and the government, the peasant, the official, and the noble, in a common reprobation, which both renders him unjust in his conclusions, and giving to his book the appearance of a mere diatribe, impairs the effect of the truths which it contains.

Thus, for instance, he cites one of the many versions of the popular story of the mother throwing her children to the wolves; and comments on it as a proof of the influence of an oppressive despotism in smothering even the natural affections of its victims. Nothing can be more erroneous: the strength of family ties being a marked and pleasing feature in the character of the Russian people.

Let us now turn to "Russia under Nicholas the First," by Ivan Golovine, one volume octavo, writ-

ten and published in Paris in the French language,* about the month of August 1845. The family of M. Golovine is one which has for generations filled the highest offices in the state. One of his ancestors was the lord high admiral of the navy created by Peter the Great; and in which that sovereign deigned, as an example to his nobles, to serve in an inferior capacity. The same individual, or one of his kinsmen, was the first Russian minister for foreign affairs. In the present generation, a General Golovine commanded in chief the Russian armies in the Caucasus; a Golovine was minister of public instruction. The author of "Russia under Nicholas the First" reminds us, in opening his book, that two hundred years ago, Thomas Golovine, one of his ancestors, had emigrated like himself; and when summoned by the usurper, Boris Godunof, to return, replied that he would do so when the three following Russian proverbs should have lost their point: "What is mine is the Tsars;"—"Next the Tsar, next the grave;" and "Dread not the judgment, but the judge."

His descendant in like circumstances refuses to re-enter the Tsar's dominions "till all Russians are promoted to the fourteenth class," [the fourteen

* "La Russie sous Nicholas premier, par Ivan Golovine," now translating into English under the title of "*Russia under the Autocrat.*"

classes of nobility being exempt from the infliction of the lash]; "till a Russian shall enjoy equal favour with a German; and till the pen shall have the same weight as steel in the social balance."

Ivan Golovine, whose family name would translate into English, *Head*, or *Headly*, had been, together with Prince Dolgorouki, (*Longarm* or *Longitharm*,) permitted to make some sojourn in Paris, where their literary ambition, however innocently manifesting itself, drew down the notice and displeasure of the imperial cabinet. Dolgorouki, under the pseudonyme of *Almagro*, had published a harmless account of the chief families in the Russian empire,—a sort of Muscovite Debrett or Burke, in a pamphlet form. Golovine was about to bring out a work on political economy, rather favourable than otherwise to the Russian government, and which on that condition he received permission to print from one of the chief Russian spies in Paris, the nominal correspondent in that city of the imperial minister of public instruction. But on the other hand, Golovine appears to have had an enemy in Count Nesselrode, the imperial minister for foreign affairs, from whose office he had formerly retired on account of some cutting observation on his handwriting made by that personage; hence he,

as well as Dolgorouki, was denounced to the emperor, who will not tolerate so dangerous a propensity as any tendency to writing, in his subjects; especially in the class to which these noblemen belonged, and whilst enjoying the favour of being allowed to reside abroad.

They were both in consequence peremptorily recalled. Young Dolgorouki obeyed, and was exiled for a year to Viatka, on the confines of Siberia; but Golovine was too wise to barter his personal independence for the retention of his rank or fortune; too wary to trust the honied words by which the chief of the secret police, and the minister for foreign affairs, sought to entice him back when their first menaces had failed. In the letter to Count Nesselrode, which terminates his correspondence with the Russian authorities on the subject, he winds up his final refusal to return with this ironical observation:—"I am forced to confess that I only quitted the service of my country to take those lessons in the art of calligraphy which your excellency pointed out as so necessary. I was without protectors, and of course it was not your place, Monsieur le Comte, under such circumstances, to remember that the first Russian minister of foreign affairs that ever existed bore the name I bear."

Having thus passed the rubicon, he wrote and published an account of the condition of his native country, under the Emperor Nicholas. In the true spirit of the Russian noble, he has striven rather to be witty than profound, rather to write gracefully than instructively; though his book, as it proceeds, evinces far more solid acquirements in its author than mere ease or brilliancy of style. Though liberal in his opinions, and bold in expressing them, he writes with natural pride of caste, and somewhat of the feeling of the feudal lord and proprietor tinges his exposition of the condition of the serf population. Not unfrequently too, in citing laws and regulations established to secure the rights and privileges of different classes, he forgets that he is addressing a western public, who cannot by any known analogy believe in such utter disregard of solemn enactments as reduces them to inutility—indeed to worse than inutility, because the letter of the law is there as a sort of cloak for the abuse.

Hence those laws and regulations which he cites to show the recognition of certain rights by the government, are apt to be mistaken by a French or English reader for a proof of their existence.

Such for instance is the law which exempts from

corporal punishment all individuals belonging to the fourteen classes of nobility. But in reality, it only protects them habitually from the discretionary power of the police, to inflict such chastisement where and when they list. It is openly violated in two ways,—firstly in the punishment of cadets, secondly in all political cases, where it is used not only on the proof of offence, but to extort confession from the suspected. Now, inclusive of Poland, who will venture to say that half of those who have suffered during the last twenty years, in the empire, have not done so for offences of a political nature? Where not openly violated, it is evaded by making the presumed culprit a private soldier; this the emperor has the power to do to-morrow, by every one of his ministers and ambassadors, and not only is he not restrained by any law, from exercising such a stretch of power on personages of the highest rank, but not even by custom, nor by any want of precedent.

The hour that the man of proudest birth or rank in the empire is made a soldier, he may be flogged at the discretion of his serjeant, and his captain as frequently as he pleases may order the infliction of a hundred lashes.

Again, the law prohibiting the sale of the serf,

without the estate on which he is settled, or the separation of families, becomes by the facility and frequency of its evasion, as has been shown elsewhere, a mere dead letter.

On the whole, the book of this high-born and patriotic Russian affords striking corroboration of the picture drawn in the "Revelations of Russia," of the condition of that empire. He bears unflinching testimony to the incredible extent of the corruption and demoralizing influence of that government, which the writer of these volumes has denounced. Of the governors of provinces, he says, (page 369,) "They do not possess more disinterestedness or integrity than other Russian functionaries, but they are quite as ignorant and heedless. It would be too voluminous a task to cite the innumerable and unheard-of instances which might be brought before the reader of their malversations; and as it is impossible to denounce them all, it would not be just to call down punishment on some, whilst sparing others. Let it suffice to instance, that, one borrows money of those to whom he can be useful, never to return it; another causes his household to be served gratis, by tradesmen whom he tacitly authorises in return to sell adulterated articles; that a third

receives bribes from the farmers of the brandy monopoly, to allow them to add water to their spirits; that a fourth causes government contracts to be adjudged to himself at undue prices; that a fifth employs the crown peasants to construct a road to an estate which he has purchased with money extorted from heretics, as the price of the enlargement of their incarcerated chief. These are not isolated facts, which apply to only a few of these governors, but the greatest number of them are guilty of such or similar extortion."

Of the senators,—a body gathered from all the most venerable illustrations, civil and military, of the state,—he says, "that though they are not proof against bribes offered with more or less tact, still, on the principle that one individual is more easy to corrupt than a whole body, that they are less easily bought over than the imperial procurators, "who in reality in Russia, in the senate as well as in the governments (provinces), are the sole dispensers of justice."

Of the subordinates, he adds: "The governors are worthily seconded by the various agents and officials under their control. Equally divested of principle and of instruction, there are no abuses or malversations into which money will not tempt

them." And elsewhere (page 114): "The dishonesty of the officials in Russia surpasses all that can be imagined. All public officers, high and low, rob openly, and with impunity, from the ammunition and stores of the soldiers, down to the medicine in the hospitals."

In some part of the "Revelations of Russia," an account is given of a den of murder discovered in a watch-box of the St. Petersburg police, situated in the very centre of the most crowded street in the city. Golovine says (page 196) that Mr. H. having related this fact in a letter imprudently sent through the post, was taken out of his bed from the side of his pregnant wife, who in consequence miscarried, and that he was subsequently kept three years in exile.

Jakovlef (introduced to the reader in the "Revelations"), according to Golovine, loses £4000 at play, and is by the paternal care of the secret police ordered to be exiled to Viatka. This order "was only revoked because his father made a donation of £4000 to the public charities; which, in strange derision, are presided over by the chief of the secret police—a police which cannot be equalled in China or Japan, and which may be considered as the most maleficent of institutions."

He relates that Mr. Koukolnik having written a drama, entitled "The Hand of the Most Highest," which met with the approbation of Nicholas, a Mr. Polevoi ventured to find fault with it, and was in consequence seized in Moscow, torn from the bosom of his family, and hurried in custody of a gendarme in a cart without springs to St. Petersburg; being cured by the fright and the jolting for ever of his liberalism. How would those critics, who still find semi-apologies for the Russian emperor, like to exercise their craft under such patronage?

But "*The Mystères de Russie*," chiefly a compilation from the notes of Russians, and the book of Golovine—who has boldly and in his own name stepped forward to unmask his government,—both paint the condition of the country in more sombre colours than even the author of these pages has done. The character which he has given of Nicholas—towards whom he has been accused of bearing invidious animosity—appears amiable and bright beside their portraiture of that sovereign.

Not only do both the "*Mystères de Russie*" and Golovine draw a darker picture of his vices, but they deny in a great measure such moral qualities attributed to him as tended to elevate his character, if not to render it more amiable.

In the "Revelations of Russia" the author calls in question the personal courage of a man whom he had seen effeminately timid at some explosive experiments, and nervously alarmed at the skittishness of a very harmless charger;—a man, who, with a passion for everything warlike amounting almost to mania, behaved with incontestible want of courage in the Turkish campaign, and never afterwards adventured his person on the battle-fields of Poland or the Caucasus, where he has sent, and sends, his soldiers to perish with such reckless disregard of human life;—a man, who, on the memorable revolt which marked his accession to the throne, retired out of shot when a fire was opened on the rebels. The trustworthy informant of the author respecting this fact was an Englishman, who, passing at the time, and prompted only by curiosity, had stood in the midst of the fire; whilst the sovereign whose crown depended on the issue, backed by thirteen thousand men, was ordering twelve pieces of cannon to play upon eleven hundred revolters; and retiring out of reach of the musketry with which they might have retaliated. Still a degree of moral courage, and of promptitude in action, was attributed to him by the author, which not only both these works, but many

other authorities, unhesitatingly deny; and if they cannot gainsay the eventual energy with which he acted, they at least establish that he only assumed it after having passed through a transition state of terror and irresolution which lasted many hours. Golovine relates, too, the anecdote given in the "Revelations," of the address made by Nicholas to the infuriated multitude during the cholera, when he ordered them to fall upon their knees, and was obeyed; but he subjoins a fact of which the author was not aware, which changes altogether the complexion of this trait, which is, that the market-place was first surrounded by the military.

A perusal of these works will prove that he has estimated with comparative indulgence the character and conduct of this powerful sovereign, and painted without exaggeration the general condition of his empire,—as a few extracts will show when returning to a subject to which the author recurs,—instead of leaving undisturbed, facts of which he was then ignorant, or of which he then forbore the use, because the harshness of the autocrat's disposition, and the merciless cruelty with which he seeks to bear down all opposition to his will, have undergone none of that modification which it is to be hoped will, through the future, be insured by the conscious-

ness that the civilized world has its eyes upon his conduct, and that his acts must now continue to obtain publicity through the intermedium of channels which it is beyond his power to stop.

The author has shown elsewhere what the state of the Russian empire was a few years since, and he has called the attention of the reader to the corroboration which all cotemporary and subsequent writers furnish of the correctness of his statements. In these volumes he has pointed out what is the condition of the Polish provinces up to the present hour; but lest it may be supposed that Poland offers an unhappy exception, and that since then things may have progressed in Russia Proper, he is now about to cite some anecdotes dating within the present, none later than the close of the past year, whilst scarce six months have elapsed since the occurrence of some, and nearly all took place in St. Petersburg beneath its imperial master's eye.

And to whom must we attach the blame of this state of things, which like a poisonous fungus grows in rankness and extent; and what is not this extent, if the reader only admits one tithe of the converging evidence now pouring in upon this subject?—Not to ministers who notoriously do not govern; not to the noble, who would gladly enfran-

chise his slave in exchange for his own freedom; not to the official reared in the vices of a hideous system, and whom its overturn would reduce to beggary; not assuredly to the passive and enduring serf, whom all these three powers oppress.

It would be equally unjust to saddle the whole blame on the emperor, or to hold him responsible for the evil which he found existing; but on his head, and his alone, must justice visit its continuance, and increase. Who but he has the power to destroy its existence or to stay its augmentation; and what class, what public body, what individual, however energetic, would be allowed to make one step towards social progress in the empire of a sovereign so jealous of his power? If, therefore, only as the obstacle to all improvement, it is impossible to treat of his empire, and to spare him personally. He is not a mere passive obstacle—not a mere indolent and apathetic prince. One tithe of the exertions lavished on details worthy of the army tailor and drill sergeant, — one tithe of the activity wasted in scampering about high-roads,—one hundredth part of the suffering caused in his empire to uphold the terrors of his name, would have sufficed in some degree to root out from it the corruption and demo-

ralization which more than ever thrive, extend, and flourish. But if neglecting a sacred trust as the autocrat of so many millions, he is responsible for not having done that on which their happiness depends, and which none but himself could do, who but he is answerable for the decimation of Poland,—for his treatment of the Jews,—and for that sanguinary religious persecution still ringing in the ears of Europe? Let us admit that he had no cognizance of the revolting details of individual cases, is it to be believed that the monarch who signs the sentence of every soldier sentenced by court-martial to be flogged, is ignorant of the cruelties involved in a persecution comprising millions of his subjects,—that he has signed hundreds of orders for the perpetual banishment, or for the infliction of the knout or plitt on religious recusants, without being aware of the consequences of that signature? Common sense dictates the contrary; and knowing this, to spare the man who is at this moment the government of Russia, would be, not a courteous forbearance, but a pusillanimous injustice.

CHAPTER II.

Erroneous notions entertained in France and England respecting the Russian Government—The Private Character of the Emperor Nicholas, and his Personal Responsibility—The late Count Benkendorf—Orloff—Kakoshkine—Perowski.

THE Russian despotism, and the despot representing it, long found warm apologists with certain parties and classes in France and England, and may still possess some of their lingering sympathies.

But these have arisen from mistaking the character of the Russian empire, and the nature of the system which he personifies; for the age is long past when either would find advocates, if known in their reality.

The friendship of the powerful is always attractive, and the Russian sovereigns have long been powerful,—none more so than the present. The character they assumed in the eyes of the world beyond their empire, has always been many-sided, and might be compared to those diamond-cut reflectors, presenting various faces, in which every

shade of opinion might see something of their ideas or prejudices mirrored.

In France, that school of philosophy which succeeded the Voltarian, like the founder of the latter, applauded the falsely asserted religious toleration whose origin seemed scepticism and indifference. The Legitimist party, with all the aristocratic and exclusive notions mixed up with its loyalty, saw in the Tsar the unshaken champion of that legitimacy everywhere else overturned or tottering.

The Buonapartists were dazzled by the similitude in form and extent of the imperial rule of Russia, with that which still lived in their enthusiastic memories; and the marriage of a daughter of Nicholas with a Beauharnais still further captivating their imagination, seemed a connecting link between the long inhumed despotism they were regretting, and the inglorious and far more desolating system which they were learning to regard with complacency.

The Republican party could contemplate without much disgust a form of government which levels beneath the Tsar's imperial chariot wheels, those irregularities of birth and fortune, which obstinately surviving in western countries, so profoundly irritate its partisans. They saw the principle in

practice, of men without other importance in the state than that which it ephemerally conferred upon them,—the meanest raised up from the dust, and the highest humbled in it. It is true that all this is effected in Russia by one individual will, which represents the state; but in their estimation, it is at worst many obstacles reduced to unity. The Chinese centralisation of the empire, and the imperious power of the ukase, remind them only of the energetic days of the Republic; and then for them, as for most other Frenchmen, the panoply of war—the camp-like aspect—the tremendous array of bayonets and battalions—thrown into the balance, had long blinded them and made them deaf to all that could have shocked, in the condition of the Tsar's dominions.

In England, the exaggerated language in which political grievances are habitually set forth, led many to disbelieve the accounts which occasionally reached them; and these accounts, few and far between, from avowed enemies, were unaccompanied by any of the testimony which would have been deemed necessary to support charges far less monstrous. Nearly all acquaintance with that country was derived from mercantile men, anxious to suppress all discussion which might irritate a

despotic government, on whose good will they are to a great extent dependent ; or else from diplomats, less well-informed, and equally discreet. All documentary evidence which came to hand upon the subject, consisted of ukases, framed for the purpose of misleading public opinion, which when most oppressive in spirit and cruel in effects, are couched in terms so fair and deceptive as to remind one of the medal already described to the reader, on which the Emperor Nicholas has recorded the forcible reunion, with all its sanguinary episodes, of the Basilians to the Greek church, by the motto " Reunited by love."

Hence, very unjustly, rather the people than the government was generally unpopular in England. From our constitutional habit of regarding our own powerless sovereigns as irresponsible, all blame was especially averted from its imperial head, whilst credit was inconsistently given him for all that seemed fair and favourable.

The general persuasion seemed to be, that the Russian emperors were using means, harsh and arbitrary in themselves, but perhaps solely fitted to redeem their people from barbarism and degradation.

The high Tories saw in the Tsar an incarna-

tion of the Church and State principle. Like the French Legitimists, and in common with all other Conservatives, they were once disposed to regard him as the most uncompromising and successful upholder of the rights of all privileged classes from sovereigns downwards—the foe of dangerous innovation and of revolutions, and the powerful conservator of peace in Europe.

It would be difficult to calculate how far the public opinion of the West had further been influenced by the enormous sums so judiciously spent by the Russian cabinet to secure its favour, or to modify it; or by the diamond rings, snuff-boxes, orders, or presents in money profusely distributed to strangers by a sovereign who taxes so oppressively his subjects, and pays his servants in a manner so niggardly that they are forced to rob to avoid starvation.

Those sudden visits by which Nicholas has astonished, not his generals in the Polish campaign, nor his Caucasian armies, but the late King of Sweden, the court of St. James's, or the bewildered old pontiff and his cardinals—have not been without some effect. Men are prepossessed in favour of the assurance that looks so like innocence, —by the person and the urbanity of a sovereign who

neglects none of those acts of seduction which it is to be regretted he does not with his own subjects substitute for imperious violence, and which exercise a far more potent influence even over those who consider themselves far above it, than they are willing to allow, or even conscious of. When Lord Durham went to St. Petersburg, bearing, or supposed to bear with him the option of peace or war, the man whom all the wealth of the Siberian mines could not have tempted, and who would have looked with scorn on any dignities or distinctions in the power of a Russian Tsar to bestow, was nevertheless easily won over by the respectful civilities of the potentate, who waving all the ceremonial of courts, and breaking through the trammels of time-honoured etiquette, waited on the ambassador in his own house, and introducing himself, gave him hospitable welcome.

The Tsar and his predecessors have had so much experience of the existence of a price for all men, and of the transparent devices by which they may be duped by those possessed of power, that it has no doubt led them to the conclusion that parties and nations may be influenced in the same manner. Thus, to conciliate the favour of the English people,—to whom, with their manners, customs, usages, and

opinions, he bears as great an antipathy as a people, as to the reigning family of France as a government, —he first signs a treaty for the suppression of the slave trade, and then gives a racing cup to its sporting public. Not a little tact was shown in these allurements. They have been insufficient permanently to influence the public, because since that period its sources of knowledge respecting his real conduct are twenty-fold increased; but who will deny the effect of these two measures;—and is it not enough to call a blush to the cheek of an Englishman, to reflect what it would have been but for counteracting causes?

In England, where the conduct of a minister, of a party leader, a magistrate, trustee or vestryman, is made the subject of such virulent declamation, royalty is usually respected; and this is just because we have made it irresponsible, as it is practically impotent. But this feeling, as a people, we are apt falsely to extend to responsible sovereigns, and we are far too courteously satisfied and duped by any outward pretences which in our own would be reasonably sufficient as indicating an acknowledgment of that popular will, which known, they are never ill advised enough to brave.

Thus many abolitionists, contrasting the readiness

of Nicholas to sign the treaty, with the querulous spirit of the French opposition, and the shuffling of the cabinets of Madrid, Lisbon, and the Brazils, judged him to be animated by their own sentiments. The sporting men of England concluded this monarch to be, instead of a gloomy military tyrant, on the contrary, a man sympathising with them—a fine fellow after all.

And yet this imperial personage, subscribing so ostentatiously to a treaty for the suppression of the trade in human flesh, is not only a slave-holder, but possesses more slaves than all the planters of the southern states of the Union, of the French and Spanish colonies, and of the Brazils put together. Not only does he withhold that one dash of his pen which would emancipate them without interfering with any private interest, but not contented with the vast inheritance of bondsmen which has devolved upon him, he is perpetually adding to their number.

Uninterruptedly since the commencement of his reign, when he signed the above-named treaty,—whilst he was enjoying the hospitality of Great Britain, and up to the present time, the newspapers published in St. Petersburg, his seat of residence, weekly advertise a description of stray slaves—as

we do in England of dogs without owners ;—and these slaves, when unclaimed, pass into the private domain of the emperor.

This founder of a racing cup in England, is a man who profoundly despises British sports. In 1841, at the races of St. Petersburg, some taste for the turf seemed awakening amongst the Russians. A Prince Bariatinski rode in a hurdle race, and had a severe fall ; and the heir apparent, fired with emulation, took part in a sweepstakes for gentlemen riders. His imperial highness rode a horse of enormous price, which he had been assured was unrivalled in speed, but which, whatever might have been its natural swiftness, had been reduced by the severity of the riding-school to a sort of rocking-horse canter. The youth, who left his horse's rein quite loose, appeared lost in wonder at finding himself left half-a-mile behind by several of his competitors. The emperor was absent at the time, but on his return he severely reprimanded his son, and placed several of the officers under arrest, "for *making grooms and lacqueys of themselves like Englishmen.*"

The only field sport in which he ever indulges, is shooting in the gardens of Peterhoff. The game is not even preserved here. It is caught, and let

loose by men concealed in the bushes. Even wild ducks are pegged down on the surface of the water, and loosed when the *sportsman* approaches by means of a sort of trigger pulled by a string. Of a certain diplomatist known in England as a crack rider, and who represented at St. Petersburg the court of St. James's, he is said to have observed contemptuously when speaking of his own servant Matutsewicz,—the only foreigner perhaps who ever shone in the hunting-field,—that they had "*des goûts d'écurie.*" Is it therefore to be presumed that any sympathy or fellow-feeling prompted him to contribute to the amusement of the sporting community of England? or was his gift of a perpetual plate inspired by the belief that all men of all classes in all countries have their price, and that the sporting men of England, with an imperial prize before their eyes, would be induced to turn a deaf ear to all the complaints of his victims?

It would be difficult to conceive a more noble, and the author believes popular, use of the success of a triumphant candidate, than the chivalrous restoration to the Polish emigrants, by the winner, of this stake, given by a foreign tyrant, who at the lowest computation has confiscated private property in their native country to the amount of 50 millions sterling.

All, indeed, of those classes in France and England which have been cited as prone to view in the interests of the autocrat, some reflection of their own, are as much deceived as the abolitionists and sportsmen of Great Britain, in their estimation of the nature, spirit, and tendencies of the Russian despotism. Betwixt that spirit and the opinions of the most widely antithetic parties in Western Europe, there exists not on close examination, the faintest analogy. All the vegetation of our temperate climes, from the towering oak down to the humble daisy, does not differ more essentially from the rank produce of a tropical swamp.

There exist no feelings, views, or opinions in common, between any of the political, religious, or social sects or parties of civilized countries, with the Russian despotism. To comprehend its tendency, it is idle to scrutinise the history of progression in the West, since the Greeks emerging from barbarism centuries ago, transmitted to us the undying heritage of their intellectual acquisitions. We must, on the contrary, turn to the populous despotisms of the East, which have left in Egypt and Assyria little more intellectual traces than abandoned ant-hills,—suggesting only multiplicity of life, but nothing of its elevating principle. It is from such empires

as the Mongolian, which have left no record but an immense amount of human suffering,—no monuments excepting piles of skulls;—it is from the contemplation of an existing state like China, where the fiercer passions of mankind are curbed and quelled to give full scope to its meaner propensities, and where society has remained in the stagnation to which it had been tens of centuries ago reduced,—that we must learn to find the inspiring thought, and to read the desolating moral of the Russian policy.

Such portions of the arts, sciences, and organisation of civilized lands as tend to multiply its physical strength it covets,—as in all parts of the world the savage has eagerly laid aside his bow and sling to adopt the firelock of the European;—but in all besides it strives to instil the abject submission, the superstitious dread of power, and the unreflecting materialism of the Asiatic, into the minds and bosoms of its subjects.

It has no feeling in common with those who uphold the union of the church and state,—for to the Russian autocracy the church must be a submissive handmaiden, a blind and indiscriminating tool,—a means to reach men through their consciences, when prolonged endurance has produced insensibi-

lity to the terrors of this world. To that western loyalty which, whether assuming the form of Legitimatism in France, or Toryism in England, identifies with the rights of kings, the rights and privileges of aristocracy, the Russian despotism is profoundly inimical. It has long struggled with, it has only recently crushed, perhaps it still dreads, and undoubtedly it profoundly hates everything approaching to aristocracy. It hates essentially even its best feature, the chivalric feeling which it has perpetuated; because this gives rise to prejudices, and involves duties which render men unpliant to the sovereign will. Everything of what we should call gentlemanlike feeling is sedulously discouraged, trodden down, and rooted out. All men are taught to cringe to the basest and vilest on whom the light of imperial favour shines,—to shun and execrate the worthy on whom its displeasure darkens. The man of the nicest honour must fraternise with the felon, pardoned and favoured by his sovereign; and he must submit to any indignity from him if that sovereign makes him his superior. All considerations of family honour, personal feeling, or self-dignity must disappear before the incessant dictates of a blind and unmurmuring obedience.

Every shade of conservatism in the West is

radically based on the principle of consolidating the right of those professing it, by supporting and respecting in their turn, the rights of others. But in the spirit of the Russian despotism it is utterly inadmissible, because no other rights whatever are compatible with its own.

As regards those liberals who view with complacency the strength of arm which has essentially levelled all social distinctions, they would find on more narrow investigation, that this effect is a step towards the antipodes of that democratic equality which they covet. The jealous—perhaps envious—level above which a democracy will not see any of its elements permanently elevated, has no doubt its faults and dangers, as well as its advantages; but it bears no analogy to such a process in the East, where, being the result not of the will of the majority, but of the action of one dreaded individual, it has a tendency to generate more abject and hopeless submissiveness, by exaggerating the stature of the oppressing power, between whose excessive altitude and the profound abasement of the people, no steps intervene to break the abruptness of the contrast. Despotism, therefore, far from having done their work, by leaving only necessary the substitution of popular, for auto-

cratic power, has paved the way for military dictatorship, instead of sowing the seeds of an equality, ready to spring up in a common and inextricable growth, with liberty, whenever it should take root. Even the partisans of that most inconceivable of all political hallucinations, now so rapidly disappearing,—the French Buonapartists,—are deceived by analogies quite as imaginary. The Russian despotism does not offer a bloody lottery, from which generals' scarfs and marshals' batons were the prizes destined to reward the stake of skill and daring.

The spirit of the martinet, the jealousy of a suspicious government, and the intrigues inseparable from its profound corruption, award its gains to the most ignoble objects.

It is Napoleon's military system rendered irksome by intolerable restraint, and divested of its splendid chances for the fortunate and brave, of its glory for the enthusiastic.

Though the public opinion of constitutional countries, which set strongly against the Russian despotism for several years after the Polish revolution, then for a considerable period subsided into indifference,—still it has gradually, but undeniably within the last two years, been awakening

to reprobation of its oppression, and to interest in the fate of its victims. The strong expression of public feeling has recently caused even the autocrat to pause in the prosecution of his violence, and through the future there is little cause to doubt that the strong enunciation of popular sympathy with the suffering millions of Eastern Europe, will in many more effectual ways tend to the amelioration of their condition. It is not, therefore, as some affect to believe, a sentiment as idle when inspired, as commiseration with beings in another planet. No, there is scarce a book, a newspaper paragraph, or public speech expressive of this feeling in the West, which does not within the last few years,—and it might almost have been said months,—find its way into those parts of Eastern Europe, to which it is the object of these volumes to call attention; inspiring their most influential inhabitants with present fortitude, because with high resolves and hope for the future.

But it is equally undeniable that this indifference in the West has yielded only two concurring causes,—the concentrated exertions of several individuals in dragging, as it were, this subject into notice, and the rash and violent conduct into

which the impetuosity of the emperor's character has hurried him. It is equally undeniable that three other causes have concurred to awaken the reprobation thus drawn forth upon his conduct : *viz.*, the tendency of various parties to view him somewhat in the light of a fellow partisan ; the erroneous notions entertained regarding his private character ; and the constitutional habit, to which allusion has been made, of passing over with deferential disapprobation the actions of sovereigns, to vent the public wrath on their responsible advisers.

This is indeed a legitimate excuse for passing lightly over the derelictions of princes, whilst visiting with severity the bad conduct of all other authorities ; but if applied to a Russian autocrat, to screen him from deserved opprobrium, the greatest aggregate amount perhaps of human wrong which man has ever inflicted on his fellow man, might pass uncensured and unpunished. If courtesy make him irresponsible, and seek individually to defend him, the evil must endure unstigmatised ; for if he be sheltered, there are none who can be held responsible, or on whom the blame can be affixed.

That constitutional deference the author of these volumes can comprehend, approve, and prac-

tise ; but if all the wrath of the press,—if all the vituperative eloquence of the senate is to be poured forth to brand the tyranny of individuals, from the governor-general of India to the workhouse official,—from Warren Hastings to the master of the Andover union,—he confesses that he can see but one motive left for any forbearance towards a despot, who, according to the evidence of his own ukases, has been guilty of cruelty and oppression a thousand-fold greater than any they were accused of ; and this is a motive which he thinks no Englishman would avow,—that of the wealth, power, and exalted station of the imperial culprit.

Nicholas, as the individual, has neither been the founder of the Russian despotism, nor will it die with him. He has merely increased its intensity,—firstly, because ambitious of dominion, his passions all tend towards that one object ; and secondly, because he was placed in a peculiar position, in which the most moderate capacity with fixity of purpose might readily attain it. All the efforts and combinations of preceding reigns had smoothed the way for him, so that he might on his accession to the throne be compared to the inheritor of those colossal fortunes resulting from the accumulated savings of many preceding gene-

rations. This inheritance, if no tempest rise from without to destroy and overwhelm it, he will transmit to his successor. Therefore, as it is against the system rather than the man that the hostility of humanity should be directed, the author would have been sedulous to abstract the autocratic from the private, and even from the individual, character of the Russian emperor; but when the actions of the autocrat are excused, palliated, or doubted, on account of the presumed excellence of the individual, then the emperor owes to the unskilful or ignorant zeal of his apologists any discussion trenching upon ground which would have been respected if the feelings of the man or the emperor could have been put in competition with the truth, upon so grave a subject.

Until within the last two years, those whom this powerful despot chose to persecute were so profoundly wretched that they could not even find defenders. The press was either silent, or only heaped on the autocrat its adulation, which, if not entirely believed, at least served to neutralise the effect of all injurious rumours. We have even seen Alexander Dumas, the ungrateful protégé of Louis Philippe, and the ultra-liberal in his writ-

ings, guilty, as regards the Emperor Nicholas, of the basest of all flattery, that which transforms a man's vices into the opposite virtues. There is a certain historical novel by this author, entitled the "*Maître d'armes*," in which the conspiracy of 1825 is historically introduced, and Nicholas made to play the part of the benevolent sovereign in the "*Recueil des Anecdotes Choisiés*," towards Ivaschef, a youthful participator in the conspiracy of 1825; against whom very little was proved, and who was exiled to Siberia. The clemency really displayed by the emperor towards this individual, consisted in his allowing the French companion of his mother, who had conceived a romantic affection for him when high and happy, to join him when a Siberian felon, on condition of her becoming his wife. To have refused the boon would have been contrary to the common regulation respecting convicts, formed for the purpose of peopling as rapidly as possible the Siberian solitudes. It may be pardonable, though it must be in questionable taste, for a writer to invent traits of generosity and grandeur wholly fictitious, attributing them to a public man, even in illustration of any known characteristic; but what would be said of an author devising a

wholly imaginary incident, and mixing it up with the narration of historic truths, to prove the cowardice of Charles XII., the liberality of Louis XI., the purity of Louis XV.'s morals, or the sensibility of Murat? Harshness, and an extreme vindictiveness, are the most salient traits in the disposition of Nicholas, and he has seldom given way to them with less reserve than on the occasion in which Dumas assigns to him a part so amiable. The emperor forgave no one; that is to say, that he sent all the condemned into perpetual exile, or exile of best part of their lives; excepting five, whom he hanged,—not because the most guilty, but because the most heroic of the conspirators.

Seven months intervened between the capture and execution of the rebels, and meanwhile he personally interrogated the nearest and dearest relatives of the accused, remaining deaf to all their appeals to his mercy. Such was his conduct on that particular occasion which Monsieur Dumas has chosen as a peg on which to hang this fictitious episode of imperial clemency. Twenty years have elapsed since then, and he still continues inexorably to keep those exiles in their banishment whose term of punishment has not expired.

During twenty years he remained, and remains unmoved, to all the prayers of the Princess Troubetskoi, and of the ladies Narishkin and Rosen, who chose to share the exile of their husbands. This mercilessness is not the result of temporary irritation, it is habitual to the character of Nicholas, and it usually exceeds even that of his subordinates.

He never alters sentences passed on those condemned by civil or military tribunals, but to add to their cruelty.

Such was the case with the cadet Anguel, the son of a Saxon nobleman, whom in a fit of malignant jealousy his captain had caused to be flogged. Anguel, when he left the service, called him out. For this he was tried by court-martial, and condemned to run the gauntlet twice through two squadrons. The emperor, in confirming his sentence, added to it,—*thrice through four squadrons*.*

A grenadier having threatened to kill his captain, was condemned to the same punishment;—the emperor added with his own hand, that he should receive a certain number of the blows upon the head.* Prince Sanguschko having been condemned to exile in Siberia for participation in the Polish revolution, the emperor added that he should per-

* Golovine and Lacroix.

form the journey on foot. Madame Grascholk having been with her son to visit her husband, an emigrant in Switzerland, the child refused to quit its father, and the mother had the imprudence to return to Russia. She was tried, and condemned to Siberia. The nobility of Podolia subscribed for her the sum of 14,000 roubles (about £600); by order of Nicholas, 13,000 were confiscated for the benefit of his invalid corps.

“ Even as grand-duke,” says Golovine, “ Nicholas, then chief of the engineer department, in signing the order to punish one of his soldiers, augmented the number of the strokes he was to receive. It was only on the representation of his aid-de-camp, M. P***, that already the sentence of the culprit was so severe that he could not possibly outlive it, that he desisted. What most shocked the aid-de-camp, however, was the indifference with which he talked over the affair: Nero even had wept in signing a death-warrant.”

But if in his habitual character Nicholas, who never loses an opportunity of presiding military executions in person, is merciless and vindictive, a few exceptions mark his conduct; but only towards those who, high or low, have given evidence of

their baseness. That predilection which some of the Bourbons have entertained for the occupation of cooking—some of the house of Brandenburg for tailoring, seems to attract his sympathies towards all whose actions stamp them as the vermin of society; and in favour of these people only does his inexorable severity thaw into clemency.

The instance of Sherwood, presently to be cited; and amongst his favourites, those hereafter mentioned, of Klein-Michel detected in a falsehood,—Kakoshkine, in his dishonest practices, and pardoned, where so many others for comparative trifles have been disgraced—afford a specimen of this propensity.

The pardon and re-installation of the police-major mentioned in the “Revelations of Russia” as convicted of having plundered a guest at the London Hotel in St. Petersburg, whom he was further suspected of having murdered, but who being related to the wife of Kakoshkine, grand-master of the police, could only have led to the conclusion that this connivance of the sovereign with the infamy of his servants was the result of a necessity entailed by his position—the necessity of attaching to him at any price unscrupulous tools, in the immediate interest of self-preservation; but what are

we to say when we find this man, so relentless to all appeals to his mercy from the high-minded, the devoted, and the innocent, granting his free pardon, as he has done recently in the autumn of 1844, to Michael Nowak, a Pole, who having been refused relief by the Polish committee because convicted of felony, had assaulted Lord Dudley Stuart, its vice-president !

There is an unnatural Polish mother who in a fit of terror at the awful penalties incurred by those who harbour deserters, called in the Russian authorities, and gave up to them her own son, when he scared her by returning harassed and foot-sore to take refuge in her cottage. On this woman Nicholas has conferred a cross and pension, though he did not remit the sentence of her son, a sentence which was tantamount to death.

A Russian senator, after the outbreak of the rebellion of 1825, brought his own nephew, to deliver him up to the emperor; the emperor conferred an order, and lavished his subsequent favours on him, but sent his relative to Siberia.

Was it not obvious, that in these cases, the mother and uncle, if acting through want of feeling, or under the influence of terror, were unworthy of reward?—if through exalted loyalty, at least deserving of the pardon of their relatives ?

Count Orloff is said to owe no small share of the favour he enjoys, to his having betrayed the plans of his associates in Pestel's conspiracy, from which he seceded with Momonoff and Van Wiesen. At least this sort of treachery appears a ready road to the imperial favour, if we may judge by the example of a certain Sherwood, whom we blush to record as of English name or descent, on whom the title of *Vernoi*, or "faithful," was bestowed as a reward for his treachery, for having in 1824, being then a non-commissioned officer, betrayed the plans of the secret association to which he was bound by solemn oath; a service rendered directly to Alexander, but which his successor hastened to acknowledge on his accession to the throne, by appending to his name an epithet which would have appeared a cruel imperial pleasantry, if Nicholas had not conferred on him more solid marks of his munificence and gratitude; amongst which that of a donation of money, and repeated promotion, which did not prevent his being turned out of his regiment in disgrace; and lastly, by relieving him from a criminal prosecution no later than the year before last, when imprisoned for forgery in the *Ouprava* of St. Petersburg. The watchmaker Frankenthal, who

betrayed Konarski, was made a noble, and invested with an order by the emperor.

It has happened to the author to hear several times the following arguments used in England by those who have risen, filled with horror, from the perusal of such works as have recently thrown light on the condition of the Russian empire:—"There must be great exaggeration. If otherwise, we can never believe that the emperor Nicholas—so good a father, and so irreproachable a moral character—can participate in such a state of things."

The moral character of sovereigns, like that of all public men, so that it afford no glaring or scandalous example, is a matter with which the public have no right to interfere. History has shown us over and over again that feeble, or wicked princes have been the best of parents and of husbands; and that sovereigns, whose private character has been most questionable, have proved admirable rulers.

The author, therefore, will not attempt to raise the veil which covers any private weakness of the man, even though made to hide the vices of a hideous system, excepting where the illegitimate exercise of his arbitrary authority has rendered these transgressions political crimes towards society.

No man living has a right to drag into publicity the amours of a contemporary prince, who does not publish them; and even where, as with Louis XIV., they were ostentatiously paraded in view of the whole nation, a writer might have passed over in silence such episodes of the monarch's life as his connection with Mademoiselle de la Vallière, and Madame de Maintenon, whilst duty would have called upon him to brand with reprobation the monstrous abuse of kingly authority, by the sovereign who threatened the outraged husband of Madame de Montespan, and lastly punished his importunities.

Let us, therefore, when we hear the morality of conduct of the Emperor Nicholas held up in the West as a political argument so decisive, investigate in the spirit above alluded to, the public rumour of St. Petersburg upon the subject. Certain anecdotes are prevalent in that capital, amongst them the two following, of which, as of everything else connected with such a despotism, proofs are of course impossible, but which cannot be given here as universally diffused and accredited in Russian society without inquiry being made into the prevalence of the report, and the general belief conceded to it. The authenticity of one of these anecdotes (men-

tioned in the "Revelations of Russia,") was confirmed to the author by the near relative of a party implicated.

It is briefly as follows : An aide-de-camp of the emperor's, at his master's request, married one of the maids of honour, endowed with a large marriage portion by his imperial majesty. The aide-de-camp immediately after his marriage refused to live any longer with his wife. The wife was retained at court, the husband sent off to the Caucasus, and made up to this hour to serve in a distant part of the empire. This circumstance happened some years ago.

The following, selected amongst many similar stories, like the preceding, on account of the tyrannic feature which brings it legitimately within the domain of public discussion, is of recent occurrence. It formed last winter a theme of common conversation amongst the Russians resident in Paris, all loyal subjects,—whose presence in that capital is a striking mark of the favour of their government.

"A personage of some note," runs the story, which gives dates, names, and locality, "returning unexpectedly, met an officer in his wife's apartment. Heated with wine, or maddened by jealousy, or

more probably," observes the narrator, "not recognizing at once the imperial intruder, he seized him by the collar, exclaiming, *padletz!* (scoundrel.) The next day he was removed by the secret police, whether to Siberia or a distant government report is not agreed, but at any rate, he had not been restored to liberty."

The advance of age, and the cares of government, have seldom the effect of rendering those who rule less irritable, and all the Romanoffs (or as they might more properly be termed, the Holstein Gottorps,) become more arbitrary or moody with increasing years. Some of the favourites of the Emperor Nicholas have been removed, either by death or the disfavour of their sovereign, from his councils; but those who have succeeded them, are mostly men who have the reputation of being tools more servile, or agents more violent of the imperial will.

Old Count Benkendorf, the grand-master of the secret police, and once his *locum tenens*,—an honest man as the world of Russia goes,—has been sometime dead. Whilst still living, the grand-master was cited in the "Revelations of Russia," by the author, as one of the least contemptible of the higher officials of the empire. Golovine repeats

the assertion made therein, "that everybody was agreed that in the exercise of his disgraceful functions, (as grand-master of the secret police,) he has done as little harm as possible." But even of this man he says,—“He did not disdain presents, if adroitly made. A certain emerald necklace earned for Mr. L. the ribbon of St. Stanislas; there are certain diamonds to which Mr. B. owes the recognition of his title of count, of which the validity was called in question.” Nevertheless, the comparative inaccessibility of Benkendorf to bribes placed *him* in so favourable a light by contrast with other personages in power, that he decidedly bore a high character, even though known to be the unscrupulous agent both of political enormities and of private transactions, which, in the civilised portions of Europe, would not only have excluded him from the company of gentlemen, but have placed him beyond the pale of that very comprehensive circle designated respectable society. Such blemishes in his character could naturally little affect his reputation in a country where public rumour attributes to three fourths of the other great officers of state the prevalent vice of their class,—to which it is with regret that even allusion is made in these pages, and which the criminal law of England punishes with death.

Sometime before his death he met with a mishap of which it is said that he never recovered the chagrin. The old vizier had a well-known foible, by which a French actress profited so well as to extract from him certain papers.

This powerful favourite, whose office made him the arch-spy for the centre of a vast and cumbrous system, for whose guidance legions of sub-delegated spies daily betrayed the trusts of nature and of friendship, to keep him advised of all that passed in every circle throughout the empire, and in every court of Europe,—this man, at whose name all men trembled, little suspected that there was a certain colonel in his office, whose duty it was to report directly to the emperor on the grand-master himself, if he caught him tripping.

The emperor did not name the matter to his old servitor, but sent the colonel to the actress, and forced her to give up the documents. There was, however, in this merited slight to a man who had been for so many years all-powerful, a mortification, which, if not expressed to a despotic master, may be readily supposed to have remained unforgotten.

“Count Benkendorf died in the bosom of the Catholic church, &c.” says Golovine. “His conversion, which only transpired after his death, greatly scandalised the emperor and the court.”

The conversion of Benkendorf is undoubted, but there is much reason to believe that it was to the tenets of an Evangelical sect by which he was surrounded at the time of his death, not to the Roman Catholic faith.

On the death of Benkendorf, his office was given to Count Orloff, of unenviable notoriety; that is to say, as the man who, whether for his own misfortune or for that of the illustrious personages in question, had appeared like a bird of ill omen in the vicinity of Alexander, Constantine, Diebitch, and the Empress Elizabeth, or sat at the same table with them, at the eve of their sudden deaths. And whilst upon this subject, it is as well to notice a rumour prevalent in St. Petersburg, and which is offered here without comment on its truth or falsehood,—a matter indeed comparatively unimportant, since the fact of its having gained credence speaks volumes as to the opinion entertained in 1845 by the higher classes in Russia, of those who govern them. The story is as follows :—The colonel alluded to as having so long acted in a humble nook of his office the part of counter-spy on the grand-master, when the fact transpired of his having the imperial ear, was eagerly invited by the most powerful courtiers. One day he dined with the minister of

war ; he rose from table indisposed, and that night he was a corpse. Where would such insinuations find a moment's echo in the West, even among the bitterest invectives of party malice ?

Golovine, who may be said to speak the common belief of the higher classes, says, in allusion to the deaths of the personages first cited, " that Nicholas had not the courage to displace Diebitch, and that the latter died of cholera, or of poison, taken willingly or unwillingly ; for history has not cleared up which. Then followed the death of Constantine, just as he was about to become embarrassing to his brother. His own physician was not present at his death-bed. He was replaced by the town-doctor, who received an order for this service : the governor of the province was also rewarded."

" It suffices that any person's death should be useful to a sovereign," says the Russian author, " to cause his being accused of it, if circumstances tend in the smallest degree to favour this conjecture. The Princess of Lovicz died, too, just as her reception at court became an embarrassing point of etiquette. I know that there are officious servants who go beyond the wishes of their master, but it must be at least admitted, that here are many

deaths suspiciously opportune, particularly if we add to them that of the Empress Elizabeth.”

“Count Orloff, who has just replaced Benken-dorf,” says Ivan Golovine, “is in the intimacy of his majesty. He owes his advancement to the 25th of December. Being colonel of a regiment of horse-guards stationed near the palace, he was the first to resort with his regiment to the Isaac’s plain. He has since been loaded with honours and rewards. One day, however, when the emperor was jocosely poking him in the stomach, the favourite took it in dudgeon, declaring ‘that he was growing old, and wanted rest.’ ‘For that matter,’ replied the emperor, ‘go when you please.’ Orloff, terrified at his own rashness, increased his insinuating assidui-ties towards the monarch, who vouchsafed to over-look this incident; but said on another occasion,— ‘No one’s services are indispensable to me but those of Tchornichef,’ (the minister of war). Orloff, when appointed chief of the secret police, made this pro-found remark :—‘ I do not see the use of the whole of this institution.’ May he one day,” continues Golovine, “see the utter inutility of the whole of it, and contribute to its abolishment !”

This observation, attributed to Orloff, has, how-ever, more properly reference to the continuance

of an establishment on its former footing, whilst a portion of its power and action have been transferred to another department; for though Count Orloff has nominally succeeded to the office of Benkendorf, its glories have departed, and it would appear that the grand-master has no longer the absolute confidence reposed in him which that functionary once enjoyed.

General Douppelt, the factotum of its late chief continues to hold the situation of second in that department, of which now, as towards the closing years of Benkendorf's life, he has practically the direction. But though the secret office is now shorn of much of its former power, it is not to be hence deduced, that the amount of oppression has in any measure been mitigated; for, on the one hand, the still more infamous institution of the civil police has grown in influence with the emperor, and on the other, he has delegated for certain purposes the full extent of his own unlimited authority to another individual, who has exercised it with wholesale and sanguinary violence. It is the present minister of the interior, aide-de-camp of the emperor, Perowski, (to the best of the author's belief, brother of the general of that name who did not conquer Khiva,) who now seems to unite

much of the arbitrary power, with many of the former attributes of the grand-master.

Perowski, it must be premised, ranks with Benkendorf as one of the most zealous and honest of those who have enjoyed the favour of Nicholas. He is the only one, indeed, on whom Golovine lavishes any praise ; he says "M. Perowski has secured an honourable place in the annals of Russian administration." The author has no reason to call in question the integrity of Perowski's intentions, but he appears to belong to the same school as Araktcheief, the tyrannical administrator of the empire under Alexander, and as Yermoloff, to whom the subjugation and government of the Caucasus was once intrusted. Such men are spoken of with respect, because the honesty of intention, perhaps justly attributed to them, shines in the midst of the general and unblushing corruption of surrounding society ; though the cruel means to which they resort, and the sanguinary nature of their energy when irritated by difficulties, or roused to anger by opposition, would probably draw down a very different judgment on their conduct from a civilized people. Ruthless violence is no longer considered at the present day as fitted to soften the savage, to enlighten the barbarous, or

to reform corruption. The history of society affords no one instance of its success in attaining this object. But if those advocates of reform who seek to effect it by the exercise of injustice and the inspiration of terror, be judged almost as great a curse to humanity, as their dishonest but less violent colleagues, there can be no question of their superiority over those who blend all the oriental tyranny with the vices, meanness, and corruption of the oriental slave; and such unhappily is the character of most of those who attain to power under the system by which the Russian empire is governed; and in this category we must class Kakoshkine, the present chief of the civil police.

On taking office, Perowski commenced a crusade against existing abuses, and as the most crying, immediately came in contact with the civil police of St. Petersburg. He discovered their connivance with the thieves and assassins of the metropolis stigmatised in the "Revelations of Russia;" he brought to light their infamous malpractices, and denounced to the emperor their chief, a man of low origin, who, with a salary of a few hundred pounds, has notoriously purchased an estate worth £6,000 per annum from his savings, *i. e.* from his conni-

vance and participation in the guilt of his subordinates.

“ He had attacked,” says Golovine, “ the infamous police of St. Petersburg, and only desisted when he found it shielded by the imperial protection ; a fact which has earned for Kakoshkine the surname of *Cache coquin* (screen-rascal). The agents of the minister had discovered in St. Petersburg, the existence of an association of robbers, consisting of several hundred men, and his investigation led him to demand from the emperor the dismissal of Kakoshkine ; but his majesty merely reprimanded that functionary, and replied to his minister that it was thanks to the grand-master that he had slept quietly in bed for the last twenty years.”

But the emperor, at the same time, gave his favourite *carte blanche* to clear the capital, by any means he could devise, of the thieves by which it was infested.

It is about a year and half ago that Perowski, debarred from interfering with Kakoshkine and his myrmidons, commenced his crusade against those pitiful knaves who rob without the sanction of an imperial uniform, though in almost every case under the protection of those who do.

His method of proceeding was that of the

Turkish pashas in the good old times. Having ascertained the houses of entertainment frequented by the suspicious characters of the capital, and the hours at which they chiefly resorted thither, he caused these places of rendezvous to be simultaneously surrounded, thus netting all whom they contained. These people were to the number of many hundreds conveyed to the castle of St. Petersburg, a fortress situated directly opposite the emperor's windows, on the other side of the Neva. Here they were summarily tried by court martial, and their presence in the houses of evil fame being deemed conclusive evidence of guilt, upwards of eight hundred were condemned to run the gauntlet, and made to undergo this fearful punishment.

The reign of terror then relaxed, and Perowski carried elsewhere his blind and violent inquisition. Kakoshkine subsequently had his revenge, by proving, what undoubtedly was true, that a great number of the sufferers were innocent, and thus causing the minister to be in his turn reprimanded.

Such are the wholesale means of terror to which in his growing irritability the emperor encourages his agents to resort, in his own capital, beneath his own eye, and for the chimerical purpose of thus reforming the corruption of a large city. We

retrace in them a courtier-like exhibition of the same spirit which dictated the wholesale religious persecution of Poland,—the transplantation of a whole people because they baffled the vigilance of imperial customs filled with venal agents.

All who have any acquaintance with the operation of despotic governments, will be prepared to find that only fresh evils, instead of any good result, followed such measures of arbitrary repression. For the information of those disposed to believe that a display of such indiscriminating severity, though involving the innocent in a common punishment with the guilty, must at least have served to deter the latter from their practices, we will select a few out of many cases which came under the knowledge of a single individual chiefly during the latter part of the year 1844, and in the course of 1845.

The author possesses the minutest details respecting these cases, from which he has selected a few of the most varied, for the perusal of the reader, using his own discretion as to what names to give, and what to withhold.

It is probable that every one circumstantially mentioned here will eventually lead to inquiry; and for the nature and results of an inquiry in Russia,

the reader need only be referred to the words of Marmier, quoted page 15 of this volume.

It should be borne in mind that these outrageous examples of injustice and misgovernment are but a few out of the many in possession of the author: whilst those in possession of the author, gleaned by one individual, in a city where there is no publicity, are but a few out of the multitude of fraudulent and oppressive transactions, of which they afford not an epitome, but a mere sample.

It should be remembered too, that these scenes have been enacted in the capital, which is the habitual residence of the emperor,—some of them only a few months back, some extending up to the very moment the reader is perusing these pages.

When such things occur up to the present hour, and under the emperor's very eye, what hope can reasonably be entertained of amelioration under the autocratic system, and what atrocities may not take place in remote portions of the empire?

To this question the prolonged and fiendish persecution of the nuns of Minsk—more horrible if taken all in all, than any atrocities recorded in times ancient or modern—furnishes a terrible answer.

The first of the anecdotes to which allusion has above been made, furnishes an illustration of

the manner in which laws the most obsolete are used by the privileged officials as instruments of extortion. There exists an old law in the Russian empire, of Draconic severity, which, though, bearing a *prima facie* appearance of rough justice, has long fallen in desuetude from the sheer impracticability of its ordinary application. It declares that every person accusing another of any transgression of the law, which he cannot substantiate, is to be punished as the accused would have been, if the offence had been proven against him.

An officer on terms of intimacy with a police naziratel, founded upon it the following expedient.

Having duly warned his confederate, he repaired to the shop of a wealthy draper in the Gostinnoi Dvor. After long turning over different pieces of cloth, he contrived, under one pretext or another, to send both the shopmen at once to the further end of the shop. The shopmen, who do not trust even a Russian general, had not averted their eyes from their customer more than a few seconds, when on returning to the counter they perceived a parcel protruding under his cloak, which was not visible when he came into the shop. He was about to leave, saying they had nothing which would suit

him, when the shopmen called their master, the draper, who very humbly suggested to the officer that he had taken up a piece of cloth by mistake, and begged him to pay for it, or return it. The officer pretended to be outrageous. "Son of a dog, whose mother I have defiled! How dare you say so? Do you know that I am an officer?"

"Officer or no officer," said the shopkeeper, who was a first-guild merchant, and fancied he stood well with the police, "I have sent for the police, and if your nobility does not quietly give up what you have taken, you will be searched, and committed to prison."

The officer persisted, however, in refusing to give up what he had concealed, or in allowing himself to be searched, till the naziratel was sent for. On the arrival of this police official, with whom his plan had been preconcerted, he waited till the draper had made his accusation, and then opening his coat, pulled out a fox-skin cap, which he had compressed into a small compass, and then plumped out whilst the shopmen's backs were turned.

"I take you to witness," said the officer, "that he has made an accusation of theft, which would, if proved, have occasioned my being exiled to Siberia; I shall now demand the application of the same penalty to himself."

The draper, who was experienced in the usage of the courts, and not to be frightened with squibs, as he had proved, was yet on due inquiry glad to compromise matters with the officer for fifty thousand roubles (£2000). Being a rich man, he was aware that had he not done so, the police would have seized this pretext to ruin him.

A man from the Polish provinces had a sum of ten thousand roubles (£400) stolen from his drawers, which were broken open; the thief, who was on good terms with the police, divided the amount with them, and brought an accusation against the man he had robbed, to meet the one directed against himself.

They were both imprisoned, the robber only for form's sake, being let out at the end of a few days; the Pole was kept a whole year incarcerated, unable even to obtain a trial. By dint of incessant petitions, at the expiration of this period his case was looked into. Kakoshkine's police then contended that the man who had committed the robbery was dead; and the other, without hearing any tidings of his money, or receiving any redress, was let out on bail. Not having, however, been acquitted of the charge brought against him, he was thus enlarged with the liability of being incarcerated afresh

at any moment at which he should attempt to press the investigation further.

A Mr. Kolbe, teacher in the families of Barclay de Tolly and of Diebitch (who married that general's daughter), being accused twelve years ago of having abetted in getting a child baptised according to the Lutheran instead of the Greek ritual, was harassed by a law-suit during *twelve years*; this year his sentence was pronounced by the *ugolodne palat*, which condemned him to *three days imprisonment*. On being asked, according to the usual form, whether he was satisfied with the decision, he replied that he was not. He was, however, maliciously represented to the emperor as having said "that he was not satisfied with Russian law." Whereupon his imperial majesty ordered him to be expelled the country.

It must not be imagined, however, that Russian justice is always so tardy. Two brothers, named Panoff, extensive butchers and graziers, were bankrupt. It was reported that they had concealed eighty thousand pounds from their creditors, and consequently an order was obtained to try them by *court martial!* One of the bankrupts, to gain time, bribed the doctor of the prison, and retired to the hospital, where he was in bed with a plaster on his

head, when generals, aides-de-camp, and colonels flocked to his bed-side. They removed the bandages, and feeling his pulse themselves, ordered the removal of so precious a prey to the *ordonanz haus* (military prison), where they found means to overcome alike the secretive tendencies of the butcher, and to disappoint the inquisitiveness of his creditors.

The day after the nomination of this military commission to try a bankrupt butcher, a fellow-prisoner, who had been an officer, applied to be judged by a similar court. But this favour was denied him, and his case still lingers on. He was a man from whom property was withheld, not from whom anything could be extorted.

An officer in the army, who had served in the Turkish war, importuned the bureaucracy of the civil police office, presided by General Kokoshkine, in obstinately investigating the case of a third party; he was suddenly arrested on the charge of stealing a cloak in the very anteroom of the police chief, an accusation which bore on the face of it the most glaring improbability; he was condemned and sent to Siberia.

But if justice in Russia sometimes strikes the innocent with severity, it sometimes punishes the

guilty, and displays not unfrequently a degree of mildness fitted to win criminals back to the paths of virtue.

The inhabitants of a house in the Vasili Ostroff were long inconvenienced by the fearful cries of a female slave belonging to a *pamojnik*, or police officer, a fellow-lodger. This wretched woman, in the last stage of weakness and emaciation, was tortured by the father and son, who, harnessing her to a cart, flogged her round and round the yard, and actually through the public streets, with a cart-whip. As they were police officers no one dared make an observation till some chance brought the matter to the knowledge of the emperor, who ordered these brutes to be tried in the criminal court. The ponderous chain with which she was habitually chained to the wall, was produced in court. The delinquents were merely condemned to quit the government of St. Petersburg for an adjacent one.

Again, two Chenovniks (or men of rank,) named Emilianovitch and Ivanoff, forged a set of papers as being sent from their department with extraordinary powers, and succeeded in swindling the governors of seven different governments. One of these worthies had been employed to draw

the sums of money, the other was a confederate in the office through which the receipts and reports relating to the transaction passed, where he carefully destroyed all these documents. This trade had been long carried on, and would probably never have been detected, had not the most active of the two parties retired from business and married, cheating his quondam friend out of a portion of the proceeds. Hereupon the aggrieved party finding his income stopped, determined to forestall any possible detection, and turned what is called in this country "queen's evidence" upon his friend. In consequence of this voluntary confession, he was not deprived of his rank, but only suspended in it, and condemned to serve for a few years as a soldier. His friend, who had been more actively guilty, was only deprived of one rank, and immediately provided with a situation in Kazan.

A creditor to the amount of £100,000 on the Rosamoffski estate, which was divided between several of the heirs of its late proprietor, applied through the courts of Moscow for its recovery. The first sum in question, amounting to about £10,000, was paid over to him by order of the court. One of these heirs, however, happened to be Ouvaroff, the Minister of Instruction.

Through his powerful interest, the creditor was required in another court to refund even the sum he had received, and on his refusal was, under one pretext or other, incarcerated for the space of five years; at length, however, being a clever, energetic, and monied man, he got his case decided in his favour in the Imperial Council, the last court of appeal, which is about as rarely resorted to as our House of Lords. The minister had therefore imprisoned during five years, for the sum of ten thousand pounds, the man to whom it was eventually decided that he owed a hundred thousand. The prisoner then obtained his liberty, but many months after, up to the present time, of the thousands awarded to him, he had received—0!

It would appear from the two following instances, both that the length of time cases are pending does not prevent very painful errors of judgment, and that the compensation made to the victims of mistakes, is not quite complete or satisfactory.

About the spring of 1844, the driver of a vehicle plying for hire, was murdered near the dock-yards of Auchta. It was one of those cases in which, from its casual publicity, it was necessary for the police to punish some one, and consequently a cripple was selected as the least valuable criminal

that could be pitched upon, where an able-bodied man is worth a given number of roubles. The poor wretch was knouted. Being neither a Pole nor a political offender, he survived the execution, and he was about being sent to Siberia, when by one of those strange chances which so often reveal murder, the real assassin came to light. It became obvious that the cripple had been unjustly punished, and he was therefore by law entitled to an indemnity amounting to a certain sum for every blow of the knout which he had received, and which was duly awarded him. But this indemnity, which no doubt would have been very gratifying to the victim of this untoward mistake to receive, it was equally so to the cupidity of the authorities to retain. Months after he had not received it, but was still in durance, where he will no doubt remain till only too happy to give his tormentors a quittance in full.

In another instance, three "*men of rank*" had stolen a small image of a saint: the evidence was clear against two, the third was arrested on suspicion of being an accessory. The two former were acquitted; the latter, who had no friends, was condemned to Siberia,—the chance of falling ill alone preventing his being sent thither. In

the hospital, he managed to interest some one in his story, and his case was looked into again, and found to be so flagrantly unjust, that the criminal court reversed its own decree.

This crime of robbing a holy image is considered as peculiarly heinous, though sacrileges are becoming much more frequent; for instance, the next case to the preceding is that of a chinovnik, or nobleman of office, condemned to Siberia for cutting off and stealing the fur collar of a cloak in a church during service time.

A retired captain in the navy, named Kireieff, had two brothers high in office, in St. Petersburg. On the death of his father, he came up from the country to receive his share of the heritage, which they refused to pay over to him. Some words had ensued, and the captain threatened to take legal proceedings.

One of the brothers, fearing this, repaired to the secret police-office, and declaring that his brother had attempted to murder him, requested that he might be quietly got out of the way, to save the family the annoyance of sending him to trial. The captain was immediately placed in durance, and four-and-twenty hours after removed in a kibitka to some unknown part of the empire, notwith-

standing his protestations of innocence, and his entreaties that his case should be investigated.

A moujik related that, in the hospital of the prison, having offended one of the *fershels*, or surgeons' assistants, the latter removed him to the mad ward, where experiments of all kinds were tried upon him to torment him. It is as well to mention here, that when prisoners are supposed to feign being dumb or idiotic, the practice is still resorted to of pricking their feet, and actually lifting up their toe-nails, to detect them.

Another moujik was at the same time tortured, through the malice of the assistants; who, amidst peals of laughter, fomented some part of his body with a burning mixture, instead of the soothing lotion ordered by the head doctor. This was, notwithstanding the fact that the last-mentioned personage had, a few weeks previously, caused one of these very assistants to be punished by the infliction of some hundred lashes.

The continuance of such a state of things as these anecdotes indicate, cannot be otherwise than painful and distasteful to the Russian emperor. Its previous existence must have been as much so to his predecessors as to himself,—whenever conscious of it. It would be absurd to suppose that

any despot, however unscrupulous and selfish, unless tainted with absolute insanity, should ever have regarded with complacency the corruption of his agents, and the exercise of a vexatious policy by them towards his subjects, for the sole advantage of these faithless servants, at the expense of his interests; for it is obvious that the efficiency of these agents, as instruments, must be impaired by such habits; whilst they are, at the same time, exhausting or impeding the wealth or strength of his people, which would otherwise have remained applicable to his own imperial purposes.

The idea may hence suggest itself to the reader, that the author might more beneficially have utilised his sources of information, by bringing these matters under the private notice of the emperor, than by exposing them to the public of a distant and foreign country.

In the late reign, as the reader may see by reference to the "Revelations of Russia," an association was formed, comprising all the worth, talent, and high birth of the empire, for this identical purpose. The result of their attempts, even under Alexander, a well-meaning prince, was so unsatisfactory as to lead them to the conclusion that nothing but the extinction of the despotism

would cure the evil; and this society merged into the conspiracy, which feebly exploded on the accession of Nicholas. The author has some reason to believe that his open denunciations have led to certain investigations; but in addition to the cause which rendered these abortive in the reign of Alexander, there exists another quite as potent with the emperor Nicholas, which still further paralyses their effect.

Now, as ever, all the officials of the empire, from high to low,—with rare exceptions,—stick together. Let us imagine a murder committed in England; and the police, the coroner, the jury, and reporters, all in collusion to declare that the victim died a natural death,—what credit would the public give to witnesses who saw the deed committed? Yet it is in that hypothetical position of the public that a Russian sovereign is commonly placed. When, therefore, an investigation is ordered, it leads only to an individual result,—and that only in a particular case: viz., when confided to a personage influential enough to set the remaining authorities at defiance, and anxious to bring in a clique of his own, who, on attaining office, resort straightway to the same practices. If he act from mere zeal, and be not seconded by

such a powerful interest, his efforts remain powerless as those of a madman striking at a room-full of smoke,—which nowhere resists and everywhere eludes his grasp. Such has always been the case where the sovereign was willing to punish condignly on discovery ; but with all his merciless severity in ordinary cases, Nicholas is unwilling to inflict any punishment in which men useful in upholding his despotic authority would be involved.

The want of penetration sufficiently acute in an autocrat to pierce the mist of deception by which he is surrounded, may prove equally fatal to his subjects, and lead in a like manner to their abandonment to extortioners and oppressors ; but it does not leave the same stigma on the character of the prince, as when we see him consciously entrusting power to men of infamous character, whom he considers devoted to his person, or to his despotic system : and this Nicholas has done, as sufficient evidence is adduced to prove in these chapters.

This interested exception to the merciless severity of his disposition, which might otherwise have been deemed conscientiously misplaced, darkens it ; just as the proofs he has given of being uninfluenced by religious superstition, adds a deeper shade to

the cruelty of religious persecution,—hideous, when born of fanaticism, but a thousand-fold more so, when the deliberate offspring of a politician's brain.

As the emperor continues his rule, and the author his more close investigation of his political conduct, it assumes a complexion more repulsive. And yet the system is now mainly defended on the character of the man;—and that character the author has been judged to have handled with undue severity. Hence he had felt called upon to point out such circumstances as might corroborate the truthfulness of the censure he had passed,—not alone in self-justification, but because advocating the cause—and endeavouring to make known the wrongs—of millions, and of races which will be still full of youth when the autocrat himself is ashes.

CHAPTER III.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS AND HIS ADVISERS.

Nesselrode, Minister for Foreign Affairs—Pozzo di Borgo—Cancrine.

Charles Albert de Nesselrode, still at the head of foreign affairs, is a little sharp old man, far advancing into the vale of years. Born at Lisbon, some seventy-five years ago, originally brought into notice at the time of the Russian mission to the French consul, and raised to power during the invasion of 1812, he has grown grey in office; and as presiding so long the foreign policy of an empire so vast and ambitious, is ranked in the popular estimation of Europe, amongst cabinet celebrities, with Talleyrand and Metternich.

* According to Golovine,—“born within sight of Lisbon on board an English ship, of German parents in the Russian service;” on which account he observes ironically that, four powers might claim the glory of possessing him among their subjects.”

Nevertheless, between the astuteness and talent of Metternich and Nesselrode, and the power which each has exercised, there lies a world of difference. Whilst Metternich has governed, and governs, an empire like a sovereign, Nesselrode has never been more than the chief of his department. The knowledge acquired by a hard-working minister, during more than a quarter of a century, of all the tortuous secrets of his cabinet, and treasured up by a retentive memory, have made him too valuable a servitor to discard; particularly when adding, as he does, to this qualification, a perfect pliancy to the will of his sovereign.

Nesselrode, who hands down the traditional policy of the Romanoffs, will not incur the imperial displeasure, by censuring any rash departure from it. He yields submissively in the moment of wrath; and seeming proud to be a mere instrument in his master's hands, he is allowed to proceed again in the same routine. He has had much to say in the guidance of the foreign policy of the empire,—and may again, if increasing years will allow him; but it has only been when the indifference of Alexander or of his favourites left him at liberty to act. The present emperor

—at least since the revolution of July—has been too determined in the bent of his foreign relations to leave anything to the discretion of this minister, except the choice of means conducing to a pre-determined end; and on these he is consulted as a vast and passionless encyclopædia of political knowledge, which is opened to extract under a certain heading the information required for a given purpose.

Nesselrode is, therefore, little to be blamed or praised for the external policy of the empire during the last fifteen years; and it is upon the same terms that he still maintains his office.

Golovine, who acknowledges a personal quarrel, speaks of him very slightly, and he repeats a story current in St. Petersburg, of his having been, first a naval, and then a cavalry officer; from which capacity he was removed to the diplomatic service by the caprice of the Emperor Paul, who took it into his head that he looked more like a diplomatist than a soldier. This version has at least none of that improbability or originality which would characterise it in other countries. Nicholas disposes, in a manner quite as arbitrary, of the destination even of those amongst his subjects on whom his favour shines.

Four or five years ago, a young Gargarin (son of the Russian agent at the Court of Rome, who so mystified the holy pontiff) returned to Russia, filled with aversion for the public service, and particularly to the military profession, though of a spirited and courageous disposition. It hence occurred to him, that by volunteering to the Caucasus, and fighting hard through a campaign or two, he might earn the privilege of retiring into private life, without being, as otherwise happens, marked out for unceasing persecution by the higher authorities. He repaired thither—distinguished himself for his gallantry—was rewarded with the cross of St. George—and flattered himself that he had succeeded in the attainment of his wish, when, unluckily, at a fête at Peterhoff, just previous to his quitting the imperial uniform, he was so unlucky as to catch the emperor's eye.

Nicholas commended his spirit, gallantry, and conduct, and wound up his eulogium by observing, to the consternation of the unhappy youth, that after so brilliant a debut, and with an appearance so soldier-like, he could not think of allowing him to discontinue his military career.

Golovine adds, somewhat unjustly :—“ that it is well known how little skilled was Paul the First

as a physiognomist." At least, in this instance, he was not deceived,—for Nesselrode has undoubtedly displayed considerable ability in the cabinet; though in Russia generally his talents are as much underrated as his genius and influence are exaggerated abroad. In foreign countries, for the last two-and-twenty years, Nesselrode alone has been popularly known of all the ministers and advisers of the Russian sovereigns; but in Russia a varying extent of influence and power has been attributed to Benkendorf, to Kleinmichel, to Tchornichei, to Orloff, to Menchikof, and even down to Kakoshkine, far greater than Nesselrode has ever been reputed to enjoy.

Much of the foreign reputation of Nesselrode was due to a very different personage, well known both in Paris and London, and now gathered to his fathers.

Pozzo di Borgo, long the boldest of Russian statesmen and diplomatists, some time previously to his death, had passed irretrievably out of the pale of imperial favour. This man, who had played a memorable part in the events of that Titanic struggle between the greatest of earth's conquerors and Great Britain,—in which empires tottered, kingdoms rose and fell, and nations were con-

vulsed,—this man remained, with a few of the surviving celebrities of that remarkable epoch, as the mythologic giants might have done, in the midst of men, after their combat. The great object of his life, in which all his energies had been exhausted, was effected; and his aim had been to spend the remainder of his days in peace, like all who have attained sufficient interest in the service of Russia to be allowed that favour, and a consequent knowledge of that country—far away from it.

Pozzo di Borgo—like the minister Cancrine, and like the personal friend of Nicholas, the General St. Aldegonde—had no more idea of enjoying their *otium cum dignitate* near the person, or within the dominions of Nicholas, than of building a house in their old age over a powder-mill. He had, consequently, made all necessary arrangements to reside in Paris, where it had long been understood that he was to spend his declining years as ambassador from the Court of Russia. To judge of the conduct of the emperor towards him, it is, however, necessary briefly to review his past life, and to recall the main object which had occupied and given it its chief importance.

Did you ever hear, reader, of a Corsican vendetta?

If not, as the life of Pozzo was one long vendetta, it is necessary briefly to explain the meaning of that word. The island mountaineers of Corsica, so remarkable for their energy and talent that we are often led to fancy that something of the Greek genius of the Hellenic colony established in their island, is discernible in their character,—are distinguished by a remarkable usage, which appears to have grown from a custom into a national propensity,—that of nourishing implacable animosities, which the lives of successive generations are employed and wasted to avenge. This is the vendetta; but it must not be confounded with the Highland, Red Indian, or Circassian feuds. Though subject to rules as immutable, there are redeeming traits in the vendetta, which have fatally rooted by ennobling it, till it has become as thoroughly identified with the national character as the love of a nomade life, or the passion for warlike or seafaring occupations inborn in other races.

The vendetta is never allowed for any personal offence, but only for an injury done to some one dear to the avenger. All considerations of danger or interest give way before it. The individual on whom it is affixed, must be duly warned of the

doom preparing for him ; and when it happens that the same person is marked out for two or more vendettas, if closely pursued by one of them, on pleading this necessity he may take refuge on the very hearth of the man or family persecuting him in another quarrel ; and for a specified time they may not either refuse him hospitality nor allow one hair of his head to be injured. A minute after this strange truce, the Corsican shoots his enemy like a dog. There is no pardon, no compromise possible ;—the avenger may defer during years, but he may never forego his vengeance.

This blind and implacable hatred, in which his countrymen indulge, animated Pozzo towards no less a personage than Napoleon.

Charles Andrew Pozzo di Borgo, a young and fiery republican, had been appointed secretary of the Corsican notables, and deputed by them to the national assembly of France, at the bar of which assemblage he made several declamatory speeches against all tyranny and all princes.

It happened that at this period the island of Corsica was divided into two parties, the one comprising the inhabitants of the sea-coast, who were desirous of incorporation with the French republic ; the other the upland population, bent on

securing the national independence for which the Corsicans had struggled with the Genoese and the French monarchy.

To the former faction belonged Arena, Salicetti, and the Buonaparte family, whilst the young Pozzo was powerful with the latter. There will no doubt be some of the readers of these pages who will personally remember the anecdotes referring to this period, on which the old diplomatist during his residence in London, almost garrulously loved to dwell, and amongst others an instance which recurs but imperfectly to the author's recollection, though distinctly recalling that it hinged in substance on some trivial chance which prevented Pozzo from causing the young, and then unknown Napoleon Buonaparte, to be arrested.

The faction to which the Buonaparte family belonged, as it is well known, triumphed. Pozzo di Borgo was obliged to fly. When Napoleon rose to power he used it first to crush the adversaries of his family, and then somewhat vindictively to persecute his exiled countryman; who soon learned to centre in the consul or the emperor, as his fortunes grew, all the hate with which he had ever been inspired by the party, or the house, of his formidable rival.

From this moment his whole existence was centered in a war to the knife against Napoleon; from court to court, and camp to camp he flew, rousing enemies, and counselling them when roused.

When the proudest and most powerful of the successful soldier's enemies quailed before his fortune, humbling to it their kingly and imperial diadems —when the inconceivable destiny of this man was at its zenith, Pozzo's hatred continued untiring, and unawed by the power or glory of the conqueror, whose enmity unceasingly pursued him.

Having taken service in Russia at the peace of Tilsit, he quitted Alexander, whom the conqueror would otherwise have forced to expulse him, but he quitted with the prediction that a fresh and fatal struggle must eventually occur betwixt the two sovereigns, and by the offer of his services, whenever it should take place.

Five years spent in the most active enmity, brought him to the period which he had foretold. War had been declared betwixt France and Russia; and Napoleon was preparing to invade the latter country, when Pozzo appeared again at Alexander's court, and was again admitted to his confidence and favour. Wherever he went he

instilled courage into those who quailed before Napoleon's star, and every reverse found him serene and confident. When at length the tide of Napoleon's fortunes turned, and brought the allied armies to the French frontier, a moment of irresolution pervaded the councils of the banded princes, who dreaded to let fortune tempt them on to the soil of that terrible country, which had for so many years poured forth the irruption of its conquering armies, and into the den as it were of the lion who had so long scared them in their very capitals. They had driven him, indeed, till he was hunted down; but all hesitated to go into him when he stood at bay. The cowardice of Prussia, the two-faced treachery of Austria, and the natural irresolution of Alexander's character, combined, would undoubtedly have saved Napoleon. Pozzo di Borgo, who was well aware that this, if ever, was the moment to thrust home, and that if breathing time were given his great enemy, he would still baffle all his continental adversaries, when convinced that his influence or arguments would prove powerless, repaired to England, whose cabinet had undeviatingly followed a policy consonant with his own opinions, and brought back with him to the conference of Frankfort, Lord Castlereagh, who,

if without the talent, still with all the confident resolution which Pitt could have shown, turned the balance against Napoleon; and the allied armies were directed against Paris. Pozzo di Borgo himself penned Prince Schwartzberg's famous proclamation, and soon after obtained the total exclusion of Napoleon's family; and on that occasion, turning to Talleyrand, exclaimed, radiant with triumph: "If I alone have not killed him, I have shovelled the last spadefull of earth upon his grave!"

Pozzo di Borgo's vendetta, was, as he deemed, now satisfied by the greatest fall which history chronicles, and this after he had witnessed a period in which his enemy had risen to so high an eminence, that the most energetic efforts he could make against him, appeared beneath the notice of the man whose victories enabled him to proscribe him from all the states of Europe. In the rancorous hatred which this state of things engendered towards Napoleon's person, he is said to have learned to include all who showed any strong devotion towards him; and hence, amongst other anomalous prejudices, is said to have arisen his hatred to the Polish people. About the period of the conference of Vienna, when Alexander, elated by his late

successes, set himself up as the liberator of Poland, with the view of uniting the whole twenty millions of that people beneath his presidency, his project was violently opposed by Pozzo di Borgo.

The landing of Napoleon from his island prison scared alike the princes and the vindictive Corsican, who suddenly found the victim of his vendetta, as it were, uprising from the grave on which he boasted that he had scattered the last shovel-full of earth.

We next find him present at Waterloo, and wounded in the ranks of the English on the memorable field which saw the spirit laid for ever, whose political resurrection had threatened to render his vengeance like the morsel swallowed and torn undigested from the vulture's craving maw. The great object which had hitherto filled his life was accomplished; but Pozzo found that he was now unfitted for any other career than that of quietly enjoying the honours and the wealth which he had insensibly attained in the pursuit of his revenge.

Originally starting in the world with liberal, if not with democratic ideas, he had come to be considered the most zealous absolutist in his opinions. He had grasped in his strong hand the tiller of the wavering bark of Russian policy; his exertions had

been more instrumental than those of any individual in procuring the restoration of the Bourbons, and it was hence naturally concluded that he was identified in feeling with the ambitious and despotic views of Russia, and the absolute tendencies of the Bourbon family. But such was not the case: Russia, the Bourbons, and the anti-liberal prejudices of European cabinets, had been to him mere instruments of vengeance, for which he entertained no predilections when his purpose was accomplished and their uses over, though some of his animosities seem to have lingered with the tenacity of Corsican vindictiveness in his mind.

There are many, no doubt, of the readers of these pages, as it has been before observed, who, from his long residence in this country and in Paris, must vividly remember how, arch diplomatist as he was, he loved to dwell on the subject of his native country, and the part he played in its history in the early period of his career. They cannot fail to recall how his dark southern eye, contrasting so strangely with his silvered hair, flashed as it were rekindling with the recollections of his youth, and how his fine countenance became animated into that expression natural to it, which the long dissimulation of the

statesman had taught him to disguise. In these moments of reference to that distant period, his ideas, like his features, were exhibited in their true form to the listener ; and it was obvious that in his present exalted position, as the representative of an absolute monarch, and the champion of those doctrines, which under the plea of order, are repressive of all progress, his thoughts reverted with regret to independent Corsica, and that his pride would have been to be one of the chiefs of its free republic. He appeared, perhaps, to lean towards a commonwealth somewhat oligarchic, but this oligarchic feeling basing itself upon republicanism, could only add fresh disgust to the oriental nature of the despotism of the government he was serving ; a despotism which not alone raises the lowest in station and in character to place and power, but renders them objects of the respect and envy of society ; and which can crush down rank or merit at its will or pleasure, overwhelming them with the public scorn.

Pozzo di Borgo hence not only determined to spend the closing years of his life out of Russia, but as regarded France, the country chosen by him in which to enjoy the honours and the pensions earned in the Russian service, he was influenced

by no predilections in favour of the Bourbons, whom he had accidentally served so well.

Both his natural sagacity which foresaw the consequences, and his now unbiassed personal feeling, led him to reprobate the absolutist tendencies of the elder branch of that family, if only because likely to disturb the tranquillity of the country which he had selected as a refuge for his old age.

When the revolution of July took place, he advocated the recognition of the new dynasty elected by the national choice, the more strenuously that he entertained much good will towards Louis Philippe, and was full of confidence in his wisdom and moderation. The Emperor Nicholas, who, on first ascending the throne, had been hitherto sufficiently occupied with the internal affairs of his empire, had continued Pozzo di Borgo in office, partly through the representations of Nesselrode, and partly through sympathy with his anti-Polish feeling; but on being made acquainted with the successful revolution which Pozzo had duly prognosticated, he was so violent in his condemnation of it, that no one but that veteran statesman and diplomatist dared counsel pacific measures. Nicholas was forced to temporize, but he treated the new sovereign with a degree of contempt which would have ruffled an

equanimity of temper less resolute, and which eventually recoiled upon himself; obliged as he has since been by circumstances, to interchange with him in an unrestricted manner, the courtesies common between princes.

It is now well known to have been the intention of Nicholas to attempt rashly to renew that great continental war against France, in which Europe triumphed when aided by the millions of Great Britain, and backed by her victorious fleets; but which without her co-operation would probably have resulted in making the tricolor float again over half its capitals. He was interrupted in his purpose by the Polish revolution, and Pozzo's influence then became invaluable with those who could restrain the turbulent spirit of that portion of the French nation panting to fly to the relief of Poland, and the overturn of nearly all other continental governments. But Nicholas, of whose character an implacable vindictiveness in little things, is as distinguishable a trait as it was in great ones in the mood of the old Corsican, never forgave the latter for his avowed esteem of the French king, for his confidence in him, or his unqualified advocacy of a pacific policy towards the order of things which Louis Philippe represented,—not even though the event proved the wisdom of this advice.

From that time he surrounded him with spies, a circumstance of which his ambassador could not long remain ignorant, and one which, though of usual occurrence with those of his rank, was still an indignity to a personage who had filled the exceptional post of confidant and counsellor of the policy of the empire in its extremest peril.

He further transmitted him an order to refuse, under different pretexts, to allow of the residence of several of his subjects in certain places ; but Pozzo considering it beneath his dignity to lend himself to such a subterfuge, sent for the persons in question, and acquainted them with the command he had received.

The emperor and his servant were thus soon in a state of hostility ; not that hostility which is openly declared, or tangibly manifests itself in actions, but which is incessantly evinced by tacit ill-will, masked by a strict regard to conventionalities. The emperor held indeed within his own dominion absolute power over his servitor, and abroad he could strip him of his office, of his pensions, and his honours ; but on the other hand he found that he had to do with a master-spirit, one who, having struggled his life-long with the lion, was not to be scared by the ass in the lion's skin.

Pozzo had provided against Muscovite astuteness or caprice : he was in possession of documents and secrets which rendered him a dangerous enemy to offend, and he was far too wary to venture back to the country whose place and pension had still sufficient attractions for him to make him the very humble servant of its sovereign at a safe distance.

Within this given circle of mutual apprehensions, the persecution of the one, and the defiance of the other was restrained ; but at length the emperor pitched upon the following means of annoyance. He was aware that Pozzo had made every preparation to end his days in Paris, that he had sought in France an alliance for his nephew and heir with one of its noblest families, in the person of a lady whose beauty and accomplishments are well known to the fashionable world of London. He had formed in that country, too, the friendships which were to solace his old age, and he had prepared there an asylum of fitting magnificence in which to pass it. This had been a boon long since conceded to him in reward for his services ; and his temporary missions to the court of St. James's, were hence viewed by him, particularly when much prolonged, in the light of real hardships.

The Emperor Nicholas, learning what a griev-

ance they had become to the old man, finally removed him from the court of the Tuilleries to London.

This was a thunder-stroke to the ambassador, whose energies had become impaired by age and illness; and whilst hesitating what course he should take, death overtook him in the midst of his perplexity. It is whispered that there are certain documents left by the ambassador in the hands of his family, which the Russian cabinet has vainly reclaimed under the plea of their belonging to the chancery of the legation;—if so, they will now prove pledges for the fulfilment of such claims as he may have bequeathed to his relatives.

Amongst those to whose opinion Nicholas paid the most deference, may be cited Cancrine,—recently created Count Cancrine,—the late minister of finance; a personage of a totally different stamp from Nesselrode or any of his colleagues. Of obscure Jewish origin, he has been succeeded in the management of the finances of the empire by another of the same race, named Vrontchenko, (said to be a Russification of Rondchen,) notwithstanding the bitter personal prejudices of the emperor against this people, and the law which forbids their residence in the capitals and northern

governments of Russia. Cancrine is essentially the man of expedients, though he has always been considered by the emperor as a second Colbert. The fertility of his genius, and his remarkable ingenuity, trammelled by no patriotic considerations as to the eventual confusion into which his temporary shifts must entangle the finances of the country, inspired the emperor, whose government is so often pressed for money, with such unlimited confidence, that he considered Cancrine as a sort of monetary necromancer. All-powerful as a Russian sovereign is within his own dominions, even there he is cramped at every step, unless the god Plutus has been duly propitiated; and this ingenious minister, having induced the belief that he was the favourite priest of this divinity, was determined not to serve his imperial master on bended knee.

On the contrary, he affected the style of a political Abernethy, and when Nicholas wished him to resort to some of those financial expedients with which his brain seemed so inexhaustibly stored, he only replied by demanding retrenchment and reform, by declaring the impossibility of acceding to his demands, and by threatening to resign his portfolio. His sovereign master, so imperious with

other of his servants, was obliged to humour, coax, and conciliate him,—as if he had been a capricious beauty; condescending even to entreat him to retain his office: till one day, Cancrine having, according to the vulgar phrase, sufficiently feathered his nest, obdurately persisted in retiring to enjoy in Paris the fruits of his labours, leaving his successors to unravel, as best they could, the tangled web of the finances of the empire. If any gratitude were due to men for benefits unintentionally conferred, Cancrine, like all his predecessors, would be entitled to the gratitude of humanity,—as it has been chiefly through their instrumentality—through the deplorable state into which they have brought the finances of the empire, and the low condition to which they have brought its credit—that the peace of Europe has been these last fifteen years maintained. There is little question but that the wish nearest to the heart of Nicholas, is war with France. Happily, however, both himself and the living generation of generals and statesmen, have witnessed the impossibility of rendering available the resources of the state, without the pecuniary assistance of a wealthier power; and the Turkish and Polish campaigns repeating the lesson, have given them personal experience of the

difficulties to be encountered from scarcity of funds and absence of all credit.

Golovine speaks of him in favourable terms, but admits "that he did not neglect his private interests, to which the post he occupied gave him—more than to others—ample opportunity of attending."

He has amassed a fortune of 400,000 roubles per annum (upwards of £16,000). The pay and legal perquisites of a minister of finance do not exceed a few hundreds per annum, and he is forbidden by law, like all other officials, to receive any present, however innocently, under pain of degradation and banishment to Siberia.

The connexion of these two facts alone, if we suppose no dereliction of duty in the ex-minister, may be considered as casting far into the shade even the financial genius of the happy soldier of the old song—

"Who lived on his pay,
And spent half-a-crown out of sixpence a-day."

CHAPTER IV.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS AND HIS ADVISERS.

Kleinmichel—Tchornichef, the Minister of War.

Now that Benkendorf is dead, and Cancrine retired from office, the favour and confidence of Nicholas is considered to be chiefly divided, though in unequal degrees, between three individuals. To cite these personages rather according to their supposed influence with the emperor than their actual rank,—far before all others, stands Kleinmichel, the rising man in the empire, on whom his sovereign has conferred the dignity of Count, and the rank of General. He ostensibly presides the Department of Roads and Bridges, though acting as an administrative jack-of-all-trades.

Kakoshkine, already mentioned in this volume, filling the subordinate office of chief of the civil police of St. Petersburg,—a base employ, attempted to be dignified by making him imperial aid-de-

camp,—is considered to be next solidly rooted in the imperial favour. The emperor, convinced of his vigilance and fidelity in watching over his own person, resolutely shuts his eyes to the infamous practices of his servant, wherever brought to light.

Thirdly, may be cited Tchornichef, the minister of war, whose disgrace is now rumoured, as it has frequently been before ; but whom Nicholas is said at once to dread, and to consider indispensable.

The influence of General Kleinmichel with Nicholas, is accounted for, by public rumour, in a manner which does not become the writer, any more than the public, to notice ; but the three following anecdotes with regard to this personage, who now ranks as one of the first in the empire, are, however, adduced, to illustrate to the reader what class of people inevitably rise, in an unlimited despotism, to the favouritism of the sovereign, notwithstanding all the contempt he may at first sight entertain for such unscrupulous instruments.

They may also tend to point out the extraordinary social difference which exists between rank, title, and station, nominally analogous in our own country and in this oriental empire ; where, aping the style and costume of civilised lands, its ruler

and his servants, beneath the purple, the uniforms, the epaulettes, and stars, still feel and act in the spirit of the eastern despot, who raises the eunuch or menial to his councils; and where the intriguing eunuch or menial raised to power, is by turns cringingly servile, and arrogantly haughty.

This General Kleinmichel served in the office of Arakcheieff, (Alexander's sanguinary favourite, the founder of the military colonies,) doing duty as his private secretary, with the rank of Colonel.

Mr. Alexander Smith, who recently met with an accidental death in St. Petersburg, was in the habit of relating, that he had once occasion to seek an interview of this minister, whom he described as a violent and irritable, but well-intentioned man. During the course of it, he begged this personage to refer to a memorial which he had forwarded to him. Arakcheieff desired his secretary, the Colonel Kleinmichel, to bring it. Through some accident or negligence, it had been placed where it could not be found till he had exhausted Arakcheieff's patience, which was very speedily the case. To the surprise of his visitor, the Russian vizier commenced abusing Kleinmichel in the most violent manner, and, bidding him approach, spat full into his face. The colonel bowed his head, wiping off

the spittle, and saying in a humble voice, *Vinabat*, "I am in error."

Mr. Alexander Smith was a clever Scotch engineer, for many years, and indeed up to the period of his death, inspector of all the steam engines of the Baltic fleet; he was also, to the best of the author's belief, brother-in-law of the engineer, Napier, the constructor of the *Fire-king* steam ship, and of the rapid two-funnel boats which ply upon the Thames.

Another Englishman, named Clayworth, also since deceased, after realising a considerable fortune as gas-fitter, plumber, painter, glazier, &c., in St. Petersburg, and who boasted that he had eventually made much money by collusions with Kleinmichel, was in the habit of observing that these golden opportunities were only justly due to him, considering that the general had been for many years some hundred pounds in his debt. For this sum, as he further related, he had so long made application in vain, that he despaired of ever obtaining the payment, till at length finding that fortune was lavishing its favours in every shape upon his debtor, he bethought himself as a last expedient of making an appeal to his honour and generosity. For this purpose, he repaired to his levee (for all rising men

in Russia have their courts and courtiers), and presented him with a receipt in full. Kleinmichel took the receipt with a nod, but never forwarded the money, and on subsequent application, told him with hauteur, that the affair was long since settled, as Clayworth knew he held his acknowledgment of its payment. Perhaps it may be thought that the emperor was deceived in this man's character? Scarcely so. Kleinmichel, as he rose in influence, bitterly resented some slight he had received from Paskewitch; nevertheless, on the elevation of the latter to the rank of Field-marshal, and to the first of the fourteen classes of nobility, to which, by the bye, he was the only individual appertaining, he came to St. Petersburg. According to etiquette, it now became the duty of Kleinmichel to call on him. The emperor, who passes a large portion of his time in attending to punctilio, reminded Kleinmichel of this circumstance, who, intending to mortify his rival by taking no notice of him, and thinking his neglect would never come to the imperial ears, replied glibly that he had called on him that morning. As Kleinmichel went out, the field-marshal, however, stepped in; and it so chanced that the emperor observed to the latter that he had received the general's visit, which Paskewitch at once denied.

The emperor angrily recalled and confronted Kleinmichel with him, who, detected in this very pitiful falsehood, bowed his head, and again hurriedly repeated *Vinabat*,—"I have erred." The emperor ordered him under arrest for several days, and he then resumed the even tenor of his way in the imperial favour.

Let us now see how such a man uses his influence. There are in the vicinity of St. Petersburg, several government works of greater or lesser magnitude, but each, like those of Alexandoroffsky and Colpenas, under the superintendence of a man dignified with the rank of General. As many Englishmen are necessarily employed in these factories, an idea appears to prevail with the government, that the mere fact of a man's being a native of England must qualify him to preside over such an establishment. The director of one of these, General Clarke, having died, Kleinmichel gave the situation to an English shoemaker and cobbler, named Smith, who is said never to have exercised any other calling. Smith's wife, or wife's sister, was nurse to Kleinmichel's children.

As a general rule, the only very certain channel of interest, whether with the emperor directly, or his ministers, is not derived from the protection or

recommendation of the princely families, or from the illustrations of the land ; but through the intrigues of menials, nurses, and actresses.

Few sovereigns have ever appeared more jealous of governing for themselves than Nicholas; and his dread of being influenced, added to his personal hatred of his nobles, render him forewarned, and even unjustly prejudiced against their intercession ; but for the hidden action of this under-current he is unprepared.

In an unlimited despotism like that of Russia, it would indeed appear that the interest is so strong to deceive, that an extraordinary firmness of character, and perspicuity of intellect, could alone preserve its autocratic ruler from eternal deception. A sovereign like Alexander, was aware of this peculiarity of his position ; but a man of the character of Nicholas, who adds to considerable firmness and obstinacy an inordinate vanity, is readily convinced that he possesses, because he seeks to obtain, omniscience in his empire ; and so it happens that whilst he plumes himself on being inaccessible to the influence of his favourites, or his nobles, and inexorably dooms the scion of a great house, despite all efforts made by his favour, he is still in three-fourths of his actions degraded to the condition of

a mere puppet, of which the strings, cunningly contrived, are pulled by slaves, menials, and prostitutes.

Thus it happens, that the author has known the marshal or president of the nobility of a district, long fruitlessly endeavouring to obtain a favour through a personage high in office, which a foreign actress flippantly undertook to procure, and succeeded in procuring for him, in four-and-twenty hours. Thus he has known a professor successfully founding his hopes on the interest of a milliner with the mistress of the lover of the wife of a man in power; a grey-headed general, the decision of his lawsuit, on the protection of a nurse in one of the imperial palaces; and a high judicial authority, his advancement, on the patronage of a foreign cook.

The services of Prince Tchornichef, the minister of war,—though differing in nature,—are said to be considered by the emperor as valuable of their kind as those of Kleinmichel or Kakoshkine. Kleinmichel, the pliant tool of despotism,—exhibiting the passive submissiveness of the chief eunuch of an oriental seraglio,—fulfilling complacently the same ignoble duties, and possessing the same insidious cunning—the same abject perseverance;—Kleinmichel is one of those men who, when treated

with insult and contumely by an absolute master, kiss the foot that spurns them, and then by the divulgence of important secrets,—by unwearying activity, — by rapid perception and unscrupulous execution of a despot's wishes,—eventually force him to employ, and at length consider them indispensable; because their total abdication of all the self-respect of man, if at first exciting disgust in that master's breast, is soon merged in appreciation of those qualities alike incompatible with personal dignity and indispensably necessary in the economy of a thorough despotism,—and because such agents, as in the case of Kleinmichel, inspire with confidence the unhappy prince who is conscious that he sleeps on a volcano, and is well aware that they possess neither kith, kin, nor root in his dominions; having, to prove their servile zeal, become so generally detested, that like the Snarleyow in Marryatt's novel of that name, their interest becomes indissolubly bound up with the life of their protector. Kleinmichel is supposed to be more frequently consulted on all general subjects by the emperor than any one in the empire; while Kakoshkine is esteemed by his master as the vigilant and devoted chief of a police, whose first duty is considered to be protection of the imperial person

and interests, to which all the usual objects of such an institution are unhesitatingly sacrificed. Few in Russia accord to Kakoshkine that skill in his peculiar occupation attributed to him by his master ; but if far from possessing the ingenuity of Vidocq, he is universally considered as ranking many degrees below him in infamy of character.

Prince Tchornichef must not be classed with these men—the vermin of a profoundly demoralised society,—who would never have been admitted into the society of his valet, if not refracting, as they do, the light of imperial favour ; which, in Russia, like the rays of the sun, raises the miasma of filth and corruption to an offensive altitude in the social atmosphere.

Prince Tchornichef, a man of courtly habits and manners, recalls the noble of the reign of Charles the II. or Louis the XV.,—or perhaps rather of an antecedent period, less profligate, though more ruthlessly unscrupulous,—but he has nothing in common, except a share of his sovereign's confidence, with the two other individuals cited, who can only be compared to those slaves who by pandering to the caprice of their tyrants, rise in the east from menial servitude to power.

The character of Tchornichef is far from being

unimpeachable. It is popularly rumoured of him that he was mainly instrumental in causing the banishment of his wealthy relative, Count Tchornichef,—implicated in the conspiracy of the nobility,—in the hope of securing his estates, for which he made application, as the reward of his activity and zeal.

Golovine, in relating this anecdote, says “that the emperor took Tchornichef to the mother of the man he had caused to be condemned, intimating his imperial wish that she would adopt him instead of the son she had lost. But this worthy woman replied that she would willingly receive him as an aide-de-camp of her emperor, but could never be induced to regard him as a relative.”

He further narrates, that when, in the council of the empire, some law was attempted to be found which might justify the transference to him of the property he coveted, Count M—, who was opposed to his claim, observed ironically that there was somewhere a law by which the clothes of the culprit went to the hangman.

Tchornichef, in the Polish war, undoubtedly impeded the progress of Diebitch, the commander of the Russian force, by withholding from him reinforcements and supplies; and inspired by a like

animosity, he is said to be now pursuing the same line of conduct with regard to Worontzow in the Caucasus.

Mention has been made elsewhere of the rumour attributing to him the death of a certain personage connected with the secret office ; and at least its prevalence will probably before long be authenticated through the publication of some singular revelations, by a person who lived for many years in the families of the field-marschals Barclay de Tolly and Diebitch.

Active and intriguing,—uniting the corruption of a Walpole to the ruthless avidity of a Leicester,—the dissemination in Russian society of the suspicion above named, may serve to illustrate the opinion popularly entertained of the unscrupulous character of the minister of war.

Notwithstanding this popular estimate of it, he holds a respectable place amidst his compeers in power and favour. His intrigues have been in the higher regions of courts,—he has plotted to worm out the secrets of governments, or to ruin the commanders of armies ;—but he has seldom descended lower than to endeavour to secure a vast estate.

Now even Prince Volkonski,—the friend and confidant of the Emperor Alexander, long ambas-

sador to the court of France, and now minister of the imperial household,—daily holds a levee in his apartments, receiving all contractors, tradesmen, cooks, and actresses, to whom he vends his protection, and negotiates shilling by shilling perquisites which the law would punish him capitally for receiving! Yet the minister of the imperial court forms no unfavourable exception to the mass of his fellow dignitaries.

Tchornichef, first created count, and lastly prince, has served with distinction in his younger years, both as a soldier and diplomatist; and he has, perhaps, shown more natural ability than any of those who have shared, or share, in any other than a strictly professional sense, the confidence of the Emperor Nicholas. Endowed with great versatility, as a young man he first shone at Napoleon's court as a leader of the fashions of the day, and whilst supposed to be absorbed in the most frivolous pursuits, both discovered in the boudoir the meditated invasion of Russia, and obtained all the plans of the impending campaign, through the intermedium of a certain Michel, employed in the military clothing department of the French war-office, who had obtained them with the assistance of three other *employés*, named Saget, Salmon, and Moïse.

With this information Tchornichef quitted Paris, narrowly escaping the pursuit set on foot.

On the flight of the young diplomatist, the treachery of his informants was brought to light; and being criminally prosecuted, Michel was condemned to death, and executed in May, 1812. Saget, who had been defended on his trial by the elder Dupin, was sent for life to the galleys. During the war of invasion, Tchornichef being employed in a military capacity, was sent by Alexander to Admiral Tchitchagoff, to convey to the latter his instructions, and to promise him reinforcements which were never sent. Here at the head of a body of Cossacs he distinguished himself as an enterprising partisan leader. On the invasion of France by the allied armies, he commanded a division of regular troops, and appears to have shown as much skill as was displayed by any of the allied generals, in a campaign carried on by such disproportionate numbers against an army demoralized by unparalleled reverses.

Having been now for many years minister of war, Tchornichef is said, alone in the empire, thoroughly to understand its military administration. At least with this conviction he appears to have impressed the emperor, who has heaped on him

estates and titles, provided him successively with rich wives, and built a palace in the Morskoi of which the usufruct is assigned to him. He has always represented the Russian minority of office, and hence is said to have originated his hatred of Diebitch, and the German party.

Some insinuate that, bold, crafty, and dangerous, he has inspired Nicholas with considerable awe; and it is at least certain, that, notwithstanding occasional rumours of impending disgrace and the growing favour of Kleinmichel, Tchornichef still continues in office.

To the attainment of that office, to the establishment of a firm position, and to cabals against rivals, the minister of war seems to have directed energies and confined a capacity of no common order. But this is in the true spirit of his age and country, where men of the best abilities neglect the barren acquirement of knowledge, to cultivate the easy and more profitable tact of seeming to possess it; seeking only proficiency in those arts of intrigue which supply every deficiency, and by which alone success is to be attained. He is said to have been strikingly handsome in his youth; and is now far advancing into years, though with considerable pretensions to juvenility, which are better

supported by a still vivid Cossac eye and erect martial figure, than by the raven locks of a well-curled wig, the constraint of stays, and the brilliant *ratelier* of factitious teeth, which occur on recalling to memory his "personal presentment."

There are, however, a few personages in the empire, very far superior both in character and acquirements to those we have named, who enjoy in a much more limited degree the confidence of the emperor. These are Count, now Prince Worontzow, Admiral Greig, and Field-marshal Prince Paskevitch d'Erivansky.

In the two first cases, the confidence reposed in these individuals has been strictly professional, and in the last is considered to be chiefly so.

These three personages, in their respective characters, of soldier, sailor, or administrator, have been considered, and not without much justice, as being the most skilful men in the empire.

The favour they have enjoyed, which indeed has never been greater than to secure for them temporarily a discretionary power in the departments they have presided, or over the territories they have governed, has only been vouchsafed to them at intervals, succeeded by intervals of disgrace, and has probably been solely owing to the universally recognised superiority of their abilities.

Paskewitch has the reputation of being a man of energy and integrity, though violent and tyrannical. As regards his military career, he served with some distinction in the war with Napoleon, and subsequently as commanding a Russian army in Georgia, and on the Persian frontier, when the title of d'Erivansky was conferred upon him for the capture of the city of Erivan, and the success of his campaign. At this period he shared with Diebitch Zabalkansky (or the crosser of the Balkan), the reputation of being the most skilful commander in the Russian service.

Paskewitch represented in the army the Russian, as Diebitch did the German faction. During the Polish war, Diebitch had made little progress, though opposed to Skrynetski (Skrzynecki), a man, whose moral timidity offered a strange, but not uncommon contrast with his personal valour, and who never followed up his successes, either from incapacity, or because dreading that their consequences might rouse the whole Polish people, and thus indispose the great powers, to whom, like many others, he vainly looked for a favourable solution of the national question. It must, however, be mentioned, that Count (now Prince) Tchornichef, the minister of war, (of the Russian party,) notoriously

threw every impediment in the way of the German Diebitch, withholding from him reinforcements in men and stores at the most critical moments. At Ostrolenka, the last great battle which Diebitch fought, he had succeeded in utterly surprising Skrynetski, who, nevertheless, after a desperate and sanguinary fight, obliged the Russians to recross the river Narew, and remained master of the field. So great was, however, the discouragement into which he had fallen, increased by the prodigious loss of officers in the combat, that he precipitately retreated from the field he had conquered, thus converting this dearly purchased victory into an unequivocal defeat; but, on the other hand, Diebitch did not even occupy the ground which Skrynetski had quitted, but remained inactive. Thus, as throughout the war, both Diebitch and his adversary played the part of those generals in the last Spanish war, who, whether on the side of Don Carlos or his niece, reciprocally defeated each other, and were commonly no further advanced after victories which they were incapable of following up. Diebitch died suddenly,—poisoned, according to the popular belief in Russia, by the Russian faction; and Paskewitch took his place. Paskewitch acted with that decision which is a characteristic difference between

the operations of German and Russian commanders, and which, in this instance, gave him a singular advantage, both over his predecessor and the antagonist who so much resembled that predecessor in indecision of character. He acted promptly and boldly ; Skrynetski with more than his previous irresolution ; and thus the war was put an end to, and Poland's independence forfeited.

But there was far more of good fortune than of merit in this successful boldness ; for the execution of his plan was as rash and unskilful as it was happy. To cross the Vistula, he led his army by a flank march under the cannon of Modlin, where he would have exposed himself to destruction, if attacked even with an army less unwieldy than that which he commanded. . But he was not attacked, either when before Modlin, nor during the passage of the river ; and by the happy issue of a manœuvre, which depended for success on the supineness of his adversary, he was speedily enabled to put an end to the campaign on which depended the political existence of Poland. Paskewitch was afterwards created Prince of Warsaw, and entrusted with the government of the country, which had been rather delivered up to him by the errors of its defenders, than conquered by his own sword.

The unpretending field-marshal has, therefore, never, during his career, had occasion to prove any remarkable military genius ; but the emperor has been anxious to give him, in spite of himself, the reputation of a great captain. The reign of Nicholas is compared by his flatterers to that of Peter the Great, of Catherine, Napoleon, and Augustus. As Poushkin, the first of Russian poets, flourished, and Karamsin the historian closed his career in it, there appeared to be wanting to its completion a great captain, a character into which it was impossible to think of transforming any one else in the empire but Paskewitch.

Admiral Greig, the son of an English admiral of that name in Catherine's service, was brought up in the English navy, and for a considerable period entrusted with unlimited authority on the Black Sea. Count Worontzow, also brought up in England, had for many years an equal authority confided to him throughout Southern Russia. Greig and Worontzow have alone maintained a character of which any of the subjects of a free and really civilised state might be proud. Though every man in the empire is aware that to attempt to change the abuses and corruption of the administration, would be to combat the windmills of Don

Quixote ; still such public officers as Greig and Worontzow could not cease in their efforts to restrain them, and consequently raised against them the whole bureaucracy. The popularity which Worontzow had acquired amongst the nobility and the people, gave umbrage to imperial jealousy. Greig was disgraced from the first of these causes, under pretext of a *mesalliance* which he had made with a Jewess. Worontzow, from a combination of both. He has since been restored to favour, and was this year sent as the only man in the empire whose veracity and integrity could be depended on, to undertake in the western Caucasus, a campaign, whose unfortunate termination in confusion and disgrace has verified his anticipations, and obtained for him the barren title of prince.

There was another individual, Count Matutsewicz, of whose character and talents honourable mention should be made. Better known in this country than even Pozzo di Borgo, he, like Pozzo di Borgo, has been gathered to his fathers, diminishing by his decease the number of those skilful diplomatic agents selected by Alexander, and subsequently employed by the present emperor, who, when trusting to his own judgment, has been invariably unfortunate in every choice he has yet made, of civil, military, or diplomatic servants.

Matutsewicz, as his name indicates, was a Pole from the province of Mazovia, the cradle of the Polish aristocracy. His father, if the author remembers right, was one of the ministers of the independent grand duchy of Warsaw. His son, the personage in question, belonged to the same dashing school of diplomacy as Tchornichef, the minister of war, before he abandoned that career. Eschewing the pedantry of his profession, under an appearance of frivolity he was a keen observer, and a sagacious politician. Many of his dispatches, written after a hard day's hunting, when those who had been his companions across the fields of Leicestershire, and at the table, had retired to rest, are said to be models of political penetration and lucid exposition.

The urbanity of his manners made him a general favourite, whilst his English tastes and habits rendered him peculiarly and deservedly popular in this country. He was considered to be the only foreigner who had ever shone in the field, and acknowledged even at Melton to be a crack rider.

His English predilections are said to have given umbrage to the emperor, and were carried so far, that, on returning to St. Petersburg, for the purpose of being surrounded by English people, he would take up his abode at an English boarding-house,

though the establishments of that description are of very secondary order in that city. His knowledge of the state of parties, and of public opinion in England, rendered his services, however, too valuable to be dispensed with by his sovereign.

Matutsewicz, like Pozzo di Borgo, was one of those men who, with a profound disgust for Russia, remained voluntarily more ignorant of its internal condition, than if employed by another court ; but who, seduced by the attractions of wealth and station which were to be enjoyed out of it, consented to serve its cabinet, and who on account of their political ability and personal popularity—and considering how apt the public is to be influenced in its judgment of a distant state by the individuals representing it—were the most dangerous to the cause of freedom and civilisation who could possibly have been employed. So much so, that even the author of these volumes surprises himself yielding to a feeling of involuntary regret, at their removal from a scene in which they were playing a part so pernicious.

Diplomacy has been characterised as at best the art of deceiving foreign countries for the benefit of your own ; but it is apt to resolve itself into the converse, of deceiving your own country for the benefit of

others. Its value, under any circumstances, to a powerful government, may be considered as more than questionable. Our naval officers have notoriously proved more successful in their negotiations than the most skilful of our professional diplomatists. The labours of the latter, when employed on secret missions, with discretionary powers, by constitutional governments, seem, after failure in the visionary attempt at over-reaching foreign cabinets, to be chiefly directed to the mystification of the public at home.

Hence the governments of France and England have usually fared the worse in their disputes with the United States, which are often represented abroad by men of notorious inexperience or incapacity. This arises from the fact, that on every important question, the American diplomatists become virtually mere delegates, to the discretion of whom nothing is left by the exigencies of public opinion at home. We have witnessed both French and English ministries with might and right alike upon their side, give way before the difficulties of such a position, abandoning the national interests confided to them, because their maintenance might have endangered the stability of their tenure of office, or the reputation of the diplomatists who served them;

war, however inevitable, being to a man of that profession, what the death of the patient is to the doctor,—an assumed reflection on his skill. No doubt the time is rapidly approaching when the art of the diplomatist will become as obsolete as that of the astrologer; when, confident in the national power, and desirous only of impartial justice, our whole intercourse with foreign governments will be matter of publicity. In as far, however, as exceptions may be admitted to the general inutility of diplomacy, they apply unquestionably to its agency when employed by a cabinet like the Russian, and in some degree to the intercourse of a constitutional government with a despotism as absolute as that of Russia. The Russian empire looms gigantically in the distance, and intimidating the feeble, increases its dominion, influence, and power by the power it is supposed to possess. Its diplomacy is the mouth-piece by which this intimidation is conveyed,—the accompanying agency of corruption put into operation. It is by means of her indefatigable diplomatists that the opinion of Western Europe has during so many years been kept quiescent; for, if the Cabinet of St. Petersburg had in this respect shown as much apathy as the Ottoman Porte, leaving things to take their natural

course, the popular voice in France and England would long since have called urgently for that political crusade which public opinion in this country has long since commenced against negro slavery.

With respect to our own relations with a government, which, in the reign of the present emperor, may be considered as essentially personal, it is obvious that any impression produced upon the sovereign as individual, acquires an importance which it could under no other circumstances possess, and may hence be supposed to offer unusual chances of success to a diplomatist.

It should, however, be remembered, how great a distinction in every-day life, men of the most ordinary capacity make, between those with whom they transact business or whom they select for companionship; and how seldom in anything affecting their interests they allow themselves in the former case to be influenced by their predilection in the latter, whilst, on the other hand, there is more danger of the diplomatist being cajoled by the sovereign, than the sovereign by the diplomatist. This was evidenced in the case of Lord Durham. He was supposed to be sent over bristling with prejudice against the Russian cabinet, and bearing with him

the option of peace or war. He found an officer in simple uniform in his apartments, who stepped forward to introduce himself and give him welcome. It was the Emperor Nicholas, who continued to treat the plenipotentiary with a mingled urbanity and deference which was so flattering to his vanity that he soon sank from the proud position of a dreaded mediator, into that of a thorough-going partisan of the sovereign he had come to admonish. The emperor ordered reviews, and placed steamers and men-of-war at his disposal, and on his first demand, caused all the claims of all British subjects, which had been vainly advocated during years by the British legation, to be forthwith adjusted and discharged. By this means Lord Durham was so completely gained over and disarmed, that he desisted in the intercession he had come to make in favour of Poland, and in many other demands, which the fears of the Imperial cabinet would at that period have conceded to a more energetic mediator. The satisfaction felt by the British residents at the prompt, unexpected, and unprecedented settlements of their pecuniary claims, by rendering Lord Durham popular, not only saved his conduct from obloquy, but has caused that of subsequent legations to be most unfavourably contrasted with it.

Having no point to carry, the emperor has since turned a deaf ear to all reclamations in favour of the claims of British subjects, as undoubtedly he will continue to do till such time as an envoy is found obtuse or weak enough to barter, as Lord Durham, the interest of the country at large, for that of a few individuals.

The foreign diplomatists at the court of St. Petersburg, and the Russians themselves, were, however, far from entertaining as exalted an idea of Lord Durham as the English residents, who had profited by his exertions ; and it was a common observation amongst them, that he had been outwitted by the emperor.

Prince Menchikof, the minister of marine, who, whether through design or imprudence, occasionally violates all the rules of military etiquette, to make confidential observations on the quarter-deck, was heard to say directly after the departure of Lord Durham, that he had come strutting like a turkey-cock, and gone away like a plucked goose. The occasion of this remark was particularly humiliating to the English engineer, in whose presence it was made, to the officers of the Russian steamer which had conveyed the English envoy to Stettin. It is customary for princes, ambassadors, and such person-

ages as receive this mark of favour, to give presents to the officers and crew; now those distributed by Lord Durham were very much below the average value of gifts ordinarily made by illustrious travellers.

The minister of marine, boarding the steamer on its return, enquired what donation had been made; such inquisitiveness, however unworthy of his station it may appear, being in Russia habitual to personages of a rank far more exalted than his own.

On examining them, with many expressions of disgust at the Englishman's meanness, he reproached the officers with accepting a gift so beggarly, and recommended them to throw the present into the water, a suggestion which was promptly complied with. Meanwhile, Lord Durham, a convert to the fitness of Russian institutions, was on his way to England, where he spoke shortly afterwards with considerable enthusiasm of that much maligned sovereign, the Emperor Nicholas.

After the mission of Lord Durham, it became naturally difficult for his successors, whom the emperor had no good reason for delighting to honour, to satisfy the English residents, whose claims and disputes with the authorities were again subject to the same chicanery and interminable formalities as

before ;—and hence, as it has been said, comparisons unjust and detrimental to the popularity of subsequent diplomatists have been constantly made by the commercial body, which constitutes ninety-nine hundredths of the British residents or visitors in Russia. Allowance made for this disadvantage, it may be affirmed that Great Britain, both as regards attention to the interests of its subjects, and the respect he inspired, has never been more creditably represented than by the Marquis of Clanricarde.

Great Britain and France, indeed, are the only two European countries whose legations may be considered as able to afford the remotest protection to the persons or interests of their respective subjects. The protection which our arrangements with the Russian cabinet affords to British subjects, in their persons and interests, is, however, far from being sufficient or complete, and calls loudly for interference for its increase, both because the Russian government, if pressed upon the matter, would probably concede the point, and because those who suffer from its insufficiency are not individuals residing in or visiting the Russian empire to gratify their curiosity or caprice, but in the utilitarian pursuit of commerce; being moreover, as often the case with our English seamen, forced visitants of the Russian shores.

In our ordinary intercourse with foreign states, we recognise their criminal law as affecting Englishmen whilst in their dominions, subject only to the supervision of our consular authorities, to ensure regularity of procedure. But notorious partiality or venality in the administration of justice, has led either to specific stipulations or to practical interference in such cases. Such has been the case in Portugal and in China, if the author's recollections serve him right.

Now, the unanimous evidence of all acquainted with the subject, goes to prove the utter and scandalous perversion of justice in Russia in every department, from that of the police, which is entrusted with more than the summary power of our magistracy, up to the highest tribunals. The criminal courts are so disgracefully venal and corrupt that it is perfectly possible to obtain the condemnation to capital punishment of a wholly innocent individual, as may be seen in the instance of the cripple given at page 82 of this volume. There is no judge whom popular report does not consider to be bought for a ten or even a five-pound note, in the absence of a counter bribe; and it is notorious that *chenovniks* (government officers) may be found to swear to anything for the value of three shillings.

Now, all a consul is empowered to do, is to see that no irregularity takes place in the trial. He cannot, however convinced of the fact, say to the judge, you are bribed, and your witnesses are all notoriously forsworn. By the evidence of half-a-dozen individuals holding the rank of commissioned officers, and by the decree of one of the highest judicial dignitaries, the most palpable iniquity may thus be committed, and an Englishman capitally punished in strict accordance with the laws of the land. It is only a year or two ago that an English sailor was knouted at Riga and condemned to Siberia for the alleged murder of a pilot. It is not meant to be asserted that he was not guilty, but simply that his condemnation afforded no proof of his being so. English sailors at Riga and at Cronstadt are often seen forced by the military police, with cane in hand, to sweep the streets in company with the lowest criminals, because found drunk in the streets. Now let any English residents, who having abandoned all mercantile connection with Russia, dare give evidence, be examined, and see whether they have not known numerous instances wherein the sailors have been seized by the police when perfectly sober, to pay off some grudge to the captain, or to extort a few copecks from themselves.

Until some special court be established in the sea-ports, in which the resident merchants or the consular authorities have a voice, the interference of the latter must always be incomplete ; for, unless in the exercise of a direct right, in most cases it can only be made by reflection on the integrity of the authorities ; and it must be remembered, that if a consul render himself too obnoxious to the government in whose dominions he is established, he runs the risk of expulsion, thereby debarring himself from such future limited interference as he might have been permitted, for the benefit of the subjects of his native flag.

The influence exercised by the representatives of Great Britain, both diplomatic and consular, is far greater than that enjoyed by those of France ; constituting a difference which the French public would have every right to resent, and which may be defined as follows : An Englishman, though subject to much extortion and annoyance, is habitually treated more favourably than any other foreigner ; a Frenchman, on the contrary, is exposed to pointed insult and ill treatment whenever he comes into collision with the government officials. The author is acquainted with two instances where Frenchmen have been brought

before the emperor's aide-de-camp, **Kakoshkine**, civil police master of St. Petersburg ; in both of which, that functionary, on learning their country, condemned them without a hearing ; observing in the one case,—“ Ah ! a Frenchman.” and spitting on the ground to mark his contempt : in the other, addressing his victim, “ Vous êtes français, coquin, et marche ! ” “ You are a Frenchman, a rascal, be off with you ! ” It is true that a Frenchman, as well as an Englishman, is ordinarily exempt from exile to Siberia, from forcible enlistment, and from the infliction of corporal punishment, though at all times liable to sudden expulsion from the empire. But, unhappily, the subjects of other European states enjoy no such immunity ; and the Prussian cabinet in particular, which has so frequently duped the press of France and England by its pretensions to liberalism, has cruelly abandoned, and still daily abandons, its own citizens to the tender mercies of the Russian authorities.

It will readily be understood, that the artificial boundaries of continental states, when not marked by rivers or mountain chains, or strong distinctions of habit and language, which in fact never exist without the first-named adjuncts, become, with whatever se-

verity maintained, impotent, permanently to divide the populations living on each side of an imaginary line, which only treaties have defined. The inhabitants of one village will resort to another within stone's throw, though one may be situated within the Prussian or Austrian, the other in the Russian territory; and, without the employment of vast armies, it is impossible to prevent the peasant, in his neighbourly pursuits, from overstepping the limits of his field, because it happens to be the boundary of an empire.

Hence, excepting locally and temporarily, it has never been attempted, even by the most despotic governments, and especially on the frontiers of Russia, Prussia, and Austria; the inhabitants all speaking a common language, have so long carried on comparatively unrestricted intercourse with their immediate neighbours, that it may be considered now impossible entirely to prevent it.

The Emperor Nicholas, in his violent efforts to suppress smuggling,—which, by the way, has since considerably increased,—issued an order that all Prussians found on his territory should be sent to Siberia; and some hundreds have already been despatched thither, without remonstrance from the cabinet of Berlin, as the author has some reason to

believe ; but at least, as the event proves, without effectual remonstrance.

It will excite no surprise after this abandonment of its own people, that Prussia, by renewal of the cartel, should play the jackal to Nicholas. It undertakes by this treaty to restore all fugitives from their prison-house in the Russian dominions ; and though professing to exempt from this measure political offenders, this clause merely entails on the Russian authorities the formality of claiming them as civil criminals, which the law itself enables them to do, as it would even in Prussia, since every individual leaving the country without the permission of the authorities attested on his passport by their *visa*, becomes on that very account liable to criminal persecution.

The great want of deference shown, since the revolution of 1830, to France, which has no complicity of political interest like Austria and Prussia, with the Russian cabinet, is owing partly to the personal antipathy of the Emperor Nicholas to Louis Philippe, and partly to the undignified solicitude with which that sovereign has attempted to deprecate the angry feeling of the autocrat. Louis Philippe, by returning during years, like Bernadotte, with humility and respect, the contumely of the Tsar, may

have hoped, like Bernadotte, eventually to mollify his wrath; but whatever motive prompted him, whether want of spirit, or whether the determination to sacrifice even in a manner the most ungrateful, his private feelings to the pursuit of some great end,—still he would, probably, by the assumption of a firmer tone, long since have forced Nicholas to display that courtesy into which events are gradually forcing him to unbend; instead of compromising, as the king of the French has done, during sixteen years, the dignity of France, and the interests of its subjects, to effect that object.

There is, perhaps, no man existing, to whom the civilised world is more indebted than to Louis Philippe; and there is no living individual whose life is of as much importance to the best interests of humanity.

Undoubtedly the peace of Europe was long chiefly maintained through his firmness, moderation, and consummate wisdom. During subsequent years, it can scarce be doubted, that his death would have been the signal for its violation; whilst, perhaps, it yet depends, and may still for some years to come, hinge on the duration of a life which thus becomes unprecedentedly precious.

To all who watch the progress of public opinion

in France, innumerable signs conjoin to presage that the period is surely, if slowly approaching, when its people will feel their interests so identified with those of Great Britain, as to render any collision impossible between two countries, whose strife would be one of the greatest calamities which could afflict the human race. It is to be hoped that the national feeling may have already progressed so far towards this point, that the moderate and enlightened party which has gathered around him, will suffice, like an experienced crew, even if the pilot were lost, to guide into the desired haven, the vessel, which, without disparagement to his exertions, it must be remembered, that they have aided him in navigating through the storm. This tribute to the wisdom and genius of the King of the French, and to the beneficial action both of his conduct and of that of his party, the author may the more readily render, because without predilection for the private character of Louis Philippe, and without sympathy for the motives of those who have seconded his efforts.

It is rendered, judging both as public men should be judged, by their actions, which alone have any practical results for the public; whilst their motives and inspirations, which, however apparent,

must always be subject to some doubt, can only be taken into account in our estimation of their private character.

A few years back, the republican party contained, and probably the opposition—I mean that portion of the nation adverse to existing institutions, not the parliamentary opposition—still comprises in its misguided ranks, the vast majority of those animated by the most noble and generous impulses which move mankind to action.

The party now in the ascendancy, and virtually governing France, is not perhaps unjustly reproached by its adversaries, with being animated by the spirit of trade, in its narrowest acceptation. But at the same time that this party is solely guided by its selfish interests, it is enlightened enough to discern the true direction in which they lie, which happily chances to be that most conducive to the peace and civilisation of the world.

Its adversaries, as a body, are still in knowledge far behind the moderate party of France, and the average public of this country; whilst the warmth of national temperament, and the consequent vivacity of prejudice, would render necessary a far larger amount of knowledge, to prevent them from

abusing the possession of power, by entering on the course most detrimental to the eventual freedom and prosperity of their own and neighbouring countries.

This enlightenment, requisite to discern the true path to the attainment of the objects which it has in view, makes daily progress in this party, and consequently daily converts from that passion for war, hostility to England, and tendency (by which it has hitherto been distinguished) towards the adoption of extreme and unsafe theories, instead of tried and practical reforms.

When its views shall therefore have sufficiently expanded, there will be more to be expected from this portion of the nation than from that which now steers the right course, guided by its clear-sightedness, but impelled only by that narrow selfishness, which, whilst France had still slaves in its dominions, allowed it to haggle for a few thousand pounds proposed for their relief, and to become with open eyes the accomplice of those who, blinded by the enthusiasm of national prejudice, afford facilities to the slave-holder only in pursuance of their hostility to England. However much more of eventual promise there may therefore be in that portion of the French people which, in as far as represented

in the chambers, is designated as "left" and "extreme left," its exclusion since the revolution of July, from power, has undoubtedly hitherto been a blessing both to France and Europe; and whatever diversity of opinion there may be as to the precise share which Louis Philippe's genius may have had in conducing to this result, there is none as to the fact that it has been very large; and he is hence entitled to the gratitude, not only of his country, but of Europe at great. If its misapplication to Godoy, the intriguing traitor, had not brought the title into discredit, he might justly have been honoured as the Prince of Peace in an age which values pacific triumphs above the most brilliant achievements of the sword; and whatever the future bring forth, at least the sixteen years of his reign which have elapsed, will suffice to ensure him the renown in history of the most skilful and enlightened sovereign who has ever ruled over any realm. The author, in making the observation, can hardly be suspected of flattery, when adding (together with a few following observations) his belief, which no accompanying praise would qualify in the eyes of the court of the Tuilleries, that the King of the French, as the late Lady Newburgh contended, is the son and change-

ling of the Italian jailor and executioner, Chiappini.

It may be remembered that her ladyship was born in the same small town in the Apennines where the wife of the Duke of Orleans, who had never borne any but female children, was confined. The jailor quitted his occupation to bring his presumed daughter up in affluence. She grew up fair, and bearing a striking likeness to the Bourbons. Louis Philippe is dark, and in mind, person, and character, the very antipodes of that incapable and ill-fated race. In disposition he has shown, if not avarice, an insatiable avidity of gain, which is doubly inexcusable in the wealthiest individual in the world, and as endangering by its pertinacity the whole political fabric which he has so successfully and laboriously upreared. The private wealth of Louis Philippe, as estimated by one of the great capitalists of Europe, throws far into the shade the fortunes of the Arkwrights and the Rothschilds. Yet for the appanage of his sons, a paltry consideration to one of his means, he is constantly at issue with his ministry, endangering the stability of his dynasty, and the work of years.

In reviewing the past conduct of this sovereign with reference to the potentates of Eastern Europe, the peculiar position in which he was placed must

not be forgotten ; and it should be borne in mind, that his first duty he owed to France, which, though powerful enough to have defied, if not to have mastered its continental neighbours, was still so difficult to preserve against internecine dangers, and to defend against itself. War would in every human probability have led to the triumph of a dangerous party in the state, to anarchy and to military despotism. To preserve France from these evils, he acted rather the part of a wise than of a generous man, whilst, besides, the part he was acting was not that of the man, but of the politician.

To secure the peace of France, he sacrificed all those who had a right to look to her for succour or protection, condescending even to take many humiliating steps for the purpose of ensuring towards the pacific policy of his cabinet, the forbearance of those oppressing them.

However inglorious such a part may appear when recorded, it is probably nevertheless true, that he thus pursued and accomplished all that was practical, and that any other course, without finally benefitting those whom he abandoned, would have compromised the liberties and well-being of the country over which he had been called to rule. If

painful and degrading sacrifices were necessary to propitiate the great continental powers, they were resolutely made in all their humiliation. The expulsion of Lelewel from France, and of the Polish exiles who had taken part in the expeditions of Zalivski and Konarski, are but slight illustrations of the length to which his cabinet went, to prove the sincerity of its pacific intentions, beside that afforded by the fact that the French police was in regular correspondence with the police of Prussia and of Russia; betraying to both the movements of the refugees, as was too ostentatiously evidenced to some of them by the police authorities of those countries on their arrest, and in a similar manner proved to others on their return, from the very mouth of Gisquet, the police prefect, when giving them the order to quit the French territory, to seek the refuge which other constitutional countries afforded. These, and other stains in the policy of Louis Philippe, may be excused in consideration of the difficulties with which he was surrounded, or in favour of the success with which he has attained a great object, which it was pardonable that he should pursue with extreme, or perhaps even with unscrupulous solicitude.

But times have since changed, without yet show-

ing that alteration in the policy of the King of the French which sixteen years of success would safely have allowed. France reposes now no longer on a volcano. The republican party has dwindled into comparative insignificance, unless it be recalled to life and vigour by the want of elasticity, or contractive tendency of that policy, and by the reaction which it may occasion. The great majority even in those opposed to his government and inimical to his dynasty, are disposed to admit both with certain modifications in the existing order of things. The general feeling of the country has grown decidedly constitutional, and may continue so, provided it be shown that the present state of government contains a safety-valve which may allow a gradual and pacific expansion to the dilating exigences of the public mind. France is now menaced by a danger diametrically opposed to that which threatened it in the earlier periods of the present reign. Thus far Louis Philippe has prevented retrogression, and ensured stability; but it is not enough for a people like the French to be stable, if at the same time stationary in an age when all things tend to progression; and if his powerful hand, which hitherto has so skilfully guided the engine of the state, be allowed to press so heavily on that safety-valve, the very strength

and energy which before were conducive to security, may, on the contrary, now occasion the explosion.

France, though saved from itself by having a king who not only reigned but governed, is now thereby impeded in its progress; and unless he govern in a much more liberal spirit, both as regards reform at home and his relations with foreign states abroad, the country will probably, as Thiers has recently expressed, grow dangerously impatient of such tutelage.

There is no longer now in prospective, anarchy at home as the consequence of dissent with neighbouring potentates; and the chief dangers which menace the popularity of Louis Philippe whilst he lives, and the stability of his dynasty after him, exist only in his complicity, or presumed connivance with those despotic states to which necessity once made him so subservient. The propagandism of constitutional governments and representative institutions, on the contrary, would not only avert the dangers to which the struggles of the victims of Russia, Prussia, and Austria may continually give rise, but identify the reigning family with a mode of government so much in accordance with the genius of the times, that eventually it cannot fail of universal extension.

Louis Philippe, of all men, has shown himself convinced of the benefit which must accrue to the prosperity of France, and to the security of his throne, from a cordial and permanent good understanding betwixt the country he governs and Great Britain. Now, in the whole cycle of political questions, there is perhaps only one on which the sympathies of the French and English people might be made to harmonise without giving rise to jealousies; and perhaps nothing but the emulation inspired by co-operation in such a cause would promptly effect that cordial fraternisation which otherwise must be the work of years, with all intervening chances of interruption.

That neutral ground on which the two nations may meet to inhume all lingering heart-burnings or animosities, is the question of intervention in favour of Poland, to procure for its wretched inhabitants those constitutional immunities solemnly guaranteed by treaties, of which the three powers have been the shameless violators; and of whose infringement, France and England, pledged to their maintenance, the apathetic witnesses.

It must be remembered that the Polish question differs from every other in this singular feature, that, though it may in general be regarded with selfish indifference by the majority, there can be

said to exist but one opinion upon it with the French and English public.

If we take the united press and representative assemblies of both countries, we cannot probably find more than one man, (the Marquis of Londonderry,) or two papers, (the *Presse* and the *Morning Post*,) which, in 1846, dare venture to express their sympathy with the oppressors of Poland.

Now, what intelligent Tory can lay his hand upon his heart, and declare that he would not consider as an advantage to his party, the secession of the noble marquis from its ranks? The *Presse* is, by the avowal of those connected with it, pensioned by Russia, and the *Morning Post* reported to be so; a rumour which the author cannot credit, believing as he does the Russian diplomatic agents to be far too well informed to imagine that the *Morning Post* could in any way influence the public opinion in favour of their government, unless indeed by writing against it.*

* The hostility of both Lord Londonderry and the *Morning Post* to the Polish cause, is not quite motiveless.

His lordship, on the eve of his departure for St. Petersburg, as ambassador, was superseded in his appointment, on account of the strong feeling excited in the House of Commons by the indiscreet avowal on his part of sentiments towards the Poles, which would have been repudiated, even by his brother, Lord Castlereagh, who actually brought a bill into an English House of Commons.

As regards Louis Philippe, though evidently a man to whose credit as a statesman it must be re-

to make libel punishable by transportation, with death as the penalty of return ; and who publicly, in a British parliament, plumed himself on waving the establishment of a censorship, which he had at first intended.

The *Morning Post* has sufficient reasons for identifying its opinions with those of the noble marquis, besides that of turning an honest penny by the tendency of its political *convictions*, as may be illustrated by the following receipt from its advertisement office :

THE MORNING POST.		
Office, Wellington-street, Strand. (opposite the English Opera-house.)		
No. of Adv.	Insertions.	March 29th, 1846.
	1	21s.
		G. Courts.

This advertisement refers to the notice of a ball about to be given for the benefit of the Polish exiles, in Willis's room, in the first week of June, 1846 ; and which appeared gratis in the columns of the *Times*, *Morning Chronicle*, *Globe*, *Sun*, *Daily News*, *Advertiser*, *Morning Herald*, and *Standard* ; all of which papers refused to deduct a guinea from the slender fund destined to the relief of the necessitous exile, of the sick, the aged, and the stranger.

The Marquis of Londonderry—who has thus secured one panegyrist for his lucubrations—is, or was, connected by the ties of proprietorship with the *Morning Post*. He is, indeed, even suspected of contributing to its columns, where, at least, he must have many opportunities of confirming that species of knowledge with which they are ordinarily replete, derived from the house-keeper's room, the butler's pantry, or from direct observations in the porter's hall. Now, it might be interesting to know how much of that identical one-pound-one came to the share of the noble marquis as proprietor?

* corded that he has sacrificed his personal predilections to his policy, (which hitherto has been identical with the weal of the state,) it is evident that he can feel none towards the Emperor Nicholas, who during years received all his advances with coldness and contempt, and his professions of amity with treachery.

On his accession to the throne, the king of the French wrote privately to the Emperor Nicholas, as follows :

*Letter from Louis Philippe to Nicholas.**

Sire and Brother (Monsieur mon frère),

I announce to your Majesty my accession to the throne, by the letter which General Athalin will present you with in my name ; but I am desirous at the same time of speaking open-heartedly to your majesty on the consequences of the catastrophe which I sought so earnestly to avert.

** Lettre de Louis Philippe à Nicolas.*

Monsieur mon frère !

J'annonce mon avènement à la couronne à Votre Majesté, par la lettre que le général Athalin lui présentera en mon nom, mais j'ai besoin de lui parler, avec une entière confiance, sur les suites de la catastrophe, que j'aurais tant voulu prévenir.

I had long seen cause to regret that King Charles and his government were not following a course more in accordance with the national wishes. I was, however, far from foreseeing the astounding occurrences which have just taken place. I had hoped that in the absence of that good faith in the spirit of the Charter, and of our institutions, which was wanting, that a little prudence and moderation would have sufficed to maintain the late government for a long time still as it was conducted.

Since the 8th of August 1829, the composition of the new ministry had, however, alarmed me. I saw how far those constituting it were odious and suspicious to the nation, and I consequently

Il y avait longtemps que je regrettais que le roi Charles, et son gouvernement, ne suivissent pas une marche mieux calculée, pour répondre à l'attente, et au vœu de la nation. J'étais bien loin pourtant de prévoir les prodigieux évènements, qui viennent de se passer, et je croyais même qu'à défaut de cette allure franche, et loyale, dans l'esprit de la charte, et de nos institutions, qu'il était impossible, d'obtenir, il aurait suffi d'un peu de prudence, et de modération pour que ce gouvernement pût aller longtemps, comme il allait. Mais depuis le 8 Aout 1829, la nouvelle composition du nouveau ministère m'avait fort alarmé.

Je voyais à quel point, cette composition était odieuse, et suspecte à la nation, et je partageais l'inquiétude générale, sur les mesures que nous devions en attendre.

shared in the general anxiety felt as to the measures to be expected from such men.

Nevertheless, the popular attachment to law, and the love of order, have made so much progress in France, that resistance to the late ministry would have been confined to parliamentary opposition, if in its insanity that ministry had not given the fatal signal by the most audacious violation of the charter, and by the abolition of those guarantees of our national liberties in the defence of which there is no Frenchman who would not willingly shed his blood.

No excesses have followed this fearful struggle, but it was difficult that there should not result from it some convulsions in our social condition; and the same exaltation of the public mind which had preserved it from disorder, tended at the same

Néanmoins, l'attachement aux loix, l'amour de l'ordre, ont fait de tels progrès en France, que la résistance au ministère ne serait certainement pas sortie des voies parlementaires, si dans son délire ce ministère lui-même n'eut donné le fatal signal, par la plus audacieuse violation de la charte, et par l'abolition de toutes les garanties de notre liberté nationale, pour lesquelles il n'est guère, de français, qui ne soit prêt à verser son sang. Aucun excès n'a suivi cette lutte terrible.

Mais il était difficile, qu'il n'en résultât pas quelque ébranlement, dans notre état social, et cette même exaltation des esprits

time to urge it to the trial of political theories which would have plunged France, and perhaps at the same time Europe, into terrible calamities.

It was under these circumstances that all eyes turned towards myself.

The vanquished party itself thought me necessary to its safety. I was perhaps still more so to the conquerors, that their victory might not degenerate. Setting on one side many personal considerations, which united to make me wish to decline it, I accepted this painful task because I felt that the slightest hesitation on my part might compromise the future fate of France, and the peace of its neighbours. The indecisive title of Lieutenant-General, conferred upon me, excited

qui les avant détournés de tout désordre, les portait en même temps vers des essais de théorie politique qui aurait précipité la France, et peut-être l'Europe dans de terribles calamités. C'est dans cette situation, sire, que tous les yeux se sont tournés vers moi. Les vaincus eux-mêmes m'ont cru nécessaire à leur salut. Je l'étais encore plus, peut-être pour que les vainqueurs ne laissassent pas dégénérer la victoire. J'ai donc accepté cette tâche noble et pénible, et j'ai écarté toutes les considérations personnelles qui se réunissaient pour me faire désirer d'en être dispensé, parceque j'ai senti que la moindre hésitation, de ma part, pourrait compromettre l'avenir de la France, et le repos de tous nos voisins. Le titre de lieutenant-général, que laissait tout en question, excitait une confiance dangereuse, et il fallait se hâter,

fallacious hopes ; and it became necessary to emerge from a provisional state, not only to inspire the confidence requisite, but to save that charter so important to preserve, which the late emperor, your august brother, so well appreciated, and which would have been in danger of perishing if the public mind had not been speedily satisfied and re-assured.

The exalted wisdom and extreme perspicacity of your majesty, cannot fail to perceive, that to attain that salutary end, it becomes desirable that the recent occurrences in Paris should be considered from a right point of view, and that Europe, doing justice to my motives, should accord to my government the confidence to which it is entitled. Let your majesty bear in mind, that as long as Charles X.

de sortir de l'état provisoire, tant pour inspirer la confiance nécessaire, que pour sauver cette charte, si précieuse à conserver, dont feu l'empereur, votre auguste frère, connaissait si bien l'importance, et qui aurait été très compromise, si on n'eut promptement satisfait, et rassuré les esprits.

Il n'échappera ni à la perspicacité de votre majesté, ni à sa haute sagesse, que pour atteindre ce but salutaire, il est bien désirable que les affaires de Paris soient envisagées, sous leur véritable aspect, et que l'Europe, rendant justice, aux motifs qui m'ont dirigé, entoure mon gouvernement de la confiance qu'il a droit d'inspirer. Que votre majesté veuille bien ne pas perdre de vue, que tant que le roi Charles X. a régné sur la

reigned over France, I was the most submissive and the most faithful of his subjects ; and that it was only when I saw the action of the laws paralysed and the royal authority annihilated, that I thought it my duty to defer to the national wish, by accepting the crown which has been conferred upon me.

It is towards you, Sire, that the eyes of France are now directed. She delights to see in Russia her most powerful and natural ally. I hold a pledge, too, in the noble qualities which distinguish your imperial majesty, whom I pray to accept the assurance of the high esteem and inalienable friendship with which I am,

Sire and Brother, of your Imperial Majesty
the loving brother,

LOUIS PHILIPPE.

France, j'ai été le plus soumis et le plus fidèle de ses sujets, et que ce n'est qu'au moment où j'ai vu l'action des lois paralysée, et l'exercice d'autorité royale totalement arréantie, que j'ai cru de mon devoir de déférer au vœu national, en acceptant la couronne, à laquelle j'ai été appelé.

C'est sur vous, Sire, que la France a surtout les yeux fixés. Elle aime à voir dans la Russie, son allié le plus naturel, et le plus puissant. J'ai pour garantie le noble caractère, et toutes les qualités que distingueur Votre Majesté Imperiale.

Je la prie d'agréer les assurances de la haute estime, et de l'inaliéable amitié avec laquelle je suis,

Monsieur mon frère de Votre Majesté Impériale le bon frère,

LOUIS PHILIPPE.

*Answer from the Emperor Nicholas to Louis
Philippe.**

I have received from General Athalin the letter of which he was the bearer. Events, ever to be deplored, have placed your majesty in a cruel dilemma. You have taken a determination which appeared to you the only one which could save France from great calamities, and I can give no opinion as to the considerations by which your majesty has been influenced, but I entertain the hope that Divine Providence will bless the efforts you meditate in favour of the happiness of the French people.

In concert with my allies, I receive with pleasure the desire which your majesty expresses of maintaining peaceful and amicable relations with

** Lettre de Nicolas à Louis Philippe.*

J'ai reçu des mains du Général Athalin, la lettre dont il a été porteur. Des évènements déplorables ont placé votre majesté dans une cruelle alternative. Elle a pris une détermination qui lui a paru la seule propre à sauver la France de grandes calamités, et je ne me prononcerais pas sur les considérations qui ont guidé votre majesté, mais je forme des vœux pour que la Providence divine veuille bénir les intentions et les efforts qu'elle va faire pour le bonheur du peuple français. De concert avec mes alliés, je ne puis que accueillir le désir que votre majesté a exprimé d'entretenir des relations de paix et d'amitié avec tous les états d'Europe.

the states of Europe. So long as they are based on existing treaties, and on the firm determination of respecting the rights, obligations, and territorial possessions consecrated by them, Europe will find therein a pledge of peace, so necessary to the repose of France itself.

Called conjointly with my allies to cultivate with France these conservative relations, I shall for my own part use in them all the sollicitude they require, and display towards your majesty that personal feeling which I beg leave to express in return for the sentiments which you have given me the assurance of entertaining towards me.

I pray your majesty to accept, &c. &c.

NICHOLAS.

Tant qu'elles seront basées sur les traités existants et sur la ferme volonté de respecter les droits et obligations, ainsi que l'état de possession territoriale qu'ils ont consacré, l'Europe y trouvera une garantie de paix si nécessaire au repos de la France elle-même. Appelé conjointement avec mes alliés à cultiver avec la France ces relations conservatrices, j'y apporterai pour ma part toute la sollicitude quelles reclament, et les dispositions dont j'aime à offrir à votre majesté l'assurance en retour des sentimens quelle m'a exprimés.

Je la prie d'agréer un même-temps, &c. &c.

NICOLAS.

If, with the letter of Louis Philippe, we compare the style and wording of the answer vouchsafed by Nicholas, nothing can be more contemptuous. He replies not only without reciprocating the "*Monsieur mon frère*," with which his royal correspondent commences his confidential effusion, but with an apparent equivocation even in the constrained civilities to which he condescends. Contempt and antipathy to the man he addresses, are scarcely glossed over; but at the same time he gives a distinct assurance of his pacific intentions with regard to France, so long as international rights, as based on established treaties, were respected. Even this Nicholas need not have done. The Prince of Monaco, with a territory six miles wide, refused to recognise Louis Philippe! so that assuredly the Russian autocrat, ruling over sixty millions, and divided from France by hundreds of intervening miles, might, as a matter of principle, have pursued the same course. He chose, however, to dissimulate, and to declare pacific intentions whilst preparing a crusade against the revolution of 1830; an attempt which was frustrated by the breaking out of the Polish revolution; though the premeditation of war with France was proved beyond all doubt by the seizure of state

papers at Warsaw, in the portfolio of the Grand-duke Constantine ; and in particular by the finance minister Lubecki's reply to the Emperor Nicholas, produced before the French Chambers on the 22nd of March 1831, by Lafayette ; wherein he acknowledged the receipt of orders to hold funds disposable for enabling the Russo-Polish army to march westwards, and stated that he held at the imperial disposal eight millions of Polish florins in the treasury, and a million dollars in the bank of Berlin.

It is true that this treachery towards Louis Philippe, whom he treated so cavalierly, could scarcely be held so personal as the tone of his answer ; since the same seizure of letters brought to light as much evidence of imperial duplicity towards the Austrian cabinet, in the shape of a military plan for the invasion and occupation of Hungary, drawn up by lieutenant-colonel Prodzinski, at the express command of the emperor's brother. The Polish revolution put an end to all thoughts of aggression against France, both at that time and up to the present hour ; but the answer which has just been cited was not the last as well as first of the humiliations to which Louis Philippe was subject in his intercourse with the autocrat.

During years the Emperor Nicholas has heaped

upon him and his representatives every species of diplomatic slight and contumely, which were met, as it has been already shown, with unwearied patience; creditable, no doubt, to the judgment and forbearance of the French king, so long as endured rather than endanger the growth of the still insufficiently rooted constitutional system on which he had upreared his throne.

But the continuation of that subserviency which is now no longer a political necessity, would indicate not only a very different feeling to that which has been supposed to have hitherto actuated Louis Philippe, but furthermore, a lamentable departure from the sagacity and foresight by which his conduct is believed to have been dictated.

If moderate and enlightened men have seen cause to deny to that sovereign the meed of being solely moved by sentiments of exalted and self-denying public virtue, at least they had given him credit for that sort of integrity which nurtures the uprightness of private life by the forcible appeal to

* Incredible as the conventionalities of the west may render it, on one occasion Nicholas so far gave way to his antipathy as to express himself before several persons,—“Ce cochon Louis Philippe;”—a fact known in every drawing-room in St. Petersburg, and of which that sovereign's ambassador was not ignorant.

human interests contained in the homely maxim, that "honesty is the best policy."

A given amount of benevolence, and the wisdom derived by a powerful intellect from long and varied experience of life in all its phases, were supposed to have led him to the conclusion that he might pursue a career alike beneficial to himself, his family, and the millions of the French people, of whose destiny, his birth, antecedents, and talents concurred to make him arbiter.

He would, it was supposed, have foreseen that a distribution amongst the governed, of the utmost liberty consistent with social order, and an incessant furtherance of their interests, would have given the only possible stability to his throne and dynasty, and hence have been led to identify the security of both with the growing liberality of national institutions, and progressive well-being of the people.

Until recently, whatever the prejudice of opponents, or the voice of faction may have urged against him, and however often he may have found it necessary to diverge for a few steps into another path; there was every reason to believe that this was his ultimate object. Of late, however, there have been signs in his conduct of a contrary tendency. He appears anxious now voluntarily to cultivate relations of amity

with the despotic cabinets, utterly irreconcilable with the character he has hitherto enjoyed. Legitimacy of government, in the language of absolute states,—and indeed of legitimatists of all descriptions,—can only signify, the sanctification of power by its possession for a certain period ; since there is no reigning family, and no form of government whatever, in existence, which did not originally usurp the place of some other.

Now sixteen years of uninterrupted success have given to Louis Philippe, once under the ban of advocates of the right divine, a semi-legitimate title, just as Napoleon's intermarriage with a daughter of the Austrian emperor hallowed the imperial sceptre into which the victorious soldier chose to convert his sword. Now it might be difficult to conceive it possible, that a man who had displayed the political sagacity of Louis Philippe, should dream of repudiating, however tacitly, the solid title derived from the free choice of the people—that title, by which, for two centuries, the royal family of England has reigned over it,—for the sake of substituting therefor the questionable rights of those legitimate sovereigns who are tottering in their worm-eaten and barbaric thrones. Such a suspicion would be inadmissible, such a fear ridiculous.

if we did not know from the experience of recent history, that the most exalted genius, whether overstrained by its exertions, or whether through inherent susceptibility of certain vulgar temptations, yields to them, to its own destruction.

Napoleon, with all the moral force he derived from being the tamer of kings,—the humbler of ancient dynasties,—the child of that revolution which had impressed the world by contemning all it had looked upon with awe, and overturning all it had considered strong and terrible;—Napoleon abdicated all the advantages and prestige with which this character invested him, to assume, from his connection with the Austrian Cæsars, a few rags from their imperial mantle, which his heel had trampled in the dust.

The genius of Napoleon was constructive and destructive, the latter tendency predominating; that of Louis Philippe is conservative; and though his talents in their kind may be worthy of comparison with those of the Corsican, it can hardly be contended, that if the latter succumbed to the vulgar temptation of exchanging antagonism for companionship with legitimate princes, that the king of the French is to be held beyond the influence of so ignoble an ambition.

At home he has recently not been acting in that liberal spirit which his partisans once augured would guide his actions, as soon as he should have steered the vessel of the state out of immediate peril. France imperatively requires commercial and political reform. With a population exceeding that of Great Britain by seven millions, it has not one quarter the number of electors;—the only plea, in a country in which equality is the soul of every institution, for this restriction of the suffrage, is the ignorance of the masses;—but what has seriously been done to enlighten these masses? and, if anything, why is not the suffrage proportionately extended?

On commercial questions, Louis Philippe is undoubtedly aware of the advantages of a more liberal tariff to France, and of the eventual triumph there, as in all free countries, of free trade; but these sentiments he dare not avow, for fear of offending those monopolists who once were instrumental in upholding his dynasty, and maintaining peace for the purpose of advancing their own private ends; and whom, their support being now no longer indispensable, he should consequently sacrifice to the weal of that majority, for whose advantage he has been intrusted with his present power.

At home, therefore, it seems as if a narrow expediency now prompted the conduct of the man who was once supposed to be actuated by the far-seeing sagacity of the statesman. In his relations with foreign states we are shocked to find him ostentatious of sympathy with the legitimate despotisms of Eastern Europe—to find his police in 1846, (the same as when directed by Gisquet,) in connivance with the murderers of the Minsk nuns, and his minister and mouth-piece, Guizot, fathering in the French chamber the lies, and palliating the conduct of that Austrian cabinet, which with three hundred thousand soldiers at its command, hounded on a barbarous rabble to massacre men, women, and children in Gallicia.

Let us, however, hope that in these signs we are deceived. The right path and the wrong still lies open to that monarch, though it be impossible to pursue them both, or to tread a profitable course between.

He must soon choose between linking his name, fame, and prospects with the tottering cause of absolute sovereigns, who, if successful, would never pardon him ;—he must choose between being stigmatised as onewhom the blood of the executioner and jailor, his reputed father, led to play the jailor's and the

executioner's part—he must choose between this and the applause of all good and enlightened men, and the gratitude of whole nations; and he must bear in mind, that by this latter choice would be secured both his personal safety and the stability of his dynasty; while he should equally remember, that the last step which he or his family, if expelled, might make to descend from the French throne, would be the first to ascend the scaffold on which the Duke of Orleans perished.

CHAPTER V.

THE PRUSSIAN KINGDOM.

THE Prussian kingdom, the third of these great continental despotisms, is perhaps the most remarkable monument which has ever existed of human ingenuity—not ingenuity of a humane or beneficial kind—but of that nature which is sometimes evinced as well in the construction of a prison-wall as in the erection of an hospital or asylum.

The materials out of which this singular state has been constructed are as incohesive as the sands in the midst of which its capital is built; and it has no more permanent solidity of foundation than an edifice reared upon them.

Liable, from the topographical disposition of its territory, to be lost or won in a couple of battles, it is defended by a population, which organisation has rendered military, and nature made unwarlike;

which, during a century past, has been engaged in numerous wars, and whose every man is a drilled and pipeclayed soldier, but of which the army is so little efficient in a serious struggle, that, excepting against other Germans, the writer cannot recall four battles in a century won by the Prussian arms, unaided, against foreigners, to match a hundred disasters in the field.

This heterogeneous population is, moreover, disaffected on its eastern and western extremities, (in Posen, Silesia, and the Rhenish provinces,) and indifferent in the centre of the kingdom.

From such elements the Prussian state has been chiefly collected by the thrift of two princes, and by the policy and talents of Frederick the Great, perhaps the most consummate captain of times ancient or modern. Since his decease, a few bold and skilful ministers, and far more the continuous employment of statesmen above the ordinary average of mediocrity, has conduced to its prosperity, through the minute and intelligent attention they have paid to every branch of the public service. It would be difficult to conceive a series of minute regulations ostensibly better framed, for the direction of every department, civil, military, and judicial. But the very minuteness and of these regulati vents the peop

one single step alone ; and though these may originally have been instituted with a view to the national prosperity, this has nevertheless been unhesitatingly sacrificed wherever interfering with the paramount interests of the sovereign ; and with those supposed interests of despotism, unluckily it happens that the well-being of the people is nearly always irreconcilable.

Governed, therefore, by an arbitrary system, whilst its northern and western frontiers abut upon, or are only divided by the sea from constitutionally governed France, Belgium, Holland, England, and Sweden, there would be cause to wonder alike at the comparative popularity of its cabinet in those countries, and at the preservation of its existence during the last five-and-thirty years, if we neglected to take into account the fact that it has perseveringly and diligently pursued a double course of fraud, both towards its own subjects at home, and towards the public of those foreign nations whose opinion might have re-acted on the people of Prussia.

Thirty-five years of broken promises have thoroughly disabused its own subjects, though strangers are only now beginning to discover that the kingdom of Prussia, its sovereign, and the character which

its government assumes, are from beginning to end the embodiment of the personification of one continuous falsehood. It is not long since we commonly heard Prussia cited as pre-eminently distinguished by the patriotic feeling, warlike organization, industrial industry, and intellectual tendencies of its population, fostered by a system of education so complete as to have captivated even the imagination of Lord John Russell.

The Prussian government was described, whether as an enlightened despotism, or a practically limited monarchy, still as permitting more freedom to the governed than was allowed by the tyranny of popular opinion in more liberally constituted states, whilst the conduct of the Prussian princes was unanimously set forth as a series of political acts the most enlightened and patriotic. We are told by grave authorities, as the highest praise they can bestow, that these monarchs have humbled the power of the nobility; that in Prussian Poland (the grand duchy of Posen) they have freed the peasantry from personal servitude; that they were instrumental in procuring constitutional institutions for the German states possessing them; that wherever local prejudices will allow, (that is to say in the western provinces,) they have established the Na-

pleon Code ; and that they have given education to every man, and placed arms in the hands of every citizen,—the surest guarantee against any abuse of their supreme authority.

To read the animadversions contained in those papers which are recognised organs of the government, and to listen to the sneers of writers and professors at the want of liberality of the institutions of Great Britain and France, it is difficult not to conclude that, due allowance made for national prejudice, still the rule of Prussia, vaunted as so much more enlightened and free, must at least bear a close resemblance to constitutional countries.

Of all these assumptions, nothing is true excepting that the Prussian government has levelled aristocracy, and was the means of procuring constitutions for sundry states of the Germanic confederation.

In the abolition of aristocracy, it followed only the instincts of every despotism when it becomes ripe and strong enough. There is no aristocracy in the despotic countries of the East ; there is none in China, nor in Russia ; but it is replaced by a bureaucracy far more oppressive ; and this has been in Prussia substituted for it.

It is readily to be conceived how meritorious may be despoiling one set of men of their privileges for the benefit of the community, as happened with the abolition of the feudal distinctions lingering from the middle ages; when all ranks were submitted to the same laws and taxation, and when every immunity of which the privileged orders were deprived, was added to the sum of the liberties of the people.

This has been the case in Western, but not in Eastern Europe, where, consequently, the question assumes a very different aspect. There, in fact, the excessive privileges of aristocracy have been suppressed, not to divide amongst the whole people rights monopolised by a class, but only to confiscate them for the benefit of despotism. Thus, for instance,—to deprive the lord of the right to strike the peasant is an undoubted benefit to society, but to take from the lord himself his privilege of exemption from corporal punishment, as was done with the great bulk of the Polish nobility abolished by a stroke of the pen of Nicholas, was only to render the whole, instead of a portion, of the nation liable to the lash. This may be taken as an apt illustration of the general benefit to the community, of those reforms in absolute states which are commonly hailed by free countries as the dawn of a

happier state of things ; and it applies, though in a less degree, to Prussia, as well as to Austria and Russia.

As regards the intercession of Prussia with the diet, subsequently to 1814, in favour of representative institutions ; though these were mainly obtained through her influence, that same influence was afterwards successfully devoted to rendering the constitutions it had obtained for its protégés, a dead-letter ; and its cabinet, which promised five-and-thirty years ago a similar boon to its people, is still only promising it. Prussia at that period was emulating the policy of the Emperor Alexander, described in the first volume of this work, when he conceived the hope of reuniting the scattered fragments of Poland under his sceptre, by setting himself up as its protector, and making an ostentatious parade of liberalism. The Prussian cabinet appears about the same period to have conceived the idea of playing towards the German states, the same part as Alexander did towards Poland, endeavouring by its popularity to gain an ascendancy of influence over Austria.

Prussia long succeeded in imposing a belief in its liberality—so easy when in competition with a state like Austria,—both to foreigners, to the Ger-

manic states, and for some time even to its own subjects.

At home, and with its neighbours, these pretensions have been, however, for some time regarded as preposterously unfounded. Their admission in the face of facts, for so long a period, and their dissemination abroad, is, however, mainly due to the peculiar nature of the agents which Prussia has employed. In some governments, military, financial, or oratorical talent ; in others the qualification of aristocratic or monied influence, have predominated ; but that of Prussia has for many years been carried on by schoolmasters and pedants. Whilst treating the governed in the true spirit of pedagogues, these men have discerned the utility, and impressed upon royalty, the vast importance of propitiating public opinion. This has been attempted rather by deception than by deserving its encomiums. To the foregoing effect, it has endeavoured to buy up every man in Germany who had acquired a certain credit with the adverse party ; and, alas for Germany, until a recent period, its most energetic patriots were not proof against a trumpery ribbon and a miserable pension. Furthermore, not content with the abandonment of their principles and the flattery of their employer, to which they resort, these men

heighten this flattery by incessantly contrasting with the Prussian government the free institutions of constitutional countries, which they vilify and calumniate in the comparison.

Let us now examine the other allegations, which are all essentially at variance with the truth.

The patriotic feeling of the Prussian people, which these hireling writers din into the ears of Europe, till it believes it to be a reality as imposing as this feeling in Spain, France, the United States, or England, has no existence anywhere, but in their pages, or in the mouths of Prussian *employés*. At least it is not any more compatible with the indifference of the Saxon or Pomeranian, than with the aversion which mingles with the indifference of the Posnanian, Silesian, and Rhinelander.

As regards the dissemination of education, it is true that the Prussian government has taught a large proportion of its subjects to read; but what is the use of teaching a population to read, when it withholds books and newspapers so strictly from them, that to the author's certain knowledge, even the *Times* newspaper has been excluded from the Prussian dominions within the last three years.

It is true that at one time or other it places arms in the hands of every able-bodied man, but as

these men are denied a free press, divested of political instruction, and restrained from anything approaching to political discussion, it is difficult to see why Prussia runs more risk from putting arms into the hands of those men, than Russia and Austria from the embodiment of still larger armies; and consequently how it should prove any check upon the arbitrary character of the government. Nor does it. The kingdom of Prussia is an absolutism, governed with a very varying rigour in its different parts; and a scale of diminishing severity might be established, if we take its territory circle by circle, from the Russian frontier to the Rhine. The Rhenish provinces being also the wealthiest in the kingdom, present, therefore, a singularly favourable sample, both of the material prosperity, and liberality of administration in Prussia, which is frequently judged from the standard of this district, chiefly visited by strangers. But even in the Rhenish provinces, no one can either be christened, brought up, live, or be buried, without the interference of that bureaucracy, with its complex regulations, which has flourished for ages in all its glory in China, and having attained a rapid growth in the contiguous Russian empire, has taken vigorous root in the proximate state of Prussia; being

apparently transmitted, like the cholera, westward from the far east, diminishing in energy as it travels, though still abundantly pernicious. Under the rule of the enlightened government of Prussia, a child could not have been christened by such names as Lytton Bulwer or Sidney Smith; the authorities objecting to patronymics as christian names; whatever agreement may have been made between its parents, it must be brought up, if a male, in the religion of the father; and when it dies, whether in infancy or manhood, it must be buried in a coffin of the government regulation size.

It is not true, that the abolition of slavery in Prussian Poland was effected by Prussia. At the first partition of Poland, the King of Prussia, as well as the Emperor of Austria, declared the emancipation of the peasantry, but a prior declaration to the same effect had been made by the quatriennial diet of independent Poland, prior to its dismemberment. Effectually, it can only be considered to have taken place when that portion of the country now belonging to Prussia was wrested from it and incorporated with the grand duchy of Warsaw, erected by Napoleon. Neither is it true that anything has been done by the Prussian cabinet to perfect the distribution of justice. A

code worthy of the middle ages is far from incorruptibly administered over the greatest part of its dominions, whilst in the Rhenish provinces, where a modification of the Code Napoleon is still in use, the government has made several attempts to deprive the inhabitants of it. As regards the material prosperity of Prussia, if we except the Rhenish provinces, its population is chiefly fed on potatoes and rye, and almost a stranger to the enjoyment of any luxury, excepting an immoderate indulgence in spirits, the chief comfort of a miserable peasantry. All that it has yet proposed whereby practically to benefit its subjects, is still to be put into execution. Prussia, in fact, is essentially the political land of promise. In 1808, the late king and his minister Von Stein, when they wanted the people, which was not dreaming then of liberal institutions, promised it a constitution. Already in its manifestoes to the nation, it began to sneer at the institutions of free countries, as its hirelings still continue to do.

“The representation of the people, in countries where it has existed till the present, is imperfect,” said the Prussian minister, who then went on to promise all that he would do for the liberties of his fellow-subjects.

In 1811, Hardenberg, another minister, renewed these promises, and even convoked a provisional national representation at Berlin.

In 1815, the late king distinctly promised, in an ordinance dated the 2nd of May, to establish a house of representatives, whose sphere of action should extend "to all that concerns legislation and public taxation." By the 7th article of this same ordinance, the assembly of the national representatives was fixed for the first of September, 1815.

Thirty-one years have since elapsed; and the constitution which was then to be given in four months, is now (in April 1846) still postponed for nine months more, that is to say, till January 1817.

If, therefore, we have positive proof that these four months mean thirty-one years, by the rule of proportion we may infer, that the nine months now avowed portend a delay of sixty-nine years and three-quarters more, before the inhabitants of Prussia (for there is no such thing as a Prussian people) are allowed to enjoy the benefits of a representative form of government.

Promises, however, have not meanwhile been wanting. In 1820 it was declared by a cabinet order, that no fresh loan should be contracted without the sanction and concurrence of that na-

tional representation which at the present period, six-and-twenty years afterwards, is yet without existence.

In 1823, the provincial estates were convened to act expressly only until the establishment of a national representation. This action consisted in giving their advice whenever the king chose to ask it, on the subject of laws and taxation, though he reserved to himself, and exercised the right, of making laws, without giving them the opportunity of expressing their disapprobation, or of attending to their remonstrance when he did give them an opportunity of making it.

In 1837, the provincial estates, who by the ordinance instituting them, were to be consulted on all laws, and to have a right to complain of their grievances, addressed a very humble memorial to the king, in which, far from asking for a constitution, they modestly confined themselves to a prayer, that he would observe the terms of the ordinance by which they had been instituted; complaining that their advice was never asked, and that the right of petition had been surrounded by so many formalities as to be deprived of all practical existence.

The new sovereign, Frederick William the Fourth, the same who now rules over Prussia, had

on his accession, only a similar moderate request to answer. He appeared shocked in his reply, that his subjects should ask of him so little,—it was, in other words, to the following effect:—“My dear friends! you are too moderate by half; I am really hurt that you should show so little confidence in my magnanimity. You only ask me to remove the regulations which render the provincial estates a dead letter; but I propose to give you a constitution—an equal right with myself in making laws and imposing taxation, instead of the empty privilege which you demand, of advising me upon the subject, or complaining of their inconvenient action only; whilst I am about it you shall have one worthy of the cogitations of a cabinet of professors, and which will put to shame the representative systems of France and England; but you must wait a few months till I give it the last finishing touch.”

Six years more have elapsed, and this famous constitution is still being perfected. Sometimes indeed a year or two pass over and we hear no more of it than of the kraaken or the great sea-serpent, but like those wonders the promise is then periodically revived in the official and semi-official papers. This announcement is usually elicited by some

liberal movement in Germany, if that can be called movement which is confined to the motion of the tongue, and sometimes of the goose-quill.

At other times, the same announcement is called forth by any act of the neighbouring German governments which occasions locally or temporarily any symptom of that popularity which Prussia seeks to monopolise in Germany.

In short, like Mrs. Cluppins, the witness in the famous trial of Bardell *versus* Pickwick, "who sits with her finger upon the spring of her umbrella, as if ready to put it up at a minute's warning," so Frederick William the Fourth has evidently a constitution all ready for promulgation on any requisite emergency.

That events will force him to this step is the belief of the author, but one which is no longer shared by his own subjects, who have come to regard him in the light of a thorough political Jeremy Diddler. This result will, however, never be brought about whilst the Prussian monarch can succeed in palming himself on the public of free states as a liberal and enlightened prince. Nothing but the fear of public opinion in Prussia and in Germany will effectually drive him to fulfil his promises; and this opinion is so timidly dependent on that ex-

pressed in foreign countries, that its voice will hardly be raised with sufficient energy whilst Frederick William is lauded by his French and English friends, and so long as no one thinks it worth while to reverse the picture.

There are both public men and certain of the organs of public opinion in this country, who, without being exactly deceived as to the conduct of his Prussian majesty up to this moment, still, when they see him hesitating between dread of the danger of retaining absolute power, consciousness of the advantages to be derived from its abandonment, and an unconquerable reluctance to relinquish it, imagine that, by encouragement and judicious praise, he may be induced to pluck up resolution for the irrevocable act. They are like the nurse who to induce an obstinate child to let itself be washed, calls it a dear little obedient boy, who is sure that master Willy will do as his mamma wishes him, and who finds the little urchin only the more sturdy in his resistance.

This plan, which may tell well on a more emulative disposition, has signally failed during six years with Frederick William; and it consequently now becomes time to try whether unmasking him to the world will not have a happier effect; a task to which a pen no less persevering, and far more able

than that of the author, will soon be devoted unceasingly, until that sovereign judges fit to fulfil his promises, and to redeem by this fulfilment the stigma of royal humbug which a patient exposition of his past conduct cannot fail to fix upon his character in the estimation of the world.

The King of Prussia has, in the main, closely followed the policy traditional for five-and-thirty years in the Prussian cabinet; wanting as much in intellect to have struck out a better, as in moral courage to have entered on another path. This policy has been to play fast and loose between absolutism and liberalism; keeping its despotic neighbours in check by the one, its constitutional neighbours by the other. At the time there may have been much ingenuity in this conception; but the wisest of political maxims derive their value only from present aptitude to ever changing circumstances. The liberal aspirations of the Prussian government were a host whilst they still obtained credence, but as that credence diminishes they are becoming yearly valueless as assignats of the old French republic; and hence his majesty, whilst depending on the old adage of "two strings to his bow," may find that he has lost sight of the possibility of falling to the ground between two chairs.

There is, whatever the flatterers of this prince may say, nothing in his antecedents to induce the belief that he is doing any violence to his own feelings by following in the footsteps of his father.

A short time previous to his accession to the throne, when most ostentatious of his liberalism, on the occasion of his visiting the Rhenish provinces, he was waited on at Dusseldorf, in the name of the Jewish community, by a Mr. Scheier, a man highly respected in that city, and brother of the banker of that name. Mr. Scheier was deputed by his co-religionaries respectfully to solicit the intercession and interest of the prince-royal in favour of the removal of the painful disabilities under which they laboured, and which to this day in Prussia can only be compared to those imposed on the Jews in England in the middle ages.

The heir-apparent, judging, no doubt, that he might at once give way to his arbitrary temper, and at the same time gratify the narrow-minded prejudice of his people, received the deputation with insult; and in reply to their petition, bade Mr. Scheier retire, by the use of an expression which will not bear literal translation; but which is rather more offensive than "Begone fellow!" (*mach't dasz ihr fort kommt.*) Mr. Scheier, who expected at

least sympathy and promises from the prince, at that time in opposition to his father on account of the liberal sentiments he was then professing, retired with tears in his eyes.

No sooner had the prince-royal ascended the throne, than he proved his religious and political intolerance in his contest with the Archbishop of Cologne. The substance of their quarrel, in which so much ink was shed, and which finally alienated the affection of the Roman Catholic population of the Rhenish provinces, is briefly as follows.

The King of Prussia's Lutheran subjects are, perhaps, the most lukewarm Protestants in Europe ; his Rhenish Roman Catholic subjects, the most bigotted in Christendom, as the recent exhibition of the holy coat at Treves may testify. The well-authenticated prostrations of thousands, and the pious apostrophes entreating the intercession of the holy coat, would now be scouted by the most devout of Roman Catholics in the remotest villages of Spain or Portugal.

The result of bigotry and indifference in that incessant juxtaposition inevitable with a mixed population of the two creeds, was obvious. In all marriages between Roman Catholics and Protestants, it was found that a stipulation was made that all the chil-

dren both male and female should be brought up in the former faith. It is probable that Roman Catholics were forbidden by their clergy to contract marriage with Protestants, excepting under such conditions ; eventually the Archbishop of Cologne avowedly prohibited it ; whether before or after the provocation of royal secular interference is of little moment. This state of things may be (according to the religious opinions of the reader) to be deplored, or matter of congratulation ; but it was obvious that interference of any but a spiritual nature to arrest this proselytism would not only have been unworthy of any civilised government, but furthermore ineffectual, or detrimental to the effect sought to be produced. The King of Prussia found, however, in this circumstance, the opportunity of proving either his arbitrary temper, or a bigotry which made him worthy of ruling over so bigotted a population as furnished its hundreds of thousands of pilgrims to the holy coat.

He attempted to counteract the influence derived by the Romish church from the zeal of its votaries, by a clumsy and tyrannical law, entailing penal consequences. In England, if the followers of Joanna Southcote chose only to intermarry with communi-

cants of the church of England on the condition of the issue of such marriage being brought up in the Southcotian faith, what would be said if an act of parliament were passed to interfere with such an arrangement? The church might, indeed, retaliate upon such sectarian intolerance, by forbidding its communicants to intermarry with Southcotians, unless the children were agreed to be brought up in the church of England faith; or it might altogether prohibit such marriages. This would be redressing a spiritual wrong by a spiritual remedy, but the interference of secular law, with the appeal to material force and physical coercion, which it must entail, would be so gross a violation of liberty of conscience, as to be (except in Prussia) unparalleled in any Christian country out of Russia, in the age in which we live.

This appeal, however, Frederick William did not hesitate to make. Instead of attempting to counteract, through the agency of the Lutheran clergy, what he considered the sinister influence of the Roman Catholic clergy on the Lutheran congregations, he at once exerted his temporal authority, and finally imprisoned the Roman Catholic archbishop; thus rendering an obstinate old man

a holy martyr in the public estimation, converting an apathetic into a disaffected population, and bigots into fanatics.

The King of Prussia subsequently visited England; he saw and lauded the effects of our liberal institutions, he visited Newgate, prayed in its chapel, and took philanthropic tea and toast with the worthy Mrs. Fry.

On his return, of all that he had seen during his visit, the only thing he has shown himself inclined to transplant into his hereditary dominions, has been the forms and constitution of our established church.

Leaving its doctrines out of the question, there are, probably, few who will deny that these, if admissible with a people so wealthy and essentially so aristocratic, and so devoutly inclined as the English, are wholly unsuited to most other nations, but of all others, egregiously inapplicable to that mixture of homely simplicity and philosophic indifference which constitutes Prussian Lutheranism.

He did not, either from the holy inspirations he received when kneeling beside the quaker lady, nor from the example of Queen Victoria, nor from that of Louis Philippe, (of which he could not have been

ignorant,) learn, when the assassin's pistol was levelled at him, that the noblest prerogative of kingly power is mercy; but exacting his pound of flesh, he signed the death-warrant of Tchech, and took in retaliation for the intent to kill, that forfeit life which Queen Victoria spared in the case of Oxford, and which Louis Philippe refused to take when he found that the blood of Alibaud had not deterred Meunier from a deed of blood; a fact which his Prussian majesty would have done well to remember, bearing furthermore in mind how much more imperatively the case of Meunier called for the punishment of death, if such were any example, instead of being a mere act of individual vengeance; since Meunier's motive in seeking to destroy a man by whose life hung the destiny of a nation, was political; his attempt, the execution of many homicidal wishes; whilst Tchech's attempt to shoot a sovereign too common-place for any one to be interested in his individual death, was merely prompted by an isolated mania.

It is Frederick William who has proposed to substitute the barbarous law of Prussia Proper in the Rhenish provinces for the Napoleon code; an attempt which cannot be said to be abandoned.

though he has been deterred from it by the strong disapprobation manifested, and the proximity of these districts to the French frontier.

It was Frederick William who renewed the cartel with Russia, so odious to his subjects; and by which it has been shown that he virtually delivers up to the Russian authorities the fugitives from unendurable religious and political persecution. The treacherous and cruel policy of the Prussian cabinet which he has adopted towards the Poles is not sufficiently known in Western Europe; the truth having been on the one hand parried by the hireling Prussian writers, whilst on the other the indignation of the sufferers has been merged in the recollection of Russian atrocities, and silenced by contemplation of the hopeless despotisms of Russia and Austria. Unhappily the conduct of Prussia towards these unfortunates is less measured now than after the revolution of 1830, when France was threatening, and visions of another Jena were flitting before the royal eyes. Let us briefly examine what it was, then, to be enabled to judge somewhat of its present duplicity and cruelty. As an example of the former, the author selects the following out of a mass of evidence, chiefly because the testimony of a refugee resident in England.

“ To the author of ‘ Revelations of Russia.’

“ My dear Sir,

“ In answer to your inquiries, I beg leave to state that you have been quite correctly informed respecting the attempt on the part of the Prussian authorities to deliver me up to the Russians. The particulars of the transaction are as follows : In January 1831, I was sent by the national Polish government through the Prussian dominions on a mission to London. On my way through Silesia I was arrested by the Prussian authorities at Breslau. I was imprisoned for the space of one calendar month, during which time a gendarme kept watch over me day and night, as your turnkeys do at Newgate over criminals between their condemnation and execution. At the expiration of a month, the Russian general Diebitch having pressed forward, the rumour became accredited that the Russians had occupied Warsaw. It was then insidiously proposed to me that I should give my word of honour never again to set foot in Prussia, as the condition of allowing me to recross the Polish frontier. With this condition I complied ; but on reaching the last station on the boundary, the commanding officer, a good fellow, commiserating my case, in-

formed me that I was about to be delivered up to the Russians, who were occupying the frontier.

“ My escort, on reaching it, demanded from the party into whose hands they delivered me, a receipt in the name of the Russian imperial government.

“ To my joy, and to the consternation of my companions, the detachment turned out to be not Russian but Polish ; and its commander, who released me, replied, that whatever might be the case in Prussia, they only gave receipts for cattle, not for men.

“ I afterwards ascertained that the authorities of Breslau had been deceived by the Prussian States' Gazette, which announced that the Russian army had taken Warsaw, which it only occupied in the following September, seven months afterwards. &c. &c. &c.

“ KRYSZYN LACH SZYRMA.

“ Devonport, April, 1846.”

The fatal termination of the revolution was chiefly brought about by the permission given to Russian troops to traverse the Prussian territory, and by supplying the Russian army with provisions, whilst the same frontier was so hermetically closed

to the Poles, that even medical aid was refused them. When the national government of Poland, the commander in chief Rybinski and twenty-eight thousand men, took refuge in Prussia, they laid down their arms by a capitulation which insured them hospitality and protection.

Of this number, at least eighteen thousand were subsequently delivered into the hands of the Russians, either by forcing them at the point of the bayonet to recross the Russian frontier, or by refusing them provisions, and threatening coercion on the one side, whilst on the other holding out the solemn assurance that they would be allowed, on reaching Poland, to return to their own homes. As detachments of the refugees were directed towards the frontier, they became in some instances acquainted with the fate which had befallen those preceding them, and, like oxen at the smell of blood on the threshold of the shambles, refused to proceed. These unfortunates, though offering only a passive resistance, were then charged by Prussian cavalry, who rode over them, plied them with musketry and grape, and pricked them with bayonets as they clung in desperation to the trees, and declared their determination rather to suffer death than fall into the hands of the Muscovites.

According to the avowal of the Prussian government, organised bodies of Polish soldiery, to the amount of eight-and-twenty thousand men, had sought refuge on the Prussian territory, without taking into account those who came individually, or by small detachments.

These men laid down their arms on the express stipulation that they should be protected from the Russians.

Inclusive of those who escaped through Austria and Saxony,—of officers, civilians, and every other class of emigrants,—no more than eight thousand reached the west of Europe. A few months after (again according to the avowal of the Russian government), there remained only four thousand Polish refugees in the kingdom of Prussia.

Even according to its own admission, therefore sixteen thousand Poles were driven by force back into the power of the Russians. These men would never have laid down their arms excepting on the assurance of being protected from such a fate. All that they asked was to be allowed to proceed to France, Belgium, England, or the United States. The Prussian government could not even allege economic motives for its barbarity, because Rybinski brought with, and delivered up to the

authorities, two millions of Polish florins. A German eye-witness gave the following account of the transaction.

“ June 29, 1832.

“ The Prussian government has ordered all Polish soldiers to return to Poland, promising that they would not be in any way molested, but, on the contrary, would be allowed to return to their respective homes. Prussian officers harangued them, told them they were betrayed by their leaders, who do not find any support from France; that those who retired from France have been sent to Algiers, and made slaves; that France, for whom so much Polish blood has been spilt, was entirely devoted to the Russian and Prussian system. The poor Poles yielded to their remonstrances, and, divided into small columns, took their way towards Poland; but on approaching the frontiers, they heard how their companions had been treated, and refused to march. This gave rise to cruel scenes. The disarmed Polish soldiers fell on the ground, when a regiment of cuirassiers was ordered to rush on them on horseback and trample on their bodies, and the infantry struck them with the butt end of their muskets! Several lives were lost;

one non-commissioned officer had his nose cut off by a Prussian, and instead of being sent to the hospital, he was tied to a waggon and driven on foot. Such cruel proceedings exasperated the inhabitants, who were Jews. They sent their agents to apprise those soldiers who were yet behind, of the fate which awaited them ; and seven hundred dispersed immediately into the woods and villages.

A letter of another German, from Eastern Prussia, written on the 15th of July, to one of his friends at Paris, contains the following :—

“ Immediately after your departure, thirty-two officers of the Polish lancers arrived here.—They are all expecting their amnesty. The soldiers who were stationed in the neighbourhood of Lutz (probably Lyck) were compelled by famine, or violence exercised upon them, to re-enter Poland. What a heart-rending sight was it for me to look upon these unfortunate men, who asked, with tears in their eyes, that they should not be delivered to the barbarity of the Russians ! They all looked exhausted, some were sick, and Prussian soldiers compelled them with the butt-end of their muskets, and with their swords, to advance towards the frontiers. It was revolting to witness this cruel proceeding of our

government; but I could not help your compatriots —I was scarcely permitted to pity their ill fate."

"I have just returned," writes Mr. Samuel Howe, to Thomas Campbell, "from amongst those poor fellows * * * If the voice of his wife and his children cannot induce the Polish exiled soldier to return to his country, it must be that he regards it as a hell; and they are worse than demons who would drive him into it * * * you have heard that promises and threats had been used to induce these soldiers to re-enter Poland, and that when these failed, the bullet and bayonet were resorted to. Yes, sir, all this is true; but it is not all the truth. *I have seen* the unfortunate men who were still lingering with wounds received in the affairs of Marienburg and Dischau, where Prussia so wantonly stained her escutcheon with the blood of unarmed exiles, yet was not so moved with indignation as at discovering the moral persecution by which Prussia is endeavouring to drive these men into Poland. By the one she stabs her victim in an ebullition of passion at his obstinate resistance; but by the other she is coolly binding the victim, to offer him up to the ever whetted knife of Russia."

“ * * * It is known what promises of protection, what pledges of good faith she gave when this army laid down its arms on her territory. The Polish officers were to be treated with the honours of war, and arms presented by the Prussian soldiers as to their own officers. They were to be free to come and go where and when they would; the soldiers were to be well provided for and left free to go whenever they should desire. * * * Prussia found it impossible to shake the spirit of the army while the officers remained with the men. These, therefore, were separated from them; those who hesitated about going were torn away by force; and those who resisted were severely punished. You may imagine the feelings of the poor soldier, on seeing his only friend, his last remaining officer, torn from him; and you would not be surprised if he had broken out into open mutiny; yet he did not so. I remember, while I was at Marienburg, an officer was discovered among the men, in the disguise of a common soldier; he was taken away by *gens-d’armes*; the soldiers, clamouring and swearing they would not be separated from him, followed him to the prison-door; and the Prussians, finding they could not get rid of them, shut the whole nine in together.

I left Marienburg eight days after, and the poor fellows were still in the dungeons.

“The object of separating officers from the army was, to be enabled the better to act upon the men; and they were then quartered off in small squads upon the peasantry, dragooned up and down the country by the soldiers, and continually urged nearer and nearer to the frontier occupied by the Russians. About two-pence a day is allowed them by the Prussian government; and with that, they must find themselves everything. They are most miserably clad, and hundreds of them are without shirts to their backs; yet did the Prussian authorities forbid me to distribute clothing to them. General Schmidt ordered me away from the premises, and sent *gens-d’armes* to enforce his order; and *I have among my papers his written refusal of my application for a permission to distribute clothing, even though I offered to do it in the presence of a Prussian officer of his naming!*”

“Sir, I would that my feeble pen could do anything like justice to this subject. I would I could but describe to you the half I felt, whilst but five weeks since, I was in the midst of these poor Polish soldiers; I should hold up to you a picture of long-suffering patriotism, of patient devotion, that you

would hardly conceive falls to the lot of a common soldier. From all my preconceived notions of Polish patriotism, and of Polish heroism, I had no idea that the common soldier, the poor ignorant peasant of Poland, possessed such a stern devotion to his country, as to enable him to endure what these men have endured, and are still enduring.

“Separated from their officers, in a strange land, poorly fed, and miserably clad; at one moment flattered by the promise of good treatment in Russia; and assured that France and all other nations have refused to receive them; and the next, threatened with imprisonment or expulsion: reduced almost to despair at their lonely situation and without a hope of alleviation of their suffering; they still resist every effort of Prussia to induce them into Poland, and seek every possible chance of escape towards France. I shall never forget meeting a noble young fellow of the Krakous guards, wandering in the high roads of Prussia; it was a cold day, and he was shivering in his ragged and soiled uniform; his feet were swollen, and his countenance was wan and haggard; he had not a farthing in his pocket; he knew not a word of the language of the country, and was pointing to the west, and asking the road to France. Poor fellow!

he imagined, from the length of time he had been wandering, that it was but a few leagues distant; and yet, he was on the banks of the Oder!"

Let us now take the testimony of an eyewitness, who saw these unfortunates in the custody of the Russians.

"In the month of July, 1832, the Polish soldiers were marched through the palatinate of Plock, (Russian Poland,) on their return from Prussia, and conducted in several detachments, by different roads, under escorts three or four times more numerous than the detachments themselves. One party passed through Prasynz. It consisted of from 600 to 800 men, accompanied by two battalions of Russian infantry, marching in close order on each side of them. The head and rear of the column consisted of troops of Cossacs, and two guns with lighted matches. The inhabitants on their line of march were not allowed to offer any provisions or refreshment to their brethren.

* * * * *

"A good many were brought to Plock and Mlawa; they were those whom the Prussians had wounded, in compelling them by force to return under Russian dominion."

These men had nominally been domesticated. Their treatment under the amnesty was as follows:

1stly, all who were in the Polish army at the time of the outbreak were to serve in the Russian ranks till they had completed fifteen years; 2ndly, all those who had voluntarily or forcedly been enlisted since, to serve fifteen years from the time of the amnesty; 3dly, all officers who had obtained commissions during the revolutionary war, to serve fifteen years as privates.

Now it must be remembered that the knout and exile to Siberia are often commuted to service in the ranks, as the next grade of punishment; that the discharge of a soldier till disabled is unknown in the Russian army, except upon paper; and that the service of the private includes various gradations of misery. Military organisation extends so far, that even the galley-slaves, (or men of the *arrestantsky roth*,) working in chains, are soldiers in the imperial service. The terms of the imperial edict of amnesty left the authorities at liberty to send the refugees to corps in the Caucasus or Siberia, or even into the ranks of those who work in chains; but it did not allow them to exempt any one from military service.

To the personal knowledge of the author,

several of these refugees thus given up by Prussia, were, in 1838, 39, and 40, working in the *arrestantsky roth* in the dock-yards of St. Petersburg and Cronstadt. So cruel is the condition, and so severe the discipline under which these men are kept, that they frequently turn desperate, attempt to murder the soldiers guarding them, throw themselves on their bayonets, or dash out their own brains against the wall. Furthermore, several of the Polish prisoners, who at Cronstadt refused to take the oath of allegiance to Nicholas, were refugees expelled from Prussia, or lured by the solemn assurance that they should be allowed to return to their own homes.

The reader will find in the Revelations of Russia, an account of how these men were murdered by scores in the sight of the whole city, in pursuance of their sentence signed by the hand of the emperor, condemning them to eight thousand lashes a-piece; how they expired, notwithstanding the cruel intermissions in their punishment, long before the whole of this infliction, which would have sufficed to reduce a human body to a pulpy mass of macerated flesh, bruised bones, and coagulated gore.

There remained four thousand Poles in Prussia a few months after the Polish army had taken

refuge on its territory. These consisted chiefly of fugitives who had dispersed about the country. They were submitted to Prussian military organisation, and officered by Prussian officers. Let us see how they were employed.

A soldier of the 4th regiment of the line writes, on the 25th of July, from the Prussian fortress of Bischofsberg. "Poor wretch, I am incessantly tied to my wheelbarrow. Our detachment, though composed of brave men, is treated in the most cruel manner. We are reproached with having excited soldiers to resistance, at the moment they were to be delivered up to the Russians. They vent all their revenge on us—and we are forced to work from early in the morning till late at night, without relaxation. You would not recognise any one of us. We are pale and wan as those dug up from their graves, and it is not astonishing, as food is given us but once a day, and this food is often so bad, that in spite of hunger it is impossible to partake of it. You know that we were not afraid to die when on the field of battle; but to suffer without interruption, to be worn down by hard labour, and to die a death useless to our native land, is frightful, and renders life an irksome burden!"

Such was the conduct of the Prussian cabinet, in 1832, towards the Polish refugees to whom it offered hospitality, and the reader may hence form some idea of their treatment under Frederick William the Fourth, who has notoriously shown himself more hostile to that people than his predecessor.

Nothing could be more significant of the unpopularity of his rule in Prussian Poland, than the fact that during the revolution of 1831, this portion of the Polish nation did not attempt to make common cause with its brethren; whereas in 1846 we find the duchy of Posen prepared to take the initiative in the attempt which has just been suppressed, against the three spoliating powers.

The government papers themselves admit the arrest of eight hundred noblemen in Posen and its environs.

“Fifteen years ago,” said a nobleman of Prussian Poland to the author, “I, like many worldly-wise people,—giving our best wishes to our fellow-countrymen beneath the Austrian and Russian rule,—thought it was our duty to look only to ourselves. Though we placed no reliance on the promises of our sovereign, we knew that he was old, and our hopes centred in his son. We never

doubted that he would give us representative institutions ; and those who, like myself, had property to lose, and a salutary dread of revolutionary excess, deemed that it would be far better to enjoy such advantages—sharing with our German yokefellow that Prussian nationality, which, hitherto a mere sound, might thus have become a reality—than to identify our interests with those of our race, name, and language in Austrian and Russian Poland. But we have been justly punished for our selfishness. The three despotisms, deriving strength from their nefarious connivance, have put in practice with the disjointed fragments of our people, the fable of the lictor's rods, so easily broken when divided.

“ We have seen the prince-royal step into his father's place, and found his promises as stale and hollow as his father's. We have found by dire experience, that our German yokefellow cannot be trusted ; not, indeed, through want of sympathy, but through weakness. This year (1845) a large proportion of the German members enthusiastically promised to back us in an address to his majesty, demanding the fulfilment of his promises. But when the time came, they withdrew in terror ; and you will find, if you refer to the list, only two or

three Germans who did, and only two or three Poles who did not vote for the address. Independent, therefore, of antipathies of race, which render amalgamation so distasteful, our interest bids us seek the only solution of our difficulties in making common cause with the other eighteen millions of Poles whose unextinguishable patriotism promises to maintain the Polish nationality, longer than in the ordinary course of events, the artificial combinations of policy which oppress it, can endure.

“The people of Germany, we are fully aware, wish us well,—a sentiment which we reciprocate; and the growth of public opinion in Germany will undoubtedly aid our efforts; but experience has taught the most timid amongst us, that it is madness to count on any but negative assistance from that people. The great movement which is preparing amongst the Slavonic, and at any rate amongst the Polish nations, may give the example and the opportunity to the Germans. German freedom may grow from Slavonic or Polish liberty and independence, but to wait till Germany alone achieved or offered us any but the passive co-operation of opinion, would be to play the part of the countryman who loitered by the margin of the

stream he wished to cross, in the illusive hope that its waters would flow away."

The address alluded to, of the Polish members, praying the king to fulfil his promises of granting them a constitution, drew down a severe reprimand from his majesty. The representations made by several of the provincial states, complaining of the increased rigour of the censorship, were long left unanswered. The tardy reply, made only a few months since, is probably still fresh in the memory of many of my readers. It was not only a refusal to mitigate the severity of these laws, but an insulting refusal. "I will alter the laws of which you complain," replies this royal puppet of the Tsar; "but it shall only be to increase their stringency." Finding that he had then gone too far, fresh promises of a constitution, to be granted in January 1847, were made through the semi-official organs of the government; but, at the same time, we are informed that new laws regulating the press are to be made in July. Thus we find that threats of retrogressive measures usually accompany and qualify all liberal and progressive promises, with this further drawback, that the former have always been punctually put into execution, whilst the latter are, without exception, still awaiting their fulfilment.

This king, as we have already mentioned, outraged the feelings of his Polish subjects, by a renewal of the cartel; by allowing his peasantry to be kidnapped across the frontier and transported to the Siberian mines, and by exercising an increased severity towards the refugees from the other despotisms. One recent instance, illustrative of the change of conduct in this matter, immediately occurs to the author.

It is only a twelvemonth ago, that a Polish refugee, who had embraced the ecclesiastical profession, and long abandoned all interference in political matters, was, after eight months' negotiation, refused passports to visit Prussian Poland, for the purpose of seeing his aged father; though in the late reign this privilege had been conceded him on account of his inoffensive character. The Poles under the dominion of Prussia, finding that the effect of their forbearance from all participation in the movements of 1831, has been only, after fifteen years of subsequent patience, to remove them still further from the fulfilment of their hopes, whether founded on the promises of their sovereign, on the energy of the German people, or on both, cannot now be blamed, if, yielding to their sympathies, they make common

cause with their brother Poles, and read in the signs portentous of so many changes throughout Eastern Europe, the augury of a more hopeful future, even though exchanging hostility to its banded despotisms for the bootless civil struggle they have so long carried on with the duplicity and prevarication of their government.

“ We have been waiting fifteen years for the German liberals,” writes one of the late conspirators in the grand duchy of Posen. “ We are tired of waiting for them. We repudiate all transaction with the Prussian government—all idea which some of us may once have entertained, of blending, under constitutional forms, with the German population, into that Prussian people whose nationality is yet a fiction. We renounce all hope of that initiative movement in Germany which we have been so long expecting, and we are convinced that it must originate with us for their benefit, instead of with them for our own. The political sympathies of the masses in Germany are with our cause—the people of Germany has no wish to rule over us, no more desire to amalgamate with us, than we have with them. We have a common enemy—their despotic princes; a common end—the attainment of free institutions; but these, both Poles and

Slavonians will best attain by enlisting under the banners of their respective races. Thirty millions of Germans and twenty millions of Poles, differing in language, habits, customs, and manners from each other, are assuredly numerically strong enough whilst socially and territorially sufficiently divided, to prosper, without fresh attempts to effect that fusion which the efforts of sixty years have failed to accomplish, and which those formerly best disposed towards it, now regard as impracticable, till both have attained that degree of civilisation which cannot be reached without freedom as its earliest preliminary."

It is undoubtedly true, that the condition of the inhabitants of Prussian Poland is far more favourable than that of their brethren beneath the Russian and Austrian yoke. The condition of the latter, where slavery or serfdom in their worst forms have been perpetuated or imported, where the arts of centralisation are employed only to exercise a more benumbing oppression and ruthless violence against all classes of society—can only be compared, as they have been so often, to hideous oriental despotisms.

Viewed beside these, the government of Polish Prussia appears so fair as not unfrequently to be viewed with complacency by the Russian and Austrian

Poles, but it is otherwise with its own subjects. They are no longer disposed to endure contentedly, a state of things which never entirely satisfied them, and which now is retrogressive. During fifteen years, education and enlightenment have made rapid progress. The author does not term progress, the proficiency of a large portion of the population in rudiments, conjointly with their restriction to the same, but alludes to the vast increase since that period of a really educated class. This class, whose opinions react on the whole people, will not measure their condition by advantageous comparison with the fate of the Russian and Austrian Poles, but have a natural tendency to take the standard of their political and social rights from those possessed by free and constitutional nations.

It must be remembered, that the general dissemination of the press has produced, in the age in which we live, a more rapid movement in the moral, than steam navigation or railroads on the material world. The progress of opinion has become so much more rapid that a quarter of a century in our era operates greater changes than four centuries could formerly have produced. The people of England once submitted patiently to the tyranny of Henry the Eighth. In that reign they would

have found the rule of Charles the First, or James the Second comparatively mild and paternal. Yet when the reigns of Charles the First and James the Second arrived, the people would no longer tolerate their milder sway, which was still too arbitrary for the spirit of the times; and there is now scarcely an Englishman to be found, even amongst those who deny a niche to Cromwell's statue, or who sympathise most feelingly with the misfortunes of the Stuart race, who does not applaud the resistance offered by the parliament to the encroachments of King Charles, or the expulsion of the next but one of his successors.

Now, with races kept in ignorance, and suffering oppression, that change which took place in the public feeling of the British people between the reigns of Henry the Eighth, and Charles Stuart, is produced in our own time. Under the joint influence of the press and the vivifying example of other nations, advantages which our ancestors did not enjoy, we find the life of one generation more rapidly ripening civilisation and political perception than was effected during many in the centuries to which allusion has been made.

This is the case with Prussian Poland. The rule of its government is flattered by comparing it

to that of Charles the First, and the Second,—it is, in fact, what theirs would probably have become, if success, instead of death and banishment, had met their efforts. It is true that it may be considered mild and salutary beside the habitual harshness of the gloomy Russian despotism. It is true that the means it employs for the prevention and repression of change are merciful beside those resorted to by Austria, when its Machiavelian jealousy is alarmed for the safety of any of its possessions. It is furthermore true, that, during the last thirty years, the prosperity of Prussian Poland has undeniably increased; but are we therefore to blame the Prussian Poles because, in 1846, they are impatient of a state of things which we violently exploded for even in 1688?—Are they to be tongue-tied by gratitude, and to attribute to their government that slender measure of material prosperity which has fallen to their share,—or rather, when they regard the immense proportionate strides made in this respect by all free states, to feel indignation at the vast progress which despotism has impeded, instead of thankfulness at the advantages which it has permitted?

Such, at any rate, is the feeling of the Polish subjects of Prussia. They are led to such conclu-

sions alike by a vivid recollection of the extinct glories and independence of their people, and by the sanguine and restless temper of the national mind, which is essentially calculated to render them rather emulous of any condition above their own, than contented with it from comparison of others less happy.—This tendency, which may, when misdirected, lead to turbulence, is, it should be remembered, an ingredient indispensable towards the attainment of national greatness, and will be found in the characters of the French, English, Dutch, and of every people who have achieved it on the basis of civil liberty, and for the national benefit.

Changes have indeed taken place, within recent years, in the opinion of the most practical amongst the enlightened men of Prussian Poland ; but only as to the means of best effecting the one object they have had incessantly at heart, the attainment of free government, instead of arbitrary despotism. Hence, at one time a large party looked forward to a constitution, as the most certain means of enjoying, though incorporated with a strange race, positive freedom at the sacrifice of those more remote hopes which strict adherence to the principle of national indivisibility might have offered.

But even the most moderate and practical men have been long since convinced, firstly, of the impossibility of the concession of a constitution ; and, secondly, mistrust of its character when granted.

Between that free, national government in which the people has a share through whatever remote delegation,—which we understand in the West by constitutional government, and a purely arbitrary rule, there is as great an essential difference as between a dead body and another animated by the breath of life. An arbitrary may be made as closely to resemble a free government, in its form, as the rootless bough stuck into the ground does the growing sapling—as the galvanised corpse, the living body. Yet, no two things externally most dissimilar, can differ more than these, identical in form ; but from one of which the vivifying principle has departed. There may be a difference in the strength or intensity of vitality, but there are no gradations between life or death—a being lives or has ceased to live ; and so it is with the character of governments,—they are either arbitrary or not arbitrary. We all know how much less than Shakspeare's "bare bodkin" will reduce to a mass of corrupting clay the most magnificent intel-

lectual and physical organisation ; and thus, in a like manner, the most perfect and organised representative system may, by one single clause, be reduced to an empty formula, instead of proving a palladium of the civil and social liberties of the people.

The right of Charles the Tenth, to issue, under any circumstances, his ordinances, would have rendered the "*Charte*" a dead letter. The power of the crown to prorogue parliament for an indefinite period, and to raise taxes, and keep the mutiny act in force until it met, would as effectually render its government a despotism, as if we were to adopt the Russian catechism as the expression of our political creed. Yet the constitutions of the kingdom of Poland, of the republic of Cracow, and of the several German states, have all been reduced to nullity, by the subsequent introduction of such clauses, or were ushered lifeless into the world by its insertion at their birth. With the German states this took place chiefly at the instigation of Prussia ; and the use, under such circumstances, of constitutional forms, was, on the one hand, to amuse the people, and on the other, to deceive the public of free countries.

If, therefore, Prussia should nominally fulfil that

promise, which in 1830 was still hopeful to its Polish subjects, they have, judging by its conduct since then, every reason to dread that it will be rendered illusory. The greater threatened severity of the censorship, at the moment when remote promise of a constitution is given, are strongly confirmatory of this apprehension. The press is now so far from being free, that any greater stringency can only portend as total a suppression of the public voice, as in the Russian empire.

Now, over a widely extended territory, where inter-communication is slow and unfrequent, and with the suspicious antecedents of the Prussian cabinet, who can believe that representative institutions will prove anything but an illusion if accompanied by the utter extinction of the press?

Between free institutions and a shackled press, and a free press with an absolute government, if the latter were in any but exceptional cases possible, it would undoubtedly be wise to select the despotism.

British India, with its absolute government and free press, offers an example of the advantages of this anomalous condition over that of constitutionally organised states, where the expression of public opinion is forbidden, or perhaps impossible.

Freedom, in fact, is unattainable without it ; and hence, until the modern extension of the press, which magnifies and disseminates so ubiquitously the popular voice, we have no instance of the enjoyment of liberty by any great nation or extensive people.

If we refer to the middle ages or the ancients, we never find freedom extending beyond the city walls, the islet, or the valley, where men could congregate and inter-communicate their opinions.

The freedom of the Greek and Roman republics was really limited to a small and concentrated population ; and it was lost when Rome became so large that only a tithe of its inhabitants could any longer gather in the forum.

The existence of a press, and that liberty without which its existence is reduced to inutility, are therefore the first conditions of the freedom of any extensive people. This Prussia has always greatly limited, and now proposes to annihilate. The very men therefore, who, in 1830, looked with hope to the Prussian government, have for these reasons withdrawn all faith, not only from its promises, but would withhold it from any preliminary acts towards its accomplishment. This conclusion once formed, they transfer their hopes to the inextin-

guishable national feeling of twenty millions of their race, and regard the unendurable nature of their oppression under the Russian and Austrian yokes as the surest guarantee of a finally successful effort to shake it off. Hence many of these same men, once confident in the promises of their cabinet, have since been opposed to any efforts to obtain a constitution ; in the validity of which, if obtained, they ceased to believe, but which might have withdrawn others from the end which they had now in view. The opposition given of late years to such a demand in the duchy of Posen, and indeed till recently, is to be thus explained. The German liberals, however, began to complain of this conduct ; the government hirelings argue from it the popular indifference to free institutions. Under these circumstances, the Polish members of the provincial estates last year voted the address which has been mentioned, reminding Frederick William of his promises ; on which occasion they were left in the lurch by their German colleagues. Meanwhile, however, the feeling of Polish unity and independence was making rapid strides. So powerful has it become with the noble class, as daily to dissever anti-national ties, the growth of years of intercourse with German fellow-subjects, whilst

at the same time triumphing over the pride of caste, nourished during centuries, and the love of property. Previous to the discovery of the participation of Prussian Poland in the recent conspiracy against the three despotisms, it was observed that the nobility had for the first time, of its own accord, waived the rules of etiquette which rigorously excluded the middle and lower classes from companionship with them. Countesses led off the balls at Posen and other places as the partners of the burghers and artisans, and men of the first family with their daughters. This is a reflection of the feeling animating the Polish nobility under the rule of Russia and Austria. Knowledge and experience has brought with it the conviction that private wealth and individual power to oppress are no compensation for the want of national and personal independence. Hence universally the landowners are anxious to free their serfs whereservitude exists; and in an incredible number of instances, to divide their lands amongst the peasantry, as a means conducing to an inestimable result. So far has their enthusiastic exaltation led them to undervalue property, so far has the oppression of their governments depreciated it. This is the communism which Metternich sneers at. Perhaps everywhere impracticable, it

is liable to invincible suspicion, when advocated by the poor man who seeks to share in the wealth of the rich; but when originating with the rich man seeking to divide his wealth with the poor, it assumes a complexion which places it above misinterpretation.

Now, the nobility of Poland, resembling in its peculiar position no other in the world, is of a greater social and numerical importance. The general ignorance respecting this body enables the despotic cabinets and their hireling scribes easily to enlist against it the liberal sympathies of writers, under the erroneous impression that it is a small privileged class, similar to the titular nobility of France, England, and Germany; and one whose interests are antagonistic to those of an immense majority. Metternich speaks of the insurgents, in his vindication of the atrocities in Gallicia, as a few nobles. Papers of different shades of opinion, arguing differently from the same premises, have regarded the Polish nobility as a caste analogous with nobility at home. It cannot therefore be too often repeated, that the Polish nobility are in extent a nation, or three millions at the lowest computation; more numerous than the whole Scottish people,—more numerous, in proportion to the popu-

lation of Poland, than all the nobility, gentry, annuitants, professional men, manufacturers, merchants, shopkeepers, soldiers and sailors put together in the united kingdom of Great Britain, and equalling alone the whole native German population of the Austrian empire.*

The nobles, who (if we deduct the Jews) are in the proportion of one to every five individuals of the Polish population, monopolise ninety-nine hundredths of the education and enlightenment of the people; who, with few exceptions, throughout Poland, are disposed to make common cause with the nobility against the three despotisms, through the mere stimulus of national pride,—of antipathy to the Russ and German, and blind religious zeal. These exceptions only exist where spoliating governments have maintained, restored, established, or embittered the feudal relations between the nobility and peasantry, whether in the form of absolute slavery, as in the incorporated provinces of Russian Poland, or of serfdom, in the Russian kingdom of Poland, and the Austrian province of Galicia. The Machiavelian foresight of both

* The total number of Germans in the Austrian empire is estimated at about double this number, but the remainder are colonists and temporary sojourners from other parts of Germany.

cabinets was keenly sensible of the facilities to be derived in suppressing any national movements, from the fear and antipathy which oppression would generate between the lord and peasant ; and this oppression it has originated or encouraged wherever it could put forth the noble as the ostensible instrument, and keep its own agency occult from the victim. But the results of this policy have been frustrated by the strong religious feeling of the peasantry, in every instance where their faith has not happened to be identical with that of the state church.

Thus Russia has substituted slavery for serfdom in the Polish provinces ; but the religious hatred of the Roman Catholics, or United Greek population, to the Russo-Greek government, far exceeds any antipathy which slavery can generate towards their masters. In the Polish kingdom, Nicholas has introduced serfdom where the peasantry were free ; but here again all the hatred of the serf to the baron is merged in abhorrence of the heterodox Tsar ; and the peasantry cannot, in either, be roused against those who are forcedly their lords, so long as they are enemies of their heretic tyrant. It is therefore only in Little Russia and its frontiers, where the nobility are frequently Roman Catholic,

and the peasantry of the Greek faith, that the Russian cabinet could raise the peasantry to rebellion, by means of that slavery which it has introduced and carefully perpetuates.

So, in Austria, the Roman Catholic peasantry may be excited against their lords, by the Roman Catholic emperor, whilst the Greek peasantry are scarcely accessible to this influence. Now, in Prussian Poland, the peasant was freed from serfdom by the celebrated constitution declared on the 3rd of May, 1791, by the last quinquennial diet of the independent Polish republic. This declaration was confirmed by the King of Prussia, when this territory fell to his share, at the partition of other states; and from a nominal recognition, it became the practical enjoyment of a right, when Napoleon united this portion of Poland with the independent grand duchy of Warsaw, which he erected. After its re-transference to Prussia in 1819, a part of the land occupied by the peasantry was assigned to them in perpetuity, with the full concurrence, and at the express desire of the landowners. The Prusso-Polish peasant is consequently as free as any individual can be, in a despotism; and he is, furthermore, almost without exception a proprietor.

It would hence appear natural, that he should be better disposed towards his government, than his fellow-countrymen beneath the rule of Austria and Russia. But this is not the case. He is a pious Roman Catholic, the government Lutheran. He is a true Pole, and hates the government for its German character, and because it is chiefly carried on by Germans, who alone are trusted in the Polish provinces, and towards whom his antipathy is so great, that the inhabitants of whole districts, who have recently joined temperance societies, refuse the stimulus of tobacco, offered as a substitute to keep them in their good resolutions, assigning as a reason, that "*it is so German.*" He further despises the royal government for the connivance popularly attributed to it, in the oppression of his Russo-Polish brethren; and it is impossible to excite him against the Roman Catholic nobility, between whom and himself the apple of discord, in the form of serfdom, has not been thrown, in the present generation, and whom he regards with as much confidence and affection as any tenantry have yet regarded landlords, with whom a common hatred of a foreign yoke identified them in feeling. It is to be observed, too, that the peasant in Prussian Poland has been gradu-

ally becoming poorer, more discontented, and more dependent on the nobles, since the first distribution to him of the land on which he was originally settled as a serf. The want of capital, the amount of taxation, the pressure of conscription, ignorance, and the incessant subdivision of his little property, with the deterioration of culture consequent thereupon, have obliged him to have recourse to the indulgence and capital of his lord, for the cultivation of his land; whilst, on the other hand, all the burthens which press upon him, originate with a foreign heretical government, whom he has witnessed, and daily witnesses, hunting out refugees in his villages, to deliver them up to the grim Cossacks on the frontier; a process which daily reminds him of the thousands formerly driven to the same destination, like herds of cattle; and appealing, in the name of their common brotherhood, to him, for succour against the persecution of the Russian, and the treachery of the German.

The same ill-judged interference on the part of Frederick William the Fourth with the Archbishop of Cologne, which has so seriously indisposed against the royal government, the Roman Catholic population of its Rhenish provinces, has embroiled him with certain of the Polish bishops, and em-

bittered the religious prejudices of the Polish population.

This population is computed to number about two millions, who may, strictly speaking, be termed Polish; but the Slavonic subjects of Prussia do not certainly number less than six millions, and probably nearer to seven-and-a-half,—or half the population of the kingdom.

If we draw upon the map of Europe a line curving eastwards sufficiently to form the small segment of an extensive circle, with one extremity of this slight bow passing through the island of Rugen in the Baltic, the other through Trieste on the Adriatic, all the territory that lies to the east of this line, within the Prussian frontier, is peopled by Slavonians, or by a population chiefly Slavonic. The ordinary maps of Prussia, like those of Austria, would lead, by the great extension of German names, to very different inferences; but these names are frequently unknown upon the spot. Bromberg, for instance, on the frontiers of West Prussia, is called by the natives Bidgosh (Bydgoszcz); Lemberg, in Gallicia, is only known as Levof (Lvov); and a traveller inquiring for either Lemberg or Bromberg in a neighbouring village, would stand far less chance of being understood,

than a Frenchman asking at Greenwich the way to *Londres*.

If we take the duchy of Posen, its population is almost entirely Polish, though the Polish and Lithuanian population extends southward into Silesia, and partially northwards through East Prussia. The population of Silesia is wholly Slavonic, that of the provinces of East and West Prussia everywhere Polish and Lithuanian, except in the vicinity of the sea. In Pomerania even, the bulk of the peasantry speak a Slavonic dialect, which betrays their origin ; and the Slavonic names and language trench even upon the province of Brandenburg. The whole population of the territory described is not less than eight millions, of which the Germans constitute only a fraction. Wherever the Slavonic dialect is spoken, the sympathies are anti-German, anti-Prussian, and consequently with the Poles and against the government. Of the remaining seven millions of the Prussian kingdom, the Roman Catholic population of the Rhenish provinces, to the amount of a couple of millions, partake the same religious and political feeling.

But the five remaining millions, centrally situate, are not Prussians united by the ties of nationality, or having any interest in keeping the

remainder in subjection. They are passive Brandenburgers, Westphalians, and Saxons: the two latter, in as far as they entertain any opinion, discontented with their transference to Prussia, and in as far as they express it, favourably inclined towards the Poles, as the representatives of turbulent opposition to despotic power. They number, besides, chiefly in Westphalia, nearly another million of Roman Catholics.

Nothing, therefore, can be more artificial than the Prussian kingdom.

In Prussia Proper, as we have seen, the immense bulk of the population is Slavonic—aliens in race, interests, and affection to the reigning family and their German subjects. Where, then, are the Prussians, unless we take as such the Brandenburgers? and where is Prussia, unless we place it in the barren sands of Brandenburg? since all its territory besides consists of disaffected dependencies, at best apathetically indifferent, and more often cankered to the core by religious, political, or national animosities. These are considerations which have not been neglected by the Polish subjects of the Prussian cabinet, who have determined on a course of hostility against it; and they should not be lost sight of in judging of a determination

which might be considered hopelessly rash if we viewed the Prussian kingdom with its artificial composition and its factitious nationality, not as it really is, but as it has popularly succeeded in imposing itself upon the world.

No denial has been made of the extensive ramifications in Prussian Poland, of the late ill-advised project of general Polish insurrection. On its fortunate issue in Prussia, where a plan had been organised to seize on several fortresses, depended its chief chances of success. It was frustrated by the vigilance of the government, which received timely notice of the proposed attempt through the indiscretion, or treachery, which was to be expected amongst so large a body of conspirators; whilst the comparative leniency of the authorities was calculated to lead weak but well-disposed men to put upon their guard officials with whom in Prussian Poland they lived on terms of amity, but towards whom, under the Russian rule, they would have breathed nothing but hatred and defiance.

Throughout the province of Posen, it is calculated that fifteen hundred persons have been arrested; the government organs confessing to eight hundred. As far as it has hitherto proceeded, the Prussian cabinet has shown signs of pursuing at the same

time the most humane and the wisest course towards those compromised within its own territory. Many have already been discharged from custody ; and thus far there seems to be an intention on its part of not considering those most deeply implicated, guilty of direct treason ; affecting that there is no direct evidence to show that the conspirators meditated capturing the Prussian cannon, arms, and fortresses for any other purpose than that of aiding the Russian and Austrian Poles ; or that they ever contemplated definitely renouncing their allegiance to the Prussian sovereignty. In this forbearance, of which a fresh example was afforded in the reluctance of Prussia to bring her troops into collision with the insurgents, it is to be hoped that she will persevere. It is idle to expect that abstaining from the system of terror practised in Russian Poland, where periodic victims are offered up, or from the plan of extermination at second-hand fomented by Austria, will suffice to divert the patriotic thoughts and political aspirations of the Polish population of Prussia from the deep channels in which their current flows so tumultuously ; but the reflection, that it is the least perilous course both as regards Poland and Germany, and that all others have signally failed, may suffice to induce

the most cold-hearted statesman steadily to pursue it.

Unhappily, a despotic government, upheld as all despotic governments must be, by violence or fraud, resembles an individual, who, having entered on a course of crime, is compelled by the consequences of one reckless act to the commission of another, and to whom it is forbidden to stop short in the career of evil. Thus, whilst its comparative forbearance towards its own Polish subjects has been thus far laudable, nothing can be more cruel or treacherous than its conduct towards the insurgent Polish subjects of Austria and Russia, whom it lured by the prospect of a sanctuary in its dominions from the protracted resistance of desperation, and whom it now agrees to give up wholesale and in detail to the vengeance of the governments they have offended.

The strong sensation created throughout Germany by the first rumours of a conspiracy in the grand duchy of Posen, induced the Prussian government to resort to the arms of calumny against the malcontents; and of this calumny the effects now recoil on its own policy.

Close upon the first accounts of the disturbed state of Poland, a gross attempt was made to chill

the rising sympathies of the German people and of the western public for the insurgents: The government organs and the hireling press of Prussia circulated that the plan of the conspirators was to massacre the Jewish population of several small towns, for the purpose of drawing to the spot a part of the garrisons of the adjacent fortresses, which they proposed to seize. Lists of proscription, and even a design to destroy by a new St. Bartholomew all their German fellow-subjects, were said to have been discovered. Poison was the agent to be resorted to, and it was circulated, that, with the stores of arms accumulated by the conspirators, whole chests of arsenic had been discovered, labelled,—“Food for the Germans.”

The absurdity of these rumours did not prevent them from obtaining a certain credit with the vulgar; and many a German well-wisher of the Poles began to thank his stars at his narrow escape. Such reports did not indeed retain credit when the first edge of the popular appetite for the wonderful and the terrible had passed away; but at least the impression remained of inimical feeling on the part of the Polish towards the German population; and its effect has been to deepen indelibly that line of separation which the govern-

ment has made so many efforts to efface, and on whose obliteration the security of the established order of things has always been foreseen to depend.

These calumnies have not been without some effect on the opinion of Western Europe; and a vague idea is still afloat, of the Jacobinical spirit, ferocious intolerance, and reckless disregard of life, of the projectors of the recent insurrection; to whom was attributed the plan of wantonly butchering an unoffending population, for the sole purpose of finding an opportunity to put their plans of revolt into execution.

These accusations, made without proof by the Prussian government, are denied by the Poles: both interested parties, indeed; but with the former of whom lies the *onus probandi*.

The Prussian government accuses the insurgents of a diabolical intent; the insurgents accuse the Prussian government of diabolical calumny. If the whole insurrection had been prevented, Prussia might, under these circumstances, by the adduction of false evidence, have imposed on the world a belief in the crime which the insurgents are accused of having meditated; but one portion of them did succeed, in the republic of Cracow, in possessing themselves of power;—and how did they act!—

according to the intentions attributed to them by Prussia, proscribing citizens, murdering the Jews, and emulating the horrors of the French revolution? On the contrary, they proved the truth of the intent asserted by their brethren in Russia, by disclaiming and discouraging all violent retribution, by giving passports to their civilian adversaries, by declaring the freedom of the peasantry, and by fraternising with those very Hebrews whose wholesale massacre they were said to have planned in the grand duchy of Posen.

Is it possible to conceive a more practical and striking denial of the falsehood of Prussia, or could a more glaring proof of her calumny have been adduced toward that unhappy people, despoiled by the ruthless barbarity of Russia, and the Machiavelian cruelty of Austria, of name, language, commerce, wealth, political and civil rights; and whom, having nothing more left of which it could be stripped, Prussia seeks to rob of its good name!

The king of Prussia is now in the position of that Tarquin to whom the Sybil offered her mystic tomes, when for the third time she brought him her last remaining volume. Fifteen years ago, a constitution would perhaps still have secured the

loyalty of his Polish subjects. It is now in every human probability too late ever to reconcile the Slavonians to political union with the Germans. It is still, however, time to secure, by representative institutions, the permanent fidelity of the German population, to a house which having owed its rise to the apostacy of a monkish soldier, may, in a few years hence, have to attribute its expulsion, by an indignant people, to the faithless character of a military bigot, half martinet and half *pietist*. Nevertheless, until this last opportunity is allowed to pass, an irrevocable step into the only safe and righteous path still holds out a dazzling prospect to the Prussian monarch. Germany has ceased to believe in the incessantly reiterated promises of his cabinet, which have become as hacknied as the cry of "wolf" in the fable; but the reality of a constitution, like the appearance of a real wolf, would soon establish its truth and credit; and in that case, for the want of a better centre, the whole German people, craving for unity and independence, must rally round the Prussian sovereignty, which otherwise a few brief years may see levelled in the dust,—a double consideration to which the author respectfully calls the attention of Frederick William.

CHAPTER VII.

THE JEWISH POPULATION OF POLAND.

THERE is an extraneous element mixed up with the Polish population—the Hebrew portion of it—which assumes importance from the considerable fraction it constitutes of the people amongst which it has so long been settled, and derives interest from the fact that it probably numbers one half of the whole race of Israel, equalling alone in extent all its remaining fragments scattered over the surface of the globe; and having, for this reason, preserved more strictly, both its national and sectarian homogeneity, and the traditions, creed, and customs of a distant period.

The whole Jewish population living does not probably exceed four or five millions. Of these, about 255,000 are in Hungary, 46,000 in Holland, 60,000 in France, 20,000 or 25,000 in England, and upwards of two millions in Poland. Of these two millions nearly a million and a half are reckoned to be in the Russian portion of that territory.

Poland, since the period of the crusades, has been looked upon by the children of Israel as the temporary home of its days of exile; the land in which it had tarried for ages being only a place of temporary soujourn in the eyes of a people whose traditions have been transmitted uninterruptedly through tens of centuries.

The Polish Jews are descended from those who took refuge from Germany, driven before the fire and sword of the fanatical crusaders, or expelled by the cruel zeal of the inhabitants during the period of religious excitement, which led to successive attempts at the recovery of the holy sepulchre.

At one period the Jews seem chiefly to have been settled in Germany, and beneath the dominion of the Saracens. From Germany they sought refuge in Poland, where, to this day, they speak amongst themselves a dialect of the German. The great bulk of the Jews in Europe belong either to those who at one time adopted the idiom and customs of Germany, or to those termed the Spanish Jews, who flourished in Spain and Portugal with the Moors, and were expelled with them. The German Jews are called Askernazim; the Spanish, Sephardim. The Askernazim, as we have seen, were obliged to fly to Poland, where they met with

toleration, which was never denied so long as Poland continued independent. At times they even obtained remarkable privileges, particularly under Cassimir the Great, who married a Jewess and renewed the part of Ahasuerus towards that people, through the intercession of this new Esther.

But in Poland feudality and chivalry prevailed ; and though the Hebrews were treated always as well, and often more favourably than the peasantry and burghers, they shared in the knightly contempt entertained by nobility for all whose trade was not the trade of arms, and hence were doomed to a subordinate position. Under the Moors of Spain, who appear to have retained that indifference to birth still common in the East, without inheriting the intolerance of Islamism ; the Jews seem to have secured much of the wealth, commerce, and learning of the flourishing empire founded by the followers of the prophet, and not a little of their confidence and favour. For this reason the career of the Sephardim, or Spanish Jews, was more brilliant ; and when expelled with their patrons by the Christian conquerors, they had enjoyed wealth, honours, and power ; and hence affect in France, England, and Holland, to look with some disdain on the Askernazim, notwithstanding that the former

now constitute the bone and muscle of their scattered people,—for to one of these two divisions all the western Jews belong. The D'Israelis, Ricardos, Montefiores, for instance, are of the *Sephardim*, the Rothschilds, Goldsmids, &c. of the *Askernazim*.

That the Hebrews should have congregated together or multiplied in Poland to the extent of two millions, is *prima facie* evidence that their treatment must have been far more humane than in those now constitutional countries of the West, where even at the present time they do not amount to one fiftieth or one hundredth of their number in Poland.

But in Poland, during the last centuries of its independence, the condition of the Israelites remained stationary, or it might even be deemed retrogressive, if we consider that the gradual emancipation of so many classes by the absorption of individual talent, education, courage, and learning, into the ranks of the nobility, left the Hebrew, by excluding him from this privilege, still further in the back-ground.

Meanwhile, in France and England, the treatment of the Jews, formerly so inhuman, and the strength of popular prejudice against them, softened to a degree which renders us now unable to appre-

ciate the comparative toleration of law and opinion exercised towards them during a period of universal persecution, and continued to the last moment of national independence. This national independence was destroyed by the three powers at the very moment that the Polish nobles attempted to suppress the errors and abuses of their constitution, which had hitherto led to anarchy. No sooner had their last diet assembled in 1788, and proclaimed, by the constitution of the third of May, 1791, hereditary instead of elective royalty, the substitution of parliamentary majorities for impracticable unanimity, and the emancipation of the peasantry, than the country was divided by its despotic neighbours, who seemed to dread the career of progress and improvement on which Poland was entering, and to which they put an effectual stop.

The diet left the condition of the Jews, when it began these reforms, the same as in the middle ages. Had it been allowed to proceed in the course of amelioration, there is reason to doubt that the people which in the middle ages proved itself so much more tolerant than any other, would have shown itself in the present century behind other civilised countries in toleration. If, however, the condition of the Hebrews remained stationary up

to the partition of Poland, it has since that period cruelly retrograded, alike beneath the rule of Austria, Prussia, and Russia ; though in the dominions of the latter, to a degree of almost inexpressible wretchedness.

Let us take the account given of these people in 1841 by Marmier, a narrow-minded and not very profound writer, but a close observer and accurate delineator of all that met his eye. Disgusted with the state of degradation in which the Hebrews appeared, he seems rather to approve their treatment, and hence his testimony is selected as impartial by the author :—

“ I had often heard of the hideous appearance of these valleys ; but the idea which I had formed was far behind the reality, and I scarce know to what I can compare them. They are more wretched than the Icelandic huts built up of lava ; more filthy than the Lapland tents. I can still imagine that I see the slight deal cabins, lighted by a pane or two of glass, and divided by partitions, on each side of which whole families crowd in the mephitic air,—the muddy gutters, in which half-naked children puddle about like unclean animals,—streets, in which nothing is to be met but men and women in rags, glancing half stupified at the

passing stranger ; or following him, to put in practice the artifices of some petty traffic.

* * * * *

“ They inhabit whole villages, and even towns. Isolated in the midst of a Catholic population, despised and shunned, they are nevertheless attached to the soil which has become to them a second country, and to the land which they exhaust by their cunning and instinct of lucre.

“ In the towns they accost the traveller at the door of his inn, to importune him with their offers of service. In the villages they exercise different callings. Sometimes they farm the public-houses, and woe to the inhabitants of the place where they obtain the monopoly of spirits. They demoralize and ruin the peasant by pandering to his love of drunkenness, and by giving him ardent spirits on credit, for which they afterwards make him pay exorbitantly. Some indolent landholders have been so fatally ill-advised as to appoint Jews to the stewardship of their estates, and their estates have been soon exhausted and impoverished, and their cultivators ruined.

“ This population, alien to the faith, the institutions, and the destinies of the country it inhabits has remained till our own time attached, like a

devouring leprosy, to the soil. * * * The men wear a long black cafetan tied round the waist by a girdle of the same colour,—boots, and breeches. Their head is entirely shaven, with the exception of two locks of hair upon the temples, which fall upon their cheeks, and mingle with the beard. On the bare head they wear a black calpac, and on this calpac a broad-brimmed hat, or a cap bound with a broad belt of fox or wolf skin. The women wear upon the head a handkerchief folded like a turban. The married hide their hair beneath their head-gear, the unmarried let it hang in long tresses down the back. This costume would be picturesque enough, if it were not, as it is, made up of tattered rags, disgustingly filthy. The beauty of the women—that beauty of the hereditary and ineffaceable eastern character—is lost beneath their dirt and the insignia of their misery. * * *

In the towns, the Jews are excluded from the coffee-houses, and from all public promenades and gardens. If they journey by a public conveyance, any traveller is at liberty to turn them out. To restrain them from smuggling, they are not allowed to establish themselves closer than within three leagues of the frontier; at Cracow they are banished to the other side of the Vistula, and on

holidays they must not open their shops till after mid-day, nor quit the quarter of the town without a special permission. One Sunday I had taken a Jew, who acted as *valet de place* in my hotel, to show me over the city. In the middle of the street he was stopped by a soldier, who summoned him to show his permission. The Jew had neglected to procure one, and was carried off.

* * * * *

“ This fidelity to traditional customs, this respect for the external signs of their nationality, the painful constraint in which they live, and the contumely with which they are treated, would awaken in their favour a lively feeling of interest and compassion, if they did not themselves destroy it by the perfidious treachery of which they have been guilty on important occasions; by their daily habits of theft and knavery, and by their own contentedness with their degraded position, whenever they can succeed in amassing a few florins.”

Marmier, who writes in an affected tone of liberalism, here comes to the same illiberal conclusion as others have done with respect to the Russian peasantry. “ Long oppression,” say these philanthropists of the nineteenth century, “ has profoundly degraded them; and now, because they

are so degraded, they are unworthy of being relieved from such oppression."

Several Poles, and amongst other M. Cynski, hastened to publish their dissent with Marmier's doctrine.

Mr. Kubakiewicz, not a passing traveller, but born and brought up in the country settled by this people, says of these Austro-Polish Israelites:—

"They are active, laborious, religious, and intelligent. Notwithstanding political and civil bondage, and a degree of misery of which no idea can be formed in the rest of Europe, they are animated by feelings of humanity and a love of liberty. I never in my life saw a German, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, give alms or any kind of aid to a poor Pole. Jews, on the contrary, may often be seen assisting unfortunate Poles and giving them shelter. Their love of liberty is so great that they prefer starving to tilling the earth, thereby submitting to the *kanczuk* (whip) of the landlord, and to the labour rank, which blunts all human feeling, and brutalises the masters of the soil even more than the peasantry.

"The extreme misery in which they live renders them knaves, and they are easily corrupted by the spoliating government, often serving them as spies, as all the Austrian Germans do in Gallicia."

The remark of Mr. Kubakiewicz applies to a large proportion of the Germans throughout the Russian empire.

The author has endeavoured to show elsewhere, what long oppression has made the Russian and Polish serf. The Polish Jew has not only undergone during half a century, the same oppression at the hands of the Russian authorities, but having become an agent between the landlord and his tenantry, the governing and the governed, has drawn on himself, in addition, the contempt and hatred of the peasantry; at the same time that the prejudice of the Russian sovereigns has rendered him a peculiar mark for the persecution of their servants.

Hence, though the peculiar cunning of the Hebrew enables him somewhat to ward off the accumulated evils which assail him, he has still through many concurring causes, undergone a course of treatment more demoralising than even the Polish or Russian peasantry. Now the abasement of the Polish peasant is redeemed by his love and pride of country; but degraded as the Hebrew is in character, he is not more corrupted than the Russian by a less degree of oppression, in the same manner that the character of the Russian is under more unfa-

vourable circumstances, unquestionably superior to that of the German settlers in the Russian empire.

The Jews are excluded from Russia Proper, and most strictly from the capitals. Sir Moses Montefiore, for instance, could only be allowed to set foot in St. Petersburg by special permission. In southern Russia, and those parts where they are admitted, they are legally excluded from the chief cities, in which they only contrive to remain by bribing governors and officials. They are subject to peculiar taxes and burthens. These were at first imposed on the plea of their being a substitution for that military service which the Jews consider even more onerous than the heaviest pecuniary impositions. The Emperor Nicholas has not only increased these impositions, and multiplied the restrictions which his servants use as a means of extortion, but he forces the Hebrews to serve in his armies, causes their youth to be seized, and sent as recruits, chained in gangs, to the depôts, where they are forced to eat unclean meats, and frequently baptised to that Russo-Greek faith, of which the chief merit is, in the eyes of the Russian emperor, that he is its spiritual head. In Poland and the Polish provinces, this persecuted people has long been obliged to decree in its synagogues general

facts, and that the value of the food saved should be collected for the purpose of bribing various of their persecutors. Avarice and necessity, in the long run, learned, however, too well to conceal the little, rapacious avidity had spared. The wrath of the Tsar was then heated, till he issued his impracticable edict for the immediate transplantation, hundreds of miles away, of hundreds of thousands. Partially put into execution, this ordinance served as a pretext for wholesale depredation ; and when nothing more was left of which to despoil the Jewish population, the emperor's servants humbly represented, that, on account of famine, &c., it was impossible at present to fulfil his imperial decree, without entailing serious charges on the imperial treasury.

Four years' respite have, in consequence, been given to these hapless children of Israel ; by which time, it is probably calculated, that the property of the tribe may again have accumulated to a tangible degree, like the fleece upon a shorn sheep's back. Such is the condition of this persecuted race in the Russian dominions. It is better in Prussia ; but even there, unworthy of a civilised government. The Jew pays heavy and peculiar taxes. These were originally imposed when

he had nothing to do with husbandry, as a substitution for the burthen weighing on agriculturists; and now the government seeks to drive him to cultivate the soil, from which it is impossible for him to derive a living with the double charge of a tax as agriculturist and as sectarian.

Many painful disabilities weigh upon him, and the governors encourage the prejudice of the governed against him, which is so great that even in western Prussia, the female spectators, in a place of public entertainment, may be seen to shake their garments as if to avoid contamination, after sitting next to a Jew.*

* Many of the Jewish families now settled in England, have come, within the memory of the present generation, from Poland. The author has been credibly informed, that at some Jewish meeting, it was proposed to invite the co-religionaries to quit the Russian dominions, in which they are so oppressively treated. This resembles the "vous manquez de pain, eh bien mangez de la brioche," of the French princess. These worthy people judge of Poland as it was when they left it. Such an invitation might as well be addressed to the Siberian convicts. The Tsar has not resolved to root them out from their present abode, to let them enjoy a privilege after which the first nobility in his empire pant, that of quitting it.

Their doom, whenever they are unwilling or unable by pecuniary sacrifices any longer to avert the calamity, is transplantation to desert and inhospitable localities, where they are to till the ground for the Tsar's profit, and breed soldiers for his hosts.

The Jew, like the Russian Moujik and the Armenian, turns all his thoughts to gain ; making that acquisition of wealth which other communities regard as a means, apparently the end of his endeavours. Oppression has left no other course open to these races but the acquisition of property by thrift and trade ; which, when acquired, they have learned not to dare enjoy ; it is therefore probable, that there are few nations which, under like circumstances, would not contract a similar bent of mind.

If we could judge of the character of a people by analogy with a very distant past, the history of the Jews before their expulsion from Palestine would rather tend to prove that the genius of traffic and commerce was far from being inherent in this people. The ancient Hebrews were husbandmen and shepherds, but not traders. At all events, in the present age, they are distinguished from those who share with them their characteristic love of gain and barter, by the intellectual tendency of the pursuits they mingle with it. The author has had occasion to observe how large a proportion of the distinguished men of Germany are of the Jewish family. In Poland, both from their social condition and from that of the country, they have little or no op-

portunity of directing these intellectual tendencies into any but the crotchety channels of a superstition gravely frivolous. Nevertheless, these men live chiefly in an ideal world, and herein differ from the Muscovites and Armenians. The Jew, who may be seen filling the most abject offices to which men are tempted by the love of lucre—who doles out brandy glass by glass through the livelong day, exchanging it for the last rags of the besotted peasant whom he lures to ruin,—this man, whose whole soul seems to a superficial observer inaccessible to any emotion but the love of gain, is looking forward to the silent hours of night for his recreation. When his hovel or his shop is shut, he applies himself with enthusiastic delight to the Gemara, or commentaries on the Talmud, with their quaint sophistries and wonderful traditions, or he plunges deep into the Zohar, the Chaldaic book of the magic Cabala. Of this he strives to master the difficulties through intensity of study, in the ambitious hope of some day—like the astrologers and followers of the black art of old—divining the secrets and commanding the powers of nature. The humble dealer who hawks some article of clothing, or some old piece of furniture about the streets—the obsequious mass of animated

filth and rags which approaches to obtrude offers of service on the passing traveller, is perhaps deeply versed in Talmudic lore, or aspiring in nightly vigils to read into futurity, to command the elements, and to acquire invisibility.

Notwithstanding the avidity attributed to him, the Polish Jew, however much he may treasure material wealth, places a far higher value upon that of mind, according to his peculiar appreciation of it. For the wealthiest Jew who would never consent to a family alliance with a Christian prince, feels honoured by its contraction with the poorest of his tribe who is learned in Hebrew lore. Many of the Polish Jews—alone perhaps of any in Europe—when they can accumulate the means and make their escape, repair to end their days or to settle in the land of promise of their fathers.

There is another singular fact connected with this strange people: Hated and despised by the lowliest of the nation amongst whom its fate is cast,—exposed to the oppression of those most oppressed,—ground to the dust by the extortion of the Russian official, and helplessly recipient even from the Russian private of the indignities heaped upon him by his superior,—still this people devoutly believes itself the chosen of Jehovah—

suffering indeed temporary chastisement for its sins, but to whom nevertheless the wide earth has been given as a heritage to which the children of Israel have an exclusive and inalienable right.

In pursuance of this conviction, the Polish Hebrews, in the midst of poverty, oppression, filth and squalor, have long since magnificently portioned out between them, the houses, castles, palaces, broadlands and forests, in the actual possession of the Gentile. This assumed right descends from father to son, and is saleable from one to another of their race. This partition of the land in which they only dwell by cruel sufferance, appears at first sight nothing but a puerile illusion. Practically, however, it acquires a reality often singularly detrimental to the interests of the owners of property thus divided. The sale and agency of estates has fallen in a great measure into the hands of the Hebrews, who, though poor, as a body still constitute the chief capitalists, and hold and control the circulating medium. Hence, when a Polish noble or his Russian spoiler seek to sell an estate, a house, or any real property, it sometimes suffers an immense depreciation because the chief purchasers and negociators of purchases, being Hebrews, often dare not bid for property which they

consider to belong to one of their tribe, who has not chosen to sell or transfer to them his supposed hereditary right; so that it falls in the market to a part of its real value. For aught he knows, the palace inhabited by the prince of Warsaw, and its very household furniture, belongs to some Isaak or Levy, who crosses the street to shun the brutality of the very private who stands like an automaton sentry at the Russian proconsul's gate. Under certain circumstances he and his government may laugh to scorn this pretension, as a quaint and frivolous conceit; but if the palace could be put up for sale, or if, as eventually may happen, the building materials or the furniture should be publicly sold by auction, then the right of Isaak or Levy, its mysterious proprietor, may tell in a singular depreciation of their price.

This singular assumption is called the Chazak, and has vainly been attempted to be suppressed through stringent laws by the government.

The Polish Jews may be divided into four principal sects, the Talmudic Jews and the Chassidim, who believe in the Talmud, and the Caraites and Frankists who reject it. The Talmudic Jews, of the same faith as those inhabiting western Europe, constitute the immense majority, and next (chiefly

in the Polish provinces incorporated with Russia) come the Chassidim.

The ordinary Talmudic Jews believe not only in the Old Testament, but in the Talmud. The Talmud is, however, divided into two very distinct portions, consisting, firstly, of the pharisaical Mishna, supposed to have been written about sixteen centuries back by Judah the saint, and to contain the laws and institutions given to Moses on Mount Sinai, and transmitted orally with the traditions and explanations of the prophets and elders down to Judah. Secondly, of the two Gemaras, or commentaries upon the Mishna, the first written by Rabbi Jochanan, about two centuries afterwards, and forming with it the Talmud of Jerusalem; the second by Rabbi Asce, and called the Talmud of Babylon.

Now the two Gemaras, the offspring of exile and of persecution, breathe nothing but hatred and malignity to the Goim or Gentiles. It is probable that, under the peculiar circumstances in which the Jews have been placed, a bitter antipathy and strong and exclusive spirit of caste could alone have enabled a people thus scattered and defenceless to pass unchanged and unabsorbed through so many centuries of admixture, and through collision with so many

races. At least we find this to have been equally entertained by the gipsies, the only other example in Europe of a tribe retaining through ages, in the midst of other nations, its distinctive peculiarities.

As the persecution of law, prejudice, and custom has ceased to pursue the Hebrews, so they appear gradually to have relinquished the most illiberal portions of their written law. In Holland, England, and some parts of Germany, they lay chief stress upon the Mishna, even where not questioning the sanctity of the Gemara, but in many instances reject the Talmud altogether. In France, where both law and public opinion give them equal right and standing with the remainder of the people, the Jews are rapidly amalgamating with it. But if in France they verify the moral of the fable in which the traveller is throwing off his cloak in the mildness of the sun's rays, in Eastern Europe they recall the same wayfarer, wrapping his mantle only more closely round him, when assailed by the wind and rain. In Poland both the Talmudic Jews and the more pretentious sect called Chasidim, not only prefer the Mishna to the Bible, but the Gemara to either; comparing the Bible to water, the Mishna to wine, the Gemara to an aromatic liquor.

The sect of Chassidim, or "very holy," may be considered as a morbid offspring of the anti-social tendency of the religious belief to which persecution has given birth in the votaries of the Gemaras. It was founded about eighty years ago in Volhynia, by Israel (called) Balshem, at a period when the Jews began to feel oppression increase; and has chiefly been perpetuated and extended in Russia, and in the Russo-Polish provinces, where it weighs most heavily.

The Chassidim, devout readers of the Zohar, have recent commentaries by their own rabbis, which they add to the preceding Talmuds, more filled with superstitious sophistries, and inculcating greater hatred to the Gentiles than even the Gemaras.

The written tenets of this sect are some of them so monstrous, that it can only be fairly ranked with those springing up of recent years like poisonous fungi in the same hot-bed—the Russian empire.

To give some idea of its doctrines, it may suffice to state, that Israel Balshem, its founder, in his book *Likute Amumiv*, declares, that with faith man may not only be saved, whatever his deeds, but furthermore inculcates the commission of the most

heinous crimes, as bringing him nearer to the Supreme Being ; because supposing the Creator and his creatures ranged in a scale represented by a circle, and removed from him by each degree of crime, so that at length the farthest in the ring comes to be nearest.

The two sects who reject the Talmud, the Caraites and Frankists, differ strangely in character,—the former being probably the most scrupulous, moral, and religious community in existence, the latter, the most corrupt even of the Polish Jews. The Frankist tenets originated with a certain Jacob Frank, near the middle of last century : about the same period that the doctrines of the Chassidim were broached. Both alike the offspring of oppression, offer striking illustrations of the distinct effects it produces,—fanaticism in the instance of the Chassidim, and hypocrisy in that of the Frankists.

The Frankists reject the Talmud, and recognise only the Bible as their rule of faith, but at the same time they consider it both lawful and praiseworthy to deceive the Goim, or Gentiles, by ostensibly professing the dominant religion, whilst secretly adhering to their own. The extent of such a sect can of course never be known, but that it is considerable does not admit of doubt.

It has been furthermore proved, that these Jews, professing Christianity, are to be found filling the offices of its ministry ; and there have been discovered, and probably to this day exist, Frankists amongst the Catholic and Lutheran church dignitaries of Russian, Austrian, and Prussian Poland.

The Caraites can hardly be termed a sect, since having probably followed uninterruptedly the Mosaic faith and doctrine before the traditions of the Talmud were even orally engrafted on it. They have been supposed to descend from the Scribes, who adhered only to the written law, and followed it to the letter. The Caraites, who emigrated some centuries since from Turkey, or who have been overtaken in the Crimea by the progressing frontier of the Russian empire, speak amongst themselves a dialect of the Turkish or Tartar, instead of German, like the other Polish Jews. They are chiefly to be found in Volhynia and Lithuania, and are distinguished by their addiction to husbandry, and by that rigid probity which the Quakers affect amongst ourselves. The scrupulous honesty of the Caraitic Jew is indeed so universally recognised that his simple word is more valued than the oath or bond of any other class of men. Unhappily, the Caraites form but a small portion of the He-

brew community in Poland. The future fate of the remainder long constituted in the prospective arrangements of Polish patriots and philanthropists, a difficulty as harassing as that of Ireland to British, or of the slave population to American statesmen. The Jews are, undoubtedly, in one way, as much a curse to Poland, as Ireland, in another, to Great Britain. The mischievous part which the former now play in Poland, originates, like the turbulence of Ireland, in long cruelty and injustice practised towards them. Both have been made what they are through ill-treatment, a consideration which should alone induce those at whose hands they have suffered oppression to regard with indulgence its retributive consequences, if even to bear with these were not, as it is, an inevitable necessity. Poland can no more rid itself of two millions of Jews, than Great Britain of Ireland. The present state of those unhappy sojourners in the midst of a strange race, forms a social leprosy, tending still further to disease the afflicted body of the nation amongst whom they dwell. The removal of the contagious evil which their abasement constitutes, must necessarily prove one of the first conditions of the regeneration of Poland. Experience has proved that this cannot be done by

persecution or severity ; but the example of the Jews in France and other western countries, proves, that the removal of disabilities, and the extinction of prejudice, to which such a course conduces, effects that which the violent ukases of a Russian emperor cannot do, by making Judaism the harmless religious opinion of a portion of the people, instead of an injurious distinction of race, rendering it a congregation of aliens and enemies established in the heart of a nation.

The Poles, who, to do them justice, proved themselves, up to the time of the extinction of their independence, on the whole, the most tolerant of their contemporaries, cannot be charged with intolerance, but rather with neglect towards the Hebrews. It must not be, however, forgotten, that the nobility and the clergy, who alone had any share in the government of the state, had only been brought to emancipate the Polish peasantry, a few months before the downfall of the national independence. It was natural that they should first turn their attention to their own people, who were far more in need of relief than the Hebrews. Since that period, when stopped on the very threshold of progress, Poland has never enjoyed any but partial and temporary independence, namely,

during the existence of the grand duchy of Warsaw, for a few years; the revolution of 1831, for a few months; and the recent insurrection of Cracow, for a few days.

In each of these intervals the emancipation of the Jews was discussed, and in 1846, at Cracow, the removal of all disabilities, and a fraternal equalisation of their rights with those of the Polish people, was one of the first acts of a government, which should, perhaps, rather be termed transitory than provisional.

The despotisms which have partitioned Poland between them, and kept the bulk of its population in the condition of the middle ages, as regards the Jews, have behaved still more cruelly, by rendering their treatment far worse than it had ever been in Poland since they sought refuge in it centuries ago from the persecution of the crusaders.

The feeling and the prejudice of the masses, who do not readily inquire beneath the surface, is naturally enough against the Hebrews. Rigid adherents as we have seen to the most exclusive portion of the Talmud, the bulk of the Polish Jews looked on with indifference in the often recurring struggles between the Poles and their oppressors. Considering both as infidels, they outraged Polish patriot-

ism, by serving whoever paid them, and betraying whoever they were paid to betray; whilst the most frequent and liberal customers for their services were the enemies of the nation.

The enlightened classes of the Polish people, however, who alone are likely to influence its conduct, are unanimous in the opinion that it is urgent to relieve this people from the oppression which has so cruelly accumulated upon them under the Russian rule.

All parties are agreed on the expediency of giving equal civil rights to the Jew as well as to the peasant. Some, indeed, are for withholding political equality, as in England, from those professing this faith, but the majority would make equality of political rights optional or conditional on the acceptance of political duties. Thus they propose to render the Jew eligible to any office in the state, and to give him a share in its representation, providing he contribute personally to defend it. It is also satisfactory to find, that, if slowly, the Hebrews have progressively been exhibiting signs of identifying their interests with those of the nation. To this result, two concurring causes—the unendurable nature of Russian oppression, and the feeling manifested towards them at different times by the Polish insurrection-

ary leaders—may alike have led ; but it has been abundantly proved by the support they have given the recent attempt to shake off the yoke. The significance of this support is nowise impaired by the treachery and denunciation of patriots by those amongst the Jews who have not yet merged their general antipathy to the Gentiles in individual hatred to the Russian rule,—a class which its severity is calculated daily to diminish.

In Austrian Poland, 340,000, or one-sixth of the whole Israelito-Polish population, is located. The Jews inhabit exclusively several towns, and people entirely the city of Biody upon the Russian frontier. As a body they are poorer than even in Russia. They are, it is true, allowed to exempt themselves from military service, on paying £30, but are so oppressively taxed as to keep them in a state of hopeless misery. Over and above all other taxes, they are made to contribute a million and a half of florins, or one-seventh of the whole revenue of Gallicia, as a tax on *cosher* (permitted meat) and sabbath candles. When one Jew cannot pay, the congregation must pay for him ; and when one congregation is ruined, as frequently happens, by the enormous expenses which distress for taxes entails, adjacent congregations must pay the whole

amount between them. The Russian authorities are allowed to strip the Jews of every tangible property, and consequently little remains to the share of the emperor. In Austria, where matters are more skilfully managed, a far larger share of the Hebrew spoil is gathered into the imperial coffers, and the agents of authority have less opportunity of extortion. There are, however, several imperial ordinances which afford them a rich harvest ; and amongst others, one declaring all Jewish marriages illegal where both parties have not obtained permission by proving their ability to read and write in the German language. *The poverty of this people prevents ninety-nine couples out of a hundred from obtaining this instruction, but when a couple marry according to their own rite, as usually happens, without this permission, on discovery of the fact they are punished for disobedience ; and when it cannot be proved, for immorality. The husbands are flogged with sticks, the wives with rods ; each is sent back to his or her respective parish, and the children taken from them are placed in asylums, where they almost invariably die of neglect and misery. Such is the conduct of the Austrian cabinet towards the Jews, though it must be admitted that its sovereigns

have shown none of that personal antipathy or insulting illiberality which has been evinced by Nicholas and Frederick William of Prussia. On the contrary, the late emperor Francis has been known to pray for three-quarters of an hour together in a synagogue; a proceeding which has given rise to the rumour that the princes of the house of Hapsburg are Jews of a sect analogous to that of the Frankists, of which a prototype existed some centuries back in Spain, and which may elsewhere, and in an earlier age, have been called into existence by like causes. Several chronicles and old writings inimical to the Hapsburgs, reproach them with being Jewish pedlars, who settled in Switzerland in the ninth century.*

* The works of the Abbé Chiaryni, professor of oriental languages in the university of Warsaw, and translator of the Talmud, throws ample light on modern Judaism.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE Austrian empire—the second great European despotism — comprises beneath its rule a larger number of Slavonians than any state excepting Russia. Twenty millions of its subjects out of thirty-eight are computed to belong to the various branches of this family, besides Magyars and Italians, whilst the Germanic is the least important of its constituent elements. The Austrian government appears, upon examination, so complete an absolutism that it is difficult for those unacquainted with the Russian autocracy to conceive anything more arbitrary. There exist, however, between these two despotisms, considerable distinctions, due less to any difference in the spirit animating them, than to the social condition and historical antecedents of the people over whom their rule extends.

The Russian empire is a structure raised on the basis of popular submissiveness, oriental in its

character and origin, since deduced in its political and religious features from the levelling cruelty of the Tartar, and the corruption of the Greek of the lower empire. In 1846, it is scarcely yet in anything but externals European, and in the space of a century and a half has had infused into it very little more of the real spirit of western civilisation, than such rulers as Mehemet Ali or Runjeet Singh had, by the labours of a single life, instilled into the populations of Egypt or the Punjaub. It could never probably have been raised to such intensity, never certainly have retained its characteristic peculiarities, if established over a western people, or perhaps any other unprepared for its reception by preceding centuries of oriental misrule. It must be regarded therefore as of an entirely Asiatic stamp, combining the oppressive violence of the eastern despots with the barbaric centralisation and demoralising order of the Chinese empire. It is difficult to compare things utterly dissimilar, whether good or evil. This is the case with the Russian and Austrian despotisms, the one being Chinese and Mongolian, the other European, and consequently far less hideous, notwithstanding its deformity. The Austrian government would have been Russian if planted on a Russian soil, trampled

down long since to a convenient level, but it has grown propped upon many obstacles, which the Tsars of Russia rooted out—an independent church, an aristocracy, a burgher class, and a host of distinct nationalities, all elements which it might separately have destroyed, but of which it has in some measure been forced to respect the existence, because its own depends on skilfully playing off the interests of one class or race against the other.

This necessity has proved, and proves some check on the conduct of the government, which has shown itself as cruel, faithless, and obscurantist as any on record; and which, though European in its character, seems in the nineteenth century to combine the arbitrary injustice of the days of star-chambers and *lettres de cachet* with the cold-blooded disregard of life and suffering, mysterious forms and Machiavelian perfidy of the Venetian state, or of the Italian politicians of the middle ages.

It is true, that within the pale of the Austrian empire, some of the many distinct nations of which it is compounded still retain franchises which even Prussia does not tolerate, and which appear to contain, as probably they do, the germ of constitutional institutions. The Hungarian and Croatian enjoy a considerable degree of self-administration

and liberty of speech, which they are not slow to use, and the Tyrolese, privileges which Prussia would not dream of according to its subjects.

The Austrian government differs from that of Russia, which seeks to be obeyed through terror, and covets in its subjects the moral prostration of the Asiatic. Austria would rather unobtrusively control contented subjects, concealing if possible that yoke of which it has no intent of lightening the weight. In those parts of the empire wherein it is not afraid of the wealth of its subjects, it makes every effort to secure its material prosperity. In the capital, it has rendered the Viennese the most frivolous people in the world, by encouraging an exclusive taste for amusement, whilst at the same time it guards against scarcity and indemnifies trades, such as the butchers and bakers, to avert the discontent even of classes. Strangers in Austria, who principally visit Vienna, who see the country progressing in prosperity, railroads, navigation, manufacturing industry arising in every direction, come to the natural conclusion, that the government, which renders the governed thoughtlessly contented, by providing for its wants and pleasures, is, in a great measure, entitled to call itself paternal, as it does.

The prosperity of the empire is concentrated in the German grand duchy of Austria, the prosperity of the grand duchy of Austria in Vienna, whilst the natural levity and acquired awe of its inhabitants, the secrecy of its police, and the depths of its dungeons, conceal the mass of Vienna's miseries from the traveller's eye and ear, though he may frequently hear through the walls of places of detention the cries of those undergoing the severity of the authorities.

But though even Vienna is calculated to convey to a minute observer a sad idea of Austria, the remainder of the empire, though almost everywhere more favoured by nature, must not be judged by the standard of Vienna. In the provinces, the natural resources, and the happiness and civilisation of the people are cramped in the development by the nature of the government, which there assumes a shape which recalls the gloomy tyranny of the dark ages, with the open cruelty of their feudality, the hidden barbarities of their dungeon keeps, and the treachery of their secret assassinations; recalling those times of violence and guile in everything but the knightly chivalry and princely generosity which occasionally illumined their darkness; though as far as Austria is concerned, it

would be perplexing to point to any age in which these brighter qualities were manifested—from the days of the craven archduke who kidnapped our own Cœur-de-Lion, to the imperial murderer of Wallenstein.

In the very brief space which the limit of these volumes allow, it is impossible for the author to enter into the details requisite to unmask the self-styled paternal government of the Austrian Kaiser, and this he the less regrets, that Mr. Kubrakiewicz, who long held office in Gallicia and Lodomeria, has just given to the world some interesting revelations on this subject.

To disturb, however, the opinion of those who have taken the mildness of this rule as a recognised fact, and who argue from it the incredibility of the participation of the Austrian government in the atrocities lately committed at its instigation, the author has ventured to cite the three following anecdotes, which briefly illustrate the real character of the paternal rule, as exhibited in its relations alike with the noble, the peasant, and the soldier. The first is personal to Count K., a gentleman of high character, now in England; the other two are contained in the work to which allusion has just been made, and of which M. Kubrakiewicz, the author, was eye-witness.

— When confined in the fortress of Olmutz," says the former of these personages, "I learned from many sources that secret executions were of frequent occurrence, and the assertion was confirmed by the arrival of a lady, a fellow-prisoner, whose husband had lived and died a functionary in it. She related amongst other things, that on the eve of her marriage she had been struck by the sudden melancholy of her intended, called away for a few hours to the presence of the governor, and whose solemn adjuration to her not to press him on the subject still further increased her curiosity, which he obstinately refused to gratify. Many years after, when given over by the doctors, he one day recalled the circumstance to her recollection, and being placed by the hopeless nature of his malady beyond the influence of any fears as to the consequences of indiscretion, confessed the cause of his mysterious depression on their marriage eve. It appears that when admitted to the governor's he found him seated with two other individuals at a table on which was a book and a crucifix. The governor told him with much solemnity that he had been selected to perform a piece of secret service in the emperor's interest, but that it was previously required of him to swear on the crucifix both unhesitatingly to obey

his instructions, and never subsequently to divulge them. The whole appeared so strange and irregular that he declined binding himself by any oath beyond that of allegiance, which he had already as a public servant taken to his sovereign. Hereupon the governor observed to him the consequence of refusal to comply with any portion of the orders given him, which was simply that he would be taken from the room in which he stood and instantly shot for disobedience. Under these circumstances he complied with the preliminary forms, and was then instructed to proceed to a particular spot, where he would find a detachment of soldiers at his disposal. He was to secure certain outlets and then to surround certain dwelling-houses, in which he would find three strangers of whom a minute description was given. Without exchanging a syllable with these three personages, or seeking to learn their names or conditions, he was to convey them in custody to a place, where he would find a priest in waiting. He was to leave them with the priest for the space of one hour, and to have all three blindfolded, shot, and buried in a large grave which he would find ready dug, and this business dispatched, to return immediately and report the fulfilment of his instructions. He cap-

tered the three strangers in the places designated. One was an old, the other was a middle-aged, the third a young man. They met their fate with resignation, the two elder never breathing a word. The youngest, before his eyes were blindfolded, exclaimed: "I have only been eighteen months married, I have a wife and child, and they will never know what has become of me." Finding that the officer repulsed all confidence, he too resigned himself, and they were all three shot and buried, their captor returning to the governor, and being by him dispatched back with what appetite he might to the bridal festivity, which he had quitted a few hours before. This incident remained utterly unknown in the place where it occurred; and he who had played so unwillingly the chief part in it, never, to the day of his death, knew the names, conditions, or offence of his victims.

M. Koubrakiewicz relates the following scene, one out of thousands of such instances, as he observes, but which he selects, because, of the many at which he has been present, it was the first that recurred to his recollection:—

The peasants of Podkamien, in the circle of Zlcow, refused to work more days than was stipulated in the *befehl*.

“Count Cetner, an Austrian nobleman, sent for Mr. Charles Sacher, commissary of the circle, with an escort of dragoons. Mr. Sacher sent for the deputies, who are always the elders of the village, and desired them to obey their lord without reply, and to execute his orders without hesitation. The peasants replied that his demands were unjust, and contrary to the imperial order. ‘You have the right of complaint to your lord,’ replied the commissary. ‘We have been complaining for thirty years, and a deaf ear is turned to our entreaties,’ rejoined the deputies; ‘we pray only to be allowed to quit the village with our families, and to seek another master.’ Without further loss of time, the commissary had the deputies stretched upon the ground one after the other, and the punishment with the stock (cane) by two corporals commenced. Notwithstanding the advanced age of the deputies, of whom the youngest was seventy, they suffered with patient resignation six blows a-piece. During the infliction, the peasants, book in hand, repeated litanies. On the second infliction of twenty strokes each, their fortitude, however, abandoned them; they declared themselves guilty, and submitted to the arbitrary pleasure of their lord.”

Apropos of the remark, that, when a criminal is

put to death, or a deserter shot, the body is left upon the place of execution guarded by a sentinel. M. Koubrakiewicz gives elsewhere the following touching scene, which likewise passed under his eyes. He once saw

“A Hungarian woman, who had come from the interior of Hungary with her three children, the eldest six or seven years, the youngest at the breast only four or five months of age. This unhappy creature hoped by her presence to soften Austrian cruelty, to inspire pity, and obtain the pardon of her husband, a deserter. But she deceived herself; he was shot. I saw her fling herself sobbing on his yet warm body, calling him by name,—‘ Paul, dear Paul !’ She shook him and opened his mouth, as if thinking to awaken or restore him to life. Two or three hours after she expired, with her lips pressed, or rather frozen to the lips of her husband, the child who was at her breast sharing its mother’s fate. That day the snow fell so abundantly that the three bodies were completely covered with it about two in the afternoon.

“ No one dared offer any assistance to the wife or children, for fear of drawing down upon their heads the wrath of the paternal government !”

The want of space, but not the want of matter,

forbids to multiply these illustrations of the nature of a despotism, in which the ignorance of the western public has long recognised that assumed paternity of character, which is only true if we regard the government of Austria as a political Saturn. It is difficult that it should be otherwise. The Russian absolutism is characterised by the thirst of extension, and an abstract impatience of all resistance to the would-be man-god in which it is personified; the Prussian despotism, living on from day to day, with anxious solicitude for the morrow, by its profound hypocrisy; but the government of Austria, by its profound avarice and rapacity. At the present day it may be considered to centre in about a hundred powerful families, chiefly German, and in the imperial house of Hapsburg, which monopolises three-fourths of the power divided between the whole. They may be compared, as they have by recent Slavonic writers, to a company, of which three parts of the shares belong to the reigning family, and which, like the East India Company formerly, is associated for the sole purpose of furthering the interests of the members, by the administration of the populations and lands they have appropriated. There is, however, this difference between the two,

that the commercial far-sightedness of the British merchant princes taught them, for their own interests, to better the condition of their Hindoo subjects, by comparison with what it was under their native princes; and in this foresight that Austrian company is entirely wanting, which, with the aid of highly paid church dignitaries, and of corrupt and servile instruments furnished by three millions of German subjects, oppresses thirty-two millions of Slavonians, Magyars, and Italians. To effect this, like the other great despotisms of Europe, it is forced to play off the nationalities and prejudices of castes and races against each other; rendering some poor and miserable, in opposition to its own pecuniary interests, for the sake of keeping up the ill feeling and enmities, which, by preventing combination, are a necessary condition of its safety.

The house of Hapsburg is not now what it was. The sceptre of the Austrian Cæsars, which Joseph the Second still wielded with imperial energy, has fallen for the last two generations into the hands of weak and imbecile princes. The late emperor, Francis the First, was distinguished by his falling under lip, by his head bowed upon his chest, his hollow eye and haggard look all bespeaking semi-idiotcy. The present Kaiser, Fer-

Ferdinand the First, is notoriously epileptic and of weak intellect. Both spent their time in frivolous pursuits ; the former in making sealing-wax, the latter in turning toys ; the inanity of both these sovereigns being only relieved by a maudlin avarice, their chief characteristic. By humouring this foible, by allowing them to count their hoarded treasures, and to live in parsimonious retirement, the minister of the day has succeeded in virtually coaxing the sceptre from their hands ; and contented with presiding over their treasury, or *Kofkammer*, the sovereigns of the holy Roman empire have sunk into the same relative insignificance with regard to their chief servant, as the French kings in the days of the mayors of the palace.

Metternich has long been this Austrian mayor of the palace. He cannot precisely be said to exercise absolute control, because there are in the empire personages whom he is required to conciliate, and interests he is forced to consult. His power may, however, be considered not only far to exceed that of any constitutional sovereign of the present day, but of any of the ministers or favourites who for more than half a century have swayed Russia.

Prince Metternich has undoubtedly shown considerable ability in his time, and played his unscrupulous

pulous part with more skill than most of his contemporaries. Nevertheless, his reputation probably exceeds his merits; and is said to have outlived the virility of an intellect impaired by advancing years, though the prestige of his awe-inspiring name is still sufficient to uphold the system which his subtle policy upreared during an earlier period of his long career. In this respect the man in his old age, is typical of the empire over the destinies of which he has so long presided.

Cool, cautious, and uninfluenced alike by any vain glory or considerations of honour, justice, or humanity, which might have deterred him from following the safest and most profitable course; with great means at his disposal, he has risked as little as possible, and therefore has won and lost less than his cotemporary statesmen, who staked more adventurously. His name will notwithstanding go down to posterity as one who has identified himself for five-and-thirty years with the existence of a mighty state, even if his own death be not the signal of its proximate dissolution. Metternich is at the present time probably the only man in Europe besides Louis Philippe, whose individual life is of any public moment. There is, however, this great distinction between them, that whilst the decease of both may

lead alike to eventful changes, in Austria it would be difficult for these not to further the interests of civilisation and humanity, which in France they would endanger.

The Austrian premier, notwithstanding his personal power and importance, has no claims to that species of greatness which history concedes whether for good or evil. He will never rank with Colbert or Pitt, or Louis Philippe, or even with Joseph the Second ; because, far from achieving great things with little means, he has not even attempted them with great means ; and because, contracted in his views, his policy may be defined as a persevering course of Machiavelian expediency. Austria has morally lost ground in Germany during Metternich's reign, and whilst its foreign subjects have rapidly increased, like the Hebrews in Egyptian bondage, he has never attempted to place the imperial sovereignty on a basis more broad and secure than that on which it rests, and which was found insufficient by Joseph the Second before it had to sustain its present weight. With five or six millions of Germans, ten millions of Magyars and Italians, and twenty millions* of Slavonians, subjects, besides tens of millions of the latter in

* According to the admission of official documents, more probably twenty-three millions.

adjacent territories, he has never taken any steps (as Joseph contemplated) to render this empire Slavonic; the only means which might possibly have infused fresh life into its decrepitude, and have arrested the process of natural decomposition.

It is probable that this will be attempted, but too late. Count Kollowrath, the rising man in the empire, is a Slavonian (from Bohemia), and said to be imbued with Slavonic ideas. It is true that no ties of nationality on the part of Metternich, who is a foreigner; no family prospects on the part of the vizier, whose office cannot be rendered hereditary, gives him any interest in the permanent stability of the empire, whose prosperity only materially interests him as long as he continues to live. A man of exalted mind might, indeed, even under these circumstances, feel ambitious that his work should survive him, but the mind of Metternich is not cast in any extraordinary mould. Far from having made any great efforts to fuse and amalgamate the discordant elements of the empire he governs, far from evincing any solicitude for its future maintenance; with the growing garrulity of age he complacently plumes himself in his conversation on his ingenuity in so nicely maintaining the balance, and appears to consider the insecurity of the fabric which his death will endanger, chiefly in

the light of a fact which exalts his personal consequence.

Clement Wenceslaus von Metternich Winneburg Ochsenhausen—for in these names the Austrian premier rejoices, besides titles for which the author cannot find room in these pages—is a Prussian, whose real name is Ochsenhausen. He is a scion of that disreputable petty German nobility whose offshoots being penniless and idle, seek promotion in every kind of service in Russia and Austria, where they have earned for themselves the contemptuous appellation of "*German vermin*." It is matter of dispute whether he was born in Westphalia or at Coblenz, and he must be now in his seventy-second or seventy-third year.

He commenced his diplomatic career as secretary of legation at the conference of Rastadt, and was sent to Paris as ambassador at the age of thirty-three, on the signature of peace concluded with France in consequence of the loss of Austerlitz. He rapidly afterwards rose to a pitch of power which enabled him to monopolise alike the authority and state of his nominal master.

Though in every sense of the word a *parvenu*, Metternich spends his acquired wealth with a generosity truly imperial, when compared with the

parsimonious meanness of the last and the present emperor. He has the reputation of being a finished gentleman, is a munificent patron of the fine arts, and encourages profusion and expenditure in strangers and the magnates of the empire who visit Vienna, which hence presents a far gayer spectacle than St. Petersburg, where the narrow-minded jealousy of Nicholas takes umbrage at the wealth or splendour of his slaves.

Prince Metternich is a man who undoubtedly would at any period of his life have resented such usage from his superiors, or even from his sovereign, as all Russian officials must put up with; he would probably, as secretary of legation, have considered as an unpardonable insult, such insignificant propitiatory offerings as the Russian ministers accept; he is probably an honourable man in his private transactions, and too gentlemanlike to compromise his personal veracity in his ordinary intercourse with society; but hence to argue that any credit is to be given to his official assertions, or that in his political acts or solemn declarations he is invariably influenced by any feelings of truth or honour, is an assumption incessantly controverted by facts, and of which the two following circumstances will at once determine the validity.

It is well known in St. Petersburg, that as long

as the Emperor Alexander lived, Metternich received from him a secret pension of forty thousand pounds sterling per annum.* It is not meant to be asserted that Metternich proved himself corruptible, but only venal, as, according to all appearances, it was the Russian emperor whose magnificent bribe he accepted, and not his master whom he deceived.

His political veracity the following anecdote may illustrate. Leopold King of Belgium, whilst the Belgic question was still pending, was in want of a skilful and experienced commander for his armies. Skrynetski, the commander-in-chief of the Polish army, was engaged by him for this purpose. Though Skrynetski is a bigot, and showed as much want of moral and strategical courage as he did tactical skill and personal bravery; he is acknowledged by all parties as a man of the most strict veracity and unblemished honour. He was detained at Prague at the time he received his appointment, and by the aid of an agent dispatched for that purpose, succeeded in escaping from the Austrian territory.

Metternich, in his vexation at this incident, wrote

* On the accession of Nicholas, the pension, which stood on the same list as three-and-twenty others to the mistresses of Alexander, and his favourites, was discontinued by the new sovereign. When the Polish revolution broke out, Nicholas thought it prudent to pay up all the arrears and restore the private annuity granted by his brother.

A private letter to Leopold, detractive of his new commander, in which he congratulated him on having entrusted his armies to a man who had only come to head them by violating his parole.

This calumny came to the ears of Skrynetski, who wrote to Metternich, branding him as a liar, and declaring that if he could show any parole which he had signed, or bring forward any individual to whom he had passed his word, he would return forthwith into Austrian custody. Metternich could make no answer.

So much for the argument of those who close their eyes to all evidence adduced of the recent massacres in Galicia, and the participation of the Austrian government in them, on the plea of Metternich's denial of the fact, and of the utter impossibility of their believing him, from personal knowledge of his character, capable of sanctioning such acts.

The Austrian empire comprises Hungary and the Tyrol, in which its rule is not quite absolute; Lower and Upper Austria, exclusively German; Styria, where more than half the population is so, and the Lombardo-Venetian states, Bohemia, Austrian Poland, (or Galicia and Lodomeria), and

the Illyrian and Dalmatian provinces ; in all of which, taken at an average, the German element is not even numerically as prominent as in the Russian capital of St. Petersburg.

It has been already observed, that of the Germans in the empire, amounting to less than six millions, little more than three millions inhabit the German provinces of Upper and Lower Austria, and Styria, the remainder being isolated in small colonies or surrounded, as in Bohemia and Moravia, by a preponderating foreign population. It is chiefly from these German subjects that the Austrian despotism draws the civil and military instruments of its government—the great majority of functionaries who hold commissioned rank, or its equivalent, whether in the public offices, or the armies belonging to that nation. The German provinces are the only portions of the Austrian territory for which the dynasty of Hapsburg is national, or the fidelity of whose inhabitants is not questionable. The Austrian government has therefore good reason to conciliate that only portion of its subjects, on whose services it can depend to keep the remainder in subjection.

In its conduct towards Hungary and the Tyrol, Austria is restrained by prudential considerations.

Its cabinet has not yet forgotten that the warlike and fiery Magyars stopped Joseph the Second short in the midst of the projected reforms which he attempted to pursue at the expense of their privileges. It remembers equally the stand made by the Tyrolese mountaineers against the armies of Napoleon, which occupied Vienna. It is therefore comparatively measured in its treatment of the German provinces of the Tyrol, and of the Hungarian kingdom; being anxious to increase the material prosperity of the former, and fearful of openly assailing the franchises of the latter.

The archduchy is growing wealthy and Hungary and Croatia remonstrate boldly with the emperor. But it is not on this account true that the inhabitants of the archduchy have the faintest political rights, nor that the government has aided, or even ceased to impede the development of the magnificent natural resources of Hungary. On the contrary, the steam navigation of the Danube was due to a Magyar nobleman, who carried it through in spite of the opposition of the very government which eagerly opens means of communication to enrich the German provinces. The rule of Austria, everywhere bad enough, differs therefore in its objects, even in the provinces it treats most favourably. Its govern-

ment of the people of the remaining portions of its territory, whom it does not fear to oppress, but only dreads to see prosperous, is pernicious and demoralising in a far greater degree. Unhappily, the inhabitants of the territory which comes within this category, form not the exception to this rule, but the vast majority of the subjects of the Austrian empire.

Whilst hireling writers, or travellers who have only seen Vienna—never conversed but with an official class, and whose remarks are furthermore constrained by their social relations and the civilities they have received, acquiesce in the assumption of paternal solicitude made by the Austrian government, with as much truth as the pretensions of the Prussian cabinet to *enlightened absolutism*; most of its remote provinces present a picture of misery and degradation which is without parallel in western Europe, and can only be exceeded in the Russian dominions.

The fortresses of remote districts are commonly filled with political prisoners, and wherever the mountain fastnesses and the rifles of the Tyrolese, or the *insurrection* (general rising) of the fiery Hungarian Magyars is not dreaded, all opposition or reflection on the conduct of the government, or the rapacity of its agents, is punished by the *carcer*, *carcer durus*, or *carcer durissimus*,

the three modes of punishment, which in the paternal government replace degradation to the ranks, the knout, and Siberia, in the Russian despotism; and which, except in favoured localities, are freely administered. The *carcer* is confinement during which the very name of the victim is often forgotten, so that he remains like the prisoners found in the Bastille, and by the Poles in the Russian prisons, till his name and case are lost and forgotten by the death of his successive jailors. The *carcer durus* is attended with hard-labour; and the *carcer durissimus*, from which death soon relieves the prisoner, is distinguished by the administration of the lash twice a week for life.

If the reader will refer to the narrative of the gentle Silvio Pellico, whose captivity was the *carcer*, he may form some idea of the severities of the two next grades of punishment. Let us now see on what occasions these punishments are administered in the provinces. M. Koubrakiewicz relates, that in Gallicia, Constantine Slowitinski, librarian of the Polish library of Leopol (Lwow or Lemberg), being suspected of liberal opinions and detected in importing a prohibited, perhaps a seditious book, was captured by a body of Lans-drageons, who surrounded his house and struck his

pregnant wife as she clung to him so brutally with the butt-end of their firelocks, that she expired upon the spot. The librarian was condemned for twenty years *ad carcerem durissimum*—imprisonment with the infliction of the lash twice a week for twenty years.

Vincent Zabolicki and Leon Zalewski were, in 1835, condemned for life to the same punishment, for emancipating their peasantry contrary to law.

To such poverty are the inhabitants of the fertile province of Gallicia reduced by Austrian extortion, that not one of the inhabitants in ten thousand, declares the same authority, had ever seen a four-shilling piece; the government forcing both landlords and peasantry to pay their contributions of corn according to the prices of 1792, though when distraining for taxes it sells this very corn at one-tenth or even one fifteenth of that standard of value. We have seen an example of the violence employed towards the peasantry in the exaction of the *robot*, added to which, he is so heavily burthened as to be reduced to live a portion of the year on green food; let us now examine how the landlord profits by this state of things. The great majority of the noble proprietors live upon black bread. A noble with four thousand acres and fifty families

attached to the glebe cannot often pay the schooling, of his sons. Ninety nobles out of a hundred at least have their estates sequestrated for taxes, and it is not long since a number of the Gallician landholders signed a petition to the emperor, begging him to take their property and to allow them food and raiment, which they cannot afford when the taxes are paid. It is therefore neither the peasantry nor the nobles who profit by the condition of their mutual relations; and though in a pecuniary sense the government loses also by the impoverishment which such a state of society occasions, in another it combines the two advantages of insuring the means of dominion over this territory, and of extorting all the resources it can furnish consistent with such security. It is therefore obvious that the nobles and the peasantry, the serf and his lord, have equal reason to make common cause against the government; but the government, to avert this danger, has long since fostered a state of things calculated to sow dissension between classes whose combination would threaten its authority.

The system pursued resembled that followed by the Russian Tsars, who, like the Austrian Kaisars, set themselves forth both to the world and to their

subjects, as the protectors of the slave and serf against their masters, whilst in reality they have upheld, re-established, or introduced slavery and serfdom, the most powerful agent of that policy of *divide et impera*, characteristic of extensive despotisms. The author has shown elsewhere, and cannot repeat too often, that the Russian Tsar owns twenty-one millions of private slaves; that Alexander introduced slavery into the Polish provinces, which had never before been cursed by anything worse than serfdom; and that Nicholas has reprimanded the nobility of a Russian province for proposing the emancipation of the serf, and introduced serfdom into the kingdom of Poland, where it had been abolished by the constitution. In a like manner the Austrian cabinet, in that portion of Poland which fell to its share, has restored and deeply aggravated serfdom, abolished by the last quatriennial diet of independent Poland.

Having done so, it comes forward, both at home and abroad, like Russia, as a mediator between the peasant and the noble, whose mutually injurious intercourse it has itself advised. Into the history of these machinations of the Austrian government in Galicia, it becomes necessary to enter at greater

length, because of the recent tragical occurrences in that province, and because of the attempt made by the Austrian premier to mystify the public respecting them.

The kingdom or province of Galicia and Lodomeria (or rather Halitz, Vlodomir, or Lodomer) is now inhabited by a population computed at about five millions, consisting, with the exception of Jews and Germans, of the three Slavonic races of Poles, Rusniaks, and Wallacks, in the proportions of about 2,000,000 Poles, 2,000,000 Rusniaks, 300,000 Wallacks, 500,000 Jews, and 80,000 Germans. The Polish population, chiefly Roman Catholic, inhabit the west of this province; the Wallacks, of the Greek faith, the eastern districts, particularly that called the Bukowina. The central districts are inhabited by the United-Greek Rusniaks, intermingled with Poles and Wallacks. The Poles are divided into the Poles of the plain, called Mazourquas, the most depraved of the whole Polish race, and the pastoral inhabitants of the Carpathians, named Gorales, between whom considerable differences of character exist. Galicia is divided into nineteen circles, and is represented by a diet, by the convocation of which the Austrian

cabinet affects to fulfil the engagements into which it entered in 1815, to give this portion of Poland representative institutions. This diet consists of five estates ; the clergy, the magnates, or nobles who have bought Austrian titles, the *schlachcic*, or untitled nobility, and the burgers. They are only assembled to discuss such measures as refer to the augmentation of the produce of the province, and are not even allowed to petition the emperor without the signature thereto appended of the governor, always a creature of the imperial cabinet, and at the present time the notorious Baron Krieg, an adventurer, who came to Austria with his wallet on his back, rose by infamous secret service, and having married a tailor's daughter, who brought him a dowery of thirty pounds, now that he has risen to power and dignities, banishes her to his kitchen. The majority of the nobility, as we have seen, are reduced to a state of poverty ; there is no middle class, unless we take as such the German traders. The peasantry are everywhere in a state of serfdom, excepting always those in the German colonies ; for Austria scatters German colonies throughout its non-Germanic provinces, particularly along its frontiers ; granting to these favoured communities exemption from taxation and military

conscription, and to their members and other German subjects the monopoly of the sale of grocery, hardware, medicines, &c. The privilege of carrying on any species of trade or manufacture requiring, in these provinces, special permission from the Aulic Council, which must be dearly purchased, and is only accorded to a favoured race. In fact, the Austrian cabinet seems determined that if it cannot prevent the growth of a middle class, it shall be entirely German.

The whole of the Sclavonic peasantry of the three chief races, Poles, Rusniaks, and Wallacks, are in a state of serfdom, and this serfdom consists in their being attached to the soil, with the obligation of labouring from sunrise till sunset for three days a week, in consideration of which *robot*, or labour-rent, the landlord cannot turn his peasant out of his farm; but neither can the peasant leave it without the consent of his proprietor.

This labour-rent and attachment to the glebe is nominally the same as it was established in 1786,—but really there exists this vast distinction, that formerly the peasant could neither be called upon to fight, nor to contribute to the revenues of the state, through direct or indirect taxation; whereas under the Austrian rule he is cruelly taxed and

subjected to the conscription. Prior to the partition of Poland, its nobles or gentry were violent, hot-blooded, and arbitrary as the chiefs of Highland clans, but the spirit of the West India planter was unknown. Russia, Austria, and Prussia introduced the whip, the cane, and the rods, and the systematic and habitual infliction of degrading punishment. In Austrian Poland the authorities introduced this means of subordination by first submitting to it the more docile German regiments and German settlers; thereby accustoming both nobles and peasants to a sight originally repugnant to the national habits, but which with a little encouragement the landed proprietors soon learned to turn against their serfs.

The robot being from sunrise till sunset, either for a peasant singly or with his team when he possesses one, obliges him in the long summer days to seventeen hours labour; and as he has often to go many miles to perform it, men and cattle are so thoroughly exhausted, that such three days, with the necessary rest, absorb the whole week. The peasant must obtain his ticket from the econome, in the absence of which he is liable to corporal punishment, which it is difficult for him to escape, because his master pays to government a tax of

thirty per cent. on the estimated value of his labour, whether performed or not. Besides this the landlord is charged for the maintenance of the *justiciary* and *mandatarius*, two officers appointed by the crown, but paid by the proprietors; so that in fact sixty per cent. of his income does not suffice to defray these expenses. The Austrian government thus gives the proprietor the facilities of oppression, and having done so takes care he should be cruel, by keeping him ignorant and necessitous. The noble who can scarcely keep his taxes paid, cannot be expected to be merciful to the tenantry by whose labour alone he stands the chance of paying them, and as he is only charged by the Austrian law, tenpence for the heaviest blow, and that he can beside punish the peasant *ad libitum* when his sometimes impossible quota of *robot* is not performed, it can hardly be expected that his conduct should not be oppressive. With diabolic foresight, the government, encouraging real cause of complaint in the peasant against the lord, has contrived to embitter the mutual feeling of these classes, in the very ratio of its own extortionate oppression. It entails on the lord not only the odium of enforcing the conscription, but of levying taxes. The justiciary and mandatarius whom he is obliged to pay,

and in security of whose salary government holds a mortgage of one-eighth its value upon all land, make him responsible for the government exactions, and at the same time appear in the character of ostensible protectors of the peasantry. Wherever an augmentation of tax is made, a complaint dismissed, or a surcharge enforced, the proprietor is obliged to do it, but every reclamation and every grievance redressed or attended to, are so in the name of the Kaiser. How is it possible that ill feeling should not thus be generated between the peasant and the noble ?

The broad day of enlightenment which has dawned in other countries, has, however, penetrated into Galicia, in spite of all the efforts of the Austrian cabinet. The serf lords of Austria, like the slave lords of Russia, begin to see how wretchedly inferior is their condition to that of the landed proprietors of free countries. But Austria will not, any more than Russia, allow a general emancipation of the peasantry. Metternich, who casts obloquy on the Polish proprietors, has never repealed, but on the contrary enforced the law which makes penal the enfranchisement of more than a single peasant, and through innumerable formalities renders even the enjoyment of this privilege impracticable.

A noble in Galicia can only emancipate one serf after application to the court of the province, the *gouvernement*, and tribunal of justice, after long delays, expensive forms, the payment of heavy stamps, and the expenses of ruinous commissions.

M. Koubrakiewicz relates one instance in which a village put up for sale offered to buy its own freedom at the upset price, and was refused permission by the Kaiser.

Land cannot be held by any but nobles. This privilege was once extended when the Austrian cabinet, wishing to sell crown lands, sought to enhance their value, but then finding that it would give rise to a dangerous middle-class, it has been since 1819 suspended for the whole of Galicia, except the vicinity of Lemberg, peopled by Germans; notwithstanding the often repeated request of the nobles that the purchase of land should be open to all classes. The nobles next protested against the *robot* and prayed that it might be commuted into a fixed money-rent, as had been done in the grand duchy of Austria. The Aulic Council ostensibly granted this request, but surrounded the conversion of the *robot* into money by so many tedious and expensive formalities as to render it utterly nugatory.

The diet of Galicia presented several postulates, or petitions for the removal of these difficulties, but obtained no satisfaction; the government answering, that their request could not be granted till cadastral surveys had been made, which it could not then afford.

Only the year before last (1844), Alfred Potocki (pronounced Potoshki), a Polish duke or vayvoide, count of the holy Roman empire, and of the same family as that Pantaleon Potocki recently shot, in March 1846, at Siedlce, originated in the Gallician diet a petition to the emperor, whereby that body begged his majesty to be allowed to free the peasantry and endow them, as in the grand duchy of Posen, with a portion of the soil on which they were settled, and requesting leave to appoint and send thither a commission to report upon the working of the system. The Austrian government evasively appointed a commission to inquire, before it gave its answer, *what means existed of indemnifying it for the loss of the revenue it derived from the robot.* Alarmed at these symptoms, it increased in vigilance, and left no means untried to prevent the reconciliation imminent between the lord and the peasant, whom it had estranged. To excite the fears of the nobility and create a diversion, it encouraged the spread of communistic doctrines,

which were zealously preached by hearty and enthusiastic agents from abroad, with whom the government did not interfere. But here a fresh danger threatened the authority of the Kaisars. The Polish nobility of Galicia were animated on the one hand by a patriotic feeling so strong, and on the other reduced to such a condition that communism appeared to them as a body preferable to the rule of the stranger. This has been peculiarly the case with the rising generation, carried away by the example of some of the wealthiest of their number, who declared their willingness to abandon their possessions, if independence were only thus to be thus achieved. The impetuous character of the Polish people, and the increasing severity to which the suspicions of the three governments led, hastened prematurely the recent attempt to throw off the triple yoke, which has proved thus far abortive, but can only be considered as one of the first convulsions of an inevitable series, which must terminate in the bursting of the mighty volcano, heaving with the accumulated wrongs of millions, and whose discharge must overwhelm, destroy, or dismember those three guilty despotisms, whose existence in the nineteenth century is a blot on its civilisation, and a reproach to Europe.

Of this untoward event Metternich took advan-

tage. The government disbanded all the soldiers it had been able to corrupt, after four, instead of eight years' service, and sent them to disseminate amongst the peasantry, (preparing to rise at the summons of their lords against the stranger,) "that the sole object of the nobles, in the event of success, was to increase the robot, and reduce them to still deeper servitude."

The justiciary and the mandatarius, who had always appeared in the light of protectors to the peasant, confirmed this report, and issued proclamations offering in some instances a thousand, but in many one hundred florins for the capture of rebels named, if taken alive; two hundred if dead; and ten florins for the heads of all other live, twenty for the heads of all dead rebels. A band of the crown peasants, under the command of the infamous Colonel Benedik, were formed into free corps, one half of which consisted of disbanded soldiers and Austrian agents in the disguise of peasants. The peasantry were speedily led away by their example.

With all the long-brooding animosity against the nobles roused by the report of their intended treachery, with the temptation of appropriating the lands and property of their masters, with the lure as prizes in this bloody lottery, in which there were no blanks, of twenty and even a hundred pounds,

to men who had never seen a four-shilling piece, with the security from punishment afforded by imperial sanction, these misguided boors were easily led to join the destroying column. Drunk with excitement, blood, and brandy, they hurried from one scene of massacre and devastation to another, murdering indiscriminately the families of the nobles. The whole of Europe is still ringing with these sanguinary butcheries, perpetrated in the name of an imbecile sovereign, through the premeditation and at the undoubted command of his minister. The most moderate accounts state at eight, others at fifteen hundred, the number of these victims of gentle blood—men, women, and babes at the breast. Nothing can be more hideously revolting than some of the pictures given of families upon their knees, whilst the besotted assassins interrupted them in their last prayer, saying,—“Come! come! the Kaiser has bought your heads! we are waiting for them!”

The fact that prices were set upon the heads of the rebels, leaving to the peasantry to determine who belonged to that category—that the Austrian authorities offered and paid a price temptingly high, and obviously calculated to instigate to murder by valuing the living at only half the dead captive, does not admit of doubt. It

is equally indubitable that these authorities long continued to pay the diminished price when the reward was claimed, for tens, scores, and hundreds of assassinations—that they then reversed the order of their reward, paying more highly for the live than for the dead noble, and finally discontinued it. This price of blood was first set at twenty, then at ten, at five pounds, and at length as low as four shillings per murder. Of these atrocities the author has received private and incontestible evidence; independent of which, the account of this frightful participation of the imperial authorities in the guilt of the boors has come from as many and as various sources as the intelligence of any insurrection having taken place at all.

The organs of the Austrian cabinet, the *Austrian Observer*, the *Augsburg Gazette*, and the *Frankfort Journal*, and Metternich himself, admit these savage murders. The only official notice of them taken by a sovereign with three hundred thousand soldiers under arms, is in a proclamation, dated 12th of March 1846, in which he, or rather Metternich in his name (for the imbecility of Ferdinand must be alike exempted from praise and blame,) proclaims to these men reeking with innocent gore, “that his heart longs to thank them.” In another proclamation of the same date

addressed to the arch-duke Ferdinand, he says that the instruments of these massacres "have acquired thereby rights to my satisfaction."

In the face of such proofs, the Austrian agents did not at first attempt to deny the offers of blood-money by the Austrian authorities, but simply palliated this proceeding as one legal and customary towards deserters, which had in this instance been employed against the rebels. The horror which these accounts excited in Europe taught Metternich the necessity of a disavowal. This refutation reposes against a mass of presumptive evidence on Metternich's *ipse dixit*. It is contained in a document in which that minister reproaches the nobles with a state of things whose continuance the public acts of the Gallician diet prove to be owing solely to the imperial cabinet, and in which he brands as a preposterous calumny, originating with the president of the revolutionary government of Cracow, the offers of money for the patriot heads. The reader, who has not, like the author, before him, the evidence of an officer in the Austrian ranks, and who has no opportunity of perusing the numerous confirmatory letters received by the Polish emigrants from relatives upon the spot, may, however, be the less inclined to disbelieve, according to his wishes, in the truth of

these widely spread and concurring reports, when informed that documents exist to prove that this kind of proscription is habitual to the Austrian cabinet, though never, until pressed by so great a danger, resorted to upon a scale so frightfully extensive. Official proclamations were issued on the occasion of the attempted insurrection of Zalivski, of which an account will be found in the first volume of this work, and offering sums of money for the capture, dead or alive, of the insurgent leaders. Zalivski, who still lingers in an Austrian dungeon, and whose wife and child are supported from the scanty means of the Polish emigration, was betrayed for this reward.

Furthermore, copies exist in Paris and London of a public document, dated Lemberg, 29th Feb. 1846, and signed, not by secondary officials, whose conduct the government might repudiate, but by the supreme authority of the province, the Archduke Ferdinand, a prince of the imperial blood, wherein that scion of the house of Hapsburg offers a thousand florins for the arrest, dead or alive, of either Wiszniowski (*alias* Zagorsky) or of Dembrowski (*alias* Borkowski), who were both captured in consequence.

Official proofs of the internal cruelty of absolu-

tisms are impossible. If Metternich had chosen utterly to deny that any disturbances had taken place in Poland at all, it would have been impossible to have furnished more or better proofs of the insurrection and massacres, than have been adduced of the instigation by the Austrian authorities to the deeds of blood alluded to.

If a thousand letters confirmatory of the fact had reached London and Paris, who would dare to expose their correspondents to the wrath of the government by citing them by name? The press can publish nothing in Austria, without the sanction of the censorship, and we are told that the testimony of the victims who escape is too suspicious to be received in evidence!

From the same accounts, corroborative of main particulars, though flowing through distinct and innumerable channels, we learned the attempt at insurrection, and the Gallician massacres. They are unanimous in the terrible accusation which sinks the Austrian minister to the level of a Marat and a Robespierre; and we can no more palliate his conduct by supposing it to have resulted from the momentary impulses inspired by a great and sudden emergency, than we can believe him to have been unconscious or innocent of these murders, because we see deliberate premeditation in the diabolical

foresight and Machiavelian art with which their immediate causes had been prepared. The author can only add, that this guilty participation is as distinctly proved to him as the existence of any disturbances whatever.

It is worthy of observation, that the ill feeling between the lord and the peasant has not been fostered in Gallicia only as a check on both.

In the kingdom of Hungary the Austrian cabinet has employed every imaginable art to set the Sclavonic against the Magyar population, and the peasant against the proprietor.

When during the Polish revolution of 1830—1, the chivalrous Magyars anxious to fly to the assistance of Poland, offered to the emperor, through their diet, to march to the relief of that country with a hundred thousand men, the landlords were suddenly alarmed and paralysed by the revolts of their peasantry in different districts, where they burned, massacred and destroyed.

It was everywhere the Greek Sclavonic peasant who had risen against the Roman Catholic or Protestant Magyar, and when put down by the Austrian government, whose turn was served, the revelations of these men as to the instigators of their rebellion were mercilessly silenced by the gibbets, from which they swung by scores and fifties.

This Hungarian kingdom contains all the elements of a state which might become more prosperous and powerful than any on the continent, excepting France and Poland. Undoubtedly, if its resources were properly directed, it might conquer all the remainder of the Austrian empire; and on Hungary, next to Poland—or perhaps in a greater degree than even on Poland—repose the best hopes of enfranchisement and civilisation of that hundred millions of Slavonians whose cause it has been the object of these volumes to advocate, and perhaps no less the political prospects of thirty-five millions of their German neighbours. These elements are still jarring and discordant, as the barbarous ages have left, and the policy of the Austrian cabinet has striven to maintain them. But they are yearly, and almost daily settling into that harmony which will be at once strength and independence both to Hungary and contiguous territories.

Hungary, inclusive of Croatia and Transylvania, contains nearly the same extent as Great Britain and Ireland of the most fertile and varied territory in Europe, inhabited by at least twelve—or more probably fifteen—millions of people, divided into two chief races, whose interests are identical—the Magyars and Slavonians.

The Magyars number five millions, and the Slavonians, (under the names of Slowacks or Sclavonians, Croatians, Wallacks or Wallachians, and Rusniaks,) seventeen-twentieths of the remainder ; leaving a residuum of about three-twentieths, of Jews, Germans, and Gipsies.

The Magyars, a people of Turkish or Tartar origin, are one of the noblest and most chivalrous races in Europe. The whole population, which chiefly occupies the centre of Hungary, is divided into Magnates, nobles ; and Seignorial, yeomen ; alike distinguished by their warlike spirit, hospitality and love of freedom. The Magnates constitute the only continental nobility, which, for wealth and political importance, can be compared with that of England ; yet with the exception of some half-dozen families, whom the court of Vienna has corrupted into indifference, they are distinguished as the most ardent and disinterested reformers. The nobles, and those amongst them whose poverty obliges them to resort to the cultivation of their own fields, enjoy a supremacy of privilege and race over the Slavonic population, which gives them an aristocratic character. The Slavonians stand chiefly in the light of tenants, labourers, menials, in their relations with the Magyars. They are

mostly of the Greek, or United Greek persuasions; the Magyars divided between Calvinism and Catholicism. The fiery Magyars have been from time immemorial, horsemen, and accustomed to the use of arms—the hussar uniforms and accoutrements of all armies being copied from their national costume, like that of lancers from the dresses of the Polish nobles. They rose in menacing rebellion when Joseph the Second attempted to abrogate those privileges, which had survived the incomplete tyranny of the middle ages, and which modern absolutisms have everywhere attacked or rooted out. Austria has never since dared openly to assail such liberties as the Hungarians then successfully defended; but it has prevented the development of the fruitful germ which is to be found in these institutions, by fomenting animosities between the Magyars and the rapidly increasing Slavonic races. The progress of opinion amongst the Magyars took naturally the bent of an aristocratic liberalism. When educated, they are usually enthusiastic admirers of our British constitution, whilst the Slavonians lean towards democratic opinions, and long repaid with aversion the contempt which was manifested by the lordly Magyars. Metternich felt safe though liberalism was making rapid

strides, because each of these powerful races sought dominion over, and was placed in antagonism to the other. The progress of enlightenment has, however, long since begun to convince both parties, that their best interests lie in the amalgamation of their nationalities, and in combination against Austria. The hatred of both to despotism, their antipathy to the Germans; and their sympathy for the Poles (a Slavonic people) are common ground on which fraternisation is being rapidly effected. Year by year, month by month, and week by week, the Magyar lords abandon their prejudice against Slavonic villeinage; and corresponding advances are made by the Slavonic democracy. Austria has, perhaps, still the power, in an eventful crisis, of exciting social rebellions, as it partially did in Hungary in 1831, and has recently done in Galicia; but this state of things is rapidly disappearing, and the jealously guarded privileges of the Hungarian diet, and the exclusion by it of Germans from office, prevent the perpetuation by the Austrian cabinet of that darkness and ignorance in which its safety lies, and by the dissipation of which its dominion must be overturned.

The insurrection of the peasantry in Galicia has been cited as a proof of the little co-operation to be expected in Poland from the bulk of the nation; it

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is therefore well to observe to the reader, that the furthest extent of the recent jacquerie in Gallicia spread over a territory containing less than a quarter of a million souls. In these districts the peasantry only rose partially, and in others they defended their lords. It has been shown elsewhere that the clergy were here uninfluent, because the government were of the same religion as the peasantry, and that its agents could allege the support of Rome. This is an advantage nowhere else possessed by the spoliating powers. With the one exception of these districts, containing one-eightieth part of the Polish population, the peasantry have never, in this or any previous insurrection, shown anything but sympathy with their lords against the three governments, though they may have at other times rebelled against them. Even in those parts of Gallicia where these untoward events have taken place, the boors were excited through misrepresentation of the motives of the insurgents; but this deception will no longer be possible in any future emergency; and it is an undoubted fact that several of the insurgent fugitives, after narrowly escaping massacre, were chosen as leaders by the peasantry, when they slew the imperial commissioners, and refused to lay down their arms.

The author terms the insurrection ill-advised, because long anticipated, widely combined, and begun in an unfavourable season. Any extensive and long-concerted combination is naturally more liable to failure than a spontaneous appeal to the feelings of the people, because it is impossible that the meditated attempt should not sufficiently transpire to place the three governments upon their guard.

There is reason to know that the plans of the conspirators had been betrayed in their minutest details to the three powers, who were thus all prepared to frustrate their efforts—Russia and Prussia concentrating their military forces on the points designated for the movement, whilst Austria, which at first seemed taken by surprise, had its social mine prepared to spring under the footsteps of the insurgents.

Metternich, the man of astuteness and of wiles, chose characteristically rather to resort to these than to the employment of any of his three hundred thousand fighting men.

The impatience natural to men in a condition which we in England wonder that they should submit to for an hour, the despair of the peasantry, produced by the horrors of accidental famine, which decimates whole districts throughout the Slavonic

cautious, and the subsequent precautions taken by the three governments, which showed that their suspicions were awakened, all led to a premature attempt, made at a period when the general scarcity paralysed instead of favouring the operations of the insurgents, and in a season which rendered all guerrilla warfare impossible, the trees being leafless, the frozen marshes accessible, the winter in its full severity, and the ground covered with snow, betraying every footstep. Frustrated in their attempt to seize the Prussian fortresses in the grand duchy of Posen, and prevented from rising by the presence of an overwhelming force in the localities selected in Russian Poland, the insurgents were only able to put their designs into execution at one single point—in the republic of Cracow, whose territories they seized, to the number of 400. Their conduct, whilst for ten days in possession of this city, was moderate and exemplary in the extreme. They easily raised some thousand men, but the season prevented the march of small insurrectionary columns; they were further discouraged by the bad news from Posen and the Russian provinces, and on the approach of the Austrian and Russian armies, resolved to evacuate Cracow, an open city, and to make for the Carpathian

mountains, there to await more favourable weather. But when they entered Galicia to commence their guerilla campaign, they were assailed by sanguinary foes where they had counted on enthusiastic friends.

Meanwhile, though the projected movement was rendered impossible throughout Russian Poland, by the severity of the season and the concentration of a military force on the point chosen by the conspirators, the extensive ramifications of the conspiracy caused a shock which has been felt throughout the whole empire.

The arrest and punishment of personages the most highly connected in Little Russia, Moscow, and St. Petersburg, have taken place, whilst throughout the Polish cities the prisons are crowded and a reign of terror prevails.

A Prussian nurse, sent for to the family of W——, in Lithuania, relates, that at Warsaw she was detained for a fortnight by the authorities, who would not allow any one to proceed. The execution of Zarski and Kocisewski, two conspirators, or presumed conspirators, of whom an example was made, had just taken place. The whole city was filled with dread and plunged in mourning by the arrest of

hundreds of individuals. In the inn where this woman lodged she saw a Polish lady, who through peculiar interest was allowed to see her son, who had been imprisoned on suspicion. She was led into the prison and admitted to an interview only in the presence of witnesses, and on condition of remaining blindfolded. "Oh! my child!" said she,— "how hard that I cannot even see you." "It is well you cannot, mother," replied the prisoner in a voice so altered by suffering as to be scarcely recognisable, "for you would never know your own son." He dared say no more, nor give any further information; and the poor mother was led out, her imagination harrowed by the cruelties she concluded to have been practised on her child. The Russian government has recently so multiplied exiles to Siberia that it was judged advisable to put several victims to death—Zarski and Kociszewski, at Warsaw for supposed, and Pantaleon Potocki at Siedlce for a real attempt at rebellion. The population of Warsaw was invited to attend, the whole of the immense Russian garrison being under arms, the artillerymen with lighted matches standing beside their pieces, pointed on the crowd to prevent a rescue.

The citizens of Warsaw poured out by tens of

thousands, the complete and mournful silence of the multitude contrasting strangely with the merry tunes played in defiance of popular feeling by the Russian military band as the prisoners were led out to die. When they appeared upon the scaffold, the whole of the vast and silent crowd fell on their knees with one accord, and offered up a prayer for the victims about to suffer.

Though only an infinitesimal part of the mass of varied misery entailed by the vengeance of the three despotisms comes to light, we may judge of the extent of the disaffection amongst the populations of Eastern Europe by the difference in point of rank between the individuals affected, and the territorial distances between the localities disturbed.

In Posen, in Warsaw, and in Lithuania, the Polish nobles are implicated by thousands. In Gallicia the peasantry, roused by the intrigues of the Austrian government, massacre its commissioners and refuse to lay down their arms without the abolition of the *robot*, which according to all accounts Metternich is forced to concede.

In Silesia, in the Prussian dominions, where the peasantry are in the same condition, insurrectionary movements take place. In Bohemia we hear of the arrest of Count de Thun, always accounted a

mouthpiece of the Austrian government, though one of the Slavonic party. In Bohemia, as in Silesia, the serf-peasantry also rise against the *robot*. In the Russian dominions we hear of the arrest of Madame Kalerdgi, the daughter of General Nesselrode, commanding the gendarmerie (the immediate executive of the secret police in the kingdom of Poland,) and brother of the Russian premier of that name, of whom an account is given in a previous chapter. This lady, to save one of those implicated in the late conspiracy, undertook to procure a passport, which through her father she was enabled to obtain, and with which her protégé escaped across the frontier. The deception was discovered and traced home to the unhappy lady, who was seized in the dead of night and sent off in custody to St. Petersburg. Though her father was minister for foreign affairs, she had been denied during several weeks all communications with her friends and family, and was reported to have been knouted and sent off to Siberia. More recent letters from St. Petersburg deny the fact of her having been knouted, alleging that the mistake must have originated in her being confounded with a Madame Orloff, who for participation in the recent attempt had received, not the knout, but the plitt. The

difference between the knout and plitt is, simply, that where the skilful executioner can give a mortal stroke with a single blow of the knout, it requires two of the plitt, which from the first of May is to replace it throughout the empire, by order of Nicholas; of whom we shall soon read in the German papers, that he has benevolently abolished that mode of punishment, without any mention of the slower torture substituted for it.

From this contradiction it thus appeared that not only a niece of the premier, but one of the family of the minister of the secret police, was equally implicated—the almost invariable result of every inquiry into Russian reports, that of discovering a trifling inaccuracy but at the same time bringing to light some deeper villainy or greater severity. It has since been said in a newspaper paragraph, that Madame Kalerdgi has been exiled to Dresden : the letters received from St. Petersburg make no mention of this modification of her sentence.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

WHEN the author published the first volumes of this work, he was almost startled at the magnitude of the conclusions to which his researches and intercourse with Eastern Europe had led him, and when he announced his conviction of the instability of the three great despotisms which in popular opinion were seated on so firm a foundation, he was daily prepared to find such sweeping denunciations as he had made, such extensive changes as he prognosticated, attributed in a greater measure to his imagination than his judgment. The brief space which has elapsed between the publication of the last and the present volume, has, however, given birth to events which, without yet realising to their full extent his anticipations for the future, have proved to the world the substantial foundation of the growing discontent and increasing agitation which he had asserted to exist amongst races and

millions whose nationality and existence the great despotisms had hidden from the eyes of Europe, but which, like a buried Titan, convulses with its struggle the earth piled over it. The recent ill-advised insurrection must be regarded as one of many waves of that tide which no human power can stay.

Yet even this one ripple of the mighty flood impending has given rise to fearful scenes. These have taken place not years ago, nor in the heart of Africa or Asia, beyond the reach of our intercourse or influence; but in the territories of three powers, with whom the ministers of the nation are on such terms of diplomatic intimacy as not to dare express public disapproval of their conduct. They have been so recently enacted, that whilst the corn-law bill was undergoing discussion in the house of commons, hundreds of victims were suffering imprisonment in the Prussian dominions, torture in the Russian, and death in the Austrian territories, where half a century after the French revolution, all its horrors were revived; not in the struggles of an infuriated mob to overturn a corrupt monarchy, but at the cold-blooded instigation of a cabinet seeking to perpetuate a state of thralldom.

Deeply as we may lament the suffering consequent upon the failure of the rash attempt, it is not without its use as a sanguinary protest on the part of mutilated Poland, and of the oppressed Slavonic races, against the bondage to which they have been given over. It is the loud cry of the political victim forcing itself upon the public ear of Western Europe, to dispel the illusions of that self-deception in which it has so long indulged, inclining to soothe its political conscience so willingly to the belief that half the population of the European continent, if kept in a state of ignorance and servitude, was still contented with its humble lot, and removed alike from the social miseries and popular disappointments as from the more elevated aspirations of a state of freedom.

There are those who give themselves credit for being men of humanity, and friends of peace, and who in their dread of war with its manifold inconveniences and ostentatious bloodshed, would rather that a hundred millions continued to endure through years and years an aggregate of a thousand fold more suffering, than see peace endangered. Anxious rather to keep closed than to upraise the veil which covered the reality, without approving, they sought to palliate the conduct of the three despotisms, and

flattered themselves that the races subjected had sunk into a state of quiescence which would prevent any further embarrassing appeals to their sympathies and humanity. The recent occurrences have proved, however, that it is not so. After half a century of servitude—after innumerable failures, and in the midst of all the terrors by which their tyrants seek to awe them, the whole Polish people is convulsed; showing amidst every portion of its partitioned twenty millions, an irreconcilable discontent with its condition. For half a century past one attempt has followed on the other, not successively more feeble, like the ebb of receding waters, but on the contrary, like the waves of a wind-driven tide, each more threatening than the former. It is no longer the agitation of classes or of portions of dismembered Poland only. Austrian and Prussian Poland are not tranquil whilst Russian Poland is convulsed, nor are the peasantry more disposed to be tranquil than the nobility. It is not even to Poland that the shock is confined. In Bohemia, Silesia, and Little Russia disturbances take place simultaneously, whilst the Croatian diet openly expresses its reprobation of the conduct of the Austrian government in Gallicia, and that Nicholas sees cause to punish in the families of his own confidential ser-

vants, sympathy with, or participation in the plans of the revolvers.

The class of optimist politicians to whom allusion has been made, are hence painfully roused by these signs of the times from their illusion, and forced to acknowledge the storm that hangs brooding over Eastern Europe. Even those bent upon sacrificing every consideration to peace and determined to eschew all inquiry into questions which might give a hostile tendency to public feeling, must now perceive that the state of things they were so fearful of disturbing, is threatened with proximate and violent change. Another ten years will not pass over our heads without witnessing the outbreak of that political tempest, which the spirit of concession has averted in the West, but of which the elements, arrested in Eastern Europe by the resistance of absolutism, are accumulating silently but threateningly, like dammed up waters, gathering to burst through their bounds.

In considering these great facts any prospect of change will be deemed hopeful by those conversant with the condition of Eastern Europe, and who look only to the well-being of nearly a hundred and twenty millions of their fellow men ; but even those whose rule of conduct is most selfishly utili-

tarian, must admit that since events, over which our policy has no control, have rendered chimerical the *statu quo* of the Russian, Austrian, and Prussian states through another dozen years ; and since the acceptation of the principles of free trade have rendered impossible that political isolation once so warmly advocated, that this may not be an inopportune moment briefly to examine the result to ourselves of the last thirty years misrule of these vast populations by the three despotisms, which owe their existence to the resources of Great Britain, which enabled them to resist the aggression of Napoleon, and to whose discretion so many millions of human beings were abandoned by us at the Congress of Vienna ; or rather through our subsequent neglect. What is the account which, after thirty years, they can give us of these fertile territories and innumerable subjects ? Have the interests of humanity or our national interests gained anything by their domination ? or has even one of these interests profited at the expense of the other ? No : on the contrary, tens upon tens of millions linger in poverty, servitude, and misery ; and we have been deprived of incalculable gains, which, but for the system of these crowned heads, we might have made, and which would equally have benefited those who are now their subjects.

If we take into account the productiveness of soil and the facilities which the nature of the country's surface affords for inter-communication by canals or railroads, together with the agricultural pursuits of the inhabitants in the territories of the Russian and Austrian empires, and in more than one half of the Prussian kingdom, it would be natural to conclude that our imports and exports thither ought proportionately to the population far to exceed those of such countries as France, Belgium, and Holland, densely peopled, or with a soil exhausted, or which have made considerable progress in manufacturing industry.

A very large portion of Eastern Europe is still as much in the position of a new country as the United States, but without the drawback of some thousand miles of intervening Atlantic. We have, therefore, a right to calculate, that if left to follow without artificial restrictions the bent of its natural productive and commercial tendencies, it would in this respect rather be comparable to the United States than even to Western Europe.

Our direct exports to Russia, Austria, and the eastern half of Prussia, do not exceed three-and-a-half millions sterling for one hundred and seven millions of inhabitants. Now to France,

Belgium, and Holland, countries with lesser facilities of produce, large manufacturing establishments, and a population of only forty-two millions, our exports amount to seven millions sterling annually; that is to say, that in the constitutional countries of Western Europe, every six millions of the inhabitants import on an average one million pounds sterling worth of our manufactured goods and produce, whereas under the despotisms of Eastern Europe, thirty millions and a half of the population cannot afford quite a million's worth between them.

It would be little to expect from these countries, possessed of far greater natural resources than the west of Europe, that, if enjoying the advantage of free government which the west possesses over them, (the sole cause to which we can assign its superior prosperity,) that their consumption of British merchandise should at least be in equal ratio with that of France, Belgium, and Holland.

This sum would raise the value of our exports to those countries from three-and-a-half millions to eighteen, making a difference of more than fourteen millions sterling annually, which is lost to British industry through the unnatural and oppressive government of more than one-eighth of the human

race by the three European despotisms, whose dominion is upheld by a proportionate abstraction from the material comforts, to say nothing of the moral degradation, of more than a hundred millions of their fellow creatures.

In this estimate the author has not made out an extreme case. Really Eastern Europe, with immense tracts of virgin soil and magnificent resources, ought to be rated for productive and consumptive capabilities rather with the United States than with Western Europe; and there is in fact every natural reason in the world why it should for half a century to come prove a better customer than even the United States, to the manufacturing communities of Europe. Now the inhabitants of the United States take one million sterling worth of our exports amongst something less than three millions and a half of the population; so that applying this average to Eastern Europe, our exports thither ought to be thirty millions instead of three-and-a-half; and we might estimate annually at twenty-six and a half instead of fourteen millions of pounds sterling, the annual loss to the British people.

This consideration furnishes at once a reply to the argument by which so many political iniquities

have been covered, that it is our duty to look exclusively to the prosperity and advantage of our own people, leaving other nations to shift for themselves.

The deeply-rooted moral feeling which is blent and often militates in the national character with a very acute and practical sense of its material interests, has for some years past led the British people to suspect the soundness of this selfish principle ; and to this feeling may probably be attributed the deep interest evinced in the fate of the enslaved Africans, and proved by the real pecuniary sacrifices made in their favour by those who are unwilling even to contemplate encountering the hazards of strife in helping to redress a wrong comparatively colossal.

It may in fact be compared to the conscience money, of which the receipt is occasionally acknowledged by the chancellor of the exchequer, from anonymous defrauders of the revenue, who having acquired wealth in illicit trade or industry, relieve their lingering uneasiness of mind by the restoration of a few tens, or hundreds of pounds, as an instalment towards restitution of their illegal gains, which amount to a whole fortune.

But it is a great point gained that this national

conscience is awakened. Its own workings could not fail to lead the nation to the eventual conclusion that it has not been endowed by Providence with power, wealth, civilisation, means of inter-communication and creative industry, incomparably greater than any people recorded in history ever possessed, for the sole gratification of its individual selfishness, whilst so large a portion of the earth is still plunged in misery and darkness. The time is undoubtedly approaching when no man will dare publicly meet the appeals of nations to our sympathy and protection by the question, "*what is it to us?*" or by the more specious maxim, that "*as patriots, we have no right to endanger the interests of our fellow-citizens in the behalf of strangers.*"

But how much more imperatively does it behove us to examine into the condition of Eastern Europe and to extend our countenance and sympathy, our mediation and protection, to its oppressed millions, when we reflect that—in addition to the dictates of conscience and humanity—the eventual maintenance of the present order of things has grown impossible; that an act of our legislature is being passed which in its political consequences resembles the burning of his fleet by Cortez, cutting off retreat and obliging us to adventurous advance in the

civilisation of the world; and especially when we remember that if we have become narrowly interested in the prosperity and well-being of the whole of humanity, we can form even an approximative money estimate of advantages of which the misrule of Eastern Europe deprives us; and that whilst the positive sufferings and negative deprivation of enjoyment of its inhabitants are incalculable, we can reply to the question, "*what is it to the British people?*" by the answer, that it is between fourteen and thirty millions annually out of their pockets, and that the thirty-one years of their maladministration have practically cost the nation between two and three hundred millions.

Neither are we without the means of giving weight to our intercession or remonstrance. We have seen that the tendency to resolve into its primitive elements, exhibited by the discordant materials from which the three blood-cemented despotisms have been upreared—without anything to give them stability except the weight of oppression, whose balance may be so easily destroyed; they are everywhere so vulnerable and accessible, that they would probably dissolve before the mere volition of Western Europe, but at any rate there hangs menacing over them on the side of France, an ava-

lanche of eager bayonets, which we can stay or bid roll onwards. The time is come, when France may be trusted to advance her own cause, ours, and that of humanity, by constitutional propagandism. Constitutional forms of government have overspread—as a reference to the political map accompanying this work will show—one half the continent of Europe. They are gradually gaining ground, and to believe in their retrogression, would be to doubt the progress of civilisation; to indulge in the gloomy foreboding that Providence had endowed the human race with all the requisites for social progress, only to doom mankind to the disappointment of finding them eventually barren, when every cause in nature is fruitful of some result. Even whilst these pages are going through the press, there is reason to believe that an important convert to these opinions has been made in the person of the King of Sardinia—a man who with some antecedents which probably may be explained away, others which undoubtedly require redeeming, appears to be entering on a course which may not alone redeem his former conduct, but entitle him to the gratitude of humanity, and conduce to his own fame by giving him a glorious place in the van of the many, whose opinions must

eventually triumph in that great movement preparing against the absolutisms of Eastern Europe by their own subjects, with whom the sympathies of the constitutional west are daily more warmly enlisting as that intercourse and knowledge increases, which can only augment its antipathy and hostility to despotism, because demonstrating more clearly as they progress, that moral elevation, material prosperity, and the extension of the most beneficial forms of civilisation, are wholly incompatible with despotism, and everywhere impossible without the fostering warmth of freedom and the light of publicity; a position to the elucidation of which the author hopes not vainly to have devoted these volumes.

APPENDIX.

THE author has been induced to collect in an appendix the following documents, authenticative of the narrative of the Basilian nuns, whose persecution has been attempted to be described as an utter fable in certain newspaper paragraphs, and in particular in the two notes presented by M. de Boute-nief to the papal cabinet, the one before, the other after the pretended inquiry into the matter by the Russian government.

Those who are not sufficiently well acquainted with the oriental state of Russian society, to know that the higher Russian dignities do not any more ensure veracity in so distinguished a diplomatist as M. de Boutenief, than office about the imperial person, common honesty—of which an example has been furnished by the suite of the empress, who recently plundered the apartments of the King of Naples, the host of her imperial majesty—may have considered his assertion, that the story of the nuns of Minsk was from beginning to end a fabrication,

conclusive refutation of a tale whose unparalleled horrors bore *prima facie* evidence of improbability.

The pith of the Russian diplomatist's contradiction is, that no such person as Macrena Mieczyslawska was ever abbess of the convent of Minsk, or ever known there or elsewhere in Russian Poland. He further states that "the mother-general of the order, the Princess Euphrosina Giedymin, mentioned by her, died at Rome 600 years ago." The falsehood of both these allegations is at once proved by reference to all the printed calendars prior to 1838, in which Macrena Mieczyslawska's name is given as fulfilling the office in question, as well as that of Christina Clara Giedymin, who took the name of Euphrosina on entering the order. Macrena Mieczyslawska had been fifteen years abbess of the convent of Minsk in 1838, so that hundreds of persons in the emigration have been able to identify her. To suppose that in so high a grade of the Romish hierarchy she should have been able to impose an imaginary title on the papal cabinet is as preposterous as to imagine that any impostor could pass as a Russian general with the Russian minister of war, without duly founded claims to that rank. Boutenief's note was therefore undoubtedly intended not to deceive the Pope, but the press of Europe.

No. I.

OFFICIAL NOTE PRESENTED TO THE POPE, BY M. DE
BOUTENIEF, ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF RUSSIA AT THE COURT OF ROME.

“ A Polish journal published at Paris, under the title of *The Third of May*, has disseminated the strangest narratives relative to certain persecutions which the Archbishop of Lithuania, Joseph Siemaszko, designated as having formerly filled the office of confessor in the convent of the Basilian nuns at Kowno, is alleged to have instituted against the women, in order to force them to embrace the Greek religion. According to this journal, the nuns in question, to the number of forty-seven, were seized in the night-time by Cossacs—forced to walk to Witebsk (a town which, it is pretended, is twenty miles from Kowno)—shut up in an orthodox convent, and forced to act as servants to the Russian nuns, who every Friday administered to each fifty blows of a cane. It is next declared that the archbishop threw them into irons, condemned each to such hard labour as is assigned to felons ; that they were made to suffer hunger and thirst, and to render the privation of drink more severe, they were fed on

salt herrings. It is added that some were obliged to take part in the construction of the episcopal palace, often remaining in the water up to their necks ; that others were employed in the mines ; that eight had their eyes forced out ; and thirty fell victims to that odious persecution, and only three had succeeded in effecting their escape into Austria ; as to the superior, she had arrived in Paris. These calumnies were eagerly reproduced in the *Univers*, and in most of the French journals ; they are represented as based on the depositions of the superior, who figures in the matter under the name of Mieczyslawska. In the recitals of this woman, the number of nuns is no longer confined to forty-seven, they are at once quintupled, reaching the number of 240, of whom 120 are stated to have been exiled to Siberia ; out of that number upwards of one-half are alleged to have miserably perished on the road, and the rest are represented as about in all probability to soon share the same fate. The names of Wawrzecha, Konarska, and Pomawnocka, are those by which the three nuns who took refuge in Austria are designated. It is also stated, that 346 monks of the order of St. Basil, were likewise exiled to Siberia ; that three of their heads, named Berinski, Zilinski, and Zeleniez, expired at Polosk under

the torture that they were forced to endure from iced water being poured on their bodies, and that the fourth, named Zaniecki, was killed with a blow of a hatchet. Finally, it is pretended, that all the populations of these countries are, without ceasing, cruelly beaten and exposed to all kinds of atrocities; that even children are not spared, and that seventeen of these latter were whipped to death in the town of Minsk. In dilating on this theme, the periodical prints have been careful to add other diatribes, and, as a wind-up, state that the *soi-disant* Mieczyslawska, to whom all these recitals are attributed, has proceeded to Marseilles and thence to Rome, receiving on her passage the liveliest marks of sympathy, and a large amount of money in alms. Without entering into any discussion on the subject of these assertions, which are as absurd as they are malevolent, it is intended in the present note to point out what, from the nature of things, is necessarily false, in the alleged facts. First of all, in order that a persecution could be instituted against the convent of Basilian nuns, at Kowno, it would be requisite that such a convent should exist; and in this respect, the authors of the imposture ought to have taken the pains of obtaining some information. But it is certain that no convent

of Basilian nuns ever did exist in the town of Kowno, nor in the whole extent of the province of that name. The present Bishop of Lithuania, Joseph Siemaszko, has never been confessor of any convent of Basilian nuns. No prelate in Russia, whatever may be his grade in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, has Cossacks at his order or disposal. Kowno happens to be, not 20 miles from Witebsk, but double that distance, about 300 versts. No Basilian nun has been transferred to a Russian monastery; they have all remained in their own convents, except such as having a desire to go and live with their relations of the Roman Catholic religion, obtained permission from the archbishop alluded to above. Undoubtedly, if this prelate had to upbraid himself with such revolting conduct as that imputed to him, he would not now have consented to this last-named arrangement, which offered his victims so much facility for spreading through the country their accusations and their complaints. The means of existence of the Basilian nuns have not been reduced; but, on the contrary, have been augmented by new grants which convents of this order have of late years been accorded in Russia. The Archbishop of Lithuania, Joseph Siemaszko, has never exercised any authority over

the convents in Witebsk and Polotsk, inasmuch as they belong to another diocese. Throughout the whole extent of the empire of Russia, the criminal jurisdiction and the infliction of corporal punishments fall to the lot, not of the ecclesiastical authorities, but exclusively of the secular power. Never are women employed in Russia in works relating to building, and never has the archbishop, Joseph Siemaszko, erected a palace. He, for the most part, lives at St. Petersburg, and possesses no house of his own. The archiepiscopal palace at Wilna, destined to his use, was purchased by the Crown in 1843 from Count Mostowski, marshal of the nobility of that government. No person in modern times has ever heard of any criminal whatever, and still less of any poor women, being forced to undergo the torture of hunger and thirst: of their being wetted with iced water, or plunged into it; or of having their eyes put out. There are no mines in Russia, except in Siberia and in the government of Olodetz. No Basilian could have been employed in the mines, inasmuch as none were transported from the western provinces of the empire, where there are no mines. Previously to 1839 there were in Russia nine convents of Basilian nuns, inhabited not by

240 women, but by only 55, of whom 35 belonged to the diocese of Lithuania. No one of these ever fled from the cloister, and no mention has been as yet made in any report, of any of those who went to live with their relations having fled to a foreign country. It is an indisputable fact that in Russia there have never been Basilian nuns known by the names of Mieczyslawska, Wawrzecha, Konarska, and Pomawnocka, attributed by the periodical press to these pretended martyrs. It is also a fact, that no monk has been transported to Siberia from the number of the Basilians. It is certain, that in the Basilian monasteries of the empire there never have been either superiors or simple monks of the names of Berinski, Zilinski, Zeleniez, or Zaneicki, who are alleged to have expired in horrible tortures. Before 1839 there were in Russia 14 Basilian monasteries, containing 267 monks, and not 347, as the journals allege, and in the diocese of Lithuania there were only 165 monks of this order. It would be superfluous to carry further the examination of the other erroneous assertions propagated on this occasion by the periodical press. The facts which have been just cited are sufficient to assign to them their real value, and to show what ought to be attached to the existence of the 47 martyrs,

who obtained in the church of St. Roch the honour of funeral service, celebrated with so much solemnity. As to the pretended Abbess Mieczyslawska, the Russian government is completely ignorant of who she is. It belongs to the authorities of the country where she happens to be, to discover who and what she is, in order to unmask those odious manœuvres conceived in hatred of Russia, as well as to lay bare an imposture, carried on with a view to excite the sympathy of the compassionate, and draw from them important sums of money as alms. The imperial government, notwithstanding the censorship to which it subjects foreign journals, has authorised the free circulation of the articles in question throughout the whole extent of Russia, without excepting the provinces that are said to have served as the theatres of the persecutions in question. The inhabitants of these countries, ocular witnesses of what has passed there, will thus be able to appreciate, at their just value, the errors, at the same time clumsy and calumnious, which are published in other kingdoms on the internal state of their country."

No. II.

LETTER FROM PRINCE ADAM CZARTORYSKI, IN REPLY
TO THE NOTE OF M. DE BOUTENIEF.

To the Editor of the Journal des Debats.

“ All the journals of Paris, and the entire press of Europe, have repeated the account of the persecutions exercised against the Basilian nuns of Minsk. Numerous motives, independently of a consideration for her character, made it imperious on the part of Russia not only to contradict the assertions of the abbess of Minsk, but to expose some manifest falsehoods, easy to discover amidst numerous, varied, and often minute assertions, as respects persons and places. Why, for instance, did not that government obtain a denial, signed by some of the Basilian nuns whom the Russian government permitted, as is affirmed in the note, when they had refused to conform to the Greek schism, to retire among the Catholic members of their families? No such document has appeared.

“ Instead of that, an anonymous writer asserted, in a German journal, that there existed no Basilian convent at Minsk, and that no such establishment had ever existed in that town. Persons who have

resided at Minsk, and are ready to give their names, declare that they had known and visited at Minsk that Basilian convent, and the girls' school attached to it.

“ Now, we have an official act of the Russian government, denying distinctly every fact related by the abbess Mieczyslawska, and calling her an impostor. To substantiate that denial, what does that government do? In presence of the thousand voices of the press, which repeated the account, it has picked out a single journal, written in the Polish language, and published at Paris, under the title of *The Third of May*. Why that preference? It is because that journal, in announcing the escape of the abbess Mieczyslawska, in September last, mentioned that she had been expelled, with her companions, from a convent situate at *Kowno*. In its following number its error was corrected, and Minsk was substituted in the place of *Kowno*.

Now, it is merely against the assertion of the journal, *The Third of May*, that the Russian note protests. It denounces as a hideous falsehood a statement admitted to be erroneous, and whilst all the journals of Europe, and all the publications on the subject, have invariably spoken of the convent of Minsk, the Russian note of January does

not even mention the name of that town, and confines itself to affirm that no Basilian convent ever existed at Kowno.

“Such an oversight in an official document, so long preparing, dispenses us from refuting the other assertions. The denials relative to the habits of Russia and her government are little in accord with the accounts published by all the travellers who have lately visited that country. Some of them are contradicted in the reports, regarded as authentic, and contained amongst the documents annexed to the allocation of the Pope respecting Poland, made public in 1842.

“As respects the narrative of the abbess of Minsk, wherever it was heard from her own lips, at Posen, Paris, and Rome, where she appeared before the highest ecclesiastical authorities, it has invariably inspired an absolute confidence and respect for the martyrs. Time, we have no doubt, will afford material evidence of its rigid correctness. However, it should be borne in mind that the corroboration of any facts passing in Russia, places in the greatest peril the life and liberty of the witness, without in the least affecting the accused.

ADAM CZARTORYSKI.

No. III.

The official note of M. de Boutenief has created doubts in the minds of many, as to whether the Basilian nuns ever did exist at Minsk. The following is a certificate from four sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, who affirm that they have been in correspondence with that convent. We take it from the *Univers* :—

“ We, the undersigned, Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, arrived but lately in France, being driven from the province of Lithuania by the persecutions we had to endure from the Russian government, persecutions which ended in the dissolution of our society at Wilna, declare and certify to have had, through our sisters at Minsk, frequent correspondence with the nuns of the Basilian convent existing at Minsk. It is with full confidence, and to render justice to truth, we affirm that a convent of Basilian nuns did exist at Minsk, and we sign the present certificate.

“ Paris, the 8th day of March, 1846, at the house of the Sisters of Charity, of the Order of St. Casimir, Rue de Ivry, No. 1.

THEOPHILE MILRUTOWSKA,
 ISABELLE DOMBROWSKA,
 JOSEPHINE MINUTOWSKA,
 LOUISE KURINNTA, Sisters of Charity.”

Daily News, March 13.

No. IV.

To the Editor of the Times.

SIR,—Having seen in *The Times*, a statement put forth by the Russian government, impugning the truth of the account given by the Abbess Mieczyslawska, of the persecution which she, together with other Basilian nuns, endured at the hands of the Russians, I think it my duty to state, that being at Posen in the month of July last, I saw the Abbess Mieczyslawska, in the convent of the Sisters of Charity, in that city, on the very day on which she arrived there. She bore all the appearance of one having just completed a long and painful pilgrimage; her feet were swollen frightfully, and it was with great difficulty she could walk.

She was interrogated in my presence by the Sisters of Charity, who informed me that they had seen on her person the marks of the blows and stripes she had received. I afterwards saw her at the country house of a nobleman, a few miles from Posen, to which she had been invited. She came accompanied by the superior of the convent of Posen and by another Sister of Charity, who had also escaped from Russia.

I there again heard the account of her sufferings, which filled all present with indignation and horror.

I have no doubt that by some means or other, the whole story now so boldly contradicted by the Russians, will be thoroughly sifted, and its truth established ; but I think it my duty to say that I never saw any person bearing less the appearance of an impostor, and that all present on both occasions after having carefully interrogated her, were convinced of the truth of her statements.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ANNE BIRT.

March 14.

P. S. As I am unknown to you, I enclose my card and address, together with a note from the Archbishop of Dublin.

Times, March 17,

No. IV.

LETTER OF A RUSSIAN TO THE CONSTITUTIONEL
NEWSPAPER.

Sir,

I am a Russian, and I love my country. It is on this account that my best wishes, like those of many other Russians, are offered up for the success of the Polish insurrection. The oppression of Poland is disgraceful to my country, and its liberation might prove the commencement of
_____.

My object in addressing you is, however, to bring forward my evidence as an honest man, in a transaction which now engrosses the attention of the French papers,—I allude to the religious persecution of the Basilian nuns in Lithuania.

For my own part I am convinced of the truth of the fact denounced by those nuns. I believe them to be true, because I know that they are probable, and that I am aware how unhappily in Russia all evil that can possibly happen never fails to become a reality. The political and administrative organisation of that country is such that it renders good impracticable, and makes a necessity of evil.

The first consideration on the case in point is the

following : whether it be possible that the Russian government, however despotic, can have resorted to violence as a means of religious propagandism ? I am sorry to say that this does not admit of a doubt. Everybody in Russia knows to what illegal oppression, and often atrocious measures, the Russian authorities have resorted to, to oblige the inhabitants of Lithuania and Little Russia to change their religious faith. These acts of violence, systematically pre-ordained and sanctioned by the emperor, could not remain unknown to him.

Lithuania, as well as Little Russia, belonged in the sixteenth century to the kingdom of Poland, then passed over from the Greek to the Roman Catholic faith, accepting all the dogmas of the latter, and recognising the supremacy of the Pope ; whilst on the other hand, the Council of Florence, which called them United Greeks, allowed them to retain the rites of the Greek Church. Little by little, however, ancient forms became obliterated, so that already in the eighteenth century it became impossible to distinguish any difference between the United Greeks and the Roman Catholics. This change, as well as the introduction of the union into a part of these provinces, and principally into the Ukraine, was not effected without some diffi-

culty; and the means resorted to then by the Jesuits, whose influence in Poland was one of the chief causes of its downfall, bear a close resemblance to those now employed by the imperial government. This, however, was past and done with, and the population having forgotten the sufferings of its fathers, is now sincerely attached to this new faith, which, as I have just observed, offers no sensible difference from the Roman Catholic. To Russianise Poland, such is, since 1831, the reigning idea with Nicholas—and one, it must be added, perfectly logical, since, inimical to a free or independent Poland, his policy must naturally tend to the destruction of its nationality. To attain this object three things were necessary: 1stly, extinction of the Polish language; 2ndly, the submission of the Polish courts to the Russian; 3rdly, the establishment of the state religion on the ruin of the United Greek and Roman Catholic Church. My space would not allow me, Mr. Editor, here to draw a complete picture of the acts of the Russian government, I shall therefore only attach myself to the explanation of the third of these points.

It was necessary for the Russian government to begin with White Russia and Lithuania. You must certainly have perceived, sir, that the policy

if Russia consists of two chief elements,—it commonly begins by fraud and terminates by violence. You shall hear the means employed to open the true path to the unhappy dissidents.

With a pretended anxiety to enforce to the letter the decrees of the council of Florence, the Russian Government began by rendering obligatory the permission formerly given the United Greeks, to use the Greek rites. It proceeded with a few changes in the decorations of churches and in the vestments of the priests,—changes which began to be violently carried out, because no heed was taken of their remonstrance, whilst the recusants were imprisoned. In 1838, however, the government adopting a bolder line of policy, determined on striking a great blow. The Bishop Semiasko, who was the soul of this undertaking, convoked the clergy at Pskov in a sort of council, composed of a small number of bishops and priests, of which one portion was gained over by promises, the other intimidated by threats. In this council the union of the United Greeks with the Russian church was unanimously voted, and a deputation, under the presidency of Semiasko, dispatched to St. Petersburg, begging the emperor to allow his very humble dissident subjects to renounce their heresy. “I thank

God and I accept," was the reply of Nicholas. The deputies were loaded with honours, presents, distinctions. Each day Te Deums were celebrated ; and whilst this farce was being enacted in St. Petersburg, blood had already begun to flow in Lithuania and White Russia. The emperor then dispatched Semiasko thither with full powers to act, and enjoining the civil and military authorities to render him all necessary succour and assistance. The dissident population almost unanimously protested against the council of Polotsk. Local revolts took place in consequence, many peasants were shot, others perished under the knout; a still greater number were exiled to Siberia, either to the mines or as colonists. A large number of the non-conformist clergy shared a like fate. Some were imprisoned and tortured. Yes, sir, tortured; for though torture has been abolished by an ukase of Catherine the Second, it continues to be used even in Russia Proper in criminal prosecutions;—not towards nobles, unless they are political offenders, but frequently towards the people.

Notwithstanding these barbarous measures, the non-conformists still resisted the arbitrary pretensions of the Russian government, and we have a proof of it in the affair of the Basilian nuns.

After what I have related, you will admit that we have no right to disbelieve the assertions of Madame Mieczysłowska, on the plea of incredibility. Such a man as Semiasko is capable of anything. As to the insults and cruel treatment to which the Basilian nuns had to submit from the Russian nuns, I find nothing improbable in it. The greater number of Russian convents are filled by dissolute and ignorant persons, who, accustomed from their earliest infancy to every species of brutality, commonly spend their time between the mechanical recitation of prayers, gossip, and a state of drunkenness.

It will readily be understood how such recluses would receive unprotected women accused of heresy and disobedience to the emperor.

Let us now ask, was the Emperor Nicholas aware of all this? Is it possible that he can himself have commanded these atrocities?

Mr. Editor, I do not wish to be unjust, not even towards the emperor, who has been so towards many. I am, however, bound to speak the truth. The condemnations and executions which I have mentioned were all sanctioned and ordered by the emperor. He certainly did not order Semiasko to break the jaws of poor nuns, but he ordered him to

act with all the severity of the Russian laws. I am convinced that if the emperor had any decided wish to prevent such unjust and sanguinary scenes of violence from being enacted in his empire, all these atrocities would not have taken place.

The facts which I have mentioned, I can answer for, because employed for some time in Lithuania in a military capacity.

If I were not afraid of trespassing on your attention, I could cite to you many instances to prove that when O'Connell said "that no country on the face of the earth had been so cruelly treated as Ireland, that he must obviously have spoken in ignorance of the barbarous conduct of the Russian agents in Poland.

The administration of Poland is only composed of men who having no object but to rise in rank, and to enrich themselves by any means, strive to distinguish themselves by their zeal; and this zeal consists in the discovery of conspiracies, and in the assiduous pursuit of real or supposed conspirators.

You will be pleased to remember, sir, that the Russian government strives after nothing less than the total annihilation of Polish nationality, in its customs, religious faith, and native tongue; that

is punished as treason, all that is contrary to the emperor's wishes, and that all prosecutions and condemnations are carried on in a wholly arbitrary manner, that all those conducting these prosecutions, down to the lowest Russian officials, are endowed with almost absolute authority over every Pole with whom they come in contact. Sum up these things, and you will be enabled to form an idea of the sufferings of that noble and unhappy people.

I am, &c. &c.,

M. BAKOUNINE.

Paris, 9th of Feb. 1846.

N^o. V.

ANSWER TO THE ADDITIONAL NOTE DATED FROM ST.
PETERSBURG, MARCH, 1846.

The venerable nun whom it pleases the author of the additional note to call 'the woman Miecyslawska,' never assumed the title of Abbess of the convent of Kowno. We defy the Russian diplomatists to cite from among the numerous persons who have seen and conversed with her since her arrival within the Prussian territories, a single witness worthy of credit who heard her

take this quality. In the first declaration made before the Archbishop of Posen, two months before the publication of the article of the journal the *Third of May*, she took her true title of Abbess of Minsk. The error into which the journal the *Third of May* had fallen, was rectified the next day by that journal and by the *Univers*. Thus vanishes the first part of addition No. 1. Remains the title of Abbess of Minsk. The author of this second note is forced to confess that, in the first note, it was carefully concealed that in the said town of Minsk there did exist a convent of Basilian nuns, and to acknowledge that the mother Makrena did not arrogate to herself an imaginary title. Thus is confirmed, by the admissions of Russia herself, the existence of this convent, the reality of which has been wilfully denied; thus is confirmed the testimony of the old inhabitants of Lithuania, and particularly that of the Sisters of Charity at Wilna, as well as that of the Marquis de Narp, an officer who was in the service of the French army in 1812, now resident at Rome, all of whom attest the fact from having been eye-witnesses of it. Driven to speak of the Basilian nuns at Minsk, the note gives its history from 1834, and pretends that at that period it was converted into an hos-

THE ABOVE STATEMENT IS COMPLETELY FALSE. IN 1812 THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT DEGRADED AS THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT AND IN THE YEAR WHICH IT THAT YEAR REDUCED ALTHOUGH A NUMBER OF TURKS SUFFERED SEVERELY. ALL THE WEALTHY MEMBERS OF THE ORDER WITNESSED THE MILITARY ADVANCES WITH THE SWORDS OF SWEDEN AND DENMARK. DEMONSTRATING AND RECEIVING CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE REPAIRS OF THE DAMAGES THEIR CONVENT WAS SUFFERING. IT WAS NOT TILL 1838 THAT IT WAS SUPPLEMENTED BY THE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION OF THE MONKS. AS TO THE ALLEGATION OF REVENUE AND OTHER ADVANTAGES OF WHICH THE ABOVE SPEAKS, FACTS STILL EXISTING IN THE SUPERIOR OF THE CONVENT TRANSFERRED TO THE ALTHOUGH THERE IS THE SAME SOPHISTRY, THE SAME ALLEGATION AS WAS MENTIONED IN THE FIRST NOTE. IF IT BE TRUE THAT THE REVENUES OF SOME CONVENTS HAVE BEEN SUPPLEMENTED BY TRUST GRANTS, IT HAS BEEN MOST ASSUREDLY ONLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF SUCH MONKS AS HAVE REMAINED IN THE MONASTERY, AND NOT OF THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN DEPORTED TO RUSSIA: SINCE THESE LAST HAVE BEEN TREATED AS SERVANTS AND PRISONERS, AND AS NO LONGER FORMING A SEPARATE COMMUNITY. BESIDES, IT IS LITERALLY FALSE TO ASSERT THAT ANY NEW REVENUES HAVE BEEN CONFERRED UPON RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS, SINCE THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT, AFTER HAVING SEIZED THEIR ESTATES AND PROPERTY, HAS REPLACED THE AMPLE INCOMES DERIVED

from them by very small pensions. Consequently there is an evident falsity in this second part of the first addition. No person can be made to believe that the Russian government, which had seized the property of the convents, can have augmented revenues no longer in existence, that they can have been augmented in favour of nuns considered to be rebellious heretics, and that these grants have been continued up to the present day. The fact referred to in the addition, No. 5, has never been disputed. It has not been denied that some nuns may, on account of the state of their health, have been allowed to return to their Catholic families; but it is affirmed that these returns have all been anterior to the cruel persecutions of 1838. Addition 12. The note affects to give the names of the superiors of the convents existing in 1839. Here it again falls into voluntary error. Thus, the superior of Grodno was not Baikowna, but Maliszewska; that of Witebsk was not Kasimerska, but Kostrowna. From this let the confidence merited by the writers of the note be judged when they say that Makrena Mieczyslawska was not abbess of Minsk. It may be that in 1839 there were only nine convents of Basilian nuns in Russia, for at that period persecution was already old. It

must be concluded that persecution had already borne its fruits; for previously there were at least fifteen of these convents in Russia—viz. those of Wilna, Grodno, Pinsk, Orza, Minsk, Polotek, Witebsk, Novogrodesk, Zyrovice, Slonim, Boruny, Bereswecz, Czaszwiki, Biala, and Poczajow. These convents were inhabited by 245 nuns, as is proved by the calendars of the order printed before the persecution. The convent of Minsk alone reckoned 35. If, therefore, there were no more than 55 nuns in all, there would remain only 20 for the other 14 convents, or one and a half for each. It is added that no change has been made in the interior discipline of the convents. Nothing, certainly, beyond the religious faith and the persons of their inhabitants—the old faith has been made to give place to a schism, and the inhabitants have become Greco-Russians, or have been martyred for remaining faithful to their creed. With these exceptions, it is true that there has been very little change. The note concludes with two allegations—the first of which is founded on a slight mistake, which it vainly endeavours to exaggerate; and the second of which is branded with flagrant bad faith. It is true that the governor of Minsk was not named Uzakoff. The mistake arose from

the similitude between the two names Suzkoff and Uzakoff, and not Usrakoff or Souchkoff, as the note with a view to delude, wishes to represent. It was in truth General Suzkoff who was governor of Minsk at the time of the persecution. It may easily be imagined the ear of the abbess, or of those who took down her testimony, may have misapprehended the sound. It will be easy to appreciate the declaration which the note attributes to General Suszkoff, when it is known that this personage is a man of cruel and despotic character, sent at that period to Minsk precisely to be the executor of those pitiless orders against the Catholics whom it was determined to force by whatever means to apostacise. In the second place, the note joins irony to falsehood in affirming that the Princess Euphrosina Giedymin, who is brought to life in 1838, died at Rome more than 600 years ago. We inform the learned author of the note, that Christina Clara Giedymin, who took the name of Euphrosina on becoming a nun, was visitress general of the order of Basilian Nuns; that she is the person designated under the name of Mother-General, a title given to her according to custom, and that she it was who perished miserably when she was being conveyed to Siberia. It will be seen that the

author of the note is little versed in genealogies, though he pretends to have consulted them. It will not be out of place to make him acquainted with that of the nun whom he persists in calling the woman Mieczyslawska. Makrena Mieczysławska belongs to a distinguished family of Poland, allied to the princely family of Wistgenstein. She is the daughter of Joseph Mieczyslowski and Anna Jagullo, daughter of Casimir and Hedwige. She was born at Stokliszki, the estate of her parents, in the ancient palatinate of Troki, in 1784. She is not the only member of her family who has suffered for religion. One of her brothers, Calixt Mieczyslowski, who took the name of Onuphrees on entering the order of Saint Basil, was on his refusal to forsake his religion, put into a cart and so tightly bound that he perished on the way to Smolensko. Two of his companions, Szozerbwiski and Chryanowski, died with him in the same cart; and a fourth, Zolkowski, expired on arriving at Smolensko. We will add that mother Makrena entered the order of St. Basil at the age of twenty-three, in the convent of Biala, of which her maternal aunt, Isabella Jagullo, was abbess. Several months afterwards she went to the convent of Minsk, where she remained and performed almost all the duties of the establish-

ment until the moment when the abbess Kuleska, having become infirm, Makrena took her charge for three years and succeeded her as abbess at her death in 1823. In her quality of abbess she was present at the elections of the abbesses of Wilna and Bereswecz. We have destroyed one by one the allegations of the additional note, and we deliver the new errors with which it is filled, and its most cruel condemnation, to the indignation and contempt of all upright and impartial minds.

Rome, April 1846.

T H E E N D .

ERRATA.

Page 207, line 14, *for* "Russian," *read* "Prussian."

" " last line, *for* "brought with, and" *read* "brought with him, and".

Page 238, line 15, *for* "other states," *read* "Poland."

