THE POLISH QUESTION.

PREFATORY NOTE.

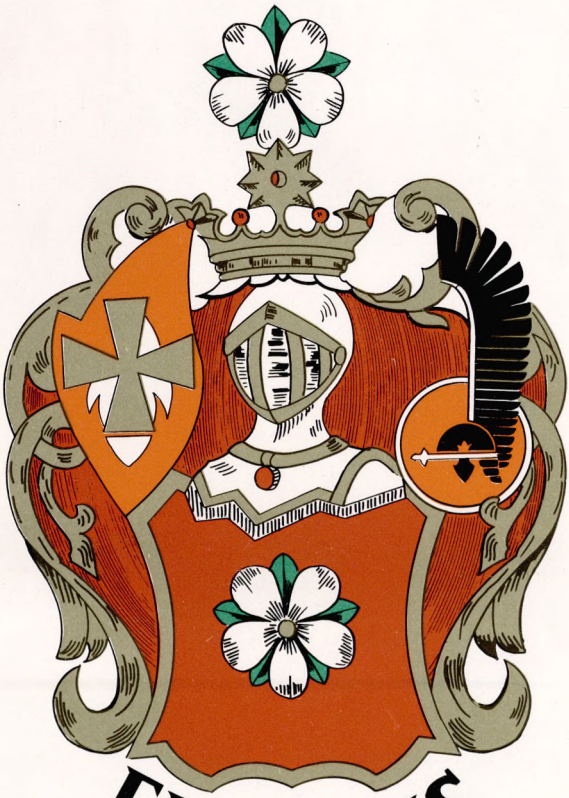
THESE pages, containing a comprehensive *resumé* of the whole Polish question, and a final appeal to the British people on the subject, are now invested with a sad interest. They are the legacy of a wise and noble-hearted man for the good of his country,—the voice, through him, of a slain nation crying for justice from the ground. The venerable writer has passed to the Better Country, the Home of earth's exiles, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." His good fight is fought, his life-work finished. He had just completed, amid suffering and weakness, the labour of correcting these sheets for the press, when Death came to release him from his long warfare, gently unlacing the armour in which, during a life of unwearied activity, he had so valiantly and patiently contended for Truth and Righteousness.

Ἱερον ὕπνον κοιμᾶται
θνήσκειν μη λέγε τοὺς ἀγάθους.

May these his last words, the life-blood of a noble spirit, fall, like the blood of martyrs, "fruitful of further thought and deed," fruitful of Justice to the oppressed and Liberty to the bound! Let them who have the same cause at heart imitate him, in manful patience and hope, in generous zeal, in wise and self-denying perseverance. Let them believe with him, and act on the belief, hoping against hope, that though He bear long, and suffer iniquity to triumph for a season,

The Great Soul of the world is just, and not unjust.

EDINBURGH,
December 25, 1855.



EX LIBRIS

LODA and EDWARD C. ROZANSKI

Hope for a season bade the world farewell,
And freedom shrieked when Kosciuszko fell.

Thomas Campbell

Schenck & M^c Farlane lith^rs Edinburgh.

IS THE POWER OF RUSSIA TO BE REDUCED OR INCREASED BY THE PRESENT WAR?

THE POLISH QUESTION

AND

PANSLAVISM.

BY

COUNT VALERIAN KRASINSKI,

AUTHOR OF

"THE HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION IN POLAND;" "PANSLAVISM AND GERMANISM;"
"SKETCH OF THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF THE SLAVONIC NATIONS," ETC.

"I cannot discover the policy of not hitting one's enemy as hard as one can, and in the most vulnerable place."—*Despatch of the Duke of Wellington, 21st March* 1814.

"I know no more striking anticipation of public events than has been offered by Count Valerian Krasinski's work on 'Panslavism and Germanism,' published at the beginning of last year."—*Letter to the Marquess of Lansdowne, by R. Monckton Milnes, M.P., on the Events of* 1848.

LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, PICCADILLY;
DETTKENS, DAVIES STREET; GROOMBRIDGE AND SONS, PATERNOSTER ROW.
EDINBURGH: JOHNSTONE & HUNTER. GLASGOW: J. R. MACNAIR.
DUBLIN: JOHN ROBERTSON.

M.DCCC.LV.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY JOHNSTONE AND HUNTER,
HIGH STREET.

TO THE

PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

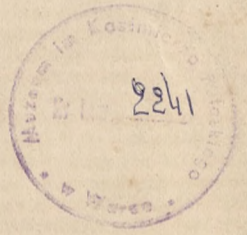
It is said that the present war is essentially a people's war. If this be the case, it is of the greatest importance that the people should know with precision in what consists the real object of this war,—whether it is such as to warrant all those heavy sacrifices which they so nobly bear, and whether the means employed for the attainment of this object are the best calculated to bring about this desideratum. I have, therefore, ventured to submit to you some views on this subject; and I conscientiously believe that the object which I have endeavoured to explain in this essay is the only one which may justify all those immense sacrifices of blood and money which this country is so cheerfully submitting to, and that the means which I have exposed in the same place are such that to neglect them in the present war is exactly the same as to undertake by manual labour a work which may be easily accomplished by the application of steam power at an immense saving of time and expense. The views which I have expressed on these subjects are not my

own, but those of the most eminent statesmen of various countries, who, however differing amongst themselves on various other subjects, have entirely agreed on this question. I do not want, therefore, to impose them upon a credulous public, but I demand for them the most searching investigation; and I think that a subject in which all those are interested who have the loss of a dear relative or friend to apprehend or already to deplore, as well as all those who begin to feel the burdens of an increased taxation,—in short, every family in the land,—deserves at least to be examined. A single glance at the detailed summary of its contents, which I have prefixed to this essay, may, however, convince my readers of the importance of its nature.

Edinburgh, *Dec.* 10, 1855.

SUMMARY.


PROVINCES OF POLAND
before its successive dismemberments
IN 1770.
Parts with the red tint show
land before its dismemberm
Diagonal lines in additio
show Russian Poland as crea
by the Congress of Vienna
Horizontal lines in additio
show Austrian Poland.
Perpendicular lines in addit
show Prussian Poland.
BALTIC SEA
GULF OF FINLAND
SWEDEN
DENMARK
STOCKHOLM
KOPENHAGEN
ST PETERSBURG
Revel
Narva
Novogrod
ESTONIA
Oesel
Pernau
Dorpt
Gulf of Riga
Gotland
LIVONIA
Pskow
Ostrow
Windau
Marienhausen
Riga
Tver
Wladimir
COURLAND
Libau
Mittau
taken since 1795
Zavolocie
Vidkiebskie
MOSKWA
SAMOGITIA
Memel
Dünaburg
Drissa
Polock
Vienna
Rezan
Rossienie
Wilkomierz
Witebsk
Drohobush
Kaluga
Bornholm
Rugen
Tilsit
Konigsberg
Orsza
Smolensk
Tula
Laubeck
Stralsund
Kowno
Wilna
obtained at the third dismemberment of Poland in 1795
Lepel
Mseisiesk
Danzig
Elbing
Heilsberg
Kolberg
MECKLENBURG
POMERANIA
Marienburg
Lötzen
Minsk
Mohilew
Bransk
Jeletz
Graudenz
Culmsee
Thorn
Grodno
Nowogrodek
Propoisk
Pozarpow
BERLIN
Magdeburg
Kunersdorf
Bromberg
Inowrocslaw
Gnesne
Posen
Biglystok
Wolkowysk
Slonim
Slutsk
Rohaczew
Plock
Modlin
Bielsk
Kobryn
Pinsk
Bielica
Novogrod Sewersk
Kursk
WARSAW
Praga
Rowa
Litowsk
Lenczyca
Kalisz
Sierads
Ivangarod
Radom
Lublin
Mozyr
Tschernigow
Pultusk
Baturin
Leipzig
Dresden
Breslau
Kielce
Sandomir
Zamosc
Wladimir
Lucko
Dubno
Rowno
Ostrog
Zitomierz
Hadziacz
Achtyr
Charkow
Kiew
Prague
Glatz
Sieradz
KRAKOW
Jaroslaw
Przemysl
Brody
Zaslaw
Kaniow
Biglaserkiew
Zenkow
Poltawa
Kollin
Troppau
Teschen
Olmutz
Brunn
Ratisborne
Lemberg
Sandecz
Sanok
Stary Konstantynow
Krilow
Zwinigrod
Salzburg
VIENNA
Presburg
Stanislawow
Kolomea
Bradow
Kamieniec Podolski
Kudak
Munkacs
Tokay
Chotim
Baltu
Ofen
Pesth
Jassy
Odessa
Taganrog
Warasdin
Venice
Trieste
Istria
Hermanstadt
Braila
Ismail
Yenikale
Kertch
Arabat
Kaffa
CRIMEA
Eupatoria
Simferopol
Sebastopol
Kerman
Balaklava
ADRIATIC SEA
DALMATIA
CROATIA
BOSNIA
SERVIA
Belgrad
Bukarest
WALACHIA
Silistria
DOBRUDSHA
BLACK SEA
AUSTRIA
HUNGARY
MOLDAVIA
TRANSILVANIA
BUKOWINA
GALICIA
SILESIA
MORAVIA
BOHEMIA
SAXONY
BAVARIA
Danube
Dniester
Dnieper
Pruth
Theiss
Save
Drave
Elbe
Oder
Vistula
Given up to Turkey in 1672
obtained at the peace at Kutschuk-Kainardsche in 1774
obtained at the peace at Jassy in 1792
Given up in 1686


Museum für Kosmische
Erforschung
Wien
2241

THE POLISH QUESTION.

The leading paper of this country has recently made the following observations on the present war:—

"A very slight reflection will serve to show, that if there is any subject in the whole sphere of human action in which there ought to be no doubt or demur, it is the awful business of war. A government may or may not be very cordial or unanimous on a question of reform in institutions that have lasted for centuries unreformed, or on a question of railway, or other material improvements; almost any question, indeed, of mere secular import, may be left open for the variety and fallibility of human judgments; but in war, we are assuming, as needs we must assume, the tremendous prerogative of heaven,—the assertion of justice by the sword. The man who takes the responsibility of sending fleets and armies to kill, to burn, to waste, and destroy; to spread ruin among millions; to sow the seeds of endless resentment; to stop the progress of civilization, and drive the human race back again to the desert, ought to be very certain, very hearty in the hideous work. To do all this doubtingly, with perpetually intrusive misgiving that, after all, there was no need for it, and that we are responsible for these horrors, implies a singular indifference to humanity, justice, and truth. That the nature of the work demands the firmest determination and most unyielding decision, and that hesitation and doubt are to be written in blood and tears, is only a proof of the infinite moral gravity of the task, and the necessity of a thoroughly resolved mind." —*Times*, *Saturday*, *July* 14, 1855.

The truth of these observations cannot be doubted for a moment; and I would only add, that, in order to prosecute a war in the manner expressed above, the real object of that war should be clearly understood, not only by the government, but also by the population of the country which has engaged in it. This seems not, however, to be the case in respect to the present war even with some statesmen of the Western Powers, as has been recently proved by the conduct of the British and French plenipotentiaries at the Congress of Vienna, as well as by the speeches delivered on this subject in the British Parliament by Mr Gladstone and other ex-Ministers, who had begun the present war; and yet nothing can be more important to the successful termination of such a war as the present one than a thorough and univer-

sally spread knowledge of its real nature and objects, particularly in a country like Great Britain, where the voice of the people must have a decisive influence on the action of the government.

Everybody knows that the present war was brought about by the aggressive policy of Russia. Volumes have been written to denounce this policy, and the same thing was done by numberless pamphlets and articles in periodicals, published in various languages and countries, and yet, though this subject ought to have been by this time a truism to the public of Western Europe, they seem to be generally very much in the dark on the real nature of this all-important subject; and even many of the bitterest opponents of Russia are animated more with a kind of instinctive hatred to that power than possessed of a clear perception of its danger. Thus, for instance, there was a general outcry against the personal ambition of the late Emperor Nicholas, who was made as an individual the object of much obloquy, whilst a very irrational joy was manifested at his death by many who were simple enough to believe that the accession of a new monarch to the throne of Russia would be followed by a change of her policy, forgetting that this policy had not been created, but only inherited from his predecessors, by the Emperor Nicholas, as much as it has now been done by Alexander II. The present war has not been produced by a mere accident, but is the effect of a permanent cause, though its outbreak has been accelerated by accidental circumstances. This subject cannot be, however, clearly explained, except by a short exposition of the circumstances which are the direct, though not immediate cause of the present political complications.

It is now acknowledged at all hands, except by the wilfully blind, that Russia is an aggressive power, and a single glance on the acquisitions which she has made in the course of one century is sufficient to establish this fact beyond every controversy.* It is, however, by no means so generally understood that the whole foreign policy of Russia has been, since its very beginning in the fifteenth century till the present time, influenced and modified in all its important phases by Poland, and that its future development must entirely depend upon the manner in which the Polish question will be decided at the issue of the present war.

* "The population of Russia at the accession of Peter I., 1689, was 18,000,000; at the accession of Catherine II., in 1763, it was 23,000,000; at her death, in 1798, it was 36,000,00; at the accession of Nicholas, in 1825, it was 58,000,000. The acquisitions of Russia from Sweden are greater than what remains of that kingdom; her acquisitions from Poland are equal to the Austrian empire; her acquisitions from Turkey in Europe are of greater extent than the Prussian dominions, exclusive of the Rhenish provinces; her acquisitions from Turkey in Asia are nearly equal in extent to the whole of the smaller states of Germany; her acquisitions in Persia are equal in extent to England; her acquisitions in Tartary have an area not inferior to that of Turkey in Europe, Greece, Italy, and Spain; the acquisitions which she has made within the last sixty-four years (prior to 1836) are equal, in extent and importance, to the whole empire which she had in Europe before that time. . . . . In these sixty-four years she has advanced her frontiers 850 miles towards Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, and Paris; she has approached 450 miles nearer to Constantinople; she has possessed herself of the capital of Poland, and has advanced to within a few miles of the capital of Sweden. Since that time she has stretched herself about 1000 miles towards India, and the same distance towards the capital of Persia (Teheran.) The regiment which is now stationed at her farthest frontier post on the western shore of the Caspian has as great a distance to march back to Moscow as onwards to Attock on the Indus, and is actually further from St Petersburgh than from Lahore, the capital of the Punjaub."—*Progress of Russia in the East*, ascribed to Sir John M'Neill.

This may be considered as an historical axiom, and it was most clearly defined by one of the ablest diplomatists of Russia, Pozzo di Borgo, in the following manner:—"*The destruction of Poland as a political power forms almost the whole modern history of Russia. Her aggrandizement on the side of Turkey has only been territorial, and, I venture to say, of secondary importance, if compared to that which has been accomplished on the western frontier. The conquest of Poland was made principally with the object of multiplying the relations of the Russian nation with the other nations of Europe, and to open to it a more extensive field, and a nobler and a better known stage, where it may exercise its power and talents, and satisfy its pride, passions, and interests.*"*

The influence of Poland on the foreign policy of Russia is twofold: 1*st*, By her geographical position, which places her territory between Russia on one side, and Prussia, Austria, and Turkey on the other, from the shores of the Baltic to the vicinity of those of the Black Sea; and, 2*d*, By her ethnic composition; because the Poles and the Russians, however divided by the difference of religion and political institutions under which they grew up as nations, belong to one and the same Slavonic race, the Poles being formed by the influence of the Western church and civilization, as well as by that of free institutions; the Russians under the guidance of the Eastern church, and an oriental despotism. Hence the difference of disposition in these two nations, which are, on the other side, drawn together by a great similarity of language, and several characteristics of their common race, as well as the same antipathy against the Teutonic nation, from which the Slavonians have greatly suffered. The national hatred between the Poles and Russians, generated by a long hostility, is, however, entirely of a political nature; and there is no doubt that, individually, both of these will sooner agree with each other than with the Germans, whose national character is diametrically opposed to that of the Slavonians. This community of race is therefore of paramount importance in the solution of the present political complications, because if Poland is left at the close of the actual contest in the same position towards Russia as it is now, it will give to the Russian government a most powerful means not only for reconciling its Polish subjects to its rule, but even of extending its influence over Austrian and Prussian Poland, and all the other Slavonic nationalities; whilst, on the other hand, should the present war bring about a restoration of Poland, that country would form not only a material barrier against the progress of Russia, but, owing to the affinities of race between the inhabitants of the two countries, she will exercise upon Russia a powerful moral influence, and become the most effective medium through which the liberal ideas of the West will gradually be infiltrated into and leaven the whole mass of the Russian people, destroying thus the ecclesiastico-political despotism by which that people is governed, and whose systematic policy of aggression may be considered as the main cause of the uninterrupted progress of the Russian power. The Polish question is therefore inseparably connected with the future progress or repression of the power of Russia; and it cannot be avoided, notwithstanding all the attempts which have been made

* See the Memoir which he addressed to the Emperor Alexander, on the 20th October 1814, against the restoration of the kingdom of Poland.

by the statesmen of Western Europe to blink it. It is now, however, pressing itself every day more and more upon the attention of the governments and people of Western Europe; and it cannot be avoided, but only rendered more complicated and difficult by delay. Therefore the sooner it will be taken up by the allies the better. But the first condition of dealing with it in an efficient manner is, as well as with every other question, a thorough understanding of its real nature. This, unfortunately, is far from being generally the case with this now the most vital question for the futurity of Europe, and a most strange confusion of ideas on this subject pervades, to a considerable extent, the public of this country, as is evident from the opinions delivered on this subject in the British senate by many of its distinguished members. I shall, therefore, attempt to expose this subject to the British public as clearly and as briefly as I may be able to do so, by a rapid sketch of the development and mutual relations of Poland and Russia, as well as their present position towards the rest of Europe.

The name of Russia, which, since the time of Peter the Great, has been substituted for that of Muscovy, has been applied to a vast tract of land, the whole of which is not even now under the dominion of the emperor of Russia (the eastern part of Galicia, or Austrian Poland). It originated in the ninth century, when a band of Scandinavian adventurers, who are known in the Byzantine history under the name of *Varinghians*, and who had the peculiar surname of *Russes*,* founded, under a chief called Ruric, a state in the vicinity of the Baltic Sea, by establishing their dominion over several Slavonic and Finnish tribes. This new state, of which the capital was Novgorod, took from the name of its founders the appellation of Russia, in the same manner as the province of Neustria assumed the name of Normandy from the Northmen, Gallia that of France from the Franks, &c.

The successors of Ruric extended their dominions south and westwards, transferring their residence to Kioff, whence they made several expeditions against the Greek empire. Their new state acquired its greatest development under Vladimir the Great, who became a convert to the Christian religion of the Greek church in 986. His empire, which became known under the appellation of Russia, extended from the vicinity of the Baltic to the Black Sea; from the banks of the Volga and the foot of the Caucasian mountains, to the Carpathian ridge and the rivers San and Bug. It was composed of various Slavonic populations, and in the north of several Finnish tribes, all of which, though comprehended under the general name of Russians, greatly differed amongst themselves, and were kept together, not by any regular system of government, but by the common bond of one sovereign, whose authority merely consisted in the levying of a certain tribute, which was usually paid by them only when the sovereign or his delegates were able to exact it.

Vladimir died in 1015, and divided his empire amongst his nume-

* The Varinghians, or Varegues, were Scandinavian or Anglo-Saxon adventurers, who served as body-guards to the emperors of Constantinople. There have been many origins assigned to the name Russians, or Russes, but the most probable of them is, that it was derived from *Ruots*, or *Ruts*, the Finnish name for Swedes, and that the Slavonians adopted it from the Fins, who lived between them and the Swedes.

rous sons, who were to hold their states under the suzerainty of the eldest, residing at Kioff, and enjoying the title of grand duke of Russia. This arrangement produced considerable disturbance, until one of his sons, Yaroslav, reunited under his sceptre the paternal dominions. He was a great monarch, and powerfully promoted the Christianization and civilization of his states, but following the example of his father, or rather the prevailing custom of the age, he divided his empire amongst his sons, leaving the duchy of Kioff, with the supremacy over the other princes, and the title of grand duke, to the eldest of them. This dignity was inherited, according to the custom of all the Slavonic countries, not by the order of primogeniture, but by that of seniority, *i. e.*, that the deceased grand duke was succeeded, not by his eldest son, but by the oldest member of his dynasty. Such an arrangement could not but lead to constant troubles, particularly as the different principalities were continually subdivided amongst the sons of the deceased sovereign. Russia thus became divided amongst a great number of petty princes, warring between themselves, and continually exposed to the attacks of their foreign neighbours. The authority of the grand dukes of Kioff sank under these circumstances into a complete insignificance, whilst two powerful principalities, founded by the talents of their rulers, arose in the south-west and north-east of Russia. The first of these was that of Halich, comprehending the eastern part of the present Austrian province of Galicia, and the Russian governments of Podolia and Volhynia; the second was the principality of Vladimir, on the Klasma, comprehending the present Russian government of that name, with some adjacent provinces, and whose sovereigns assumed the title of grand duke. There were also three republics, governed by entirely popular forms,—Novgorod, Pleskow, and Viatka, a community formed by emigrants from Novgorod, in the place which now bears that name.

Thus Russia was divided into various states, frequently at war amongst themselves, inhabited by populations differing one from another as much as they differed from the Poles, Bohemians, and other Slavonic nations, having only a common name and the same dynasty, to which all the numerous sovereigns of that country equally belonged. The only real bond of union amongst all these states was the same church, governed by the archbishop of Kioff, its metropolitan.

Such was the state of Russia when the Mongols, commanded by Batoo Khan, grandson of Genghis Khan, invaded that country in 1238, 1239, and 1240, committing the most horrible devastations.

Batoo Khan, having ravaged Hungary and Poland, fixed his camp on the banks of the Volga, and summoned the princes of Russia to pay him homage, threatening them with a new devastation in case of refusal. Nothing remained but to obey; and the grand duke of Vladimir paid homage to Batoo in his camp on the banks of the Volga, and afterwards to the Grand Khan Kooblay, near the great wall of China. His successors received the investiture from the descendants of Batoo, who became independent of the Mongol empire, under the name of the khans of Kipchak. About the beginning of the fourteenth century, the petty prince of Moscow having ingratiated himself with the khan, married his sister, and obtained from him the hereditary dignity of grand duke, to which an authority over the

other princes of Russia was attached, and which hitherto had not been exclusively vested in one of their branches. His successors endeavoured, as an invariable line of policy, to court by all possible means the favour of their suzerain the khan, in order to increase by his assistance their power at the expense of other princes of Russia. Thus the power of Moscow gradually increased, whilst that of the khans was at the same time declining by internal commotions, until the former became so strong as to shake off the dominion of the latter towards the end of the fifteenth century.

Such was the origin of Moscow, the nucleus of the present Russian empire, formed from the principalities of north-eastern Russia by its princes, who, as the eminent historian of Russia, Karamsin, says, "obtained provinces, not with the sword of a conqueror, but by prostrating themselves before the khans."*

The western principalities of Russia, though ravaged by the Mongols, were, by their geographical position, less exposed to the influence of those barbarians than those of the north-east, whose fate I have related above. The most important of them was that of Halich, situated in the south, which, enjoying the advantages of a fertile soil, fine climate, and of a favourable situation for commercial intercourse with Poland, Hungary, and Constantinople, acquired a degree of welfare superior to all the other principalities of Russia. It maintained with various fortune its national existence till 1340, when, after the extinction of its reigning family, it was united with Poland by King Casimir the Great, who, in virtue of his relationship with that family, claimed its succession. The loyalty of the inhabitants was secured by the confirmation of their privileges and the grant of new rights and liberties, and Halich remained a province of Poland until its first dismemberment in 1772, when it was seized by Austria, and is now called Galicia, (a corruption of the appellation Halich.)

The invasion of the Mongols, which greatly enfeebled Russia as well as Poland, mainly contributed to the development of the power of Lithuania, which was not reached by that terrible visitation. The Lithuanians, or Lettonians, who are a race entirely distinct from the Slavonic and Teutonic races, inhabited, since time immemorial, the shores of the Baltic eastward from the Vistula. They were divided into several branches, differing among themselves by slight dialectical variations, viz., the Prussians, Livonians, Curonians, Samogitians, and Lithuanians proper. The Prussians were conquered in the thirteenth century by the German Knights Hospitallers, and the Livonians and Curonians by another German order, the Knights Sword-bearers. These two ecclesiastico-military institutions, united by a permanent confederacy, developed themselves into a powerful state, having effected a compulsory conversion of the natives, whom they reduced to a state of bondage. The remaining branches of the Lettonian race, viz., the Samogitians and the Lithuanians proper, succeeded, however, not only in maintaining their national independence and idolatry, but strengthened through the increase of their population by those of their countrymen who were flying from the dominion of their German conquerors, they became very formidable to their neighbours, and succeeded in establishing a powerful empire by the conquest of the Western Russian

* History of Russia, vol. v. chap. iv.

principalities, which far surpassed in extent the original seats of the conquerors. This conquest was achieved more by policy than by force of arms, and under very peculiar circumstances. The above-mentioned principalities, inhabited by a population professing the Christianity of the Greek church, were in a great state of weakness and disorder since the invasion of the Mongols, and were frequently exposed to the ravages of those barbarians. The Lithuanian sovereigns began, about the middle of the thirteenth century, gradually to occupy those principalities, securing to their inhabitants the undisturbed enjoyment of their religion, language, and local customs, and appointing as governors of those provinces princes of the reigning family, who became converts to the religion followed by the populations entrusted to their government. Internal troubles suspended for some time the development of the Lithuanian empire; but these being settled, it rapidly advanced, particularly after the accession of Ghedimin about 1320. This monarch, endowed with great political and military talents, occupied, almost without resistance, the country extending between the Lithuanian dominions and the Black Sea, which he organised in a feudal manner, entrusting the several principalities into which it was divided to his sons, who held them as his vassals, or leaving the princes whom he found there to rule in the same capacity their possessions. His sons, who were entrusted with those provinces, were all baptized and received into the Greek church, and some of them were married to princesses belonging to the families which had reigned over those countries. He himself assumed the title of grand duke of Lithuania and Russia; and although he remained in the idolatry of his ancestors, his Christian subjects became so loyal to their pagan sovereign, that they faithfully served him in all his wars, not only against the followers of the Western church, Germans and Poles, but also against those who belonged to their own, *i. e.*, Moscow. The dialect of White Russia, *i. e.*, of the north-western principalities, which were first annexed to Lithuania, was adopted for all the official transactions of that country, and continued so till about the middle of the seventeenth century, when it was gradually superseded by the Polish. Ghedimin was succeeded about 1340 by his son Olgherd, who was not inferior to his father in talents and ambition. His suzerainty was acknowledged by the republic of Plescow in 1346, by that of Novgorod in 1349, and by the Tahtars of the Crimea in 1363. Supporting the duke of Twer, his ally, he appeared three times before the gates of Moscow, in 1368, 1370, and 1373, and extended the frontiers of his possessions as far as Mojaysk.* He also waged many wars against the German Knights of Prussia and Livonia, as well as Poland.

Olgherd was baptized and received into the Greek church on his marriage with a princess of Vitepsk. He attended Christian worship at Kioff and other towns of his Russian possessions, built churches and convents, and was prayed for by his Christian subjects as their orthodox sovereign; but at Vilna, the capital of Lithuania proper, he sacrificed to the national idols, and adored the sacred fire, which was kept continually burning in a fane of that city,—a religious dualism which has perhaps no parallel in history, except in the dignity of the supreme pontiff of Rome, retained for some time by the Christian emperors.

* Celebrated by a great battle in 1812.

His brother Keystut, with whom he was united during his whole reign by a most exemplary fraternal love, and who was the most trusty partner of his exploits, professed, however, all his life the national idolatry. Olgherd is said to have died as a Christian in 1380, but his body was burned with all the pagan rites of his ancestors. Several of his sons were baptized and educated in the tenets of the Greek church; but Jaghellon, who succeeded him on the throne, was brought up as a pagan. He became a convert to the Christianity of the Western church in 1386, on his marriage with Hedvige, queen of Poland, and being elected king of that country, united with it his own dominions.*

The history of Poland acquires some degree of certainty after the baptism of its duke Mieczyslav I. (965), who acknowledged, at least for a part of his lands, the suzerainty of the German empire, and took a part in its wars and diets.† Mieczyslav's son and successor, Boleslav I., or the Great (992–1025), may be considered as the real founder of the Polish state. He extended his dominions, became independent of the German empire, with which he had many wars, and assumed the royal dignity. Poland, after having been exposed for a few years to internal commotions and foreign invasions during the minority of Boleslav's grandson, Casimir I., rose under that monarch, and his successors, Boleslav II. and III., to a considerable degree of power. Its territory at that time did not extend very far eastwards to the Vistula, but on the west it comprised the whole of Silesia and the banks of the Oder to its fall into the Baltic. Its monarchs had continual wars with the German empire, extending their dominions occasionally to the banks of the Elbe, and even beyond that river. They also interfered on many occasions in the Russian principalities, particularly as they were connected by frequent intermarriages with the descendants of Vladimir the Great. Boleslav III. (died 1139), having divided his states among his four sons, left to the eldest of them, Vladislav, besides the province of Silesia, the duchy of Cracow, with the sovereignty over his brothers. Vladislav attempted to restore the unity of the state, destroyed through this arrangement, by taking possession of the principalities assigned to his brethren. He met, however, with a strong opposition on the part of the bishops and of many influential nobles, because the divided state of the country, which diminished the power of the sovereign, was, from the same cause, favourable to the growth of that of the aristocracy and clergy. This produced a war, in consequence of which Vladislav was expelled from the throne, upon which his brother, Mieczyslav III., was established. Vladislav having retired to Germany, attempted to recover his throne by the assistance of the emperors, and, Frederic Barbarossa having taken his part, penetrated (1157) with an army of Germans and Bohemians to the vicinity of Posen. Mieczyslav was obliged to promise the emperor a tribute, and to acknowledge his

* Already, in 1252, Mindove, the Duke of Lithuania, was baptized into the Latin church by a legate of the Pope, and crowned by him as king; but as his conversion did not protect him against the hostility of the German Knights, who endeavoured to conquer his states, he returned to his native idolatry, and became a most inveterate and formidable enemy of the Latin Christians.

† For those which were situated to the west of the river Varta, according to the contemporary German chronicler, Dittmar of Merseburg. He also seems to have maintained a connection with other western states, because we know, from contemporary chroniclers, that a daughter of his married Sveyn, king of Denmark, and was mother of Canute the Great, king of that country and England.

suzerainty. The emperor had not, however, the means of enforcing these conditions; but the sons of Vladislav obtained the possession of Silesia, which had been a part of their father's share on the division of Poland I have mentioned above. These princes, who represented the eldest branch of the Piastian or national dynasty of Poland, as well as their descendants, considering themselves aggrieved by their exclusion from the throne of their ancestors, and closely allied by family connections with Germany, fell entirely under the influence of that country, gradually separating themselves from their own. They promoted the Germanization of their states, at the expense of the Polish nationality, by their own example, as well as by attracting German settlers, particularly to the towns. This caused that Silesia, originally a Polish province, gradually came to be considered as a part of Germany, though the Polish nationality is by no means extinct in those parts, and there are still about 800,000 inhabitants who speak Polish, and of whom about 600,000 do not even understand German.

The princes between whom Poland was parcelled out by Boleslav III. subdivided their dominions amongst their sons, who imitated the example of their parents, so that the whole country became an aggregate of petty principalities, whose sovereigns were often warring amongst themselves, particularly about the possession of Cracow, to the ducal dignity of which a sovereignty more nominal than real was attached. The history of that period, which lasted nearly two centuries, is very embroiled, and presents, particularly to western Europe, no more interest than that of the English heptarchy. The most important event which took place during that period of the Polish history was the invasion of the Mongols in 1241, who, issuing from the deserts of central Asia, ravaged Prussia, Hungary, southern Poland, and penetrated as far as Liegnitz, in Silesia, where they defeated a numerous army of Poles and Germans. Nothing would perhaps have arrested their devastating course to the banks of the Rhine, and even farther west, if, recalled by some events in the east, they had not turned on a sudden, and retreated to the banks of the Volga, towards the Caspian Sea. I have related the consequences of this terrible invasion on Russia on p. 7.

The unity of the Polish state was restored in the beginning of the fourteenth century by Vladislav Lokietek, or the Cubit, thus surnamed on account of his short stature. This prince, endowed with all the great qualities of a ruler, succeeded, after a long struggle and many reverses of fortune, to reunite the several principalities into one whole, and was crowned king of Poland, at Cracow, in 1319. The state reconstructed by him was, however, much less extensive than that which had been divided amongst his sons by Boleslav III. in 1139, because one of its provinces, Silesia, was irrecoverably lost, its princes having acknowledged the suzerainty of Bohemia; and the duchy of Mazovia retained its own sovereign, though a vassal of the crown of Poland, whilst many valuable territories were seized and kept by the German knights.

The new king of Poland applied himself with great energy and success to the internal organization of his state, correcting many abuses, and introducing many improvements. He convened in 1331 an assembly of the states in the town of Chenciny, which, deliberating under the presidency of the king, debated on many important subjects, and

may be considered as the first Polish diet. The same year was marked by a signal victory which he obtained over the German knights (p. 8) at a place called Plovce, displaying on that occasion great valour, notwithstanding that he was already seventy years old. He died in 1333, leaving the crown to his only son, Casimir III., called the Great,—a name which a grateful posterity conferred upon him, not for any warlike deeds, but for the unexampled welfare which he bestowed upon his country by a wise and peaceful administration. In consequence of this policy, he gave up by a treaty to the German knights the greatest part of the Polish territory, which had been seized by them, in order to recover a portion of it, and he resigned in a similar manner to Bohemia his claims to the suzerainty over the Silesian principalities. He compensated, however, these external losses, which were much blamed by his subjects, by devoting himself with great vigour and unremitting diligence to the internal improvement of the country. He founded many new towns, improved the old ones, built or repaired many castles, convents, and churches, so that, according to the expression of a chronicle, he had found at his accession a Poland built of wood, and left it at his death constructed of stone. He considerably increased the population, particularly that of the towns, by attracting settlers from abroad, and rendered it rich by promoting industry and commerce. His finances were in such a flourishing condition that he was considered the richest monarch of his time; for he was able not only to live in a state of great magnificence, but even to lend large sums to foreign monarchs, whilst his wealth was produced not by the oppression of his subjects, but by their prosperity. Casimir proclaimed a code of laws in 1347, and was ever anxious to maintain justice, and to protect the weak against the powerful, but particularly to shield the peasantry from the growing oppression of the landowners, who gave him on that account the nickname of the "peasants' king." Having no male issue, he desired to secure the succession of his throne to his nephew, Louis of Anjou, eldest son of Charles Robert, king of Hungary, by Casimir's sister, Elizabeth, excluding the national dynasty represented by the princes of Silesia and Mazovia. This could not be effected without the approval of the states of Poland, which was obtained by the promise of Louis not to exact any taxes without their consent. Casimir died 1370, leaving the country not only in a state of great welfare, but considerably extended by the acquisition of the principality of Halich, which he occupied in 1340, as I have mentioned, p. 8.

Louis of Anjou, who had justly obtained from the Hungarians the surname of the Great, deserved not a similar appellation from the Poles, over whose country he reigned twelve years, 1370–82. Occupied with the affairs of Naples, his quarrel with Venice, and his conquests beyond the Danube, he entirely neglected the affairs of Poland, which he visited only twice during his reign. He was, however, very anxious to secure the crown of that country to one of his daughters, for he had no sons; and he attained his object by extending the liberties of the nobles, and reducing the permanent land-tax paid to the royal treasury to an almost nominal value, rendering thereby the crown dependent for its supplies on an assembly of states convoked for this purpose. In consequence of this arrangement, Hedvige, the youngest daughter of Louis, was proclaimed queen of Poland, and married Jag-

hellon, grand duke of Lithuania, who received baptism, and was elected king of Poland, as I have mentioned, p. 10.

This was undoubtedly the most important event of the history of Poland, because it converted that country into one of the most powerful states of that time by its union with Lithuania, or, properly speaking, with the Lithuano-Russian empire.

Jaghellon's long reign (1386–1433) is chiefly remarkable for the great victory over the German Knights by the united forces of Poland and Lithuania (1410) at the battle of Grünwald; the support given by the Poles to the Hussites of Bohemia, and the frequent intercourse between these heretics and the Roman Catholic monarch of Poland; but, above all, by the establishment of the Polish *habeas corpus*, the *Neminem captivabimus nisi jure victum*, established in 1430.

After the death of Jaghellon (1433) his son, Vladislav III., then a minor, was elected in his place, and in 1442 called to the throne of Hungary, which, being exposed to great danger from the Turks, sought to strengthen itself by such an intimate connection with the united empire of Poland and Lithuania. The youthful monarch (he was then twenty years old) marched against the Turks, who were defeated in several battles, and compelled to conclude a most advantageous peace to Hungary, which was confirmed by an oath of the king, sworn on the sacrament of the eucharist. This solemn treaty was, however, almost immediately broken at the instigation of the papal legate, Cardinal Cesarini, who represented that, being concluded without the consent of the pope, it was not binding, and absolved the king from the obligations of his oath.* This was done in the hope of relieving Constantinople from the pressure of the Turks, by taking advantage of the absence of the sultan, Amurath II., who was then in Asia. Vladislav marched with a comparatively small force to the relief of the imperial city; but the Genoese, instead of preventing the return of Amurath to Europe, as was promised by the papal legate, ferried his troops across the Hellespont for a large sum of money. The Christian expedition met the Turkish army in the vicinity of Varna. King Vladislav having incautiously rushed, with his Polish guards, into the midst of the enemy, was killed, and his army, disheartened by this event, was defeated with a great slaughter.

Casimir, who had governed Lithuania during Vladislav's liftetime, was elected after his brother's death. The united empire of Poland and Lithuania formed at his accession the most extensive state in Europe, stretching from Silesia and Hungary to the shores of the Black Sea, the steppes of the Tahtars, and Muscovy, where its borders advanced as far as Viazma (about 150 English miles from Moscow) and the river Oogra, near Kaluga, whilst the republic of Novgorod acknowledged its protection, and the principality of Tver was under its political influence. Casimir was naturally of a supine disposition, and the differences between Poland and Lithuania about some provinces,—his squabbles with the states of the former, who frequently cared more about the extension of their privileges than about the foreign interests of the state,—his wars with the German Order,—as well as the affairs

* When the news of this nefarious transaction arrived in Poland, the Polish bishops and clergy protested against it, and dispatched to the king, in Hungary, a message on this subject; but it arrived too late for producing the desired effect.

of Hungary and Bohemia, in which he took a part, made him neglect those of Lithuania. The most dangerous neighbour of that country was the tzar of Moscow, Ivan Vasilevich (1462–1505), a man of vigorous and cunning disposition, who, possessing a most despotic power, and consequently an unlimited command over the resources of his country, employed his whole reign to extend his dominions and to consolidate his authority. He threw off the suzerainty of the khans of Kipchak, to whom he paid tribute as late as 1476, conquered Novgorod and Tver, which were abandoned by their natural protector and ally, Casimir, and tore from Lithuania during that reign several important provinces. These losses were, however, more than compensated by the acquisition of Pomerelia, or Polish Prussia, a province which had been severed from Poland by the German Order, in the thirteenth century. The gentry and the towns of that province, oppressed by the rule of the order, formed a league for the defence of their rights. They appealed for redress to the emperor, who gave a verdict in favour of the knights, whilst the pope excommunicated the complainants for their disobedience to an ecclesiastical order. They offered, therefore, their allegiance to the king, Casimir, on condition of assisting them against their oppressors, and preserving all their rights and privileges. The acceptance of this offer produced a war against the order, which continued with varied success for thirteen years, and was terminated in 1466 by the treaty of Thorn. This treaty gave to Poland the western and largest part of the possessions of the order, and which formed a province of that country, under the name of Polish or Royal Prussia, till its first dismemberment, 1772. The remaining dominions of the order were left it, to be held as a fief of the crown of Poland, and its grand master received on that account a seat in the Polish senate. This was a most advantageous acquisition; for it gave to Poland a rich province, containing many towns, and particularly Dantzic, which had the most favourable influence upon her commerce and general welfare.

Casimir, when still a minor, was elected by the Hussite party king of Bohemia, but could not maintain his claims against his rival Albert of Austria. He supported afterwards George Podiebradski, the Hussite king of that country, after whose death his son, Vladislav, was elected to the throne of Bohemia (1471), and in 1490 to that of Hungary. The establishment of the Jaghellonian dynasty on these two thrones did not, however, produce any real advantage to Poland; and it would have been much more conducive to the true interests of that country, and even to those of all Europe, if Casimir, instead of promoting the interests of his family in the west, had not allowed the nascent power of Moscow to acquire such a rapid and powerful development as it did during his reign, and which he could have done by vigorously supporting, against the aggression of Moscow, the republic of Novgorod and the principality of Tver. Unfortunately he did not act in this manner; and even suffered, as I have said above, several of his own provinces to be wrested from him by that ambitious neighbour.

The reign of Casimir had a considerable influence on the internal affairs of the country. His inconsiderate liberality, and the expenses of his wars with the German Order, as well as with Hungary, against whose celebrated monarch, Matthias Corvinus, he supported Bohemia,

obliged him to have continual recourse for supplies to the nobles, or equestrian order, whom he could call out into the field, but not subject to the payment of a tax without their consent. The troops formed by those nobles, though valiant on the battle-field, and excellent for a defensive war, were quite ineffective for a long and distant campaign, which required a regularly paid army. Money was, therefore, indispensable, and it could not be obtained from the nobles without extending their privileges at the expense of the royal authority. It was this circumstance which for the first time introduced regular diets into Poland, because, when it was necessary to pay the arrears due to the army employed in the Prussian war, the diet of Piotrkow enacted that each district should send two delegates in order to deliberate on this affair; and it was on this occasion that those delegates, called *nuncii terrestres*, began to deliberate separately from the senate. Thus the legislative body of Poland was definitively organised by its division into two chambers.

Casimir died in 1492, and was succeeded by his son John Albert, whose reign is marked by the first war which Poland had with the Turks, and which was produced by the affairs of Moldavia, whose prince acknowledged the suzerainty of the Polish monarchs since 1393. John Albert was succeeded (1500) by his brother Alexander, whose short reign was very unfortunate, chiefly on account of his being disabled by his state of health from attending to the affairs of the state. Lithuania was ravaged by the Tahtars of Crimea, and the tzar of Muscovy, Ivan Vasilevich, tore several districts from it, notwithstanding that Alexander was married to his daughter Helena.

Alexander died in 1506, and it is very remarkable that the tzar of Muscovy, who had been emancipated from the vassalage of the Tahtars only about a quarter of a century before, began even at that time to form designs on Poland; because, as soon as the news of Alexander's death had reached Moscow, the tzar Vasili, or Basilius, brother of that monarch's widow, wrote to his sister, requesting her that she should induce the states of Poland and Lithuania to elect him their king, and promising to maintain the rights and liberties of those countries. This message arrived, however, only after the election of Alexander's brother, Sigismund, and consequently was never made public.*

Sigismund I. was a prince of great talents and a noble character, qualities which he had ample opportunities of displaying at his accession to the crown, having found the country in a very difficult position. The south-eastern provinces were laid waste by the continual inroads of the Tahtars; and Lithuania, threatened by Muscovy, was moreover distracted by the factions of a powerful and turbulent aristocracy, some of whom were induced, by the intrigues of the tzar, to rebel against their lawful sovereign. Sigismund defeated the Muscovites, and concluded peace, which was, however, soon broken by the tzar, who surprised and captured the town of Smolensko. The Poles obtained a great victory over the Muscovites at Orsha, on the Dnieper, 1514, but Smolensko was not recaptured, and a truce was concluded for six years. It was prolonged several times, broken in 1534, but restored again in 1537, and not interrupted till 1562, an event of which I shall speak in its proper place.

* A copy of this letter was found in the archives of Moscow.

The danger with which Moscow began already to threaten Poland at that time lay chiefly in the difference of the government of these two countries. Muscovy was still in a state of complete barbarism; its armies, though numerous, were devoid of military discipline; its generals and all the officers, with the exception of some few foreigners, were ignorant of the art of war, and had no idea of honour and other chivalric sentiments which characterised the armies of the west. But the tzar having an absolute authority over the lives and property of his subjects, had an unlimited command over the resources of his country, and thus could easily raise numerous armies, supporting them by swarms of Tahtar cavalry, of whom he always had a great number in his service. Poland enjoyed all the advantages of a western civilization; its nobles were brave and skilled in the art of war, acquired by a military training, and frequently by foreign service, which formed then a part of a Polish noble's education. But the king could not either levy taxes or make war without the consent of the diet; his treasury was therefore ill provided, and the army never numerous. From this cause, though the Poles frequently obtained in the field most brilliant advantages over the Muscovites, they rarely produced any important results; and, as an instance of this, I may quote the splendid victory of Orsha, which did not lead to the recapture of Smolensko.

It is curious to observe that, notwithstanding the barbarity and ignorance in which Muscovy was then plunged, its government began already at that time to develop the cunning diplomacy for which it has now become proverbial, and that the sovereigns of Germany were the first to seek and to draw out the latent powers of Muscovy, in order to support by their assistance their political schemes; but they little dreamed that the barbarous state which, for their selfish purposes, they were thus awakening to a sense of its own strength, would end by becoming their master. The diplomatic relations between Germany and Russia, developed by the latter with so much energy and consistency, have indeed acquired at this moment such a degree of importance, that the further development of the present war, and its final issue, will be chiefly influenced by them. A short account of their origin will be therefore, I think, not uninteresting to my readers.

I have related above, p. 14, that the Jaghellonian dynasty was established in Bohemia and Hungary by the successive election of Vladislav, son of king Casimir, and eldest brother of Sigismund, to the thrones of those countries. This was a sore point to the house of Austria, which sought to get possession of the two above-mentioned crowns. The emperor, Frederic III., wishing to prevent a Jaghellonian prince from being elected to the throne of Hungary after the death of Matthias Corvinus, conceived the idea of promoting this object by forming an alliance against Poland with Muscovy. He began his negotiations by sending to the grand duke, Ivan Vasilevich, 1488, an agent called Nicholas von Poppel,* who was commissioned to ask the hand of a

* This Nicholas Poppel, a German knight, had visited Moscow two years before as a private traveller, but furnished with a letter from the emperor. Moscow had attracted the universal attention of western Europe by the marriage of its grand duke with Sophia Paleologos, niece of the last emperor of Constantinople, and daughter of his brother Thomas, despot of Morea, who, expelled from his dominions by the Turks, fled to Rome. This marriage was arranged by the celebrated Greek scholar, Cardinal Bessarion, with the assistance of the pope, Paul II., who expected to obtain,

daughter of Ivan for the emperor's nephew, the margrave of Baden; to obtain that the possessions of the German Order in Livonia should not be molested by their Russian neighbours; and, finally, to propose to Ivan the grant of a royal title. The tzar answered that he would give his daughter to the emperor's son, Maximilian, but not to any inferior person, and despatched with Poppel, as his envoy to the emperor, a Greek, called Trachaniotes, who had entered, with several of his countrymen, the service of the tzar on his marriage with the Byzantine princess, Sophia Paleologos. Trachaniotes was commissioned to establish a regular intercourse with the imperial court, and to enlist in Germany skilful artizans of every description. The Muscovite envoy had an audience, in 1490, at Frankfort, from Maximilian I., then king of the Romans, who sent with him to Moscow an envoy, called George Delator, with the commission of concluding with the grand duke a treaty for preventing a son of king Casimir of Poland from being elected king of Hungary after the death of Matthias Corvinus. Such a treaty was effectively signed at Moscow, on the 16th August 1490, by which the contracting parties bound themselves to mutual assistance in case of a war. A copy of this treaty, the first that was concluded between Austria and Russia, written on parchment, with a golden seal of the tzar, was taken to Germany by Delator, who was accompanied by Trachaniotes and a native Russian agent. They returned to Moscow in 1491, with the treaty signed by Maximilian. Soon afterwards, the same monarch sent Delator again to Moscow, in order to induce the tzar to take under his protection the German Order in Prussia and Livonia, and to arrange his differences with Sweden. Delator seems not to have obtained the object of his mission; but the tzar sent again to Germany Trachaniotes, and a native Russian agent,* with instructions to look for a bride amongst the sovereign houses of that country for his eldest son, Vasili, and to enlist a number of people skilful in various professions and trades.

Maximilian sent again, in 1505, an envoy, called Hartinger, to Moscow, with the same object as before, but the tzar had just concluded a truce with Lithuania, and the embassy had no result; but in 1508 the tzar Vasili sent an agent to the above-mentioned emperor, reminding him of the alliance concluded in 1490, and desiring him to attack Poland. It was, however, only in 1514 that Maximilian sent an ambassador to Moscow, who concluded a treaty of alliance which was to obtain for Moscow Kioff and some other towns belonging to Poland, and for the emperor Polish Prussia, acquired by Casimir IV. in 1466. This treaty† was not, however, executed, because the emperor soon found that his dynasty could obtain much greater advan-

by this combination, the adoption of the union of Florence by the church of Russia, and an efficient ally against the Turks. The tzar of Muscovy adopted on this occasion, for his arms, the Byzantine double eagle; but the Greek princess, instead of inducing her husband to subscribe the Florentine union with Rome, abjured it herself after her arrival at Moscow.

* The reports of these envoys about the countries which they visited are very remarkable, on account of the great care with which they describe every particular relating to them.

† In the German translation of this treaty, made at Moscow, the title of *kaiser* was employed for that of tzar, and it was afterwards repeated by many writers who wrote about Moscow. It is upon this accidental circumstance that Peter the Great laid his claim to the imperial title, as having been acknowledged by the emperor Maximilian I. to his predecessor, the tzar Vasili.

tages by an intermarriage with the Jaghellonians than by a war against them, and he effected his object under the following circumstances:—

Vladislav Jaghellon, king of Bohemia and Hungary, had by his second wife, a French princess, two children, a son named Louis, who, being prematurely born, was of a very weak constitution, and a daughter called Anne. Maximilian proposed to Vladislav, first, that his son Louis should be betrothed to his grand-daughter Maria, princess of Spain,* and to be considered as his third grandson, and heir of his states, in case of her two brothers. Charles and Ferdinand, dying childless. Second, that Vladislav's daughter Anne should be betrothed to Maximilian's second grandson Ferdinand, who was to inherit the thrones of Hungary and Bohemia in case of Louis dying without issue. This arrangement was concluded at a meeting of the emperor Maximilian with the two brothers, Vladislav of Bohemia, and Sigismund of Poland, which took place at Vienna in July 1515. This meeting may be considered, on account of its consequences, one of the most important events of modern history, because it established the greatness of the Hapsburg dynasty, which had recently acquired the throne of Spain by the marriage of Maximilian's son, Philip, with the heiress of Ferdinand and Isabella, by giving it the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary through a similar combination. It was, therefore, justly said, *Bella gerunt alii, tu felix Austria nube.*†

Another German prince, the founder of the Prussian state, was even more active in securing the support of Muscovy for promoting his schemes of aggrandisement. This was Albert of Brandenburg, grand master of the German Order of Prussia, a vassal of Poland, who, though a nephew of King Sigismund, thought that there was a good opportunity of emancipating himself from the suzerainty of Poland, and to wrest from that country at least a part of the possessions of the order lost by the treaty of 1466 (p. 14.) He contracted an alliance with the tzar of Muscovy, who paid him a considerable subsidy, and attacked Prussian Poland, whilst the Muscovites were ravaging the border provinces of Lithuania. He proposed to the Muscovites a plan for uniting their forces in order to conquer some Polish provinces, but his allies were too much intent on plunder to care about any strategic movements. Attacked by a Polish force in his own dominions, the grand master was soon obliged to sue for peace to his uncle and liege lord, the king of Poland, in 1520.

The same grand master embraced, in 1524, the Reformation of Luther, and his example was followed by the whole population of Prussia. Sigismund sanctioned this revolution by assuring to Albert the hereditary possession of the states of the order as a vassal of Poland, and the first seat in its senate, on condition of furnishing a contingent of troops in case of war. This affair was the first instance of *secularization*, or the conversion of an ecclesiastical institution into a temporal one, and of which so many examples occurred afterwards in Germany, as well as the first diplomatic recognition of Protestantism as an established religion. The duchy of Prussia passed afterwards by succession

* She was the daughter of Maximilian's son, Philip I., king of Spain, and of Jane, daughter of Ferdinand of Arragon and Isabella of Castile. The parties being minors, their marriage took place several years afterwards.

† These two crowns devolved in 1526 on Ferdinand of Austria.

to the electoral line of Brandenburg, and became known under the name of Electoral Prussia, in order to distinguish it from Royal or Polish Prussia. It remained under the suzerainty of Poland till 1657, when it was resigned by the treaty of Wehlau, concluded with Frederic William, surnamed the Great Elector, and in 1701 it was erected into a kingdom by the Emperor Leopold I.

Sigismund was most anxious to maintain peace, and he resisted all the attempts which had been made by the pope, the emperor, and the Venetians, to involve him in a war with Turkey.

He was succeeded in 1548 by his son, Sigismund Augustus, or the Second, elected during his father's lifetime. The most important feature of his reign was undoubtedly the religious movement, *i. e.*, the Reformation of the sixteenth century. It spread with great rapidity over Poland; but whilst in many countries of Western Europe it caused torrents of blood to be shed, on the field of battle or on the scaffold, the questions produced by it during that period in Poland were settled in the same manner as has been done in England with those that were excited over all Europe by the political movement of 1789,—namely, by the deliberation of legislative bodies, and not by the sword of the soldier or the axe of the executioner. The most remarkable instance of it was the enactment of the diet of 1552, which virtually established religious liberty in Poland, by declaring that a sentence of excommunication, or any ecclesiastical censure, had no civil effect whatever, but without restricting in any way the jurisdiction of the church in matters of a purely ecclesiastical nature, so that the bishops could decide whether a doctrine was orthodox or heretical, but had no power to prosecute heretics. It placed, in fact, the ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the very same position in which it is now in Great Britain and the United States of America, where the Roman Catholic Church, or any other religious community, may excommunicate the members disobedient to its laws, but without subjecting them on this account to any civil consequences. This state of things is now considered as quite simple and natural, but its establishment in the middle of the sixteenth century, when the Roman Catholic Church was either persecuting or itself persecuted, proves that sound notions of real liberty were then farther advanced in Poland than perhaps in any other country. As an expression of public feeling on the subject of religion during that period in Poland, we may take the following preamble of the privilege granted by Sigismund Augustus for the erection of a Protestant church at Cracow in May 1572:—"Considering the great calamities to which the largest and most flourishing Christian countries have recently been exposed, because their kings and princes have tried to suppress the different religious opinions which have arisen in our own time, we have resolved to prevent those dangers common to the whole of Christendom, but particularly this country, on account of its vicinity to the barbarians, the common enemies of all the Christians, from disturbing the peace and security of our realms, and from causing such excitement of the minds of the people as would produce a civil war, particularly as we have become convinced, by the example of other countries in which so much Christian blood has been shed, that such severities are not only useless but even most injurious," &c.

I have dwelt on these particulars, because they prove the high degree

of intellectual and political development which our country had attained in the sixteenth century,—a subject of which no Pole, to whatever religious creed he may belong, can think without a feeling of pride and gratification; and, indeed, a nation which had once enjoyed such a state of civilization as that mentioned above, has given a sufficient pledge that, under circumstances as favourable to its development as those of the Jaghellonian period, it might not unworthily occupy a position in the community of the European states.

Poland reached, indeed, under the reign of Sigismund Augustus, a high degree of intellectual and material development. The religious liberty which that country enjoyed in a greater degree at that time than any other, allowed a full scope to a public discussion of theological subjects, which greatly stimulated the study of the learned languages amongst all the contending parties, and thus naturally gave a great impulse to all the branches of mental cultivation. The Jaghellonian period is considered the Augustan era of our national literature. The same religious liberty produced a most salutary effect on the material welfare of the country, by attracting a great number of industrious foreigners from different parts of Europe, who, settling in various Polish cities, gave a great impulse to the commerce and industry of the country. This fact is sufficiently established by the existence of French and Italian Protestant congregations at Cracow, Posen, Vilna, &c. The towns enjoyed great privileges, and their liberties were not yet restrained by those of the nobles. The country, tranquil in its interior, was respected abroad; and the best proof of its advancing welfare was the rapid increase of the value of landed property, which was a subject of surprise to several contemporary writers. In short, the Polish state may be said to have reached under Sigismund Augustus the height of its prosperity, which, after the brilliant but brief reign of Stephen Batory, began to decline, under a series of adverse circumstances, interrupted only by a few short periods of more favourable times.

The most important measure of that reign was the legislative union of Poland with Lithuania. The two countries stood towards each other, since the accession of the Jaghellonian dynasty to the Polish throne, in about the same position as England and Scotland from the accession of James I. to the union between the two countries under Queen Anne. The legislative union between Poland and Lithuania was meditated for a considerable time; but it met with great difficulties, particularly as the monarchical authority in the latter was hereditary, and much less limited than in the former, where it was elective, and greatly circumscribed by the privileges of the nobles, or the equestrian order. These difficulties were removed by Sigismund Augustus' resignation of his hereditary rights to the throne of Lithuania, which became as elective as that of Poland. The rights and liberties enjoyed by the states of Poland were extended to those of Lithuania, and the two countries deliberated from that time in one legislative assembly, whilst each of them retained its separate courts, administration, army, tribunals, and laws.

As regards the external affairs of Poland during the reign of Sigismund Augustus, the most important was the acquisition of Livonia, and the war with Muscovy produced by that circumstance.

I have mentioned that Livonia was conquered in the beginning of

the thirteenth century by the German Knights Swordbearers, and that they united with their countrymen, the Knights Hospitallers of Prussia. The grand master of the Livonian order acknowledged the supremacy of that of Prussia; but since the treaty of Thorn in 1466, when the Prussian order was deprived of the greatest part of its possessions, and reduced to the condition of a vassal state, the Livonian knights became completely independent of the grand-master of Prussia. The Livonian order enjoyed for some time a considerable degree of prosperity, particularly under the administration of its grand-master, Walter Von Plettenberg (1493 to 1535), the greatest of all its chiefs, and who, having defeated the forces of Moscow in several battles, concluded with that power, in 1502, a truce for fifty years. Peace was thus preserved for half a century, during which time the Reformation of Luther gradually spread in Livonia, and was finally embraced by the grand-masters of the order, with the whole country. When the expiration of the above-mentioned truce with Moscow was approaching, the Livonians sought to obtain its prolongation from Ivan Vasilevich the Tyrant, who refused his consent to it, except on condition that a certain tribute should be paid to him by the district of Dorpat. This affair was arranged for some time; but in 1558 the above-mentioned tzar, who was anxious to extend his dominions to the shores of the Baltic by the conquest of Livonia, invaded that country, took and destroyed several towns, committing everywhere the greatest atrocities. The Livonians tried in vain to resist the overwhelming forces of Muscovy, and were finally obliged, in order to escape the barbarous dominion of the invaders, to submit to the protection of Poland, by the treaty of Vilna, 28th November 1561. By the provisions of this treaty, Livonia became a province of Poland, retaining all its laws, privileges, and the free exercise of the Lutheran religion; whilst the last grand-master of the order, Gothard Ketler, received the provinces of Courland and Semigallia, which had formed part of the order's possessions, as a hereditary fief of the crown of Poland. This arrangement naturally led to a war with Moscow, with whom peace had not been interrupted since 1532. A Polish force expelled the Muscovites from a part of Livonia; but nothing of importance was undertaken on either side, because the tzar was seeking to gain time, as his southern provinces were menaced by the Tahtars, and as he was at war with Sweden. He concluded, however, a truce with the last named power, and having obtained security on the southern borders, he invaded, on a sudden, in January 1563, the frontiers of Lithuania, and besieged the town of Polotzk with an immense army.* The town was scarcely fortified and ill-garrisoned; and the burghers, continually assured by the agents of the tzar, that, being the father of all the followers of the Eastern Church, he would treat them with great favour, pressed the commander to capitulate, in order to save the city from complete destruction. Polotzk was therefore surrendered by a capitulation, which stipulated security of person and property to all the inhabitants. It was, however, immediately violated, by the tzar's taking the money, the gold,

* According to Karamsin, vol. ix. chap. 1, this army, commanded by the tzar himself, was composed of 280,000 soldiers (89,000 were employed for the baggage), and 200 cannons,—a remarkable proof of the force which a despotic power could command even in a country so little advanced as Muscovy then was.

and silver, and costly apparel of the wealthy nobles and merchants, sending the governor, the bishop, and many principal inhabitants to Moscow, and ordering the Roman Catholic churches to be destroyed. All the Jews who were found in the town were baptized, and those who resisted this forced conversion were drowned in the river. The foreign mercenaries, of whom there were about five hundred in the place, were, on the contrary, treated with great favour, and dismissed with rich presents, for it was the policy of that monarch to secure friends amongst the nations of Western Europe, in order to attract to his service from that quarter individuals skilful in various professions and trades, but particularly in those which were connected with the art of war. The Muscovites were soon afterwards defeated by the Poles, who several times obtained great advantages over their enemy; but the same reason which prevented the Poles, under the preceding reign, from reaping any lasting advantages from their victories over the Muscovites (p. 16) produced now a similar effect. The hostilities between the belligerent powers were suspended by a truce, concluded in 1569, for three years, leaving Polotzk in the hands of Muscovy.

It is well known that a direct commerce was established between England and Muscovy, under the reign of Ivan Vasilevich the Terrible, the same whose war with Poland I have just described. This commerce was carried on with Archangel, but it seems that several English traders imported, by the Baltic Sea and Narva, various kinds of merchandise to Moscow, but particularly arms and munitions of war. The same thing was done from Germany by the Hanse Towns, who, instead of assisting their countrymen of Livonia against Moscow, were rather glad of their misfortunes, on account of the commercial jealousies which divided them,* and who furnished the Muscovites with arms, munitions, and even with skilful officers. In order to prevent the enemy from obtaining such important assistance, Sigismund Augustus caused a flotilla of cruisers to be organised at Dantzic, which blockaded the coasts of Livonia occupied by the Muscovites. This naturally led to different collisions, and produced a correspondence between Sigismund Augustus and Queen Elizabeth of England, who complained of the injuries to which her subjects were exposed on such occasions. We have on this subject an interesting letter addressed by the former monarch to the latter, on the 15th May 1567, exposing the circumstances of the case, and which contains, amongst other things, the following remarkable expressions:—"Your Majesty may therefore see that we cannot allow the trade with Moscow, not only on account of our own interests, but also for the sake of *religion and the whole Christian community*, because the enemy is thus furnished, as we have said above, with munitions of war, and, what is more, with arms hitherto unknown to those barbarians. But what we consider more dangerous than all, he is provided in the same way with skilful engineers, because if nothing else were imported, these engineers will, if a free passage is left to them, easily manufacture and construct in that barbarous country all that is required for the use of war, and what has hitherto been unknown in these parts.

* The Hanse Towns endeavoured to prevent the Livonians from having a direct commerce with England, the Netherlands, and other western countries, whilst the Livonians did every thing in their power to prevent the Hanse Towns and the western countries from having a similar trade with Muscovy.

It is, therefore, much to be feared that these things may be accomplished, to the great injury of the whole of Christendom, much sooner than many think." *

The same considerations were urged upon the senate of the town of Lubeck by the Polish ambassador, Solikowski,† in a speech which he addressed to that body, at a public audience, on the 8th January 1568, the following extract from which may have some interest at this moment:—"The danger, of which nobody even thought before the establishment of this trade, seems now approaching to your very gates. This cruel and ambitious enemy, whom your traders support, instruct, and encourage to undertake projects more and more alarming, will not only impose his laws upon your commerce, and thus reduce the ancient liberty of the seas to a state of servitude, but by admitting him thus into the heart of your republic, you will be soon obliged to combat him under the very walls of your cities, for the defence of your own lives, families, and property; and may God preserve you from ever submitting to his yoke! . . . . . Moreover, it was not without reason that formerly many German provinces had considered the calamities which Poland suffered from these barbarians as a misfortune to themselves. If any one should doubt that these dangers are common to all of us, let him remember the disasters which were once inflicted by the Tahtars upon a great part of the Christian world. Now it is greatly to be feared that your republics shall be one day exposed to a similar danger on the part of the Muscovites, whose insatiable avidity of conquest admits of no limits." ‡

Three centuries have elapsed since these warnings were uttered, and it is only now that people begin to perceive the truth of these predictions, which were made on many occasions and in many quarters, but always in vain, because, unfortunately, the most evident proofs of a distant danger will rarely outweigh the selfish motives of an immediate advantage. And, indeed, it was necessary, almost a miraculous interposition of Providence, to open the eyes of the wilfully blind by one of those commotions which are considered by the multitude as a dire calamity, but are in fact a merciful dispensation, sent down by the Almighty to save the cause of humanity and civilization. Let us, therefore, hope that, unless the monarchs and nations of Europe are stricken with judicial blindness, the danger, which, though menacing all alike, has been allowed to grow for these last three centuries, will be now removed in an effectual and permanent manner.

The death of Sigismund Augustus (1572) may be considered as opening a new period in the history of Poland, because the election of a monarch, which had existed only in theory so long as the Jaghellonian dynasty continued without interruption, was fairly put to the test by its extinction. Two circumstances rendered the state of Poland very critical on that occasion, viz., 1*st*, There was no established form in which the election of a king was to be conducted; and, 2*d*, The religious parties into which the country was then divided rendered the

* MSS. of the Cottonian Library, in the British Museum. Nero, b. ii., p. 3, published in the *Recueil des documens relatifs a la Russie*, &c. 3*me Livraison*. Paris; chez Pagnerre, 1854, p. 584.

† A prelate known for his learning, and author of an historical work

‡ *Recueil des Pieces*, &c., 3*me Livraison*, p. 594.

choice of a new monarch very difficult; for it was natural that each of those parties should wish to elect a candidate belonging to their own persuasion. These circumstances, however, proved in a splendid manner the high degree of political and intellectual development which Poland enjoyed at that time, as I have described above (p. 20), because, immediately after the demise of the monarch, several assemblies of the principal inhabitants of Poland provided in an effective manner for the preservation of the public peace and security during the *interregnum;* and the diet of convocation,—*i. e.*, which assembled before the election of the king, in order to arrange the necessary preparations for this important transaction,—enacted, in January 1573, a law establishing a perfect equality of rights to all the Christian confessions in Poland. These wise measures produced the desired effect; and an intelligent foreign writer, who visited Poland on that occasion, was greatly astonished that so many causes of dissension did not produce the slightest bloodshed.*

The choice fell on Henry of Valois (brother of Charles IX. of France), who was obliged to agree to the constitutional guarantees of the civil and religious liberties of Poland; and what is very remarkable, the Poles exacted on that occasion from the government of France conditions favourable to the Protestants of that country, who were at that time severely persecuted, after the perpetration of the massacre of St Bartholomew. By these conditions, which the French ambassadors, Montluc and Lansac, signed at Plock, on the 4th May 1573, the king of France was to grant a complete amnesty to the Protestants of that country, as well as perfect liberty of religious worship. All those who wished to leave France were at liberty to sell their properties, or to receive their incomes, provided they did not retire into the dominions of the enemies of France; whilst those who had emigrated could

* "There were already at Warsaw many armed gentlemen and many lords, accompanied by a great number of their friends or vassals, who had arrived from all parts of the kingdom. The plain where they had pitched their tents, and where the diet was to take place, had all the appearance of a camp. They were seen walking about with long swords at their sides, and sometimes they marched in troops, armed with pikes, muskets, arrows, and javelins. Some of them, besides the armed men whom they brought for their guard, had even cannons, and were as if entrenched in their quarters. One might have said that they were going to a battle, and not to a diet,—that it was an array of war, and not a council of state,—and that they were assembled to conquer a foreign kingdom, and not to dispose of their own. At least, it was possible to suppose, on seeing them, that this affair would be decided rather by force and by arms than by deliberation and votes.

"But what appeared to me most extraordinary was, that among so many companies of armed men, and with such impunity, in a time when neither laws nor magistrates were acknowledged, neither a single murder was committed nor a sword drawn; and that these great differences, when it mattered to give or to refuse a kingdom, produced nothing but a few words; so much is this nation averse to spill its blood in civil contests."—*Vie de Commendoni, par Gratiani*, &c., liv. iv. chap. 10.

Let us compare this account of an eye-witness with what Mr Cobden says on the same subject:—"The mode of electing their kings after the promulgation of the new constitution was characteristic of the nation. About 150,000 to 200,000 nobles, being the electors, assembled in a large plain. Those who possessed horses and arms were mounted in battle array in the front, whilst such as were poor, and consequently came on foot, and without arms, placed themselves, with scythes or clubs in their hands, in the rear ranks. Our readers will readily believe that such an assembly as this, composed of warriors, accustomed to violence, and with their arms at hand, would form a dangerous deliberative body; and unless actuated by all the loftier feelings of patriotism and virtue, it would degenerate into two armies of sanguinary combatants."—*Russia, by a Manchester Manufacturer*, p. 16 The evidence of Gratiani proves that those feelings were not wanting amongst the Poles.

return to their homes. All Protestants who had been obliged to flee or condemned to exile, were to be restored to their properties, dignities, &c., and the children of those who had been murdered were to receive an indemnity. The king was to assign towns where the Protestants might openly exercise their religion.*

This is, I think, a glorious episode of our history, and of which we Poles may be more proud than of the many triumphs obtained on the field of battle by our nation; because I believe that there are not many instances to be found in the annals of the world of one nation having shown such a desire to make another and distant nation participate in the advantages which it enjoyed itself, as the Poles did on that occasion towards the French Protestants. Nor were their stipulations without effect on the affairs of these Protestants; as the French ambassador, Montluc, strongly recommended his court to grant them those liberties which he had promised for them to the Poles. The siege of Sancerre was therefore discontinued, and the Protestants, who had been reduced to the last extremity in defending that place, were thus saved from apparently inevitable destruction.† Rochelle was also relieved from an obstinate siege by the same cause, and several other concessions were made to the Protestants.

The Polish embassy, which arrived at Paris in order to announce to the French prince his election to their throne, gave an additional proof of that high degree of intellectual development of their country, to which I alluded on p. 24.‡ Henry repaired to Poland; and already at his coronation he had an opportunity of learning that the constitution which he had accepted was not to be a dead letter, because, when he was hesitating to pronounce the oath confirmatory of the religious liberties of his new subjects, Firley, the grand marshal of Poland, taking hold of the crown, declared that if he did not swear he would not reign,—*Si non jurabis, non regnabis.* Henry took the required oath; but after a reign of a few months he secretly retired from the country, in order to take possession of the throne of France, as Henry III., after the death of his brother, Charles IX.

Let us now cast a glance at the state of Muscovy at the time when Poland enjoyed such a high degree of political and intellectual development. I have described above, p. 8, the origin of the Muscovite state, and related, p. 14, its extension by wresting some provinces from Lithuania. The real founder of that state, in its internal and external relations, was undoubtedly Ivan Vasilevich II., or the Tyrant (1533–1584), whose character presented a strange mixture of uncommon talents and the most savage ferocity. He extended its frontiers by

* *Vide* Capefigue, Thuanus, Popeliniere.

† The contemporary French historian, Popeliniere, observes, in reference to that circumstance, that the inhabitants of Sancerre, already half dead, were delivered by such a distant people (the Poles) more than by their neighbours.—(Vol. iii. fol. 192, p. 2.) *Vide* also Felice *Histoire des Protestans de France*, p. 222.

‡ The contemporary Thuanus says of the members of the numerous Polish embassy: "There was not a single one amongst them who did not speak Latin, many of them knew the German and the Italian languages, and some of them spoke our own tongue with such purity that they might be taken for men educated on the banks of the Seine and the Loire, rather than for inhabitants of a country watered by the Vistula and the Dnieper. They have quite shamed our courtiers, who are not only ignorant themselves, but are moreover declared enemies of every thing called knowledge. They never could answer any question addressed to them by these foreigners otherwise than by a sign, or by blushing with confusion."—*Thuanus*, lib. lvi.

the conquest of Cazan, Astrakhan, and Siberia; whilst, by destroying the hitherto powerful aristocracy of Moscow, he crushed every opposition to the authority of the tzars. And it was not only politically that he strengthened the despotic power of the Russian monarchs, but he may be said to have done it also in a moral sense, by moulding the national character of his subjects into a form well adapted to the system of the government under which they have been doomed to live.*

I have described on p. 21 his invasion of Livonia, and the wars with Poland produced by that event. After the death of Sigismund Augustus he tried to persuade the Poles to elect him for their monarch, promising not only to maintain, but even to increase their national liberties; but his atrocious character allowed him no chance of succeeding in this object. After the flight of Henry of Valois in 1574, the Poles elected, in 1575, Stephen Batory, who, by his sole merit, had risen from the rank of a simple Hungarian gentleman to the dignity of sovereign prince of Transylvania, and was the greatest monarch that Poland has ever possessed. The tzar, Ivan Vasilevich, invaded Livonia, committing the greatest atrocities in that province, where he had sought for some time to establish his dominion by the instrumentality of a German prince.† King Stephen, therefore, attacked Muscovy, and captured in 1579 Polotzk, and several other important places.

The tzar sued for peace, but would not consent to the conditions of Stephen, who insisted on the cession of the whole of Livonia, Polotzk, and several districts which had been torn by Muscovy from Lithuania. The approaching winter having, however, suspended the continuation

* Karamsin expresses the following judgment of the influence which the reign of Ivan Vasilevich produced upon the Russians:—"His destructive hand reached even the coming generations, because the crowd of spies and delators formed by him, left, when they disappeared, like a swarm of venomous insects, their evil seeds in the nation; and if the yoke of the Mongols had degraded the national character of the Russians, the reign of Ivan Vasilevich undoubtedly did not contribute to raise it."—*History of Russia*, vol. ix. chap. 7.

† I have related on p. 16, the attempts which had been made by the sovereigns of Germany to draw Muscovy into their political schemes; and it is curious to see already, in the sixteenth century, a German prince converted into a tool of that Russian policy which has been systematically pursued since Peter the Great. The tzar, Ivan Vasilevich, perceiving the horror against his rule which his atrocities had created in Livonia, sought to obtain by policy what he despaired to accomplish by force. He proposed to the grand-master, Wilhelm von Furstenberg, who was a prisoner in Moscow, to restore him to his dignity, on condition that he should acknowledge in the name of all the Livonians, the suzerainty of the tzar. The captive grand-master having refused this proposition, two Livonian prisoners, Taube and Kruse, who had acquired great favour with the tzar, undertook to induce either the duke of Courland, Gothard Kettler, or Magnus, prince of Holstein, brother of Frederick II., king of Denmark, to accept a similar proposition. They succeeded in this object with the last named prince, a weak-minded youth, who had recently obtained some districts in Livonia, ceded to his brother by the bishop of Oesel. In consequence of this arrangement, the tzar proclaimed Magnus king of Livonia, and married him to a relative of his own in 1570. A great number of Livonian prisoners were on that occasion restored to liberty; but Magnus could not find any adherents in his kingdom, and was unable to take Reval, which he besieged with the troops of the tzar for several weeks. The originators of this scheme, Taube and Kruse, who had received from the tzar considerable estates and large sums of money, afraid of incurring, by the bad success of their plan, the tzar's displeasure, which was certain death, fled to Poland. Magnus himself continued for several years to drag out a most miserable existence under the protection of the tzar, who kept him, with his youthful bride, in a state of great want, and treated him so harshly as once to strike him on the face, when Magnus ventured to intercede for the inhabitants of the Livonian city, Asherort, the male portion of whom were murdered by the orders of his patron, whilst the women were delivered to the savage lust of the Tahtar troops. Finally, he found, in 1578, an opportunity of escaping, with his wife, into the Polish dominions.

of the campaign, the king returned to Poland, in order to obtain from a diet the supplies necessary for the continuation of the war.

The history of all free nations unfortunately shows, that almost in every one of their public assemblies individuals have been found who, animated by envy, personal interest, or other equally base motives, tried to oppose the most salutary measures for the general welfare of their country. It was therefore no wonder that the same thing occurred in Poland,—particularly considering that the authority of an elective monarch was watched with much more jealousy than that of a hereditary sovereign,—and natural enough that the above-mentioned diet, which met in 1580, witnessed the utterance of sentiments very much akin to those which the peace party has recently manifested in the British senate. These unpatriotic manifestations are described by a contemporary writer in the following manner:—

"As every Polish noble has the right of voting at the election of a king, several of them imagined that the king owed to them personally his dignity and power; and as such liberty exists in this country that every one may say what he thinks, they sought to throw suspicion on every thing, and to misrepresent the glorious deeds of the monarch by an invidious interpretation of his motives. They found fault that the king, after having conquered Polotzk, demanded new supplies from the diet, because, they observed, of what use will it be if even the whole of Russia were conquered, and how would it be possible to govern such extensive territories? and that it was much more important to remedy the interior defects of the country than to continue the war."

Fortunately for Poland, the opposition of her Gladstones, Cobdens, Brights, and similar pro-Russian advocates, was overcome by the patriotic efforts of Zamoyski,* whose observations on Russia, contained in the speech which he delivered on that occasion, are, after a lapse of nearly three centuries, very applicable to the present war between that country and the Western powers.†

* John Zamoyski was chancellor and general-in-chief of the army, one of the greatest men that Poland ever produced. He was a great general, a great statesman, an eminent lawyer, and a distinguished writer.

† The substance of this speech is as follows:—"If there ever was a time," said he, "when we ought to give thanks to the Almighty for the greatest benefits bestowed upon our country, it is now, when we have obtained a splendid victory over an enemy, who, on account of his immense power, his capabilities for war, and the many nations defeated by him, was universally feared and considered invincible. It happened, however, by a particular favour of God, that this enemy has been not only defeated, but deprived of the province of Polotzk, which will be a lasting monument of our victory, and despoiled of the glory which he had acquired by his many successes. And indeed all the triumphs which he had obtained in the course of so many years,—by his victories over the Livonians and Swedes, by the conquest of Cazan and Astrakhan, and by the defeat of the Turks and Tahtars, who had attempted to unite the Black Sea with the Caspian, through a canal between the Don and the Volga (1569), as well as by that of many warlike and barbarous nations,—have now been transferred to us, by our victory over him.

"We all understand how great are the benefits which the Almighty has bestowed upon us; but unless we preserve them by our constancy and fortitude, we shall not reap any fruits from them; whilst, if we make a proper use of those advantages which Heaven has thus granted us, we may obtain immense results. It is indeed a great thing, and which in former times was considered as almost impossible, to have conquered an extensive province, which had been in the possession of the enemy for so many years, and which had once formed a most important part of Lithuania; and to have repressed the victorious progress of an enemy elated by so many successes, and defeated his armies, destined to carry ravage and desolation into our provinces. I am, however, afraid that all this will be not only without any advantage to us, but that it would have been much better that we should never have accomplished it by so much

The arguments of Zamoyski prevailed, and the diet granted supplies for a new campaign, which led to the capture of the important Russian town of Veliki Luki, and many other places. The most curious part of this war is, however, the diplomacy which the tzar of Muscovy employed on that occasion, in order to obtain by its means what he could not accomplish by force of arms. I shall, therefore, give my readers a short account of these remarkable transactions, because they show that Russia depended on her diplomacy three centuries ago as much as she now does; and in order to avoid every imputation of partiality, I shall do it entirely on the authority of the celebrated historian of Russia, Karamsin.

I have said (p. 26) that Ivan Vasilevich sent King Stephen a proposition of peace after the capture of Polotzk, but which was rejected on account of its unsatisfactory nature, and that a new campaign was decided on in 1580. He again sent an envoy to the Polish king, in order to prevent the recommencement of hostilities; but Stephen, rejecting these negotiations, invaded the territory of Moscow.

"This invasion," says Karamsin, "which Ivan did not expect, as it was already near the end of summer, appeared to him an act of treachery. By the advice of his boyars, he hastened to despatch a messenger to the emperor, and even to the pope, in order to induce them to take his part. In his letter to the first, he endeavoured to prove that the Poles were making war with Russia on account of her intimate friendship with Austria, and demanded that Rudolph, faithful to his promise, should send ambassadors to Moscow, in order to renew their alliance against the common enemy. To the pope he complained of the bad faith of Batory, and requested him to inspire that monarch with better dispositions, and to dissuade him from an odious alliance with the Turks. He assured the pope, in the same letter, of his sincere desire to enter into a coalition with all the European powers against the Turks, and to maintain for this purpose a cordial and intimate intercourse with the court of Rome."*

labour and expense as we did, if we do not complete, by continuing this war, what still remains to be done. We have a most powerful enemy to deal with, and none of us is ignorant of the immense resources which he may command, and the existence of which is attested by so many conquered nations. Do you think that he will patiently submit to the disgrace of having lost that province, and remain at peace? No; he is roaring like a savage beast confined in a cage, and burning with the desire to regain what he has lost, and to revenge what he has suffered, whilst he prepares every possible means for attaining that object. If we allow him, by our hesitations, or by granting him peace, the necessary time for repairing his losses, and improving the unskilfulness of his troops, which the present war has made apparent, what security shall we have that this enemy, who, on account of his power, cannot be restrained from war by any difficulties, or, on account of his perfidy, maintained in peace by the most solemn oaths, will not seize the first favourable opportunity in order to attack us with increased force and improved skill?" &c. &c.

Zamoyski demonstrated in this speech the absolute necessity of prosecuting with the greatest vigour the war which had been so prosperously commenced, until the dangerous power of Muscovy should be reduced in an effective manner; that the conclusion of a peace without obtaining this object would be fraught with great dangers for the future; and that however important might be the internal affairs, the establishment of external security was much more pressing.

This speech, delivered in 1580, is so applicable to present circumstances, that some persons may suppose it to be invented for the occasion. It is, however, to be found, as well as the preceding observations, in the third chapter of Heydenstein's *De Bello Moschovitico Commentarium*, lib. xi., Cracow, 1584, reprinted several times; and in his *Rerum Polonicarum*, &c., p. 141, edit. of Frankfort, 1672.

* *History of Russia*, vol. ix. chap 5.

At the same time, the tzar sent two of his principal dignitaries, Prince Sitzki and Pivoff, to the Polish camp, and their negotiations are described by Karamsin in the following manner:—

"Stephen received them in his tent in a haughty manner. He remained sitting, and without uncovering his head, when they saluted him in the name of the tzar, and did not address to them a single expression of kindness. They began by demanding that the king should raise the siege of Veliki Luki, when they were suddenly interrupted by a discharge of the Polish artillery. This made them more tractable. They said it was the first time that their master had condescended to treat with Poland out of Moscow. They consented, in his name, to concede the title of 'brother' to Stephen, if he would restore Polotzk to Russia. These propositions being rejected, they went so far as to renounce this claim, and to offer the cession of Courland and of twenty-four places in Livonia;* but Stephen required, besides the whole of Livonia, the cession of Veliki Luki, Plescow, Novgorod, and Smolensko. Sitzki and Pivoff declared that they could not make such great sacrifices, and requested the king's permission either to return or to write to the tzar."†

A courier was despatched to the tzar by his ambassadors on the 5th September, and Veliki Luki surrendered the same day. I must now, following Karamsin again, describe the effect of this news upon the tzar:—

"The tzar received the intelligence of the fall of Veliki Luki in his retreat of Alexandrowskaya Sloboda, the usual scene of his atrocities and orgies,—that ill-fated place, where the tyrant either caused his faithful subjects to tremble, or trembled himself at the very name of the enemy. He immediately despatched new instructions to his envoys, Sitzki and Pivoff, who were following the movements of Batory, condemned to be witnesses of his triumphs. When they arrived at Warsaw, they offered to add to the concessions proposed by them some districts of Livonia, as an exchange for the Russian towns which the king had conquered, entreating him to suspend hostilities, and to send an embassy to Moscow in order to negotiate a peace; but Batory ordered them to return to Moscow with the following answer:—'I shall not consent to an embassy, peace, or truce, while the Russians have not evacuated Livonia.' Ivan, who was becoming every day more tractable, then wrote a friendly letter to Stephen, calling him his *brother*, complaining that the Polish armies were molesting Russia, and entreating him not to assemble any troops for the next summer. He despatched to Batory two members of his council, Pooshkin and Pissemski, prescribing in their instructions that the negotiations should be conducted with great gentleness and humility, and, forgetting every feeling of dignity, it was enjoined to them (unheard-of humiliation!) patiently to bear *not only injurious expressions, but even blows.*"

Such was the result of the policy followed by King Stephen, who, unlike some statesmen of our time, had no tender solicitude about the honour of Russia and the integrity of her territory, but reserved this feeling solely and exclusively for the interests of his own kingdom.

* The tzar had not a single village of Courland in his possession, and only a few places in Livonia.

† Karamsin, vol. ix. chap. 5.

Meanwhile the envoy of the tzar reached Rome, and was received with great distinction by the pope, Gregory XIII., who despatched the celebrated Jesuit, Anthony Possevin, to King Stephen and the tzar, in order to reconcile the belligerent powers. Stephen said to Possevin: "The tzar of Muscovy wants to impose upon the holy father. At the approach of the storm which threatens him, he will promise any thing, —the reunion of the churches, as well as a war against the Turks. But he shall not deceive me. Go, however, and act,—I have no objection to it,—but I am convinced that in order to obtain an honourable and solid peace, war is indispensable; and I promise you that we shall get such a peace."

The campaign of 1580 ended in the capture of Veliki Luki, and some other places. The diet which Stephen convoked after his return from Russia, granted without difficulty supplies for a new campaign, so that the army which now took the field was more numerous and better appointed than those which had been employed in the two preceding campaigns. The expedition was now directed on Plescow, as the capture of that important town was considered by King Stephen and his principal advisers as the most effective means of compelling the tzar to conclude a peace advantageous to Poland. It was, however, a great mistake, because the Polish army was not numerous enough effectually to besiege a place whose fortifications, being about five English miles in circumference, were in the most efficient condition, and provided with a numerous and well-appointed artillery. The garrison was composed of 7000 cavalry and 50,000 infantry, whilst the whole population was armed, and excited to the highest pitch of religious fanaticism by the clergy, and by a proclamation of the tzar, who had ordered the garrison, as well as all the inhabitants, to swear on an image of the Virgin, considered as miraculous, to defend themselves to the last. The Polish army, which appeared before Plescow at the end of August 1581, though numbering nearly 100,000 men, perfectly drilled and equipped, was not sufficient to invest the place in such a manner as to prevent the besieged from receiving supplies and reinforcements. Several assaults were attempted; but as soon as a breach was made practicable, the Russians erected behind it new ramparts, which the clergy sprinkled with holy water, in order to stimulate the zeal of their defenders. Meanwhile, the season was advancing, and the besieging army were exposed to a great want of provisions, and the inclemency of the weather in such a high latitude. In short, the siege of Plescow in 1581 exhibited the most striking resemblance to that of Sebastopol in 1854–5.

The Jesuit, Possevin, whom I have mentioned above, was received at Moscow with greater honours than were ever paid before to a foreign ambassador. The tzar held out to him the hope of a war against the Turks, and a union of the Russian church with that of Rome, but desired before all to conclude peace with the king of Poland, and requested Possevin to return towards that monarch for the accomplishment of this object. Possevin repaired to the Polish camp, whence he wrote to the tzar that King Stephen was ready to grant peace on the conditions which were already known to the tzar, but would not think of any other. The exhortations of Possevin received a powerful support from some Polish detachments, who penetrated as far as the banks of the

Volga, spreading terror over the whole country. This demonstration induced the tzar to send his plenipotentiaries for negotiating peace, and a truce of ten years was concluded at a place called Kiverova Gorka, on the 15th January 1582, by the provisions of which the whole of Livonia, as well as Polotzk and some other places, were given up to Poland, whilst the Poles restored to Muscovy all the other places which they had conquered. The tzar was thus deprived of the object for which he had been striving during four-and-twenty years, viz., the possession of Livonia, an object of the greatest importance to Muscovy, on account of the ports in the Baltic, by means of which she could establish a new and direct communication with Western Europe, and which was finally accomplished by Peter the Great.

A characteristic feature of that war, and of which a perfect counterpart is exhibited during the present struggle between Russia and the Western powers, is the continual and successful efforts made by the government of that country to rouse the religious fanaticism of its inhabitants against the enemy, by the employment of the very same means on both occasions, though their church had no more danger to fear from King Stephen than it has now from the powers allied against Russia. I have related above the use which was made of the miraculous images, in order to excite the zeal of the defenders of Plescow against the army of King Stephen, though that army contained many followers of the same Greek church as in Russia, and which was then professed by a great number of the inhabitants of Poland, including some of the first families of the land, as well as the highest dignitaries of the state, amongst whom was also Haraburda, one of the Polish plenipotentiaries at Kiverova Gorka. And now, after a lapse of nearly three centuries, we know, from the Russian papers, that images of saints, considered as miraculous, have been sent to the army, to which the present war is continually represented as one for the defence of the orthodox Greek church, though the present opponents of Russia have not shown the slightest intention of injuring that church in any respect whatever.

After the conclusion of the treaty of Kiverova Gorka, Possevin, who had acted as a mediator on that occasion, hastened to Moscow, in order to reap the reward of his efforts, by obtaining a union of the Russian church with that of Rome, through its adoption of the canons of the Council of Florence, and by the conclusion of a league against the Turks. He had many conferences on these subjects with the tzar and his boyars, but the accomplished Jesuit found himself completely outwitted by the wily barbarians, and left Moscow without obtaining any other result than a profusion of empty compliments for himself and his master, the pope. The prediction of Zamoyski, made at the diet of Warsaw in 1580, that the tzar would ever be anxious to regain what he had lost, and avenge what he had suffered, by his war with Poland (p. 27), proved very true, for a year had hardly elapsed from the conclusion of the truce of ten years by which that war was terminated, when he commissioned his ambassador,—the same Pissemski to whom he had prescribed patiently to support, in his negotiations with Batory, *not only injurious words, but even blows*,—to induce Queen Elizabeth of England to conclude an alliance with him against the king of Poland. Pissemski represented to the English ministers, in a conference held at

Greenwich on the 18th December 1583, that Stephen was the ally of the pope and the emperor, and that consequently England should conclude an alliance with the tzar against him. This was an instance of remarkable duplicity, considering the manner in which Ivan had recently sought the mediation of the pope, and the efforts which he had made to represent to the emperor that it was on account of the intimate friendship between Austria and Russia that Stephen had attacked the latter. The Muscovite diplomate failed, however, in producing any effect whatever on Queen Elizabeth or her ministers, who refused to enter into any other subject of negotiation than the commercial intercourse between that country and Muscovy.* Ivan would undoubtedly have seized the first opportunity of breaking the truce of Kiverova Gorka, if his death, in March 1584, had not put a stop to his schemes and atrocities.

Convinced that the safety of Poland, as well as the whole of Europe, absolutely required an effective reduction of the power of Russia, Stephen was gradually preparing the means for this great object. His views were understood and fully appreciated by the great man who succeeded Gregory XIII. on the pontifical throne, viz., Sixtus V., with whom Stephen entered into a negotiation by means of Possevin and Cardinal Batory, his own nephew. The pope agreed to pay Stephen a regular subsidy during the whole course of the projected war, and even the necessary arrangement for a regular transmission of the subsidy was settled, when the far-sighted projects of that great monarch were cut short by his death, which took place on the 12th December 1586, at Grodno, after a short illness. This was a great calamity for Poland, and a misfortune for the whole of Europe, because if Stephen's life had been spared, it is more than probable that he would have reduced Russia to such a condition as to prevent all the conquests which she has accomplished since that time, and of which the political complications of the present moment are a direct though a distant consequence. This is the opinion, not only of a Pole, the author of this essay, but also of the accomplished and patriotic historian of Russia, Karamsin.†

Ivan Vasilevich was succeeded by his son Fedor, a youth, weak in mind and body, and almost an idiot; but the reins of the state were held with equal firmness and ability by his brother-in-law, Boris Godunoff, who, under the name of *praeitel, i. e.*, ruler, governed the country with absolute power. He attentively watched the affairs of Poland; and as soon as the news of Stephen's death had reached Moscow, he sent an agent to Lithuania in order to promote the interests of his monarch as a candidate to the vacant throne. His propositions found considerable favour among the Lithuanians, whose country was always exposed to danger in case of a war with Moscow. An embassy, composed of some of the highest dignitaries of the state, was sent to Warsaw, with

* Karamsin, vol. ix. chap. 7.

† "On the 12th December 1586, died Stephen Batory, one of the greatest monarchs in the world, and one of the most dangerous enemies of Russia, whose end gave us more joy than it afflicted his own subjects, because we were afraid of finding in him a new Ghedimin or a new Vitold: but ungrateful Poland preferred a cheap tranquillity to a costly greatness. Had the life and the genius of Batory not been extinct before the end of Godunoff, the glory of Russia might have been clouded in the first ten years of the new century."—*History of Russia*, vol. ix. chap. 7.

full powers from the tzar, and letters to the principal spiritual and lay senators. The propositions which this embassy was commissioned to offer to the states of Poland were exceedingly liberal, and such as could not be offered by any other candidate to the throne except the tzar of Muscovy,* and they prove the high value which the rulers of that country attached even at that time to the accomplishment of a scheme which would have at once established a Slavonic empire much more formidable to Western Europe than all the dangers with which it was then threatened from the Ottoman Porte. Poland was possessed at that time, as I have said before (p. 20), of a high state of civilization. Literature and science were in the most flourishing condition; her nobles were well educated and accomplished warriors, being not only animated by a martial spirit, but having great military experience, acquired under the late King Stephen, as well as in the service of different European powers, where to spend a few years, or at least to make a campaign, was usually considered, particularly amongst the wealthier nobles, as the necessary accompaniment of a gentleman's education. On the other side, Muscovy could even then command immense resources of men and money, as has been sufficiently shown under the reign of Ivan Vasilevich; but the numerous armies which that power often brought into the field during the sixteenth century, with large quantities of ordnance, supported by swarms of Asiatic cavalry, generally proved inefficient against European troops, for want of discipline and officers acquainted with the art of war. Thus the union of valour, military art, and immense material resources, which would have been effected by the election of the tzar of Muscovy to the throne of Poland, would have created a military power without an equal in Europe.

* These conditions were as follow:—

"1. The tzar of Russia is to become king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania, and the natives of the two states are to be united by an eternal and indissoluble friendship.

"2. The tzar of Russia will make war in person, and with all his forces, on the Ottoman empire. He will put down the present khan of Crimea, and place in his stead Saydet Gheray, a servant of Russia. He will conclude an alliance with the emperor, the king of Spain, and the shah of Persia, and liberate from the sultan's yoke Moldavia, Wallachia, Servia, Bosnia, and Hungary, in order to unite those countries with Poland and Lithuania, whose armies will act with the Russians on that occasion.

"3. The forces of Moscow, Cazan, and Astrakhan, will be always ready to defend, without hire or subsidy, Poland and Lithuania.

"4. The tzar will not make any changes in the rights and liberties of the nation without the consent of the states; and he will leave to the same states the absolute disposal of the treasury and the revenues of the country.

"5. The Russians will have full liberty to live and to marry in Poland and Lithuania, and the Poles and Lithuanians will have the same liberty in Russia.

"6. The tzar will grant to poor Polish and Lithuanian nobles lands on the banks of the Don and the Donietz.

"7. The tzar will grant, from his own treasury, 100,000 golden florins of Hungary for the payment of the arrears due to those soldiers whose claims were left unsatisfied by the late King Stephen.

"8. The sums which have hitherto been expended for the maintenance of the border fortresses between Russia and Lithuania, shall be employed on both sides for the war with the infidels.

"9. Russia will expel from Esthonia the Swedes and Danes, and give that province to Poland and Lithuania, with the exception of Narva.

"10. The merchants of Poland and Lithuania shall have perfect liberty to trade in all the dominions of the tzar, and pass through them to Persia, Bokhara, and other eastern countries; also to the sea by the mouth of the Dwina (Archangel), to Siberia, and the great Chinese empire, which produces gold and precious stones."—*Karamsin*, vol. x. chap. 1.

The difference of religion would not have been an insurmountable obstacle to the accomplishment of this great political combination, because at that time the great majority of the inhabitants of Poland, particularly amongst the nobles, or equestrian order, the ruling class of the country, belonged to other creeds than that of the Roman Catholic Church. Almost the whole population of the eastern provinces of Poland and Lithuania, including the noblest families of the land, professed the tenets of the Eastern church, and their confession, although the same as that of Muscovy, did not prevent them from loyally serving their country against that power, or from being invested with the highest dignities of the state. Protestantism had also attained a great development in Poland, as well as Lithuania; so that the senate of the united empire numbered then only a few lay members remaining in the pale of the Roman Catholic church. All the electors who did not belong to that church would not have had any objection to a king who professed the tenets of the Greek church; and there would have been undoubtedly not a few Roman Catholics who, secure of the rights of their church being fully guaranteed, with the liberty of other confessions, by the enactment of 1573 (p. 24), would have preferred the political interests of their country to their religious predilections; and, in fact, this was the case with many of them in Lithuania. It was, therefore, natural enough that the advantages offered by the tzar created for him a considerable party, which thought, and not without good grounds, that the immense dominions of Muscovy would be by his election united with their country, in the same manner as those of Lithuania had been, two centuries before, by the election of Jaghellon to the Polish throne. They also expected that the institutions of Poland might be extended to Muscovy, as they had been to Lithuania; for it was very natural to suppose that the inhabitants of Muscovy would soon perceive the advantages of a free government over the abject despotism under which they were living, though it appears strange that a man of such uncommon intellect as Godunoff, who conducted this affair in the name of the tzar, should not perceive the dangers with which this combination menaced the absolute authority of the sovereigns of Moscow. Be it as it may, almost the whole of the Lithuanians, who were particularly interested in a permanent peace with Moscow, embraced the party of the tzar, which was also supported by not a few Poles.

Europe was saved from the danger with which it was threatened by such a combination, through the arrogance of the Muscovite ambassadors, who, instead of canvassing the suffrages of the most influential electors, behaved as if they had been granting a boon to Poland by accepting her crown for their master. Thus, for instance, they made this a condition of the tzar's election, that he should be crowned, not at Cracow, but at Moscow or Smolensko, in the presence of the Polish deputies,—by the metropolitan of Moscow, and not the primate of Poland; that the title of the tzar of Russia should precede that of the king of Poland, &c., &c.

The Russian ambassadors, having lost the hope of obtaining the vacant throne for their master, promoted the interests of the archduke Maximilian. This candidate was supported by a powerful and active minority; but the majority of the electors inclined for the Swedish

prince, Sigismund Vasa.* His principal claim to the vacant throne was his descent from the Jaghellonian dynasty, to which the Poles were devotedly attached. His election presented, moreover, the advantage of a permanent alliance with Sweden,—a most efficient means for repressing the power of Muscovy, equally dangerous to both countries. He was elected, chiefly through the influence of Zamoyski, by a very great majority; but the partisans of the archduke Maximilian proclaimed at the same time the choice of their candidate. Maximilian sought to support his claim by force of arms, but he was defeated by Zamoyski, taken prisoner, and kept in custody more than eighteen months, until he resigned all his pretensions to the throne of Poland. All his adherents were pardoned on condition of swearing allegiance to Sigismund.†

The reign of Sigismund III., which lasted nearly half a century (1587–1632), is the most remarkable period of the history of Poland, on account of the important events by which it was characterised, as well as its decided influence on the subsequent destinies of that country. The principal cause of this influence was undoubtedly the personal character of that monarch, which deserves on this account a particular notice.

Sigismund was at his election twenty-one years old. His father, King John of Sweden, allowed him, at the desire of his mother, Catherine Jaghellon, to be educated in the Roman Catholic church, believing that this would facilitate to him the obtaining of the crown of Poland. The tragical events of his family, amidst which his boyhood was spent, and the unsteady conduct of his father,‡ produced a strong impression on Sigismund's mind, and gave to his deportment a cold-

* He was son of John, king of Sweden, and grandson of Gustavus Vasa; his mother was Catherine Jaghellon, daughter of Sigismund, first king of Poland.

† Whilst the events described above were taking place in Poland, the cabinet of Moscow, having tried in vain to induce the Lithuanians separately to elect the tzar for their grand duke, directed all its efforts to Vienna, urging the emperor, Rudolph II., by repeated embassies, to support the election of his brother Maximilian; and when the latter was taken prisoner, to avenge that disgrace. It offered to the imperial court for this object assistance in money and men, assuring them that if Austria would conquer Poland, it would please Russia even more than if she had done it herself. Many other considerations, as the prospect of an alliance against the Turks, were urged on the imperial cabinet by the envoys of Moscow, who, not being allowed to pass either through the Swedish or Polish dominions, were obliged to take a very circuitous road, by embarking at Archangel for Hamburgh. These efforts having obtained no other result than polite answers from the imperial ministers, and the news that Maximilian had renounced his claim to the throne of Poland, and that the emperor had confirmed this act, having reached Moscow, a letter full of sharp reproaches was addressed to Vienna by Godunoff.—*Karamsin*, vol. x. chap. 2.

‡ The great Gustavus Vasa was followed on the throne (1560) by his eldest son Erick, a man of extraordinary talents and acquirements, but who showed soon after his accession symptoms of a diseased mind. He quarrelled with his second brother, John, who had married a sister of Sigismund Augustus, and was invested by their father's will with the duchy of Finland, as vassal of the Swedish crown. Erick besieged that prince at Abo, took him prisoner, and shut him up in the castle of Gripsholm. His wife voluntarily followed him to prison, where they remained in close confinement during four years, and where Sigismund was born in 1566. Erick's mad freaks and cruelty produced a general indignation. He was deposed, and his brother John placed in his stead. The deposed monarch was put to death by a resolution of the council of state, for fear of his being liberated by a conspiracy. John was a man of considerable parts, but of a feeble mind and wavering disposition. He inclined for some time to Roman Catholicism, and afterwards to the Greek church, but finally decided upon a liturgy of his own. He tried to compel his son to abandon the Roman Catholic church, in which he had allowed him to be educated, but did not succeed in his object.

ness and gravity unusual at his age. The same circumstance made him cling, with all his soul, for support to the Jesuit teachers by whom he was educated. He became, therefore, from his earliest youth, a passive tool in the hands of these fathers, who taught him that he should never answer any kind of request without having previously consulted them, which rendered him taciturn, and so slow in giving replies, that, during his whole life, it was necessary to repeat the same thing over and over before he gave a reluctant answer, and this circumstance frequently produced the greatest mischief.* The same education strongly imbued Sigismund's mind with the opinion that the royal authority, being of divine right, was absolute,—that all religious confessions, except the Roman Catholic church, were impious,—and that amongst all the clergy the Jesuits alone deserved his confidence.†

Such a disposition was the worst possible qualification for a monarch destined to rule a country so constituted as Poland then was, where a great part of the inhabitants belonged to other creeds than that of the Roman Catholic church, enjoying perfect religious freedom, and where the civil liberty of the citizens was beginning to degenerate into licentiousness. Such a country required a sovereign of a liberal mind, but of a strong will and resolute character,—a man like Stephen Batory, and not like Sigismund Vasa,—one who would spend the greatest part of his time in harness on horseback, or under a tent on the borders of the country, and not in the midst of the ease and luxuries of the royal castle. This warlike disposition was required in a king of Poland by the geographical position of that country, which exposed its extensive frontiers to such dangerous and barbarous enemies as the Turks, the Tahtars, and the Muscovites; and it would have soon enabled him to overcome internal opposition to his authority, as those very nobles who imagined that it was necessary for the maintenance of their rights to squabble about the payment of taxes, would have been disgraced in the opinion of their country, as well as in their own, if they had refused to obey the summons of a king who was himself taking the field, as was the case with Stephen Batory, whose standard was joined by many who had opposed his propositions in the diet. Such a monarch would soon have been able to apply to the government of the state the authority acquired by him in the camp; and this undoubtedly would have been the case with Stephen Batory if his life had been spared. But Sigismund, instead of occupying himself with military affairs, spent his time in experiments in alchemy, or with Italian musicians and painters, as well as some Polish favourites, whose merits consisted not in their services to the state, but in their flatteries and subserviency to the king; and particularly to his Jesuit advisers, by whom, as I have said above, his whole conduct was directed. It was therefore natural enough that, under such a guidance, the whole and almost exclusive object of his policy at home was the conversion of his Protestant and Greek subjects to the Roman Catholic church. I have said (p. 24) that a perfect equality of rights was assured to all the Christian confessions in 1573, and the king was obliged to swear at his accession, in the most explicit terms, the maintenance of the reli-

* This statement is made by a Roman Catholic bishop. Vide *P. Piasecii Chronicon*, p. 91.

† Niemcewicz's *History of Sigismund III.*, vol. iii. p. 377, ed. 1836.

gious liberty of his subjects.* Sigismund, therefore, following the advice of his Jesuit counsellors, endeavoured to obtain by seduction what he dared not to attempt by oppression. Although the authority of the monarch was limited in many respects, yet he had entirely in his power the distribution of dignities and riches, which, unless forced by circumstances, he did not bestow on individuals who had rendered services to their country, but on those who had obtained the patronage of his Jesuit counsellors; and, amongst them, most lavishly on proselytes whom interest had converted more than argument.† He obtained a great success by following this line of policy during a reign of forty-five years, because he left at the end of it only two Protestants in the senate, which, at the demise of Sigismund Augustus in 1572, numbered only a few Roman Catholic lay members. Considering human frailty, and the great influence of such powerful incentives as ambition and avarice, it was no wonder that such a revolution took place in Poland; for there can be little doubt that the same causes would have produced the same effect in every other country, especially if we consider that, under the short reign of James II., a monarch possessed much less of the arts and means of seduction than Sigismund III., and in a Protestant country like England, several persons were induced to barter their creed for the sovereign's favour, by conforming to his church. Another means employed by the same monarch against the non-Roman Catholic party was to leave unpunished the aggressions made on them in open breach of law. This conduct was, I think, fraught with more danger to the country than an open persecution of its citizens on account of their religion, because it was giving a most dangerous example of setting at nought the authority of the law, which can never be done in a free country without exposing it to the greatest peril, by thus undermining the very foundation of the social edifice.

The most important transaction of Sigismund's religious policy was, however, the union of the Eastern church of Poland with Rome. I have mentioned (p. 34) that almost the whole population of the eastern provinces of the Polish empire, including many of the noblest families of the land, belonged to the Greek or Eastern church. The union of Florence, concluded in 1438, between the Western and the Eastern churches, was not acceded to by the Polish followers of the latter, although some prelates had attempted to introduce it. The archbishop of Kioff, metropolitan of the Eastern church of Poland, continued, therefore, to depend on the patriarch of Constantinople, by whom he was consecrated; and this church had a completely organised hierarchy, many convents, and other ecclesiastical establishments, endowed with considerable property. The archbishop, as well as the bishops, were elected by the nobles or landowners belonging to their church, and confirmed by the king. The hierarchy of that church was, therefore, generally composed of nobles, many of whom were men of learning, educated in foreign universities, or in that of Cracow, and

* These expressions were:—"Pacem que et tranquilitatem inter dissidentes de religione tuebor et manutenebo, nec ullo modo, vel jurisdictione nostra, vel officiorum nostrorum, et statuum quorumvis auctoritate quemquam, affici opprimisque causa religionis permittam, nec ipse afficiam, nec opprimam."

† I give this statement entirely on the authority of Roman Catholic authors, chiefly Piasecki, a bishop, and Niemcewicz; and I have developed this subject more amply in my other writings.

consequently far superior to the clergy of Moscow, plunged at that time in the grossest ignorance.

It was very natural that a monarch of Sigismund's disposition should wish to effect in his dominions a union of the Eastern church with Rome; and he succeeded in inducing the archbishop of Kioff, and several other prelates, to sign such a union at a synod convoked for this object at Brest in Lithuania, in 1594. It was confirmed by the pope, and accepted by many clergymen as well as laymen, in 1598; but a great number of the nobility and clergy, with Prince Ostrogski, palatine of Kioff, at their head, declared against the measure, and they convoked a synod, which excommunicated the adherents of the union. The same party succeeded afterwards in electing a new archbishop of Kioff, who was consecrated by the patriarch of Constantinople, and organised a new hierarchy, so that the Eastern church of Poland became split into two antagonistic churches. The evil consequences of this disruption were immediately felt, by producing mutual discord where peace had hitherto prevailed; particularly as, under these circumstances, it was impossible to prevent more or less persecution from taking place, because it was very natural that a bishop, who had accepted the union, should try to compel the clergy of his diocese to follow his example; and the same thing was frequently done by clergymen with their parishioners, and by landowners with their peasantry. These circumstances greatly facilitated the intrigues of Muscovy, which even at that time was using her church as an efficient tool of her political aggrandisement. In political respects, the union of Brest was therefore a most unfortunate event for Poland, and it was soon acknowledged to be such by Roman Catholic statesmen; but then, and a long time afterwards, the conduct of many governments was often regulated much more by dogmatic than political considerations. It must be also observed, that there were many who expected that this measure would politically strengthen Poland, by increasing her ecclesiastical unity; and this would have been undoubtedly the case if all the followers of the Eastern church of Poland, or at least a predominant majority of them, had voluntarily accepted that measure, as certainly was looked for by its promoters. Be it as it may, the political consequences of the union of Brest proved diametrically opposed to that which its promoters had expected.

The same influence which regulated Sigisimund's conduct at home, directed his foreign policy. It is well known that the Jesuits were at that time the most zealous promoters of the ambitious schemes of the Austro-Spanish house, whose views were supported by the court of Rome, which considered the power of that dynasty as the most effectual means of restoring its authority, shaken, and in some countries entirely destroyed, by the religious movements of the sixteenth century. The influence of Austria, was, however, abhorred by the great majority of the Poles, on account of the injurious effects which the reign of the Hapsburg dynasty had produced on the national liberties of Bohemia and Hungary; and this consideration was the principal cause of the opposition with which the election of the Archduke Maximilian had met, whilst it greatly contributed to that of Sigismund. Great was, therefore, the disappointment of Sigismund's supporters when they found that the prince whom they had established on the throne of

their country, in opposition to the house of Hapsburg, was, acting under the influence of his Jesuit advisers, a more ready and willing tool of the Austrian policy than even a member of its dynasty could have been. In spite of the opposition of the states, and against the general will of the nation, he successively married two Austrian archduchesses, whose influence was constantly employed for promoting the interests of their family at the expense of those of Poland.

These circumstances naturally produced a general discontent; and the irritation against Sigismund's conduct became so violent that it ripened into a *rokosh*,* or armed opposition against his authority. It is very remarkable, that although the principal grievances complained of by that opposition were the influence of the Jesuits, religious persecution, and the union of Brest (p. 38), its principal leader (Zebrzydowski), and the greatest part of its supporters, were Roman Catholics, who thus stood up for the religious liberty of their countrymen belonging to the Protestant and Greek confessions,—a characteristic circumstance, which, I think, cannot be found in the history of the religious commotions of other countries. The national reluctance to spilling the blood of their fellow-citizens, which had struck Gratiani so much in 1573 (p. 24), prevented now the *rokosh* from degenerating into a regular civil war, for it produced only a single battle (of Guzow, 1607). The victory was on the side of the royalists; but no persecution of the defeated party was allowed, and not a single political execution marked either this contest or that which took place at the accession of Sigismund with the partisans of the Archduke Maximilian.

As regards the foreign affairs of Sigismund's reign, he inherited, after the death of his father, 1592, and took possession of the kingdom of Sweden, but his known zeal for the Roman Catholic church rendered him unpopular amongst his Swedish subjects. His uncle, Charles, duke of Sudermaland, an able but ambitious and cunning prince, took advantage of this circumstance, as well as of several mistakes committed by Sigismund, in order to seize the crown of his country, and he became its monarch under the name of Charles IX.

The most important foreign incidents of Sigismund's reign, however, were undoubtedly the affairs with Muscovy.

I have related above (p. 32) that the government of Muscovy, under the reign of the tzar Fedor, was conducted by his brother-in-law, Boris Godunoff. Fedor had no children, and his only brother, Prince Demetrius, who resided with his mother in the town of Uglich,

* *Rokosh* was an armed opposition to the royal authority, permitted by the constitution, when the king, disregarding the admonitions of the senate, persisted in violating it. The clause of the *Pacta Conventa* sworn by the kings of Poland at their accession, which authorised such an opposition, was inserted for the first time in the oath sworn by Henry of Valois on the 10th of September 1573, at the church of Notre Dame at Paris. It was as follows:—"Et si quod absit, in aliquibus juramentum meum violavero, nullum mihi inclyti regni, omniumque dominiorum, utriusque gentis" (Poles and Lithuanians) "obedientiam præstare debebunt. Immo ipso facto eos, ab omni fide et obedientia regi debita liberos facio, absolutionemque nullams ab hoc meo juramento, a quoquam petam neque ultro oblatam suscipiam; sic me Deus juvet." This clause remained in the *Pacta Conventa*, and was better defined by the diets of 1607 and 1609, when it was enacted, in the article "De non præstanda obedientia," that an armed opposition could be offered to the monarch only when all constitutional means had been employed in vain in order to bring him back to his duty, and that otherwise it was treason.

was murdered in his ninth year (1591) by assassins, supposed to have been hired by Godunoff, who was interested in that crime, and who, after the death of Fedor in 1598, was elected tzar by a national assembly summoned for this object. He continued to govern the country during his own reign with the same ability as in that of Fedor, and he was undoubtedly one of the wisest monarchs that had ever occupied the throne of Muscovy. He was particularly anxious to introduce into his dominions the civilization of the west; and if he had maintained himself on the throne, he would have probably introduced into Russia many of those reforms which were accomplished a century later by Peter the Great. He had to contend, however, with many difficulties, chiefly caused by the enmity of the great families, who were offended by the elevation of one whom they considered as their inferior; but he would probably have overcome all these obstacles if he had not been guilty of a measure which was as much a fault as a crime, and which, I believe, contributed more than any thing else to his downfall. And, indeed, even if history could exculpate Godunoff from the guilt of Demetrius' murder, it would brand him, notwithstanding all his great qualities of a monarch, as the founder of predial serfage in Russia.*

Godunoff's reign seemed to be firmly established, when it was suddenly overthrown by a most extraordinary event. An individual appeared in Poland, pretending to be the Prince Demetrius, who, as he maintained, was not murdered by the assassins sent by Godunoff, but escaped in a miraculous manner, and was educated in Poland. There is, and will always remain, a profound mystery about this individual, well known in history as the false Demetrius, but he was undoubtedly a man of great talents and many noble qualities. He found some partisans in Poland; and King Sigismund, believing him to be the true heir of the Muscovite throne, gave him a considerable though indirect support, as the principal members of the senate were decidedly opposed to every interference with the affairs of Muscovy, with which Poland was then at peace. Demetrius was strongly patronised by the Jesuits, having secretly entered the Roman Catholic church, and promised to the papal legate in Poland the union of the Russian church with Rome. He also found a powerful support in an influential Polish grandee, Muiszeck, palatine of Sandomir, whose daughter he

* There had been slaves in Russia before Godunoff,—prisoners of war, or men who had sold themselves into bondage, and who generally were released at the death of their master. The peasants were free; they paid the rent for the land which they held, either in money, produce, or labour; and though poor and frequently oppressed, they could freely pass at the expiration of their contract from one landowner to another. Godunoff ordered, in the name of Fedor, 1592 and 1593, that all the peasants should permanently remain on the lands where they were settled at that time, without the permission of leaving them as before; thus converting free labourers into serfs, *glebæ adstricti*, as was the case in many countries of western Europe. This iniquitous law was confirmed and extended in 1597 by an ukase, which ordered that all the peasants who had fled from their masters should be restored to them, with their families and properties; and that free servants, who had remained in the house of their master longer than six months, could be converted into bondsmen. This measure was introduced chiefly with the object of favouring the smaller landowners, upon whose service the military force of Muscovy principally depended, and whose estates were often rendered worthless, by the peasants leaving them in order to settle on the rich but thinly-peopled lands along the Volga, united with Muscovy by the conquest of Kazan, where they could obtain farms on much better terms than in the interior of the country.

promised to marry. The romantic scheme of replacing on the throne of Muscovy its legitimate heir attracted to him many adventurous characters. The forces which he had thus collected were, however, inconsiderable, but he met with many adherents on entering Muscovy, particularly amongst the peasantry, who expected to be liberated by him from the serfage imposed on them by Godunoff. His bravery on the battle-field, and his generous and humane conduct towards his adversaries, obtained for him a complete success, as he was joined by the troops who had been sent to combat him. Godunoff died meanwhile, his son Fedor was murdered, and Demetrius occupied the throne of Muscovy (May 1605).

The new monarch displayed great talent and a liberal spirit, hitherto unknown in Muscovy, where he desired to establish an order of things more in accordance with the advanced condition of the west than the oriental despotism by which that country was governed. He introduced many very useful reforms and measures,* accomplishing thus in a few months for Russia more than had been done by all his predecessors.

The great defect of Demetrius was his levity and imprudence in disregarding the prejudices and national feelings of his uncivilised and superstitious subjects, faults which outweighed in their minds all the real and substantial benefits which he had bestowed upon them.†

The clergy were particularly active in spreading discontent amongst the people, by representing him as an impostor. An extensive conspiracy was organised, and Demetrius was murdered in the Kremlin by an infuriated populace, after a reign of a year, and a few days after his marriage with the daughter of the palatine of Sandomir, Mniszeck.

Two days after this event, Prince Vasil Shooiski, one of the most

* He created new dignities for his principal nobles, re-organised the council of the boyars, called to it the archbishop and several bishops, conferring on all its members the title of senators. He himself took every day a part in the deliberations of this assembly, and transacted the most important business with extraordinary talent and facility. He scattered favours amongst all his nobles, pardoned all the political offenders; and instead of persecuting the relations of Godunoff, he gave them offices in distant provinces. He doubled the pay of the army, as well as of all civil officers, abolished or modified many taxes, and removed all restrictions on commerce and industry, which, lowering the price of every thing, increased the general welfare. He severely punished many iniquitous judges, prohibited, under severe penalties, every kind of bribery and extortion, and published that every Wednesday and Saturday he would personally receive the petition of every one. He seems not to have felt himself strong enough to abolish the laws of Godunoff about the predial serfage and domestic slavery (p. 40), and in which the boyars and other landowners were much interested, but he published a law by which they were considerably mitigated.

† He did not observe the eastern ceremonial of the Muscovite court, but replaced it with the etiquette and manners of the west, which appeared to his subjects derogatory of their monarch's dignity. He neglected many religious observances, to which his subjects attached great value; but he particularly offended their prejudices by never using a vapour bath, or taking a *siesta*, as was done by every inhabitant of Muscovy, and above all by eating veal, which was considered then a great abomination in Russia. These three last-named circumstances were urged by his enemies as the most convincing proofs of his not being the son of the tzar Ivan Vasilevich, but a wicked heretic and impostor. He also offended the national pride of his nobles by constantly praising the superiority of foreign countries and manners, and recommending them to go abroad in order to become civilised men; and he greatly alarmed the clergy by the project of confiscating their immense landed property for the maintenance of a regular army. I have said above (p. 40) that he had secretly embraced the Roman Catholic Church, but this fact became known only many years after his death.

influential boyars, and the principal promoter of the insurrection which overthrew Demetrius, was elected tzar by the boyars, clergy, and the principal inhabitants of Moscow.* This election could not be, however, considered as legal, because it was not made, like that of Godunoff, by a national assembly, representing all the inhabitants of the country, and consequently it was disapproved in many quarters. The memory of the murdered Demetrius seems also to have been very popular, because, a few weeks after his death, a report being spread that he had escaped and was alive, several provinces immediately declared against Shooiski, and crowds of people of various conditions gathered around the standard erected in the name of Demetrius by Prince Shakhovskoy. The insurrection rapidly extended, and many important towns, as Kaluga, Tula, &c., declared for Demetrius, or rather for his shade. The promoters of this insurrection, after having long time sought for an individual capable of personating the murdered Demetrius, in whose name they were acting, found at last such a substitute, whose real condition has never been well ascertained,† but who performed his part with a marvellous success. His history undoubtedly presents one of the most extraordinary instances of popular delusion. It was nothing wonderful that the first Demetrius, assuming the character of a prince who had been murdered in his boyhood, was believed by many, but that one who was so generally known as he had been, could, in a few months after his death, be successfully personated by an impostor during nearly three years, is an event, I think, without a parallel in the history of Europe.

I have said above (p. 41) that Demetrius was murdered shortly after his marriage with a Polish lady. Many of her countrymen had arrived at Moscow on that occasion, besides a Polish embassy. A great number of these Poles were massacred by the mob, but many others were saved by the leaders of the insurrection, and sent, including the ambassadors, by Shooiski to various parts of the country, in order to be detained as hostages. This naturally produced a great irritation amongst their countrymen, and an additional motive for adventurous characters joining the standard of the new Demetrius, who invited them by the most extravagant promises, so that in a short time about

* A circumstance which took place at the accession of Shooiski presents a curious contrast between the political ideas which were then prevailing amongst two neighbouring nations, belonging to one and the same race, but which is easily explained by what I have said (p. 5) of their mutual development. Shooiski began his reign by spontaneously declaring, on his oath, that he would never inflict the punishment of death without a just and true judgment of the boyars, nor confiscate the property of the culprits, but leave it to their innocent families, and require in all the accusations positive and direct evidence, by confronting the witnesses, and subject false delators to the same penalties to which they exposed those whom they unjustly accused. This liberal measure, instead of being popular, was generally condemned by the Russians of high and low degree, who represented to their new monarch, that the nation must take an oath to the tzar, and not the tzar to the nation.—*Karamsin*, vol. xii. chap. i. Thus when the Poles were animated by a constant, frequently undue and exaggerated, jealousy of their monarch's authority, the Russians were offended by a very slight and voluntary limitation of this authority.

† It is said that he was a native of Lithuania, the son of a Greek priest, called Veretkin, and a schoolmaster by profession. He knew equally well the Polish and Russian languages, was well versed in the Scriptures, and, according to some, knew Hebrew, and was constantly reading the Talmud, as well as some rabbinical works, which induced many to believe him to be a Jew. Though bold and cunning, he was unlike in appearance and character to the murdered Demetrius, being coarse, cruel, and greedy to meanness.

seven thousand of them gathered around this impostor.* His success was quite marvellous. Town after town declared for him; he was joined by eight thousand Cossacks, and many Russians, whose numbers continually increased. He marched upon Moscow, and established at a place called Tushino, in the vicinity of that capital, a fortified camp, having with him, besides the Poles and Cossacks, about seventy thousand Russians.

Shooiski, to whom only a small part of the country remained faithful, concluded an alliance with the king of Sweden, who sent a number of troops to his assistance. Russia was, however, notwithstanding this support, on the brink of ruin; and, according to the opinion of Karamsin, was saved from it by Sigismund, who knew not how to take advantage of the favourable circumstances for destroying the power of Moscow. "Had Sigismund acknowledged the false Demetrius as a tzar," says the historian of Russia, "and assisted him as an ally, zealously and in time, with a new army, Moscow, and the six or seven towns which still remained faithful, would have hardly withstood the storm of a universal revolt and destruction. What would then have become of Russia, for the second time a vile prey to imposture and its abettors? Would she have ever risen from the abyss of disgrace, and become what she is now? Thus the fate of Russia depended on the policy of Sigismund; but, fortunately, Sigismund had not the mind of a Batory. Ambitious, but mean-spirited and narrow-minded, he saw the effects without understanding their causes. He knew not that the Poles could tear, humiliate, and trample upon Russia only under her own standard, and miraculously disarm her nation, not by their own heroism, but by the name of Demetrius; he did not know it, and, by a grossly acquisitive policy, he opened the eyes of that nation, kindled amongst them a spark of generosity, re-animated and strengthened their old hatred against Lithuania, and having done much harm to Russia, he allowed her to save herself for a terrible though tardy revenge upon her enemies."†

I would most particularly recommend to the attention of my readers this passage, as containing the opinion of one of the best and most enlightened Russian patriots, because it may be considered as a fair expression of the political sentiments of the superior class amongst his nation. Sigismund is taxed with a mean spirit and narrow mind for not having made use, in order to reduce Russia, of means which may be called revolutionary in the worst sense of the word, and for having re-animated the national spirit of Russia by his *grossly acquisitive policy*. There is, undoubtedly, much truth in this observation; and history sufficiently proves that Russia has never acted on similar occasions so as to deserve the blame given to Sigismund's conduct by Karamsin, because she has never omitted an opportunity of weakening her neighbours by fomenting internal discord, or spoiled her schemes by a *grossly acquisitive policy*, for she never ventured upon material conquests without having prepared the way by her moral influence; and a striking, though not a new, instance of which was the demand of the protectorate over the Greek Christians of Turkey, that has produced the

* The excitement produced by the *rokosh* (p. 39), which was just pacified at that time, greatly contributed to increase the number of these adventurous characters.

† *History of Russia*, vol. xii. chap. 2, p. 131, 4th edition.

present war. The same passage ought also to show those politicians who seem to be afraid of humiliating Russia too much, that if her power is not materially reduced by the present war, instead of being grateful for such a policy on the part of her adversaries, she will consider it only as *mean-spirited* and *narrow-minded*, and that they will not escape her terrible, though perhaps tardy vengeance, for what she has already suffered from them. Had Sigismund possessed the mind of a Batory, the interests of Poland could have been promoted on that occasion without recurring to the vile means pointed out by Karamsin, and which would have been spurned by that heroic monarch, and rejected by a Polish diet, if it had been proposed by Sigismund. These interests could be much better served by an open and honourable war with Russia, if it had been prosecuted by Sigismund with the energy it required, and its object promoted by a liberal, far-sighted, and not a selfish, narrow-minded policy.

The most vital interests of Poland required therefore, according to the unsuspected evidence of the eminent historian of Russia, to take advantage of the troubled state of Muscovy in order to crush its dangerous power, while the treatment of the Polish ambassadors, who had been detained in custody for two years, constituted a clear *casus belli*. There was, however, a peace party in the senate, but the arguments of the war party prevailed.

Sigismund, relying on the reports of his flatterers, undertook the campaign with very inadequate forces, and laid siege himself to Smolensko (27th September 1609), which, being strongly fortified, had a garrison superior in number to the besieging army, and which was, moreover, deficient in the necessary implements of a siege, and exposed to great hardships on account of the advanced season. In short, the siege of Smolensko was undertaken (1609) with as little prevision of its difficulties as that of Sebastopol in 1854, and therefore it produced similar consequences.

I have mentioned (p. 43) that the impostor, who was personating the murdered Demetrius, established his camp at Tushino, near Moscow, with an army composed of Poles, Cossacks, and Russians. Having quarrelled with his Polish supporters, he was obliged to flee from his camp, which produced a great commotion amongst his army, and ended in its dispersion to various quarters. His Russian adherents partly repaired to Shooiski, and partly followed him to Kaluga; but the most distinguished of them joined the Poles, and sent to Sigismund's camp, before Smolensko, a deputation, proposing the throne of Muscovy to Prince Vladislav, requiring no other condition than his joining the Greek church. The Polish ministers answered that religion was a matter of conviction, and not of compulsion, but guaranteed, in the name of the king, all the rights of the Russian church, as well as those of the inhabitants of all classes. The Russian delegates then swore allegiance to Prince Vladislav, and insisted on Sigismund marching on Moscow, promising him an easy success by their co-operation; but the king gave them an evasive answer, and continued his ineffectual siege of Smolensko.

The affairs of Shooiski assumed, meanwhile, a favourable turn. His troops retook, with the assistance of the Swedes, many towns, and marched to the relief of Smolensko. This induced Sigismund to send

Zolkiewski against the enemy, and the general advanced with a force composed of about 10,000 men, following the same road, and towards the same object, as was done two centuries afterwards (1812) by the immense army of Napoleon I. The enemy's force, composed of 30,000 Russians, and 5000 Swedes and foreign mercenaries, under the command of James de la Gardie, who was considered one of the best generals of his time, was attacked by Zolkiewski near a village called Klushino, and completely routed. This battle was fought 4th July 1610, about thirty English miles from Mojaisk, near which the celebrated battle of Borodino took place two hundred and two years and two months (7th September 1812) afterwards. Both these engagements may be considered as collisions between the influence of western civilization and that of eastern despotism, and the consequences of which present some remarkable coincidences, which at this moment, and when a similiar conflict is developing itself on a large scale, may have particular interest.

The victory of Klushino was complete. The enemy's camp, artillery, &c., fell into the hands of the victors. The Russian army was entirely defeated, and its commander returned alone to Moscow, announcing that all was lost. The Swedish troops entered into a capitulation, promising not to assist the Russians, and retired. The foreign mercenaries entered the service of Zolkiewski, whom many Russians joined in swearing allegiance to Prince Vladislav as their tzar. Zolkiewski, thus reinforced, marched rapidly on Moscow, which was plunged into the greatest consternation. Shooiski was deposed in a popular movement, and the council of the boyars, which assumed the government of the country, concluded with Zolkiewski a treaty, by which the Polish prince was elected tzar of Muscovy, with a constitution guaranteeing security for the life, liberty, and property of his new subjects, and not allowing him to enact new laws, or impose new taxes, without the consent of the council of the boyars and a national assembly.*

Karamsin admits that this constitution was due to the influence of the Polish general, saying that "its clauses were in accordance with the views of the sagacious Zolkiewski, who, being a lover of liberty, did not wish to accustom the successor of Sigismund, the future monarch of Poland, to an unlimited power in Russia."† This is, I think, sufficiently proved by the circumstance that the Russians did not require any limitations of the tzar's authority at the election of Godunoff or Shooiski, and even disapproved the voluntary concessions of the latter. No other condition than security for their church was demanded by the boyars, who had proposed in the camp of Sigismund the crown of their country to the Polish prince (p. 44), and none whatever at the election of Michael Fedorvich Romanoff, the founder of the present dynasty, in 1613.

Vladislav was proclaimed tzar of Muscovy. The capital immediately swore allegiance to him. The council of the boyars announced his accession throughout the whole empire, and his authority was willingly acknowledged everywhere. "In short," observes Karamsin, "the wise Zolkiewski fully obtained his object; and Vladislav, al-

* This assembly was called *Ziemskaya Duma*, *i. e.*, territorial council, such as had elected Godunoff. *vide* p. 40.

† *History of Russia*, vol. xii. chap. 5.

though elected only by Moscow, without the knowledge of the other towns, and consequently in an illegal manner, like Shooiski, would in all probability have remained tzar of Russia, and changed her destiny by weakening the autocracy, and perhaps, by the same circumstance, changed the fate of Europe for many centuries, if his father had had the wisdom of Zolkiewski."* The fate of Europe would have been indeed very different from what it is now, if a constitutional government had been established in Russia at that time; and the reforms which it would have introduced into that country would have been much more advantageous to the welfare of its inhabitants than those of Peter the Great, which strengthened the despotic power at home, and facilitated its ambitious schemes abroad. The accomplishment of this fortunate event was frustrated by the evil genius of Poland, impersonated by Sigismund III.

The reign of Vladislav was now universally established. Prayers were offered for him in all the churches, *ukases* were issued, and judicial proceedings conducted, in his name, medals and coins were struck with his likeness, and the inhabitants rejoiced, having obtained peace after so many disturbances. Zolkiewski continually urged Sigismund to send Prince Vladislav to Moscow, and not to destroy by his hesitation a work accomplished by the good genius of Poland, whilst, on the other side, he captivated the boyars of Moscow, by representing to them the golden age which awaited their country under the reign of a young and amiable sovereign, who would readily listen to their wise counsels, and be powerful only by the authority of the law. He desired not to control the governing council, but only made suggestions, or gave advice. Thus, for instance, he represented to them, though without success, the absolute necessity of pacifying the country by a general and complete amnesty of all political offenders. His house was continually filled with the most distinguished Russians, seeking advice on their public affairs, or personal favours. In short, the Polish general, who had arrived under the walls of Moscow as an enemy, was now considered by all the Russians as the best friend of their country.†

The majority of the Polish senators present in the royal camp of Smolensko, urged Sigismund not to destroy by his hesitation the noble work accomplished by the sword and wisdom of Zolkiewski, and immediately to send Vladislav to Moscow, leaving as his tutor Zolkiewski, who had obtained a universal popularity amongst the inhabitants of Russia; that a mutual bond of friendship, thus established with Russia, would be much more advantageous to Poland than any conquests in that country; and, finally, that a different conduct would be a breach of faith, solemnly pledged by Zolkiewski, in the name of Prince Vladislav, which would give Muscovy a just cause of resentment and war for such an act of perjury; in short, that common sense, as well as the honour and interests of the country, required that the king should make a proper use of such a favourable event, and which, once allowed to escape, would never occur again.

Unfortunately for Poland, and, I may say, for Russia, whose real welfare would have been, I think, more effectually promoted, if, according to the observations of Karamsin, quoted above, her destiny had

* *History of Russia*, vol. xii. chap. 3. † *Ibid.*

been changed by the weakening of the autocracy through the accession of Vladislav. Sigismund had, however, neither the wisdom nor the elevated mind of Zolkiewski, and this *grossly acquisitive policy*, as the same Karamsin calls it (p. 43), entirely destroyed the noble work of that general. He desired to take possession of Muscovy for himself, and this project was supported by some of his advisers, jealous of the extraordinary success of Zolkiewski. He gave, therefore, an evasive answer to the Russian embassy, which had arrived at his camp in order to invite Vladislav to his throne, and continued the siege of Smolensko. Zolkiewski, after having repeatedly pressed Sigismund to send Prince Vladislav to Moscow, repaired at last himself to Smolensko, in order to obtain this object by his personal representation. His departure from Moscow presented a triumphal scene more glorious than that which a conqueror had ever obtained. He was accompanied to the gates of the city by its principal inhabitants, whilst its streets, windows, and tops of houses along his passage, were filled with people, invoking the blessing of heaven on the head of that same Zolkiewski whose very name, a few weeks before, filled them with terror and consternation. Arrived at the royal camp, Zolkiewski was received by the king with great distinction; but his urgent representations producing no effect on Sigismund, he refused to take any farther part in the affairs of Muscovy, and retired in deep affliction to his estates.*

A few days after the conclusion of Zolkiewski's treaty with the boyars, the latter, afraid of the anarchy which had distracted their capital after the deposition of Shooiski, requested the Polish general to occupy it with his troops till the arrival of the new Czar. The conduct of Sigismund, who, instead of sending his son to take possession of the throne of Muscovy, continued to besiege Smolensko, naturally produced a general irritation throughout the country, and many places declared against the authority of Vladislav. The position of the Polish garrison at Moscow was therefore becoming every day more and more critical; because, notwithstanding the strictest discipline maintained by their commander, the irritation of the inhabitants of Moscow, for which the presence of these strangers was a sufficient ground, daily increased. This garrison had to defend an undoubtedly bad cause; but the responsibility of it rested entirely with the king, their duty being to defend the post which was entrusted to them, and they had to do it against fearful odds, being 7000 (5000 Poles and 2000 foreign mercenaries), against the numerous population of Moscow, supported by the whole country, where a general rising against the authority of Vladislav finally took place. They defended themselves, however, in the Kremlin for nearly two years, but were at last reduced by famine.

Sigismund continued meanwhile to besiege Smolensko, which was

* The presence of the deposed tzar, Shooiski, in Russia was dangerous to the new order of things, as well as to the peace of that country; because, though confined in a convent, he might have easily found partisans. This consideration, and the fear of his revenge, induced the boyars to deliver him and his brother to Zolkiewski, who conducted them to Poland with all the respect due to their rank and misfortunes. They were maintained at the castle of Gostyn in a royal style; but the deposed tzar died in the course of a year; and his brother soon followed him to the grave. Their bodies were buried at Warsaw with the honours due to their station, and Sigismund erected a splendid monument to their memory. Their bodies were, however, delivered to the Russians in 1635, and transferred to Moscow; but the church where they were buried at Warsaw was demolished under the reign of the Emperor Alexander.

captured after a siege of twenty months, 7th June 1611. He was strongly advised to take advantage of the terror produced by this event in order to march to the relief of the Polish garrison, shut up in the Kremlin with the council of the boyars, which represented the authority of the tzar Vladislav. He might have easily defeated the ill-organised forces of the insurgents, and, adopting liberal measures, reconciled the Russians, but instead of thus acting he retired to Warsaw. The Russians having renounced the allegiance sworn to Prince Vladislav, elected to their throne Michael Romanoff, the founder of the reigning dynasty of Russia.*

An attempt at concluding peace with Russia by the mediation of the Emperor Matthias having failed, Prince Vladislav was sent, in 1617, with a comparatively small force to make good his claims to the throne of Russia. He penetrated to the walls of the capital; and though the attempt which he made to capture that city did not succeed, it produced such an impression upon the Russians, that they entered into negotiations, which led to the conclusion of a truce for fourteen years, at the village of Divilino, on the 11th December 1618. The tzar, Michael, ceded to Poland by this treaty Smolensko, Chernigoff, and several other places, with their districts, whilst, on the other side, Prince Vladislav resigned his claim to the crown of Muscovy, and several towns occupied by the Poles were restored to that power.

The Russian war was not terminated when Poland became involved in hostilities with the Ottoman Porte, which led to the first regular war between these two powers. The causes which produced this war were many and various; and it is indeed very astonishing that they had not brought about this event many years before. The joint suzerainty which Poland exercised with the Ottoman Porte over Moldavia, was a circumstance sufficient alone to embroil the two powers. The Tahtars of the Crimea, vassals of the Sultan, frequently ravaged the Polish territory; whilst, on the other hand, the Cossacks Zaporogues,† who

* Michael Romanoff was then a youth of sixteen, and his sole claim to the throne was his relationship to the last monarch of the ancient dynasty, the tzar Fedor Ivanovich, p. 32, who was cousin to his father. He could not, however, claim any descent from that dynasty, of which many branches are even now in existence; but the mother of the above-mentioned tzar was a Romanoff, a grand-aunt of Michael's. He was most sincerely reluctant to accept the proffered throne, and his mother was of the same opinion, so that this reluctance was overcome only by the strong representations of the clergy. This was, however, natural enough, considering the troubled state of Russia, and the examples of Godunoff and Shooiski. There is a very remarkable circumstance attached to his election, showing the effect which liberal institutions generally produce upon the mind of every intelligent person. Michael's father, the boyar Fedor Romanoff, was compelled by Godunoff to become a monk, but was created by Demetrius archbishop of Kioff. Sent as ambassador to invite Vladislav to Moscow, he was retained by Sigismund as a state prisoner. Having learned, during his captivity, that the election of a new tzar was to take place, he secretly wrote to his brother-in-law, Sheremetieff, advising that the new monarch should not be chosen from a powerful family; but above all, that his authority should be circumscribed by conditions, which he pointed out, and which were borrowed from the Polish constitution. It seems that this advice was not followed, because, according to the generally received opinion, Michael was elected without any limitation of his authority. Some writers maintain, however, that certain articles of this kind were inserted into the diploma of Michael's election, and signed by him, but afterwards abandoned.—Herrmann's *Geschichte des Russischin Staates*, vol. iv. pp. 313, 514, and 520.

† These Zaporogues formed a most extraordinary community, from which all females were excluded, and was composed of adventurers, chiefly assembled from the *Ukraine*, *i. e.*, border country, but also from other parts of Poland, and even from foreign countries. They were admitted only after undeniable proofs of the most

acknowledged the king of Poland as their sovereign, retaliated the forays of the Tahtars by their piratical expeditions on the Black Sea, and the pillage of several places on its shores, as Sinope, Trebizond, Varna, &c., extending their ravages to the very gates of Constantinople. Notwithstanding all these mutual provocations, a war between Poland and Turkey might have been avoided by the prudence of the same Zolkiewski whose noble exploits in Muscovy I have related, and who arranged the differences with the Porte by a treaty concluded in 1617. It was, however, finally brought about by the influence of Austria, and Sigismund's blind subserviency to that power. It is well known that the states of Bohemia and Hungary, having risen in defence of their religious and political liberties against the Emperor Ferdinand II., that monarch was reduced to an almost desperate position, being besieged in Vienna by the Hungarian forces of Bethlem Gabor, prince of Transylvania. The emperor implored the assistance of Sigismund, who was married to his sister, and the imperial request was warmly supported by his Jesuit advisers, though the Polish senate strongly opposed it. Sigismund ordered, however, a considerable force, which was stationed on the borders of Hungary, to invade that country; and they did it with such an effect that Bethlem Gabor was compelled to raise the siege of Vienna. Sigismund was obliged by his council to recall these troops from Hungary, but he sent them secretly to assist the imperialists in Bohemia, where they rendered great services. This expedition, which saved the crown of Ferdinand II. from a most imminent peril, exposed Poland to a war with Turkey, as the sultan, Osman III., took the part of his vassal the prince of Transylvania, and which was particularly dangerous to Poland, because she was still involved in one with Sweden, and had scarcely terminated that with Russia. Zolkiewski, who was sent with an inadequate force to meet a numerous Turkish army, was defeated and slain at Chechora, on the banks of the Dniester (1620).

The enemy invaded the country, and ravaged the southern provinces, but was compelled by the lateness of the season, and a gathering of the Polish forces, to retire. Next year (1621), the sultan himself marched against Poland with an army said to have amounted to 400,000 men. The Polish force sent to oppose him, numbering only 45,000 Poles, and about 30,000 Cossacks, awaited the enemy in a fortified camp near Khotzïn, on the right bank of the Dniester. The sultan, after having repeatedly stormed, without any success, the Polish camp, and unable

daring courage, and endurance of the greatest hardships. This population, inhabiting the islands of the Dnieper, situated between the cataracts of that river (hence their name, signifying "behind the cataracts"), were bold and skilful sailors, who performed in small vessels, constructed in a peculiar manner which prevented their foundering, the expeditions mentioned in the text. They rendered, on many occasions, great services to Poland, not only against the Turks and Tahtars, but also against the Russians; but their unruly spirit gave much trouble to the government of that country. The settlements of the Zaporogues, who became afterwards subjects of Russia, were destroyed by order of the Empress Catherine II. in 1775, and a part of them were transplanted to the river Cooban and the islands of Taman where their descendants, known by the name of the Cossacks of the Black Sea, were engaged in a continual warfare with the Circassians. A considerable part of them escaped into the Turkish dominions, and settled on the shores of the Black Sea, in the vicinity of Varna. They loyally served the Ottoman Porte in its wars with Russia; but they submitted to the Emperor Nicholas at the beginning of the campaign of 1828, and were settled on the shores of the Sea of Azoff. A number of them, however, remained in Turkey.

to continue the campaign on account of the approaching winter, concluded peace, without exacting from Poland any other sacrifice than the resignation of her claims to Moldavia, which had already been conceded by Zolkiewski.

This peace saved Poland from a most perilous position, because, whilst attacked by such a formidable power as Turkey then was, she had to contend, on the other side, with Sweden. I have said above, p. 39, that Sigismund was dispossessed of the throne of that country by his uncle, Charles IX. This led to a war between Poland and Sweden, the theatre of which was Livonia, where the Polish army obtained many successes; but the result of which was almost universally destroyed by the incapacity of the king. The war between Sweden and Denmark, the affair with Russia, and the death of Charles IX., suspended the hostilities between Poland and Sweden by a truce for several years. Gustavus Adolphus, who succeeded his father Charles IX., sought to conclude a permanent peace, offering most favourable conditions; but Austria, desiring to prevent Sweden from taking the part of the German Protestants, deluded Sigismund with a promise of restoring to him the Swedish throne by means of a Spanish fleet, and he rejected the proposition of the Swedish king. Gustavus Adolphus, therefore, invaded Livonia at the very moment when Poland was contending against the immense forces of Turkey, and took several important places. Being, however, very anxious to undertake his meditated expedition to Germany, he made repeated offers of a most advantageous peace; but all the efforts of the Polish senate could not overcome the obstinacy of Sigismund, who, disregarding their advice, and entirely acting under the influence of Austria, continued the war until he was compelled to terminate it in 1629, by a truce, giving up to the Swedes Livonia, and some districts of Polish Prussia.

Sigismund III. died 1632, after a reign of forty-five years, which, as it is now admitted on all hands, was the principal cause of the decline of that prosperous condition which Poland had attained in the sixteenth century, and of her subsequent calamities, though that reign itself cannot be, however, considered by any means as a disastrous period of the Polish history. On the contrary, it was marked by many brilliant successes, and illustrated by a great number of eminent characters,—statesmen, warriors, and writers,—produced by that intellectual and political development which Poland had attained at the time of Sigismund's accession. It was by its consequences that this reign has proved so disastrous to Poland, and these consequences related more to her internal than external affairs; because the loss of Livonia was, though imperfectly, compensated by the acquisitions made from Muscovy. The internal condition of the country at the death of Sigismund III. was indeed completely changed from that in which it was at his accession. That religious liberty, which I have described above, p. 20, and which, allowing a free scope to the public discussion of the most important subjects to mankind, gave such a powerful impulse to the national intellect, was virtually annihilated, though the laws securing that liberty had not been abrogated, or even modified. I have described above, p. 37, the means which Sigismund III. employed against the followers of other confessions than that of his church. Their effect on Protestantism, which, though widely spread amongst the upper classes, had not

penetrated into the mass of the people,* did not produce any direct political consequences, but they did an incalculable mischief, by spreading the seeds of rebellion amongst the followers of the Greek church, who formed the bulk of the population of the eastern provinces of the empire. The most injurious consequence of Sigismund's religious policy was, however, its effect on the progress of the national intellect, by giving the Jesuits such a predominant influence over the public education,† that it finally led to their almost exclusive dominion over this most important element of the national life, and on which not only the welfare, but even the very existence of a state, particularly of one with a free constitution, mainly depends. Now, it may be considered as a truism, that the invigorating effect of a free competition, which so powerfully advances every industrial and commercial enterprise, is no less beneficial to the cultivation of intellect. This was most strikingly exemplified in Poland, where such a competition amongst the various religious sects had been most favourable to the development of the national intellect. The same cause obliged the Jesuits to vie with their competitors by an exercise of talent and learning, and they acted in this manner as long as that cause was in operation. Their system of education changed, however, with the cessation of the above-mentioned cause; and as soon as they obtained a decided predominance over their rivals they adopted a different course, so that their system of education, which was trammelling more than advancing the intellects of their pupils, attracted the reprobation of some Roman Catholic writers. This circumstance is, however, more to be deplored than wondered at, because it is well known that Protestant learned institutions, founded on the principle of free examen, have, under the influence of monopoly, degenerated into corporations more anxious to obstruct than to advance the progress of intellect. Was it then wonderful that an institution like that of the Jesuits, whose object was to defend the principle of authority against that of free examen, produced, under similar circumstances, a most lamentable effect on the intellectual development of the country, which had attained such a high degree in the latter part of the sixteenth century, and reduced its truest exponent, the national literature, to a very low condition, in which it remained till about the middle of the eighteenth century, when a fortunate reaction took place, chiefly by the efforts of another ecclesiastical order, the *Patres Pii?*

The great incapacity of Sigismund III. caused the army never to be paid in due time, as the supplies granted by the diets, though quite sufficient for the intended object, were generally misapplied. This circumstance was productive of the greatest mischief, as the unpaid troops refused obedience to the chiefs on many occasions, and formed confederations to obtain by force their arrears; and this cause frequently

* They produced, however, much mischief in the towns, as the corporations of many of them having excluded the Protestant burghers from their body, the latter retired from those places, whose welfare was thereby greatly injured.

† I have mentioned on p. 37 the influence which the Jesuits exercised in the councils of Sigismund; and as their patronage was the surest road to preferment, and every advantage depending on the king's patronage, it was purchased by rich donations to their order. It was, therefore, no wonder that this order possessed in Poland at the death of Sigismund, property the yearly income of which amounted to about £100,000, which was an enormous sum at that time, and had about fifty colleges and schools. These schools became naturally most powerful means of their influence, which was steadily employed for the increase of their establishments.

destroyed the advantages obtained by a victory over the enemy, whilst it generated a spirit of insubordination, dangerous to the maintenance of the authority of the law. I have mentioned above (p. 37) the encouragement which Sigismund himself gave to the violation of this authority, whilst that of the monarch was considerably weakened under the same reign by his incapacity, and particularly by his subserviency to Austria, whose influence, dreaded by the Poles, for reasons mentioned before (p. 38), produced a continual, often undue, opposition to the authority of a king who was under this influence.

I have dwelt so much on the reign of Sigismund III., because otherwise it would have been difficult to understand the great change which was effected in the history of Poland during that period, extending over nearly half a century. It must be, however, observed, that, though a bad ruler, Sigismund III. was by no means a bad man, for he was strictly moral in his conduct, of a humane and forgiving disposition, a dutiful son, an affectionate husband, father, and brother.

After the death of Sigismund III., his eldest son, Vladislav IV., the same whose election to the throne of Muscovy I have described above, was chosen for his successor. He was of an entirely different character from that of his father, being as enlightened and liberal in his views as the other was narrow-minded and bigoted. I have related on p. 48 the treaty of Divilino, by which Russia ceded to Poland several important provinces. The tzar, Michael Fedorovich (p. 48), was, however, very anxious to recover these provinces, and consequently made great exertions to prepare for a war with Poland. He sent the Scotsman, Alexander Leslie, to Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland, in order to enlist troops, and to purchase arms and munitions. Several German officers undertook to raise troops from amongst their own countrymen and other western nations,—a task which was facilitated by the great number of adventurous characters produced by the Thirty Years' War, which was then raging.

An army, composed of 30,000 mercenaries, perfectly armed and drilled in the manner of the western troops, with a splendid train of artillery, and 70,000 Russians, besides a considerable number of Tahtar cavalry,* invaded the Polish frontiers in 1632, immediately after the death of Sigismund III., in order to take advantage of the interregnum. This invasion was a flagrant breach of the truce concluded at Divilino, having been made a year before its expiration, and consequently not expected by the Poles. The Muscovite army took several places, and laid siege to Smolensko according to the rules of European military science,† in November 1632. The position of Poland at that moment was very critical. The truce concluded with Sweden (p. 50) was near its expiration, the southern borders were menaced by an invasion of the Turks, and required a considerable force to guard them against this danger, whilst the public attention, being absorbed by the election of

* I give these numbers on the authority of Herrmann's *Geschichte des Russischen Staates*, vol. iii, p. 549.

† A contemporary historian says that this siege was conducted according to the Italian and Belgian manner, and following the same plan which was adopted at the celebrated siege of Breda by the Spanish general Spinola in 1625.—*Ibid.* This shows that the rulers of Muscovy endeavoured, long before Peter the Great, to introduce the European art of war, but it does not appear that they had endeavoured to adopt at the same time the civil and social improvements of the west.

a new monarch, the foreign affairs of the country were comparatively neglected, particularly on the side of Russia, on whose part such a violation of treaties as that which she committed on that occasion, was not expected. Smolensko was therefore besieged during ten months, and its garrison exposed to the greatest hardships, before the new king could arrive to its assistance. He did at last arrive, with an army in number less than half of the besiegers, who were defeated, and compelled to shut themselves up in their fortified camp near Smolensko. They were finally obliged to enter into a capitulation, by which they were allowed to retire on condition of not serving against Poland during four months, and leaving all their heavy ordnance, 150 pieces of cannon, with a great store of ammunition.* This advantage was followed by others. The Poles not only retook the places which had been seized by the Russians, but captured Mojaisk and Kaluga, and threatened the capital itself. This induced the tzar to sue for peace, which was concluded on the 5th June 1634, at Viazma, on the same conditions as the truce of Divilino (p. 48), which was now converted into a permanent peace. The truce with Sweden, concluded in 1629, was also converted into a similar peace at the treaty of Stumsdorf, by which Poland recovered those parts of Prussia which were occupied by the Swedes. The Turks invaded the Polish frontiers in 1633, during the Russian war, but were defeated by the Poles; and this led to a renewal of treaties with the sultan, Amurath II., who ordered the pasha to be executed who had made that invasion without the order of the sultan.

Poland having thus obtained peace with foreign powers, preserved it during all the reign of Vladislav (1633–48), but a more formidable danger than all the external aggressions was rapidly growing in its interior.

I have mentioned before the Cossack Zaporogues, and those of the Ukraine. The latter were a militia, organised by King Stephen Batory from the inhabitants of the border country,† who, being involved in a constant warfare with the Tahtars, had acquired warlike and predatory habits. Besides regular pay, he assigned them lands for their sustenance, and he divided them into regiments and companies, granting them several privileges. They rendered considerable service to Poland against the Turks, Tahtars, and Muscovites, though their unruly spirit and predatory habits gave sometimes much trouble to the government of that country. Their loyalty to the crown of Poland was seriously shaken by the union of the Eastern church with that of Rome (p. 38), and to which, being zealous followers of the former, they were

* These cannons were of such a large size as hardly had ever been employed by an army before. They were chiefly cast in Holland, and of the best description. The ammunition which was taken on that occasion consisted of 1200 quintals of gunpowder, 8000 of lead, and 10,000 shells.—Herrmann's *Geschichte des Russischen Staates*, vol. i. p. 332. The English envoy in Poland, Francis Gordon, who visited the Polish camp in May 1634, says, in a letter addressed to Sir John Coke, of the ordnance taken from the Russians, "I never did see such faire pieces, and such great quantitie of warlike munitions; six of the cannon shoote bullets of seventy-five pounds."—*Extract from the State Paper Office.* This circumstance shows that already, more than two centuries ago, the Russians attached as much value as they do now to artillery, though they had not then their present skill in managing this terrible arm. It also proves the justice of the representation made by King Sigismund Augustus to Queen Elizabeth, and of the Polish ambassador to the town of Lubeck, which I have mentioned, p. 22.

† *Ukraina* signifies in Polish and Russian "border country."

violently opposed. This circumstance gave a favourable opportunity to Muscovy for fomenting amongst these Cossacks a spirit of discontent to the Polish government; and the same thing was done by the Greek clergy of the Ottoman empire, who were exciting the same population against their lawful sovereign by the promise of protection from the sultan. The attempts made by several landowners of the Ukraine to compel their dependents to adopt the union of the churches, and to reduce many free Cossacks to a state of predial servitude, increased the evil, and the Cossacks began more and more frequently to revolt. The risings which took place during the reign of King Vladislav IV. were easily suppressed, particularly as that monarch, who employed and rewarded merit without any regard to sectarian differences, was very popular amongst the Cossacks. He had, however, scarcely closed his eyes, when a terrible insurrection of the Cossacks, who were joined by multitudes of peasantry belonging to their creed, broke out, under the command of Khmielnitzki, sweeping over the south-eastern provinces, where they committed great ravages and cruelties. This insurrection was, however, pacified by King John Casimir, who was elected to succeed his brother, by granting the Cossacks many privileges, and nominating the leader of the insurrection, Khmielnitzki, their hetman, or commander-in-chief. This compromise was, however, soon destroyed by various circumstances; and the Cossacks, being defeated by the Poles, offered their submission to the tzar of Muscovy, Alexis, acknowledging him as their suzerain, on condition that they should themselves elect their chiefs and administer the affairs of their country, where no Russian troops or civil officers were to be introduced. Alexis having accepted these conditions, invaded Poland (1654) with an immense army, whose calamities were soon increased by new complications.

King John Casimir, who, previously to his election, had entered the church, and become a cardinal, but was relieved by the Pope from his vow, was not a monarch capable of governing a country placed in such a difficult position as Poland then was. He was not devoid of some good qualities, was personally brave, but of a careless disposition, entirely governed by his wife, an ambitious, intriguing woman;* he was immoderately fond of pleasure, and bigoted and violent in his personal antipathies. He made himself thus very unpopular, and Radzieyowski, a nobleman of great influence, whom the king persecuted in various ways, retired to Sweden, and persuaded the king, Charles Gustavus, or the Tenth,† to invade Poland, promising him an easy success by the co-operation of the inhabitants. Charles entered Poland from Pomerania (1655) with a considerable force, declaring that he had only a quarrel with the king, and not with the Polish nation,‡ whose liberties he swore to maintain. The exemplary discipline observed by his troops, his conciliatory manners, his known military talents, and the dangers to which Poland was then exposed from external and internal

* Marie de Gonzague, duchess de Nevers, who had been married to Vladislav, and after his death to John Casimir.

† He was duke of Deux-Ponts, and succeeded to the Swedish throne after the abdication of his cousin, Queen Christina.

‡ John Casimir, as pretender to the crown of Sweden, issued a protest at the accession to it of Charles Gustavus.

enemies, as well as the incapacity of John Casimir, made the most rational patriots to desire Charles for their king. He met, therefore, with scarcely any resistance, but was joined by the principal inhabitants, whilst John Casimir, who had retired to Silesia, was much inclined to give up his rights to his successful adversary. It would have been, indeed, a fortunate event, not only for Poland, but for the whole of Europe, if this combination had taken place; because, considering that almost the whole north of Germany then belonged to Sweden, its union with Poland would have formed a mighty state, capable of counterbalancing the power of Austria on one side, and on the other of arresting the progress of Russia, as well as of the then still powerful Ottoman Porte. Sweden being a constitutional kingdom, her union with another state, governed on the same principles, would have given a decided preponderance to the liberal institutions in the east of Europe, and probably restored those of Bohemia and Austria Proper, which had been recently suppressed. The constitution of Sweden, which assured political rights to all classes of society, and gave the monarch a considerable authority, would have produced a salutary influence on that of Poland. These fair prospects were, however, destroyed by Charles Gustavus himself, who, inflated by his easy success, misunderstood the spirit of the nation, and attempted to treat it as a conquered people. When a Polish deputation requested him to convoke a diet, in order to be elected their king, he proudly answered that he was already their monarch by the right of his sword. This haughty answer at once alienated from Charles the Poles, who, abandoning him, formed a confederation, and took up arms against the Swedes. A desperate struggle ensued. The Swedes were joined by Ragotzi, prince of Transylvania, with a considerable force; but the Poles finally expelled all their enemies, recalled the king, John Casimir, and peace was concluded with Sweden by the mediation, and under the guarantee, of England, France, and Holland, at Oliva, near Dantzic, in 1660.

I have said above, that the tzar Alexis had attacked Poland, and supported the revolted Cossacks. Having obtained considerable advantages, he assumed the title of the grand duke of Lithuania, Volhynia, Podolia, and several other Polish provinces. The success of Charles Gustavus, however, alarmed the tzar, who clearly saw the danger which would ensue to his power from a reunion of Poland with Sweden. Similar alarms were felt by Austria, who effected by her mediation a truce between Poland and Russia (1656), on which occasion a promise was made to the tzar Alexis of electing him king of Poland, as successor to John Casimir. The conditions of that election were even settled, and the tzar was so sure of this, that he ordered to be published in all the churches of his empire the news of this event.* War was, however, renewed, particularly as the Cossacks,

* The conduct of Austria towards Poland during that war was characteristic of her selfish policy, and presents some points of resemblance to that which she is now pursuing towards the Western powers and Russia. The union of Poland with Sweden would have been very dangerous to Austria, but she was afraid of being involved in a war with the latter. When the Polish envoy at Vienna represented to the ministers of the Emperor Fredinand III. the consequences which would result to the Hapsburg dynasty from the increase of the Swedish power, he received the answer that it was impossible to require from the emperor that he should expose himself to an evident danger for the sake of Poland. However, when the affairs of the Swedish monarch began to decline, the Emperor Leopold I., who succeeded his father Ferdinand III.

perceiving that their liberties under the protection of Moscow were exposed to much greater danger than under that of Poland, concluded a treaty with the latter, returning to their allegiance to their legitimate sovereign. The Russians were defeated in several battles, and expelled from the Ukraine; but the troubles which took place in Poland on account of the king's attempt to elect a successor during his lifetime, destroyed all these advantages. New revolts of the Cossacks, and the danger from Turkey, whose protection was sought by a party amongst them, as well as the exhausted condition of the country, induced Poland to conclude with Russia a truce of thirteen years, at a place called Andrushow, in 1667, by which Smolensko, and the Ukraine on the left bank of the Dnieper, were ceded to Russia.

John Casimir abdicated in 1668, after a reign of twenty years, which may be considered as one of the most disastrous periods in the annals of Poland. Besides the loss of important provinces, that of the population, by war, pestilence, and emigration, amounted to three millions of souls. At the election which followed the abdication of John Casimir, the minor nobles, jealous of the overgrown influence of the magnates, proclaimed as king Prince Michael Wishniovietzki, a young man who had no pretensions to the crown, and no capacity to wield the sceptre of a state placed in such a difficult position as Poland then was. This reign was disturbed by a factious opposition of the primate and some principal magnates adverse to the king, who was supported by the minor nobles. The Turks took advantage of the disturbed condition of Poland, and declared war against her by the influence of the celebrated vizier Mustapha Kiupruli, who invaded on a sudden the Polish borders, captured the fortress of Kaminietz, and advanced as far as Leopol. The defenceless state of the country induced the Polish ambassadors to conclude, at Buchatz, 18th October 1672, a treaty, by which the fortress of Kaminietz and a part of the Ukraine were ceded to the Turks, with an obligation to pay them an annual tribute of 22,000 ducats.

The condition of Poland, exhausted by the calamitous reign of John

in 1656, consented to send 17,000 men to the assistance of Poland on the following conditions:—Poland was to pay at once 500,000 Rhenish florins, and 300,000 a-year for the maintenance of the auxiliary force as long as the war should last; but as Poland in its distracted state could not pay these sums, the salt mines of Wieljczka were left in pawn to Austria. Poland was, moreover, not to conclude peace without the consent of the emperor, maintain the truce with Muscovy concluded by her mediation, accept the same mediation for a treaty with the revolted Cossacks, consider all the enemies of the emperor her own, elect as successor to King John Casimir an Austrian archduke (notwithstanding a similar promise to the tzar was made under her mediation), and deliver to the Austrians, as security for the fulfilment of these stipulations, the towns of Cracow, Posen, and Thorn. The assistance obtained at this price proved, however, so insufficient against the enemy, and so ruinous to the country, that the Polish ambassador requested, but in vain, the emperor, in 1658, to withdraw his troops, and this request was renewed in 1659. The Austrians finally retired, but the salt mines pawned to them for assistance remained in their hands till the reign of Augustine II., and were not restored to Poland after the rescue of Vienna, gratuitously effected by John Sobieski. This extreme selfishness of the Hapsburg dynasty is rendered more striking when we consider that Sigismund III., father of John Casimir, had saved that dynasty in 1619 from certain ruin, by sending, as I have related above (p. 49), an army to its assistance, and for which Poland, instead of receiving a single penny, became herself involved in a war with Turkey. It is true that ten years afterwards an Austrian force was sent to assist Sigismund in the war with Sweden, but it did no service, and the Polish king was obliged to pay the Austrian general 500,000 ducats, in order to get rid of these auxiliaries.

Casimir, and distracted by faction, was truly deplorable; but the national spirit was not broken, and the diet of 1673 rejected the ignominious peace of Buchatz, and resolved on a vigorous war against the overwhelming power of the Ottoman Porte. John Sobieski, commander-in-chief of the Polish army, obtained a brilliant victory over this formidable enemy (16th Nov. 1673). King Michael died at the same time, and Sobieski was elected in his place. War with the Turks continued till 1676, when it was terminated by the treaty of Zuravno, which left Kaminietz and a part of the Ukraine in the hands of the Turks.

The reign of John Sobieski is celebrated for his rescue of Vienna, an exploit which, though glorious to Poland, was by no means conducive to her interests. These interests required her to maintain the peace of Zuravno with the Turks, who were anxious to preserve it, to heal the wounds inflicted upon the country by its long disasters, and to recover the provinces ceded to Russia by the truce of Andrushow in 1667, which was prolonged in 1676 to 1693.

I have related (p. 55) the manner in which Austria had treated Poland, whose interests demanded an alliance with France, and not with Austria, who had for more than a century favoured Russia, and who had involved Poland, in 1620, in a dangerous and useless war with Turkey. Had that last named power, which supported the Hungarians against Austria, conquered Vienna, extending thus its arms towards Italy, and menacing the Rhine, the whole of western Europe would have united against the Ottomans, instead of leaving Poland, as it did, to bear the brunt of that power. The efforts of the French court in Poland were directed to prevent an Austrian alliance, and to obtain assistance to the Hungarians. The influence of Pope Innocent XI. and of the Polish clergy, as well as some minor causes, prevailed, however, over that of France, and an alliance against the Turks was concluded with Austria, notwithstanding all the efforts of France to prevent it. War was declared against Turkey, which led to the celebrated expedition of Vienna, which produced, however, no advantage to Poland,* which could have easily obtained, through the mediation of France, the restoration of Kaminietz, as well as the territory ceded to the Turks by the treaty of Zuravno, but which this expedition did not help to recover, whilst the provinces left to Moscow by the truce of Andrushow, in 1667 (p. 56), were ceded in perpetuity by the treaty of Moscow (1686), in order to obtain the co-operation of Russia against the Ottoman Porte, but which produced no other result than two fruitless expeditions to the gates of Perekop by a Russian army.

War against Turkey continued with various success, but without any decisive result, during the remainder of Sobieski's life, and was terminated in 1699 by the peace of Carlowitz, concluded between the Ottoman Porte on the one side, and Austria, Venice, Poland, and Russia, on the other, and which restored Kaminietz to Poland, and the territory lost by the treaty of Zuravno (1676).

John Sobieski died in 1696, and the Elector of Saxony, Frederic

* I have said above (p. 56), that the salt-mines given in pawn to Austria in 1657 for their assistance against the Swedes, were not restored to Poland after the rescue of Vienna, though it had been stipulated by a secret article of the treaty of alliance, mentioned in the text.

Augustus, was chosen as his successor. Having concluded an alliance with Peter the Great against Sweden, he was defeated by Charles XII., who, declaring that he did not make war against Poland, but only against her Saxon king, penetrated to Warsaw, and set up Stanislaus Leszczynski, who was elected king by the party opposed to Augustus.* The defeat of Charles XII. at Pultawa, and the support of Peter the Great, enabled Augustus to recover the throne of Poland, from whence Leszczynski was obliged to retire; and it was during this reign that the Russian influence was established in Poland under the following circumstances:—

After the return of King Augustus, the country was for some years distracted by the partisans of Leszczynski, the inroads of the Tahtars, and revolts in the Ukraine. Augustus, in order to maintain his authority, employed a large body of Saxon troops, who committed many excesses, and frequently behaved as if they were in an enemy's country. This naturally produced a great ferment. A confederation was formed, and war was carried on against the Saxon troops. Peter the Great offered, under these circumstances, his mediation between King Augustus and the Polish nation, and a treaty was concluded at Warsaw on the 3d November 1716, between the Russian ambassador, Prince Dolgoruki, who acted on behalf of the confederation, and the plenipotentiaries of King Augustus, the principal of whom was Szaniawski, bishop of Cujavia. This treaty was confirmed by the diet of 1717, known in the history of Poland by the nickname of the *Dumb Diet*, as it lasted only seven hours, during which the treaty was read and signed. An extraordinary haste, indeed, but which must be ascribed to the great anxiety generally felt for pacifying the country, and the fear that the accomplishment of such a desideratum should be prevented by the dissolution of the diet through the veto of some members.

Two clauses, injurious to the national interests, but favourable to foreign influence, were inserted into that treaty by the instrumentality of the bishop, Szaniawski, a creature of Peter the Great, and entirely devoted to him,—namely, 1st, The reduction of the Polish army, under pretence of its better organization, to an insignificant number; and, 2dly, Several restrictions against the religious liberty of the non-Catholic confessions.†

This last clause allowed Szaniawski to exercise various acts of intolerance, and the same thing was done in different parts of Poland; and yet these natural consequences of a measure promoted by Peter the Great were made use of by himself, a few years afterwards, as a pre-

* Frederic Augustus was opposed at his election by a strong party, which proclaimed the French prince, Conti, who arrived at Dantzic with a French fleet, commanded by the celebrated admiral Jean Barth; but seeing that he would be obliged to contend for the throne to which he was elected, he returned to France without making any attempt for its possession. James Sobieski, eldest son of King John, had also many partisans; but the party of Augustus, supported by Austrian and Saxon troops, prevailed over their opponents.

† When the intention of inserting this clause became known, protests from all parts of the country by Roman Catholics were made against it; and Leduchowski, the marshal of the confederation formed against the Saxon troops, though a strict Roman Catholic, zealously defended on that occasion the religious liberty of his Protestant fellow-citizens. His honest intentions were, however, eluded by the declaration of the king. I have amply described this circumstance in the *History of the Reformation in Poland*, vol. ii. p. 421, *et seq.*

tence for interfering in behalf of those who suffered by these measures; and it is even supposed that he meditated an armed intervention in their favour, which was prevented only by his death.*

After the death of Augustus II., his son Augustus III. was elected by a minority, whilst the majority of the electors declared for Stanislaus Leszczynski, who being obliged to vacate the throne of Poland after the defeat of Charles XII. in 1709, lived in France. Augustus being, however, supported by a Russian and a Saxon army, Leszczynski was obliged to retire, and his adherents submitted, after some struggle, to his rival. The state of Poland at the close of the reign of that monarch is described by our eminent historian, Lelevel, in the following manner:—

"From the beginning of the reign of John Casimir, and the wars of the Cossacks, to the end of the Swedish wars and the Dumb Diet, *i. e.*, from 1648 to 1717, a period of seventy years, different kinds of disasters desolated the Polish soil and nation. These calamities caused the decline of Poland, the limits of which were narrowed by the loss of many provinces, whilst her population was diminished by the emigration of the Cossacks, the Socinians, and a great number of Protestants, as well as by the exclusion from the rights of citizens of the remaining dissidents. The nation was rendered weak by general impoverishment and distress; by the system of education, which was either conducted by the Jesuits, or entirely neglected; and finally, by the exhaustion consequent on the convulsive struggles that had agitated the country during seventy years. Poland was plunged into a state of stupor; she lost during the reign of the Saxon dynasty all her energy, and remained inactive, scarcely giving signs of life, save those that indicate paralysis. Accustomed to suffering and humiliation, she imagined herself to be happy; imbued with false principles, she was satisfied to live in disorder, to possess a tract of land still considerable, and to preserve republican institutions, though surrounded by absolute powers, who increased as she decreased.

"Poland formed a republic; but for a long time had been in all her actions dependent on foreign tutelage. The two kings of the Saxon dynasty had no reluctance to subject her to the influence of Russia, and to keep her under the protectorate of Peter the Great, of Ann, and of Elizabeth. The court of St Petersburgh made continual protestations of the interest which it took in the safety of the monarchs and the liberty of the republic. It gave frequent assurances that it would not regard with indifference any attempt at altering or injuring them; and that, in order to prove its sincere friendship for the king and the republic, it would never suffer the formation of the smallest confederation, or any attempt at innovation, directed against the sacred person of the king, or against the republic's liberties and rights, by

* Peter the Great entertained the idea of partitioning Poland; and the plan of this measure was composed by the Prussian minister Ilgen. The country was to be divided by the tzar, the king of Prussia, and the elector of Saxony, the king of Poland, who was to be made hereditary monarch of the part left to him. Peter was to occupy Poland with his troops, and then announce this scheme to the most important persons of the land, with a declaration that all those who should oppose it would be treated as persons opposed to the interests of their country. The assent of Austria was to be obtained by guaranteeing the throne of Spain to the Archduke Charles, and that of Holland by securing to her the border towns.—*Die Höfe und Cabinete Europas.* By Fred. Förster.

whomsoever, and under what pretence soever, they might be undertaken; but, on the contrary, that it would adopt the necessary measures for obviating similar cases. Such were the benevolent declarations of Russia."—*History of the Reign of Stanislaus Augustus*, p. 1, *et seq.*

These declarations meant, in other words, that Russia would never allow any changes in the defective constitution by which Poland was governed, and which was the principal cause of all her misfortunes. As the history of Poland cannot be well understood without a clear idea of this constitution, I shall attempt to give a short sketch of it to my readers.

During the early period of Polish history, the monarchs were hereditary and absolute. The royal title was assumed by Boleslav I. in 1025 (p. 10) without any sanction of either pope or emperor. It remained in abeyance during the time that Poland was divided into minor principalities, but was renewed after its reconsolidation in the beginning of the fourteenth century.

The commencement of the elective system may be considered as dating from the time when Louis, king of Hungary, was, during the lifetime of his uncle, Casimir the Great, elected his successor, to the exclusion of the collateral branches of the ancient Polish dynasty of the Piasts.—(P. 12.) This custom received confirmation from the agreement which the same Louis made with the Polish states to elect one of his daughters for their sovereign, but during the whole reign of the descendants of Jaghellon, the natural heir of the deceased monarch invariably succeeded him on the throne. It was thus only after the extinction of the Jaghellonian dynasty that the crown of Poland became really elective.

The election of the monarch was performed in the following manner. As soon as the king died, the supreme authority was assumed by the primate (Archbishop of Gnezno), who on that account was called *Interrex*, and who issued circulars announcing the vacancy of the throne and summoning the diet of convocation. This diet issued all the regulations for the maintenance of public order, and fixed the day for the election of the new monarch, which was effected at Vola, a place in the vicinity of Warsaw, and was decided by the majority of the votes, not of deputies, but of all the nobles who were assembled for that purpose, and arrayed under the colours of their respective provinces. Immediately after his election, the king took the oath upon the *pacta conventa*, or constitutional guarantees. He was the head of the state, and in him was vested the supreme executive power. He also constituted an estate in the legislative body, which was composed of the king, the senate, and the chamber of nuncios. All public proceedings were carried on in his name, and he had the power of pardon and the nomination to all dignities and offices, ecclesiastical, civil, and military, with the exception of those that were elective;* he had the disposal of the *starosties*, or crown lands, which he could grant to whom he pleased, but not retain for his own use. He could not, without the consent of the diet, make laws, impose taxes, declare war, conclude peace, or form any treaty, contract matrimonial alliances, or leave the country; and as he had not the power of removing the occu-

* As, for instance, the judges of the different tribunals and the members of local administration.

pants from the offices which he had once conferred, the officers of state were as independent of the crown as are the judges of England. This preposterous arrangement paralysed the functions of the executive, and it was particularly pernicious in the case of the *hetmans*, or commanders of the army, over whom the monarch had not the least control.

The ordinary diet met every two years; but in case of need extraordinary diets could be convened. Each diet was preceded by meetings of electors or nobles (called in Polish *seymiki*, *i. e.*, little diets, and in Latin *comitiola*), convoked by royal letters patent, which contained the propositions to be debated in the next diet. These assemblies returned the members, and gave them instructions with regard to the royal propositions, as well as other subjects. The members were obliged strictly to adhere to these instructions, unless they were especially empowered to act according to their own views. The Polish constitution was, therefore, not *representative* but *delegative*.

The nuncios were obliged to render an official account of their parliamentary conduct to their electors, for which special meetings were convened.

The veto of a single nuncio not only threw out the bill under discussion, but broke up the diet,—a preposterous custom, the mischievous effects of which may be easily conceived. During the reign of Augustus III., 1732–63, ten diets were convened, and each of them was broken up by the *veto*, without having passed a single bill. This could, however, be obviated by confederating the diet, *i. e.*, by uniting the two chambers, in which case matters were decided by majority, and not by unanimity of votes, and such diet could not be dissolved by the *veto*. The diet of convocation which assembled immediately after the demise of the king was always confederated.

The senate,* which was presided over by the king, formed rather a council of state than a house of peers, and as no royal propositions could be made without its consent, these propositions had merely, before passing into law, to be submitted to the approval of the chamber of nuncios; and a royal proposition which was amended in that chamber, was submitted to the king and the senate for approbation; but the power of the chamber of nuncios became at last so great, that the acquiescence of the king and the senate was never refused.

The nobles, or the equestrian order, were the ruling class of Poland. All legislative power was in their hands, and none who were not born of noble parents could be invested with any civil or military office, or promoted to the higher preferments in the church. No noble could be imprisoned before he was convicted, unless taken in *flagrante delicto:* if, however, he did not appear before the tribunal when cited, he was declared infamous and outlawed. The nobles were exempted from all taxes, and their houses, as well as those of the clergy, were an asylum. A noble enjoyed his full political rights when he was possessed of landed property, or was, according to the legal expression, *natus et possessionatus;* the amount of this property might, however, be very small; and even this slight qualification was abolished by the diet of 1768, acting entirely under the influence of Russia, and which established universal suffrage in that class. A noble lost his privileges by carrying on a re-

* The senate was composed of the two archbishops, the bishops, palatines, and castellans. Each province had its palatine, and each district its castellan.

tail trade, but recovered them on abandoning the occupation. He also forfeited his privileges by the commission of certain crimes. In return for these privileges the nobles were bound to defend the country. Each noble was obliged to join, armed and on horseback, the *Pospolite Ruszenie*, or *arriere ban*, with a certain number of followers, fixed for each occasion by the king and his council, and proportionate to the extent of his lands; those who held crown or ecclesiastical lands in lease were obliged to do the same. A noble who was condemned to imprisonment was released from prison during the campaign, but returned to it for the remainder of his term of imprisonment when his services were no longer required. A noble, who did not appear at the time and place appointed, was liable to have his property confiscated, and to lose his rights. Martial law, which was in force during the campaign, was extremely severe. The palatines commanded the forces of their palatinates or provinces, and the castellans those of the districts. The nobles of every district were obliged periodically to meet in military array, in order to be mustered by officers appointed for this purpose. As long as these regulations were strictly adhered to, Poland had always, in case of need, an efficient force, which was computed, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to number between 150,000 and 200,000 horsemen. This army did excellent service in a defensive war, but it was not of much avail for a foreign expedition, as it was very difficult to bring together, and impossible to keep a long time in the field, any considerable number of this militia. Had this military organization of the Polish nobles, however imperfect it was, been maintained in its full vigour, Poland would never have become the prey of her neighbours; and it was owing to this organization that the country was saved from the dominion of foreigners under the reign of John Casimir (p. 55). But unfortunately, it fell into disuse, particularly during the long peace which Poland enjoyed under the reign of the Saxon dynasty, which lulled to sleep the martial spirit of the Polish nobles.

Poland had, besides this militia, an army composed of regular troops, cavalry, infantry, and artillery, which was maintained by a permanent tax of one-fourth of the income of all the starosties, or crown lands. Under the reign of Augustus II., in 1717, the numerical force of this army was reduced to 24,000 men, as I have said, p. 58.

The nobles of Poland cannot be compared to those of western Europe, but rather to the military caste of the Kshatrias in India. They were formerly divided into a kind of clans, *gentes*, each distinguished by a peculiar badge, whence they derive their respective names. These clans became in time subdivided into many separate families, who assumed different names, generally taken from their estates,* but preserving the same badge as their coat of arms. There was also a great number of families who were ennobled for their services to the country, and many foreign families were, at different periods, received into the body of the nobility by naturalization. A perfect equality was established amongst the nobles, so that one who himself tilled the land

* This is the reason why the Polish names generally end in *ski*, which termination is a possessive. Thus, for instance, Laski signifies of Lask, and is rendered in Latin by *A Lasco*; Tarnowski, of Tarnow, &c. It answers the English termination *ish*; as, for instance, *Angielski*, English, *Polski*, Polish.

he occupied had the same rights as the magnate whose possessions were more extensive than an English county; but this equality was merely nominal, for several families having acquired great wealth, and immense influence over their poorer fellow-citizens, and disposing of their votes, governed the country, thus forming, *de facto*, a most powerful aristocracy, though the constitution of Poland was democratic *de jure*. This aristocracy, which could often with impunity brave the king, soon gained exclusive possession of all the most important charges and offices of the state, and maintained its wealth by the revenues of the starosties or crown lands, of which there were a great number in Poland, and which, as I have said above, the king was obliged to grant for life to members of the nobility. These grants were originally intended to be conferred as rewards for services rendered to the state, but they were more often obtained by what in England would be termed parliamentary influence. The titles of princes, counts, barons, &c., by which the members of many Polish families are now designated, are not of Polish origin, there having never been in Poland any distinction of rank between the nobles; but when the legislative union of Poland and Lithuania was finally effected in 1569, the Lithuanian families, descended either from the collateral branches of the Jaghellonian dynasty, as, for instance, the Czartoryski, or from the Russian petty princes of the dynasty of Rurik, obtained the privilege of retaining these titles. Several other families, as the Radziwill, Sapieha, Lubomirski, &c., were created princes of the Roman empire, while other houses obtained from the same quarter the title of counts without there being in any of these cases any political privileges attached to the title. When the Austrian government took possession of Galicia, it conferred the title of count upon almost all the families whose members had sat in the Polish senate. Under Louis XIV. it was a rule of etiquette in France to address the Polish senators and their sons, who visited the French court, as *Monsieur le Comte*, a custom which has probably given rise to the habit so prevalent out of Poland of addressing Polish gentlemen by the title of count.

The confederations which are so often mentioned in Polish history, were associations formed by the nobles for the attainment of some political purpose. A confederation was generally commenced by a few individuals who met together, and who, after having composed the act of confederation which expressed the object they had in view, issued circulars inviting all the nobles to join them, and then elected a marshal or chief, and councillors or members of the government, which they pretended to have a right to exercise, and really did exercise, when their strength was efficient. Such confederations generally added to the disorders of the country, but sometimes they proved the means of its salvation, as was the case with the confederation of Tyzsowce in 1656, which freed Poland from foreign invasion, and restored John Casimir to his throne.

The *rokosh* was a general meeting of the armed nobles to represent their grievances, and to obtain redress, which I have described on p. 39.

The towns were governed by the German municipal law, or, as it was usually called, the code of Magdeburg, and had a separate court of appeal. They were for a long time represented at the diets, but

were gradually excluded by the nobles, who usurped the whole legislative power of the country. The peasants, originally free labourers, became by degrees reduced to prædial servitude, and had no rights.

It is almost needless to observe how defective was this constitution, and that it would have destroyed the political existence of any nation whatever. There cannot, therefore, be any doubt that the nation which could withstand the ruinous tendencies of such a policy must have possessed an uncommon degree of vitality and patriotism.

The condition of Poland, with such a defective constitution, and such a miserable ruler as Augustus III., seemed indeed to be hopeless. Government had virtually ceased to exist; and it would be natural to suppose that the country was plunged into a state of disturbance, and overwhelmed with calamities of every kind. This was, however, by no means the case; and the celebrated French historian of Poland during that period, Rhuliere,* who is considered as a high authority on this subject, says, after having described the perfect absence of authority which prevailed at that time in Poland: "What is scarcely possible to understand is, that in the midst of such an anarchy, she (Poland) appeared to be happy and tranquil. Security prevailed in the towns, travellers might without any danger cross the most solitary forests, and pass over the most unfrequented roads. No crime was ever heard of; and nothing, perhaps, reflects more honour on human nature, and may confirm the philosopher's opinion that man is naturally good. All religious hatred seemed to be appeased; no fanatical zeal appeared anywhere; there was no longer any injuries or resentments."—(Vol i. p. 194.)

I think that I may add, without much presumption, that if the circumstances described above reflect, according to the observations of Rhuliere, honour on human nature, they do it no less on the national character of a people who thus behaved under such trying circumstances, and of which I do not believe that a similar example will be found in the history of other countries. It certainly proves that such a nation, once placed in a position where it may enjoy a free development, undisturbed by any foreign influence, would soon attain a position which would entitle it to take its place amongst the most civilised nations of the world.†

* *Histoire de l'Anarchie de la Pologne et du Demembrement de cette Republique.* P. C. Rhuliere. 4 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1807.

† And yet it is grievous to say that a Briton, and a man of Mr Cobden's standing, could, in his pro-Russian zeal, forget so much what he owed to himself as an Englishman, and to truth as a historian, as to give, on the authority of that very writer whom I have quoted in the text, the following statement:—"The annals of republican Poland, previous to its dismemberment, are nothing but a history of anarchy; and such is the title actually given to a work [*Rhuliere*, quoted in the text], which is only a horrible catalogue of tragedies, in which the nobles are the actors, who crowd the scenes with murders, fires, torturings, and famine, until the heart sickens at the frightful spectacle. For nearly a whole century immediately preceding the downfall of Poland, religious discord was added to the other incalculable miseries of the country, owing to the rise of sects dissenting from the prevailing religion. Devastated by foreign and civil wars, by famine and the plague, that followed in their train, the exhaustion of peace now served but to develope new miseries; fanaticism and bigotry armed themselves with the sword as soon as it was abandoned by the worshippers of Mars, and they waged a war against the souls and bodies of their enemies with a fury that knew no bounds; dealing out anathemas against the wretches expiring at the stake, and tearing up the graves of the dead."—*Russia, by a Manchester Manufacturer*, p. 17.

This is indeed a very strange variation of the account given of this subject by the

Several fortunate circumstances began, however, under the reign of Augustus III., to shed some rays of light over the darkness prevailing at that time in Poland, and thus awoke men's minds to the necessity of reform. Stanislaus Leszczynski, who, after having unsuccessfully contended a second time for the throne of Poland in 1734 (p. 59), had become the sovereign of Lorraine, educated at Luneville many young Poles of distinguished families, who, after their return, promoted a taste for sound information amongst their countrymen. The two brothers Zaluski, bishops of Kioff and Cracow, collected with great pains a splendid library at Warsaw, which they made public in 1747.* But the greatest services to the restoration of letters and public education were rendered by Stanislaus Konarski, a priest of the congregation of the *Patres Pii*. He founded at his own expense a college at Warsaw, where the youth were educated on an improved system. He struggled with an extraordinary courage and perseverance against great obstacles and general prejudices, boldly attacking not only the corrupt taste in literature, the inefficient system of education introduced by the Jesuits, but even the abuses which obtained in the political constitution of the country, and the state of disorder generally prevailing. Konarski and his colleague Jordan effected a reformation of their own congregation, and made public instruction its sole object, which, as they conducted it upon an improved system, contributed much to the restoration of learning and literature in Poland.

The most effective and powerful reformers of the defective condition of their country at that time were, however, undoubtedly the Princes Czartoryski; and their efforts in this respect are described by the same historian whom I have quoted on p. 59, in the following manner:—

"Michael, chancellor of Lithuania, and his brother Augustus, palatine (Princes Czartoryski), both endowed with great abilities, and fitted for an active life, undertook to effect the great transformation of

historian whom Mr Cobden quoted as his authority, and which he calls "a horrible catalogue of tragedies, in which the nobles were the actors." It is true that this work relates scenes of fires, murders, and torturings, perpetrated, not by these nobles, to whom Mr Cobden seems to have taken a particular dislike, but by the tools of his beloved Russia; and as regards the dissenters expiring at the stake, Mr Cobden must have taken these facts from his own imagination, because nothing of the kind is to be found in the work alluded to, whilst the extract from it given in the text states quite the contrary of it.

Mr Cobden says, "that those who will read his pamphlet have not the means or the leisure *to investigate, as they otherwise undoubtedly ought to do*, the history of the government ignorantly and mischievously praised by our writers under the name of the republic of Poland."—*Russia*, &c., p. 17.

I think that Mr Cobden, having undertaken the ungenerous task of pleading the cause of the oppressor against the oppressed, of the tyrant against the victim,—for such is the drift of his celebrated production, notwithstanding the occasional condemnation passed on the spoliation of Poland,—should have followed his own advice, and investigated the history of a country whose past he so bitterly censures, and at least have given himself the trouble of reading the work which he quotes, and whose statements he either wilfully misrepresents, or, judging of its contents from its title, allowed his imagination to supply the trouble of examining them. I would, however, more particularly direct the attention of my readers to the statement of Rhuliere given in the text, and Mr Cobden's version of it, because, by comparing the two, they may be enabled to form a correct estimate of the value which may be attached to Mr Cobden's statements in general.

* After the final dismemberment of Poland, this library was transported to St Petersburgh; but it was much injured by the careless manner in which this act of robbery was conducted.

the republic into a well-organised monarchy. It was, according to their ideas, a most efficacious means of raising their country from the humiliation into which it was plunged. They had, consequently, to struggle against prejudices, the local spirit, and the powerful parties of the Potockis and Radziwills. Always entertaining the same projects, they promoted, by the utmost exertions, science and literature, and created by every means partisans in Poland and Lithuania; they elevated to a certain degree of consideration families of little note, and raised those who had been reduced by adverse circumstances. They sought out and patronised men of talent, and such as exerted by their writings an influence on public opinion. Though they did not obtain their political object, it cannot be forgotten that they powerfully contributed to make many improvements. Conjointly with Konarski, they spread a taste for literature and science, and nobody could equal their efforts in this respect."—*History of the Reign of Stanislaus Augustus.*

The subserviency of the Saxon dynasty to the court of St Petersburgh, mentioned above, p. 59, gave naturally an immense influence to that court in Poland. The Czartoryskis endeavoured, therefore, to gain the favour of that court, being persuaded, as Rhuliere says, that, considering the venality, the ignorance, and the incapacity of the Russian ministry, it might be induced to support measures useful to Poland, the object of which these barbarians would not penetrate. The project of the Czartoryskis was much encouraged by the English minister in Poland, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, who promised to obtain the support of his own court and that of Russia. Had the same spirit which presided over the councils of Russia in the reign of Elizabeth continued to govern that country, the project of the Czartoryskis might have probably succeeded; but the accession of Catherine entirely changed the state of affairs.

It is well known that Stanislaus Poniatowski, a near relation of the Czartoryskis, visited for the first time St Petersburgh as a member of the English legation, with Sir Charles Hanbury Williams; that having gained the favour of Catherine, then grand-duchess, as well as of her husband, he was appointed Polish ambassador at St Petersburgh; and that Catherine, having become empress of Russia, brought about his election to the crown of Poland. The Czartoryskis availed themselves of the presence of the Russian troops sent by Catherine to support that election, in order to execute their meditated reforms; and they succeeded in accomplishing them at the diet of convocation 1764. They diminished the powers of the hetman and of the treasurer, whose offices were immovable (p. 61), established commissions for the military and finance departments, and enacted that the affairs relating to finance and justice should be decided in future by the majority, and not unanimity, of voters. This enactment limited the effect of the *veto;* but the attempt of abolishing it altogether was prevented by the influence of the Russian and Prussian ambassadors; and, indeed, it was only by artifice that the Czartoryskis contrived to elude the opposition of these ambassadors to their reforms, and by disguising their special regulations under general expressions. Though they did not succeed in abolishing the fatal effects of the *liberum veto** alto-

* *Vide supra*, Political Organization of Poland, p. 61.

gether, they rendered it nugatory in the decision of some of the most important affairs of the state. They introduced many other reforms besides, and developed them more fully at the coronation of the new king, whose authority was thereby considerably increased. Encouraged by this success, they demanded the withdrawal of the Russian troops stationed in Poland, and rejected the defensive and offensive alliance proposed by Russia, which would have involved Poland in a war, of which she would have the burdens to bear, and Russia the advantages to reap.

Catherine, who had willingly allowed the Czartoryskis to employ her troops as long as she believed that they did it simply for their personal interests, perceived now that they had been striving for an object, which, once attained, would have emancipated Poland from foreign influence. She consequently gave orders to her ambassador in that country to abolish the constitutional reforms introduced by the Czartoryskis; and the king of Prussia, Frederick II., did the same. The Russian and Prussian ministers sought now to become intimate with all the opponents of the above-mentioned reforms; and many of them sincerely believed that the liberties of the nation, or what they considered as such, would be destroyed by these reforms. These infatuated patriots, forgetting that liberty without national independence was but an empty word, made, at the diet of 1766, the utmost efforts to abolish the reforms in question; but as they could not succeed, the Russian and Prussian ambassadors conjointly declared (16th October 1766), that if the *liberum veto* was not immediately restored, their courts would consider it as a *casus belli*. Nothing remained, therefore, to the Czartoryskis than to submit to what was inevitable; and the most mischievous principle of the Polish constitution was restored.

Catherine, who courted the adulation of Voltaire and his school, by whom she was immoderately praised for the liberal principles which she proclaimed on several occasions in the most ostentatious manner, took up the cause of the Polish dissidents,* whose religious liberty was restricted under the influence of Russia, as I have shown above (p. 58), but which was now made a pretence for maintaining that influence. Frederick II. supported the same cause with a similar object; and it was advocated by the envoys of England, Denmark, and Sweden, as guarantees or parties to the treaty of Oliva, in 1660, which secured the rights and liberties of all the citizens of Poland. Russia was no party to that treaty, but only to that of Warsaw, in 1716, which restricted the religious liberty of those very dissidents whose defence she was now undertaking. The intellectual state of the nation was then, as I have described it (p. 59) on the authority of Lelevel, by no means in an advanced condition, and the claims of the dissidents were opposed by the multitude from ignorance and fanaticism, and by many on account of the foreign interference. The dissidents were finally restored to equal rights with their Roman Catholic fellow-citizens in 1767. But the same diet which passed this just and liberal law submitted to a suicidal measure, by accepting the Russian guarantee of the existing constitution; or, in other words, Russia ex-

* A name given in Poland to the Christian confessions not belonging to the Roman Catholic church.

torted from that diet a pledge not to introduce the most important and necessary reforms into the country.*

The continual oppression of Russia produced at last an armed opposition. A confederation was formed at Bar, in Podolia. Its soul was Adam Krasinski, bishop of Kaminietz, and its most eminent leader was Kazimir Pulawski.† It appealed to the principal courts of Europe, representing to them the dangers which would be produced by the Russian occupation of Poland; but Austria and France, whose interest it was to strengthen Poland against Russian influence, never took any steps for that purpose, and remained as indifferent to the affairs of Poland as if they had been those of China.‡ England, whose ambassador, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, had encouraged the efforts of the Czartoryskis, and who had, perhaps, more interest than any other power to prevent the progress of Russia, seems to have been at that time perfectly unaware of the dangers coming from that quarter, so that it is very probable that this subject, so forcibly pointed out by the genius of Goldsmith, was generally considered as a visionary's dream. I shall have an opportunity of returning to this subject in the course of this essay. Turkey alone perceived the danger of the Russian occupation of Poland; and after having represented in vain this subject to the courts of Europe, and pressed Russia to withdraw her troops from Poland, and not to meddle with the affairs of that country, declared war against her on this account.§ The Ottoman

* I have said above that the *liberum veto*, virtually abolished by the reforms of the Czartoryskis, was restored at the diet of 1766. That of 1767-8 increased the facility of dissolving the diets by the veto of a single member; and it introduced universal suffrage amongst the numerous class of nobles, each of them being declared capable of voting at the elections, which right had hitherto been confined to those who possessed landed property.

† The same who perished afterwards in the American war of independence at Savannah.

‡ These are the very words of a despatch to his court of the Saxon resident in Poland.

§ The immediate cause of this declaration was the violation of the Turkish territory on the Polish frontier by the Russian troops; but the principal reason of it was the Russian interference in Poland, as may be seen from the following extract from the Turkish manifesto on the 30th October 1768:—

"In the year 1177 (1763), on the death of Augustus III., king of Poland, the republic of Poland intending, according to the system of the Polish liberty, to proceed to the election of a king, the court of Russia set up for king a private Polish officer, in whose family there never was a king, and to whom royalty was not becoming; and has, by siding with this king, intruded on and traversed, against the will of the republic, all the affairs of the Poles. The Porte having given notice of it to the Russian resident, he declared that the republic of Poland, having required a certain number of troops to protect its liberty, six thousand horse and one thousand Cossacks were granted for that purpose, who had neither cannon nor ammunition with them, and were under the command of the republic, and that there was not a single Russian soldier above that number in Poland; yet when he was asked, some time after, why the court of Russia had sent more troops into Poland, and why violence had been used at the election of Poniatowski, son of one of the grandees of Poland, the said resident assured, by a writing signed with his hand, that his court had not declared for any person, nor had ever made use of any violent means for the election of any one whatsoever. Notwithstanding this assurance and declaration, the court of Russia has been continually sending troops, cannon, and ammunition, under the command of its own generals, who continued to attack the Polish liberty, and to put to death those who refused to submit to the person that themselves had not elected, stripping them, with clamour and violence, of their goods and estates. Such a conduct being productive of confusion in the good order of the Sublime Porte, he (the Russian resident) was given to understand, that, according to the tenor of the articles of the old and new capitulations, the court of Russia must order her troops to evacuate Poland. This the said resident promised, by several memorials signed; but this promise had not been fulfilled."—*Annual Register*, 1768, p. 231.

Porte, though fighting for a cause in which the whole of Europe was deeply interested, received no help from other powers, whilst England gave an indirect but most important assistance to Russia, by allowing her fleet, sent to the Mediterranean, to obtain all that it wanted in the British ports; and it was entirely owing to the skill and valour of the British officers employed in this fleet that it obtained such decisive advantages against the Turks.* France sent, finally, some money and a few officers to the confederation of Bar, which, though ill organised, and without any proper rallying point, struggled in a heroic manner against the forces of Russia and the partisan of the king, until it was obliged to give way, in 1772, to the armies of the three powers, which invaded Poland on all sides, in order to perpetrate its first dismemberment.

It is now pretty well established that Frederic II. was the author of that project, and that the court of Russia, but particularly its minister Panin, was opposed to it.† The cause of this opposition on the part of Russia was, however, a desire exclusively to maintain her influence in Poland, until a fit opportunity for taking the whole should arrive. Frederic himself denied this;‡ but he was undoubtedly the greatest gainer from this nefarious transaction, because, by seizing Polish Prussia, he united his disjointed possessions of Brandenburgh and Prussia. The opposition of Maria Theresa to this political crime, which was no less a fault than a crime, is well known.§ Be it as it may, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, on a sudden declared their intention of demanding several provinces of Poland, and invaded with their armies those provinces in the midst of peace, and after having most solemnly guaranteed the integrity of the Polish territory a few years before, as was done by Russia and Prussia at the diet of 1767–68. The pretences with which the partitioning powers thought necessary to colour their spoliation were perfectly absurd. Austria claimed the provinces which had constituted the principality of Halich (p. 8), because a Hungarian prince occupied for about a year the throne of that country, in 1214, consequently 557 years before, taking at the same time a considerable territory which never had belonged to Halich. The king of Prussia maintained that the provinces which he had seized had originally belonged to the dukes of Pomerania, from whom they had been wrested by the German Knights in the thirteenth century, and from whose dominion they had passed under that of Poland,

* As regards this war and its consequences, I would refer the reader to the well-known work, *Progress of Russia in the East.*

† This fact is proved by an elaborate article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1–15, October 1849, by Count de St Priest.

‡ "It was the Empress Catherine," says Frederic, in a letter to Voltaire, "who proposed the partition. I know that Europe generally believes that the partition of Poland was a consequence of political intrigues imputed to me; however, that is utterly false. After I had proposed divers intermediate measures, it became necessary to have recourse to the partition, as the sole measure that could prevent a general war. Appearances are deceptive, yet it is by these that the public judge. That which I here say to you is as true as the forty-eighth proposition of Euclid."

§ Maria Theresa expressed to the French ambassador, M. de Breteuil, "that by all that has taken place in Poland she has put a great blot on her reign; that never in her life had she so much reason to fear and to blush as on this occasion; that the world would forgive her if it knew how strenuously she had opposed the partition, and how many circumstances had concurred to make her renounce her principles, and to make her resolution give way before the exorbitant pretensions of Russia and Prussia."—*Breteuil's Despatch*, Vienna, 23d Feb. 1778.

1466, (p. 14); and as, after the extinction of the reigning family of Pomerania in 1637, the house of Brandenburg had succeeded to its rights, he was, in taking these provinces, only entering into the possession of his lawful heritage. Russia's pretence was compensation for the expenses incurred in keeping her armies in Poland.*

Russia obtained by this partition an extent of territory to the amount of 32,000, Austria 27,900, Prussia 10,800 English square miles. Austria had, undoubtedly, the lion's share of the spoil, because her part, though inferior in extent of territory to that of Russia, was by far superior in regard to the amount of population, the fertility of the soil, mineral riches, and climate. This advantage, derived by a state which had resisted their partition, was explained by the Empress Maria Theresa herself, who said to the same French ambassador whom I have mentioned before, "I thought that, by putting forward exorbitant pretensions, I should induce them to break off the negociations; but my surprise and sorrow was great when I received in answer the full consent of the king of Prussia and of the tzarina."

These confessions of Maria Theresa show that she understood better the true interests of Austria than her son, the Emperor Joseph II., who was glad to get this increase of territory. If Austria could not prevent the dismemberment of Poland, her interests demanded that she should make of her portion of the spoil a counterpoise to Russian influence in Poland, by giving to her new acquisition a thorough national Polish organization, instead of attempting to Germanise it. Such a policy would have given to the Austrian dynasty an immense popularity over all Poland, and facilitated to one of its princes the possession of the throne of that country.

Poland retained, after the first dismemberment, an extent of territory of 278,000 English square miles, with a population of about 11,000,000. The great calamity which thus fell on that country roused the spirit of the nation, which now strove to compensate its heavy losses by internal improvements. An excellent system of public instruction was introduced by the Board of the National Education,—an institution which, I believe, Poland was the first to establish, but which was afterwards introduced into other countries under the name of the Ministry of Public Instruction. Literature was encouraged, and acquired in a very short time a high degree of development, industry was reanimated, and every kind of improvement rapidly advanced, through the exertions of many patriotic individuals, and of the king himself, who earnestly sought to improve the condition of the country. These circumstances so much advanced public opinion, that the necessity of reforming the existing constitution was universally felt. In consequence of this a diet was convoked for this object in 1788. It continued its deliberations till 1791,† and proclaimed, on the 3d of May of that year, a new constitution, which abolished the *liberum veto*, rendering the decisions of the future diets dependent on the majority, and not the unanimity, of votes, and declared the throne hereditary in the Saxon dynasty after

* Mr Cobden proved, however, a more zealous asserter of Russian rights than the Empress Catherine herself, because he maintains, p. 13 of his work, which I have quoted before, that Russia did only retake her own on that occasion. Thus the poor Empress Catherine was so innocent as to be unaware of her own rights!

† It was confederated, and consequently could not be dissolved by the vote of a member.—(*Vide* p. 61.)

the death of the reigning king, Stanislaus Poniatowski.* It also extended the rights of the plebeian classes, and introduced several other useful regulations, acknowledging at the same time the necessity of further reforms, by an enactment that there should be a revision of it after the lapse of twenty-five years.

Frederick II. died 1786, and his successor, Frederick William II., whose counsels were directed by Baron Herzberg, an enlightened and liberal statesman, perceived the danger of the growing power of Russia, with whom Austria, allured by the prospect of spoliating Turkey, was closely united. He endeavoured to counteract the power of these two states by an alliance with England, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, and Poland. The efforts of the Polish reformers were, therefore, greatly encouraged by the king of Prussia, who officially declared, on the 18th November 1788, that no Russian guarantee imposed on the existing constitution of Poland should prevent the Poles from making changes in it, or check in any way the national liberty and independence; and he continually encouraged the Poles, in various ways, to reform their defective constitution. The same thing was done by the English minister at Warsaw, M. Hailes. The king of Prussia proposed to Poland a defensive alliance, which was concluded on the 27th March 1790; and he expressed his unqualified approbation of the constitution of the 3d May in a letter addressed, on the 18th of the same month, to his minister in Poland, Count Goltz, and he repeated these sentiments in another addressed to the king of Poland on the 23d May, as well as by a diplomatic note on the 24th June, in which he assured him of his firm intention to fulfil the obligations of the treaty concluded with Poland the year before.

Catherine, who had guaranteed the existence of the defective Polish constitution, was, during all this time, engaged in a war with Turkey, but as soon as it was terminated by the treaty of Jassy (Jan. 9, 1792), she turned her attention to Poland. She found a small number of misguided individuals, who had opposed the introduction of the new constitution, and who formed, under the protection of her troops, a confederation, at a place called Targovitza, declaring that their object was to restore the liberties of their country, destroyed by the monarchical revolution of the 3d May 1791. Catherine issued a declaration that she never had acknowledged the new Polish constitution, and ordered an army of 100,000 of her best troops to invade Poland for the support of the confederation of Targovitza.

The conduct of the Empress Catherine on that occasion, however unjust and bad in itself, may be called HONOURABLE if compared to the shameless manner in which the king of Prussia acted on the same occasion. I have related above (p. 67), that she had imposed upon

* It may appear strange to some of my readers, that although the reign of the Saxon dynasty was not favourable to the interests of Poland, it was called to the throne by a reforming legislature. The Saxon dynasty had, however, established, during a reign of more than half-a-century, a considerable influence in that country, and its princes enjoyed great personal popularity amongst the nation. The principal reason for calling the Saxon dynasty to the hereditary throne of Poland seems, however, to have been, that it was the only sovereign family which was connected with Poland; that the union of a country so advanced as Saxony with Poland, thus effected, would be very favourable to the advance of the latter, and strengthen its external position, as the Saxon monarchs, on becoming the hereditary kings of Poland, would have acted differently than if they were only its elective sovereigns.

Poland, in 1767, her guarantee of the defective constitution by which that country was governed. She opposed, by means of her agents and partisans, the reform of that constitution, and she had now, at least, a specious pretence for interfering by force of arms against this reform. The king of Prussia, on the contrary, did every thing in his power to encourage the Poles to reform their defective constitution; he expressed the greatest approbation of their work when it was accomplished, and sought himself the alliance with Poland which was concluded on the 29th March 1790; and yet, when the Russian troops invaded Poland, which produced a clear *casus fœderis*, the king of Poland wrote to him on the 31st May 1792, that the time was come when his assistance, stipulated by the treaty of alliance, mentioned above, would be required. He had no shame to answer, on the 9th June, declaring that he had never approved of the new constitution which the Poles had given themselves without his consent or knowledge, and that circumstances being changed by their having acted in this manner, he was not obliged to keep the stipulations of the treaty of alliance concluded with Poland. A few months afterwards he declared that same constitution which Catherine and her protegés attacked as being too monarchical to be demagogical and jacobinical, and, invading Poland, joined his troops to those of Russia. Truly an instance of barefaced perfidy which has few parallels in history!*

The Poles were not discouraged by this unexampled treachery of their ally. Conscious of the disorders resulting in the time of a crisis from a divided power, the diet invested the king with a complete authority, placing at his disposal large sums of money, and giving him an unlimited power of employing all the resources of the country for its defence. This was undoubtedly a most generous act of confidence to a monarch who had certainly not deserved it by his antecedents; but his conduct during the progress of the legislative struggle for reforming the constitution of the country seemed to have been so sincere, that these antecedents were forgotten and forgiven by the nation.

The Polish army, which had only commenced its reorganization, was no more than about 50,000 men strong; but the king could order the *arriere ban*, or general levy, and if he had only himself taken the field, as he had most solemnly promised to do, the whole nation would have risen to join him, and there was no sacrifice which he could not have demanded from it. But instead of adopting this course, he paralysed the movements of the Polish troops, which were opposing the Russian invasion in Lithuania and the Ukraine, by ordering them to retreat, and thus destroyed the effect of two brilliant feats of arms achieved by the Poles under Prince Poniatowski, his nephew, and Kosciuszko, who, having acquired a great reputation in the American war of independence, returned to his native country. He finally made his accession to the confederation of Targovitza, thus abolishing the

* The conduct of the king of Prussia on that occasion is judged by an English writer in the following manner:—"Thus did Frederick William deny his own repeated declarations, belie his solemn engagements, and trample under foot all that is held most sacred among men. So signal a breach of faith is not to be found in the history of great states. It resembles rather the vulgar frauds and low artifices which, under the name of Reasons of State, made up the policy of the petty usurpers and tyrants of Italy in the fourteenth century."—*Edinburgh Review*, vol. xxxvii. p. 504.

new constitution, which he had most solemnly sworn to uphold, and delivering its defenders into the hands of their adversaries.

This act of high treason, committed against the country by its own monarch, and one to whom the nation had shown such a generous confidence, is, indeed, a crime of such magnitude that I am quite at a loss for a sufficiently strong term to qualify it in an adequate manner; and yet it is admitted on all hands that he was by no means a bad man, but only of an exceedingly weak and vaccillating disposition,—a defect which in every public character, but particularly in one placed at the helm of the state, be he king or minister, can never be compensated by the most amiable qualities, and will often produce even more harm than positive wickedness.

Thus the Polish nation was betrayed in a shameless manner by its ally the king of Prussia, as well as by its own monarch,—a concurrence of calamities unparalleled in history, and yet its efforts made on that occasion have undoubtedly deserved a better fate, because the constitution of the 3d May 1791 obtained the unqualified approbation of such contemporary statesmen as Burke, Fox, and Mackintosh. The most remarkable judgment of this constitution, however, is that of Frederic von Raumer, professor of history at the university of Berlin, whose works have earned a well-deserved fame over all Europe, and who wrote, in 1831, by the order of his government, an account of the fall of Poland.* He cannot be therefore suspected of any undue bias towards the Poles, and he describes the constitution of the 3d May 1791 in the following manner:—

"Among all the constitutions which have been framed within the last forty years,† the Polish constitution of the 3d May 1791 is, with the exception of the North American, the most ancient. Any defects in it would be therefore much more excusable than if it had taken birth at a period of more mature experience, or if it had been planned under more favourable circumstances, or by nations having attained a higher degree of civilization. How praiseworthy is it, therefore, that the Poles succeeded, under the most difficult and the most deplorable circumstances (such, indeed, as would have rendered desperate resolves excusable), to give themselves a constitution, which, superior to almost all the subsequent attempts of the kind, conciliates in a most satisfactory manner the general claims of reason and sound theory with the order of things established by history and with the requirements of the age, and kept all within the limits of the practicable! Had the theoretical point of view, and the consequent means, been obstinately insisted on, it would have led to wild dreams alone, while too great concessions to tradition would have led to the idolatry of the past; but Kollontay, Ignatius Potocki, and the other admirable originators of this constitution, happily steered their way between the dangers of these Scylla and Charybdis.

"For if any one would find fault with certain provisions concerning religion and the relative positions of the two chambers, let him remember that Great Britain settled the first point only forty years later, and that France is still in doubt on the subject of the latter. All the other pro-

* *Polen's Untergang*, in the *Historischer Almanac of Leipsic for* 1832, reprinted separately.

† This was written in 1831.

visions were decidedly improvements on the existing order of things. Take, for instance, the extension of religious toleration, the enfranchisement of the towns, the regulation of the dues of the peasantry, the new organization of the diet, the increased power of the senators, the form of elections, the abolition of the confederations and of the *liberum veto*, the establishment of an hereditary monarchy, &c. And this constitution the Poles had given to themselves, without plunder, assassination, bloodshed, or injury to the rights of property. They combined the most tender respect for all vested rights which could possibly be maintained, with the extermination of all radical evils, with wisdom, moderation, and perseverance. Such an admirable work was indeed deserving of the greatest possible success; doubly responsible, therefore, are those ruthless hands which polluted the pure, spotless deed, the calumniators who reviled it, and the miscreants who have destroyed it."

Now, I would appeal to the common sense of my readers, whether it is just or consistent with that fair play upon which the English justly pride themselves, to condemn a nation which had made such efforts to regenerate its defective political condition, and which has been so shamefully used as the Poles were, and to accuse them of having been themselves the cause of the fall of their country. I do not speak of those vulgar aspersions by ignorant or malevolent scribblers and talkers, but I really think that a British peer, and particularly one of such a reputation as Earl Grey, should have, at least, given himself the trouble of becoming acquainted with the history of a nation, against which he has brought forward, in the senate of his country, an accusation similar to those mentioned above.

As an answer to his lordship's peremptory declaration that the Poles had lost their political independence by their own fault, and consequently are not deserving of recovering it, I shall give the following opinion on the same subject, expressed by the eminent historian whom I have quoted above:—

"The first dismemberment had, no doubt, at least partly, been brought about by the fault of the Poles,—by the neglect of their duties to themselves, and the anarchy which prevailed in their country. Since that time, however, they had advanced in a laudable manner towards a better state of things, and had even, in respect to the legal forms of public life, outsped their accusing neighbours; what right, therefore, had these latter to disturb, instead of assisting,—to destroy, instead of upholding? The tenth part of the forces which they set in motion for their unhallowed ends would have sufficed to extirpate all that was wrong in Poland, and insure victory to all that was good. In 1772, Catherine declared that she was supporting the cause of Polish liberty, while, from motives of covetousness, she was promoting anarchy. In 1791 she received the congratulations of the confederates of Targovitza for having checked the *ultra-monarchical* innovations in Poland, and in 1792 she designated those very innovations as *jacobinical and democratic!* In the same manner, Frederick William, following the triumphal car of Russia, shifted about in word and deed.

"War was made upon France because the royal power had there been diminished, and upon Poland because it had there been increased; and this increase was ascribed to the Jacobins (the enemies of all kings).

Whilst in France licentiousness, assuming the mask of a false philosophy and philanthropy, led ambitious innovators to the overthrow of all governments, in Poland the infatuated kings seem to have entered into a conspiracy with their adversaries to surpass the latter in jacobinical practices, and to destroy amongst nations all respect for right, property, the sanctity of oaths, and the duty of subjects!

"Indeed, the Poles were more unfortunate than those nations who were conquered in an open, simple war. Their friendship was sought with a view of betraying it; it was considered a pleasure to break treaties solemnly concluded with them; they were driven into courses which were afterwards condemned, and sentiments were ascribed to them which they never had harboured. At the present day, it is only blind prejudice, wilful ignorance, or base calumny, which can accuse the originators of the constitution of the 3d May 1791 of having been blameworthy revolutionists."—(P. 116, *et seq.*)

The occupation of the Polish territory by the Russian and Prussian troops was followed by its second partition, which took place in 1793, to the great dismay, not only of the true patriots, but even of those infatuated confederates of Targovitza, who had just sent an address of thanks to the Empress of Russia for having assisted them in undoing a monarchical revolution so injurious to the national liberties. A manifesto, issued by Russia and Prussia, declared that though the jacobinical party (the same which the Russian tools had accused of ultra-monarchism, and the king of Prussia cherished and encouraged) had been overcome by their arms, yet the dangerous spirit of that party was so widely spread in Poland, that the two above-mentioned powers resolved, with the consent of the Emperor of Rome,* and for the safety of their own states, to narrow the limits of that country by a new dismemberment of its territory.

Russia obtained by this new spoliation 98,000 English square miles, Prussia 22,000, and the town of Dantzic; and the remainder left to Poland was subjected to every kind of vexation from the partisans of Russia, and the commanders of her troops occupying that country, whilst the principal patriots were obliged to emigrate. The patriotic spirit of the nation was not, however, broken by these circumstances. An extensive conspiracy, as it is the fashion to call every combination of the Poles against foreign oppression and usurpation, was organised, and insurrections broke out in different parts of Poland. Kosciuszko arrived at Cracow from abroad, and having assembled a number of peasants, armed with scythes, defeated a superior force of Russian troops. Warsaw, though occupied by a considerable Russian garrison, rose and expelled the enemy. A provisional government was formed; several notorious traitors to their country were tried and executed; but the king, who had betrayed his country in such a shameless manner, as I have described above (p. 72), and who, considering the recent tragical fate of Louis XVIII., to whom nothing of this kind could be imputed, had certainly much reason to be apprehensive for his safety, was not even insulted in any way; and, indeed, it is our national boast, that, in the course of eight centuries of our history, beginning

* The title of the Emperor of Rome, assumed since the time of Charlemagne by the emperors of Germany, was resigned by the Emperor Francis II. in 1804 for that of Austria.

with Mieczyslav I., 963, and ending with Stanislaus Poniatowski in 1795, not one of our monarchs was murdered by his subjects.

The Poles struggled for about eight months against the overwhelming forces of Russia and Prussia. Kosciuszko was defeated, wounded, and taken prisoner. The suburb of Warsaw, Praga, was carried by storm, and all its inhabitants put to the sword by Suwaroff; Warsaw capitulated; and the final dismemberment of the country took place in 1795.

Poland was thus erased from the list of independent states, and the condition of her dismembered provinces varied according to the government under which they fell. Those which came under that of Prussia were treated with great mildness, and received many important improvements. These advantages were, however, counterbalanced by a decided tendency to Germanise them. The Austrian government was no more favourable to the nationality of its Polish provinces; it introduced some few improvements, but, on the other hand, it exhausted their resources by heavy taxes and levies of recruits for its wars with France.

The provinces under the dominion of Russia were in many respects the most favoured of all, because, though no material improvements were introduced, their nationality was much better respected than by the other governments; and this is an object which the Poles, as well as all other Slavonic nations, will always have much more at heart than any other advantages whatever. Thus, in the provinces taken by Russia at the first dismemberment in 1772, the laws and language of the inhabitants were respected, the administration of justice was maintained in Polish, and the principal local magistrates were elective. The taxes were moderate, and the new provinces remained free from military conscription during twenty years. The abuses of the Russian administration were then much less intolerable than they are now, because the police of the district, as well as the courts of justice, were administrated by magistrates elected by the landowners themselves. Liberal opinions, which have been of late so severely persecuted by the Russian government, were at that time regarded by it as harmless fancies, so that works like those of Voltaire, Rousseau, and other writers of the same school, were not only permitted free circulation, but even allowed to be published in Russian translations. Poland being then unable to make any attempt at regaining her lost provinces, no agitation for this purpose, and consequently no persecutions on this score, took place in the above-mentioned provinces. It is true, that towards the end of Catherine's reign there was some religious persecution of the peasantry belonging to the Greek church united with Rome, but it was quite insignificant if compared to that which the same church has suffered under the reign of the Emperor Nicholas. It is impossible to know what kind of policy would have been ultimately followed towards the Polish provinces taken by the second and third partitions by the Empress Catherine, whose liberal fancies had been cooled down by the French revolution. She severely persecuted the patriots who had defended their country in an open field, or opposed her intrigues by their efforts, and the administration of these provinces was not definitively settled when she died in 1796. Her successor, the Emperor Paul, whose mad outbursts of despotism were

evidently the result of a mind diseased by a keen sense of wrongs inflicted upon him by his own mother, but who was naturally of a just and even chivalrous disposition, strongly disapproved of the partition of Poland; and had his accession taken place a few years sooner, that act of political iniquity would probably have never been perpetrated. This was, at least, his solemn declaration to Kosciuszko, to whose prison he went himself in order to announce to him that he was free. He liberated or recalled all those Poles who had been either imprisoned or banished by his mother, and restored to them their property, and he adopted towards the Polish provinces seized by the second and third dismemberment, the same system of policy that had been followed under the preceding reign towards those of the first partition. The Emperor Alexander was still more friendly disposed towards his Polish subjects. The university of Vilna received a new and improved organization, and the public schools of the Polish provinces were placed under its superintendence; many new establishments of the kind were erected, and an excellent system of instruction conveyed in the national language introduced. This system of public education, through which a great part of Poland continued to live in some measure a national life under the rule of Russia, was entirely due to Prince Adam Czartoryski. This eminent patriot, having gained the personal friendship of the Emperor Alexander, whose minister he became, served him loyally, in the hope of seeing the restoration of his country effected by that monarch, employing, meanwhile, his whole credit for the maintenance of the nationality in the Polish provinces of Russia. These hopes had certainly every appearance of being well founded, and the intentions of Alexander sincere, because, when the Austrian and Prussian governments endeavoured to Germanise the rising generation of their Polish subjects by means of public education, the Russian monarch not only respected, but fostered and developed that most important element of the national life of his Polish subjects. This proceeding had the appearance of a preparatory stage towards the restoration of Poland; and the work of an eminent Russian, who is an exile from his country, and is by no means inclined to flatter its government, leaves no doubt that the Emperor Alexander for some time sincerely entertained that idea.*

Some Polish patriots, and particularly General Dombrowski, retired, after the final dismemberment of their country, to France, where they organised a Polish legion, which, being allowed to assume its national colours, was joined by many patriots from different parts of the country, as well as Polish soldiers from the Austrian army, so that in a short time it numbered 8000 men. This number was continually increasing, and large sums were frequently remitted from Poland for their support. They valiantly fought in the wars of the French republic, and patiently endured the most severe privations, in the delusive hope that they would be able to recover their national independence with the assistance of the French government; but after the treaty of Amiens, that government forced a great number of them to embark for St Domingo, from whence few only returned. The war with Prussia (1806) opened a reasonable hope to the remnants of these legions of assisting in the restoration of their country; and, indeed, as soon as

* *La Russie et les Russes.* Par N. Tourgheneff. Vol. i. p. 83, *et seq.*

the French army entered on the Polish soil, they were joined by crowds of volunteers, so that a Polish army was organised in a few weeks, and it rendered considerable services to the French emperor. The object for which the Poles were making such immense sacrifices on that occasion was, however, only partially attained by the treaty of Tilsit (7th June 1807), by which a part of the Polish territory that had been held by Prussia was created into an independent state, under the name of the Duchy of Warsaw, leaving to that power almost the whole of what it took at the first partition, and giving to Russia about 3000 English square miles.

The Duchy of Warsaw received for its sovereign the king of Saxony, a constitution, the Code Napoleon, and a civil organization modelled on that of France. An army, disproportionately large to its population, was organised; but the greatest part of it was sent in 1808 to Spain, so that when war between France and Austria broke out in 1809, there was no more than about 8000 men left for the defence of their country, separated by an immense distance from the French army acting on the Danube. The Duchy of Warsaw was invaded by an Austrian army four times as strong as the Polish force, which, after having given battle to the enemy in the environs of the capital, was oblige to evacuate it. This force, commanded by Prince Poniatowski, instead of attempting to oppose the progress of the superior numbers of the enemy, passed to the right bank of the Vistula, and entered Galicia, or Austrian Poland, where their small numbers increased at every step like a snowball, being continually joined by the inhabitants of the country, as well as by the Polish soldiers from the Austrian ranks, so that it soon outnumbered its adversaries, and occupied a considerable part of Galicia. The whole of that country would have soon been taken, if the progress of the Poles had not been arrested by the treaty of Vienna, which united with the Duchy of Warsaw a part of Galicia, extending to about half of the territory which had been taken by Austria.

The Duchy of Warsaw, thus constituted, made an immense effort to co-operate in the restoration of Poland by the campaign of 1812, and raised no less than 80,000 men for the expedition to Russia, whilst a diet, assembled at Warsaw, proclaimed, on the 28th June 1812, the restoration of Poland. The French emperor acted, however, on that occasion as if he were struck with judicial blindness, committing fault after fault. Instead of ordering the Polish army mentioned above to occupy the Polish provinces of Russia, which would have swelled their numbers in the same manner as was the case in the Austrian war of 1809, he dispersed them amongst his other troops employed to invade Russia Proper. He gave at Vilna an evasive answer to the Polish deputation which requested him to proclaim the restoration of their country, and this naturally threw a great damp on their hopes and exertions. Nothing, however, was more easy for him than to effect this object, considering that the Russian armies had evacuated the Polish provinces. It is now acknowledged on all hands that if, instead of advancing on Moscow, he had stopped at Smolensko, proclaimed the restoration of Poland, and organised a Polish army of about 200,000 men, which could have been done without much effort, Russia would have been unable to continue the war, and been obliged to

accept his terms of peace. Considerations for Austria seem to have prevented him from proclaiming the restoration of Poland; and the success which he had obtained by seizing the Austrian and Prussian capitals made him believe that he would attain the same object by penetrating to Moscow,—a fatal error, which led to the disastrous retreat of his army and the final overthrow of his power.

I have mentioned above the liberal policy followed, since his accession, by the Emperor Alexander towards his Polish subjects; and the establishment of the Duchy of Warsaw created a kind of competition in favour of the Poles. Several of the most influential citizens of Russian Poland were obliged to follow the Emperor Alexander during his retreat in 1812. He constantly assured them of his favourable intentions towards their nation; and he granted a complete amnesty to all those who had taken part against his government during the time of the French invasion. The Duchy of Warsaw, occupied by the Russian forces, was administered in a conciliatory spirit; and the Polish troops who had remained with the Emperor Napoleon till his abdication were taken under the protection of Alexander, who sent them home, and ordered the organization of a Polish army.

Alexander met at Vienna with considerable opposition to his project of restoring Poland. The celebrated German patriot, Baron Stein, who was so active in promoting the emancipation of his own country from the French dominion, was, nevertheless, anxious to prevent the restoration of Poland, and made strong representations to the Emperor Alexander against this project, desiring him to restore the same state of things which had been created by the final dismemberment of Poland.* What Stein opposed from a German point of view, Pozzo di Borgo did from a Russian one, urging Alexander to unite the Duchy of Warsaw with his dominions, simply as a new province. The only man who faithfully supported the Emperor Alexander in his views was Prince Adam Czartoryski, whose services to the national cause under the reign of that monarch I have mentioned above (p. 77). The opposition to the views of the Emperor Alexander was so strong that a new war was apprehended. Austria was concentrating troops in Bohemia and Moravia, whilst Alexander ordered to raise the Polish army to 70,000, and the Grand Duke Constantine, its commander, addressed to them a proclamation, intimating that they should be ready to combat for the national cause.

The fear of the increase of power which the acquisition of the Duchy of Warsaw would give to Russia led to a secret treaty, concluded on the 3d January 1815, between England, France, and Austria, with the object of arresting the progress of that power. The means of attaining this object was not, however, specified in that treaty with any precision, though it is known that the contracting parties had an idea of restoring Poland as an independent state, and that Austria was ready to make sacrifices for that purpose. There can be no doubt that if the execution of this treaty had taken place, both parties would have been obliged to bid for the co-operation of the Poles. Be it,

* It must be, however, observed, in justice to the same German patriot, that he strongly recommended at the same time to respect the Polish nationality of these provinces, and to grant them liberal institutions. He also severely reprobated the measures adopted by the Emperor Nicholas towards the Poles after the fall of the insurrection of 1831.

however, as it may, the landing of Napoleon from Elba completely changed the face of affairs at Vienna. The co-operatian of Russia against Napoleon being required by the other powers, the views of the Emperor Alexander on Poland were accepted by a compromise. Russia secured the largest portion of the Duchy of Warsaw, having an extent of 46,000 English square miles, with a population of about 4,000,000. It received the title of the kingdom of Poland, with a constitution, a separate organization, and army. The remaining part of that duchy was given to Prussia, under the name of the Grand Duchy of Posen. The town of Cracow, with a territory of about 500 English square miles, and a population of about 120,000 souls, was erected into a republic, under the protectorate of the three partitioning powers, who promised to grant national institutions to all their Polish provinces.

It was chiefly Lord Castlereagh who insisted on the necessity of respecting the Polish nationality by the following declaration, which proves that this statesman had a clear insight into the national character of the Poles:—

"Since the restoration of an independent kingdom of Poland appears to be impossible, it is greatly to be desired that tranquillity should be re-established in all the parts of ancient Poland on firm, liberal principles, favourable to the general welfare, by means of a conciliatory administration adapted to the spirit of the nation; and as experience has proved the complete uselessness of all the attempts that have been made to make the Poles forget their nationality, and even their language, by introducing foreign institutions, repugnant to their manners and ideas, it is much to be desired that the three powers should, before leaving Vienna, mutually pledge themselves to treat the parts of Poland under their dominion, without any regard to the political organizations which may be introduced there, *as Poles*, which will be the surest means of gaining their attachment. If this desideratum be fulfilled, it will remain only to wish that the independence of Europe may not be exposed to the dangers which are to be feared from the union of Poland with Russia, particularly when the military resources of the two states will be in the hands of a warlike and ambitious monarch."*

Events have fully proved the correctness of Lord Castlereagh's views of the Polish question; and I think that they deserve at this moment the most particular attention both of the British statesmen and the public.

The Emperor Alexander expressed an unqualified approbation of Lord Castlereagh's declaration, which was indeed in accordance with the policy followed by himself towards the Poles, and he was the only one who acted on those principles. Metternich expressed very fine sentiments on the same subject,† but acted in a very different manner,

* This celebrated declaration of Lord Castlereagh may be found in every history of the Congress of Vienna. I have extracted it from the *Life of Baron Stein*, by Pertz, vol. iv. p. 280.

† Metternich declared that the restoration of Poland would have entirely satisfied the wishes of the Emperor of Austria, who would not have hesitated to make great sacrifices for the attainment of this object; that Poland, in the days of her independence and liberty, had never been an enemy or rival of Austria, and that the policy of Austria had always been friendly to Poland until the partitions of 1772 and 1795, to which she was led to accede by circumstances independent of the will of her sovereigns, and that they have since that time promoted the happiness of their Polish subjects, as may be proved by the condition of Galicia; that the Emperor entirely concurred in

because the national institutions promised to Austrian Poland proved nothing more than a kind of mock diet, or assembly of states, convoked for a couple of days, and which had no right to vote or refuse taxes, but only petition the emperor about the condition of the country. The king of Prussia, who likewise applauded the sentiments of Lord Castlereagh, and promised to respect the nationality of his Polish subjects, granted to Posen the same provincial states as to the other parts of the kingdom, so that the Poles could, at the periodical meetings of these states, publicly complain, though without ever obtaining any redress of the continual breach of the royal promise by the system of Germanization followed by the Prussian government. This was the manner in which Austria and Prussia fulfilled the enlightened wishes of the British minister, which were rendered obligatory on them by the following express stipulation of the Congress of Vienna:—"The Polish subjects of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, shall enjoy a representation and national institutions, regulated according to the degree of political consideration that each of the governments to which they belong shall judge useful and fitting to grant them."

The Emperor Alexander was the only one who acted consistently with his declaration. He granted to that part of the Duchy of Warsaw which he obtained at the Congress of Vienna, under the title of the kingdom of Poland, a constitution, which established a representative legislature, composed of two chambers,—the deputies elected by the people, and the senate nominated by the monarch.* The electoral franchise was very extensive. No taxes could be imposed, or any law enacted, without the consent of the two chambers, who were separately deliberating. The ministers were declared responsible; the liberty of the press, security of person and property, and the independence of judges, were guaranteed by the constitution, which abolished every privilege of rank, declaring all the inhabitants equal before the law, and having equal rights, &c.

Such a liberal constitution granted to a small state, whose sovereign was absolute monarch of an immense empire, was an anomaly which could not last, unless the same constitution was extended to Russia. This had evidently been the intention of the Emperor Alexander, whose views were undoubtedly as liberal and enlightened as his sentiments benevolent and humane, but over whose mind sinister influences cast a cloud in the latter years of his reign. And, indeed, since the time of the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1818, his liberal opinions underwent a marked change, and gave place to tendencies of an opposite character. This had a decided influence on Poland, and her liberal constitution was violated in its most important provisions. The budget was never submitted to the diet; and the fundamental principle of a constitutional government, self-taxation, was thus set aside. The pro-

the liberal intentions of the Emperor Alexander respecting the national institutions which were to be granted the Poles; that he would continue to promote the happiness of the Austrian Poles, with a due regard to their nationality and their customs; and that he entirely approved of the principles laid down by England and Russia. I have related above (p. 76) the manner in which the Polish provinces of Austria were treated; and the same system of Germanization has been continued since the congress of Vienna, notwithstanding this liberal declaration of Metternich.

* The number of deputies was 128, in a population of about 4,000,000; that of the senators was never to exceed half of their number. The senators were nominated for life.

mised liberty of the press was not granted, and personal freedom was continually violated by arbitrary arrests and imprisonments, generally caused by the freaks of the half-crazy Grand Duke Constantine, who was appointed commander-in-chief of the Polish army, but who, in fact, had an absolute power over all the concerns of the country, and which he often exercised in the most whimsical manner. A severe and arbitrary censure weighed down the progress of literature, and a system of instruction better calculated to arrest than to advance the intellect of the pupils was gradually introduced into the public schools. The most intolerable part of this regime was, however, the universal espionage, directed chiefly against the pupils of the university, and other young men. It was carried to such an excess, that no interior of a family was secure from its effects, because often the most innocent expression was represented by the secret delators of the police spies as a proof of treasonable designs. Such proceedings could not but produce general discontent, to which it was impossible to give vent otherwise than secretly in confidential meetings of some friends, where the unfortunate circumstances in which their country was placed were discussed and deplored. These meetings were occasionally discovered by the spies of the government, and those who had taken part in them subjected to the severest persecutions as guilty of treason.

This oppressive system, which went on increasing, counterbalanced all the material advantages which that part of Poland enjoyed, for it is necessary to state that its agriculture and manufactures had made a considerable progress from 1815 to 1830. Such was the case with the constitutional kingdom of Poland which Russia had acquired by the treaty of Vienna; but the fate of the provinces which the same power had seized at the three dismemberments of Poland was still more lamentable. The oppression of their inhabitants was rendered even worse by the systematic persecution directed by the Russian senator, Novosilzoff, against the university of Vilna and the schools depending upon that establishment, which, as we have said, had been organised in a national sense by Prince Adam Czartoryski, whom Novosilzoff complimented by accusing him of having delayed the Russification of those provinces for half a century. Societies which had been formed by the pupils of the university for literary purposes were declared treasonable, and their members punished for the attempt to keep up patriotic feelings through means of literature by exile to the remote provinces of Russia. The material condition of that part of Poland was also deplorable. The serfage of the peasantry was not only maintained, but rendered more oppressive by the Russian government. This cause of misery, which prevents every real improvement of the condition of the country, was increased by the exactions of the employés, the levy of recruits, the frequent passages and quartering of troops, &c., all which greatly reduced the material welfare of the inhabitants.

The accession of the Emperor Nicholas inspired, at least, many persons with the hope of a better state of things. It was generally supposed that this monarch was really animated by liberal principles, and that he would enter on the same path which his predecessor Alexander had followed during a great part of his reign, but had latterly abandoned. Poland was entirely left to the whims of his eldest brother, Constantine; but this was considered as a temporary evil, and that the

emperor could not expel from an inferior position the brother who had so readily ceded to him the possession of the throne. During the Turkish war of 1828–29 a general wish to take part in it prevailed amongst the Polish army, tired of its inactive and irksome service, which consisted solely in drills and reviews. The emperor would probably have employed that army, and this would have been a wise policy indeed, because men generally attach themselves to a cause for which they suffer or combat. This was, however, prevented by the Grand Duke Constantine, who would not consent to have the Polish army, which was his favourite toy, withdrawn from him, and only a certain number of Polish officers obtained employment during the above-mentioned war. The emperor sent some Turkish standards to Warsaw; and when Varna surrendered he addressed a proclamation to the Poles, stating that he had revenged the death of his glorious predecessor, Vladislav, king of Poland, who perished at a battle against the Turks near that place in 1444. He sent at the same time several pieces of ordnance, captured in the above-mentioned place, as trophies to Warsaw. All these proceedings, calculated to make the emperor popular with the Poles, and which, in order to produce this effect, should have been made as public as possible, were rendered nugatory by Constantine, who did not permit any display to be made on that occasion.

The Poles who were implicated in the Russian conspiracy, which had led to the insurrection of St Petersburg at the accession of Nicholas, were judged according to the constitution by the senate, after having been detained for three years in severe confinement. As no direct participation in the above-mentioned conspiracy, or the charge of high treason, could be proved against any of the accused, they were condemned either to secondary punishments, or declared not guilty. The senators were punished by Constantine for this decree by not being permitted to leave Warsaw for a considerable time, and those of the accused whom he considered the most guilty were carried away to Siberia.

The emperor arrived at Warsaw in May 1829 in order to be crowned king of Poland, according to the provisions of the constitution given by Alexander. The ceremony was performed with the imperial crown of Russia; still it was an acknowledgment that Poland was considered as a separate kingdom, united with Russia only by having the same individual for their monarch, and not as a province of the last-named country. The emperor endeavoured to conciliate public opinion by his manners, and his *entourage* sedulously spread the opinion, that all the evil which Poland suffered was done by Constantine against the direct will of the emperor, but that it was difficult for him to coerce the brother who had resigned to him the throne, and that this inconvenience would not last long. Next year, 1830, the emperor revisited Warsaw to attend at a diet, which rejected a law of divorce proposed by the ministry, notwithstanding the great efforts which were made in order to pass it. The law in itself had no political significance, but its rejection proved that the diet intended not to be a passive instrument of the sovereign's will.

The French Revolution of 1830 produced a general ferment in Poland, particularly amongst the young men. The cadets of the military school of Warsaw, many pupils of the university, some officers of the army,

and several other persons, meditated an insurrection. Their intention was, however, not to effect the projected movement before the following spring; and as the turn which the French Revolution took during that time gave no encouragement to its imitation in other countries, it is more than probable that the meditated insurrection never would have taken place. The police having, however, discovered, by means of *agens provocateurs* a clue to the conspiracy, many persons who had taken part in it were arrested, and this circumstance precipitated the insurrection of the 29th Nov. 1830. It is well known that the outbreak might easily have been quelled by the Grand Duke Constantine, but that he preferred to remain passive at the head of a considerable force, in the hope that confusion and anarchy would follow the insurrection. It is also well known that the same Constantine was permitted to depart with his troops by the provisional government, and that this government acted in the name of the emperor Nicholas, king of Poland, until the 25th of January 1831, when the emperor having refused the demanded concessions, the throne was declared vacant. The greatest fault which was committed by the Poles after the insurrection was their not having immediately marched upon Lithuania, where the inhabitants, as well as the troops stationed there, and composed of natives, would have joined the insurrection. It must be remarked, that many patriotic individuals, of liberal principles, who strongly urged the march upon Lithuania, had the project of spreading the insurrection throughout all the Polish provinces of Russia, in order to unite them with the kingdom, but without wresting the crown of their country from the emperor of Russia. This project was based on the opinion, that as the number of the inhabitants of the kingdom of Poland would, by this combination, be raised to 12,000,000 instead of 4,000,000, their actual number, the country would be able to preserve its constitution inviolate, and perhaps even to extend it to Russia itself; that it was under such circumstances much more advantageous to Poland to remain in a close union with Russia, instead of forming the bulwark of Europe against that power; that in the latter case Poland would be obliged to be constantly armed and prepared for war in order to shelter Germany, which has proved as hostile to Poland as Russia; and that this state of continual warlike attitude, for the sake of foreigners, could not but be injurious to the progress of the intellectual and material civilization of Poland. On the other side, Poland, united with Russia, in the manner described above, would be not only secure from that quarter, but possess sufficient power to retake from Austria and Prussia her ancient provinces, and to render aggression upon her territory impossible, by the fear of a terrible retaliation. In short, the voluntary union of Russia and Poland under the same sovereign would have created a Slavonic empire sufficiently strong to exercise a decided preponderance over the rest of the continent.

It is impossible to decide whether that political combination could have been accomplished if the measure by which it was proposed to attain this object was carried into execution. It is, however, very probable that if the insurrection had gained the whole of the Polish provinces of Russia, the emperor would have preferred to retain their possession by holding them as king of Poland, to running the chances

of a war in order to regain them as emperor of Russia. At all events, the arguments urged in favour of the above-mentioned combination were, to say the least, very specious.

The events of this insurrection are well known to the public of this country, and have recently been described by the accomplished historian of our times, Sir A. Alison. I shall only observe, that the small kingdom of Poland, as constituted by the treaty of Vienna (p. 80), stood for eight months against the overwhelming forces of Russia, who were defeated by the Poles on several occasions; and that, notwithstanding the fearful odds with which the Poles had to contend, their cause would in all probability have triumphed, if they had been allowed fair play, instead of being prevented, as was done by Austria, but particularly by Prussia, from receiving any kind of assistance, as arms, ammunition, and money, which were sent to them from France and England.

Austria perceived, however, that the success of the Poles could not but be advantageous to her interests, as well as to those of the whole of Europe. France was of the same opinion, but unfortunately the English ministry took a different view of this subject, and Poland was consequently abandoned to her fate. This important circumstance is described by Sir A. Alison in the following manner:—

"The danger to Austria from the incorporation of the kingdom of Poland with the Russian empire was so obvious and pressing, that it overcame all the terrors of the cabinet of Vienna as to a revolutionary state. The Austrian consul accordingly, in the first instance, did not leave Warsaw; and a secret negotiation was opened with the cabinet of Vienna, the result of which was, that Austria would not object to the nationality of Poland, and to contribute to it by the abandonment of Galicia, provided Poland would agree to accept as king a prince of the *house of Austria*, and that the whole arrangements were made with the concurrence of the cabinets of Paris and London. Mr Walewski was accordingly charged with a mission to sound these two cabinets on the subject. He met with a favourable reception at the Tuileries, where he arrived in the beginning of March; but Mr Casimir Perrier, who had just succeeded to the lead in the French government, said he could do nothing without the concurrence of the cabinet of St James's.

"In consequence of this answer, Mr Walewski came on to London, where he had some conferences with Lord Palmerston, then minister of foreign affairs, on the subject. The hands of the British government, however, were sufficiently full at that time with the affairs of Belgium, in regard to which it was sufficiently difficult to keep the representatives of the five powers assembled in London at one. It was thought, therefore, and probably with justice, that if, in this unsettled state of the several cabinets, a fresh apple of discord were thrown amongst them, and Russia was irrevocably alienated by support given to Poland, the conference would at once be broken up, Belgium would be incorporated with France, and a general war would ensue, in which it was more than probable that from their superior resources and state of preparation, the legitimate states would prevail over the revolutionary. The Polish envoy was, therefore, informed, with every expression of regret, that England would not interfere; and Poland,

for the present at least, was left to its fate.* All that France did was to send Mr de Mortemart to St Petersburgh, to endeavour to obtain favourable terms for the Poles; but Nicholas gave him his answer by a significant motion of his hand across his throat, showing that he was not unmindful of his father's fate, and what may be rendered by the familar English phrase, 'Neck or nothing with me.'"†

I cannot agree with the accomplished historian whom I have just quoted, that the British government had valid reasons for rejecting the propositions of Austria and France; and I believe that their acceptance, instead of embroiling the affairs of Europe, and producing a general war, would have, on the contrary, settled them at once, and in a manner very different from that in which they had been patched up by the conferences of London, for the affairs of Belgium. Poland was then, as I have said above, resisting single-handed the undivided forces of Russia, which were indirectly assisted by Prussia; can it be, therefore, doubted for a moment, that England, France, and Austria, declaring together, would have effected at once her restoration? And these three powers united on such an important subject, who would have dared to oppose them on any other? The settlement of the Belgian question would have been, therefore, considerably accelerated by the restoration of Poland, because Russia would not have been then able to back Holland in her opposition to the recognition of the independence of Belgium, which would have spared to that country much expense, and prevented that tragico-comical affair, the siege of Antwerp, where many lives were sacrificed to satisfy a whim of the king of Holland. Without any disparagement to Belgium, and its importance to the balance of European power, I think, however, that the restoration of Poland, which the British ministry sacrificed in 1831 for this consideration, would have produced results of much greater importance,—namely, it would have rendered the Russian aggression on Turkey, which has led to the present war, physically impossible, by interposing the territory of a third power, *i. e.*, Poland, between those two states; and the experience of 1831 has, I think, sufficiently proved that the Poles would have known how to defend that territory. Consequently, all those who are suffering from the effects of the present war, either by the increase of taxation, or the loss of relatives and friends, or in any other way, must thank for it the policy which the British ministry thought proper to follow in 1831, by rejecting the propositions which had been made by France and Austria to restore Poland. The real cause of Lord Palmerston's conduct on that occasion was, however, I think, the agitation produced by the parliamentary struggle about the Reform Bill, which then absorbed the attention of the whole country, and the consequent apprehension that the British people would not support the ministers in this undertaking.

The Poles entreated the western powers, but particularly France, to prevent the interference of Prussia, who, except an armed co-operation, gave every possible assistance to Russia, without which that

* In the despatch addressed to the French ambassador, on the 25th June 1831, by which Lord Palmerston refused to co-operate in the affairs of Poland, he states, amongst other things, "*that the time had not yet arrived when this could be done with success.*" It is sincerely to be hoped that the English ministry will not take the same view of this affair at present, because it may be successfully done now or never.

† *History of Europe*, vol. ii. p. 632.

unequal struggle might have had a different issue from that which took place. All these representations proved vain, and the Polish cause fell from exhaustion. Warsaw capitulated on the 8th September, an event which the French minister of foreign affairs, Count Sebastiani, had no shame to announce with the words, "Order reigns at Warsaw," an expression which has become as celebrated as an equivalent of what Galgacus said of the Romans,—"*Ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*"*

It is well known that the policy adopted by the emperor Nicholas towards his Polish dominions, after the fall of the insurrection in 1831, has been that of coercion and not conciliation. His object being to destroy the Polish nationality, the most oppressive measures were adopted. The universities of Warsaw and Vilna, as well as many inferior schools, were abolished, and the system of instruction changed in others. The use of the national language was superseded in the schools and courts of justice by that of Russia. The statute of Lithuania, by which the Polish provinces of Russia were judged, was replaced by the Russian laws.† The same measure was adopted with regard to the French code in the kingdom of Poland, which was replaced by another composed at St Petersburgh. The most oppressive measure, and one which appeared impossible in this century, was the religious persecution of the Greek church united with Rome.‡ I have described on pp. 38, 39, the manner in which this union had been accomplished, and expressed my opinion on its political consequences to Poland. It was now, however, the religion of many millions who had become sincerely attached to its tenets and its rites. Some attempts were made, as I have said above (p. 76), under the empress Catherine, to force the followers of this church into that of Russia, and they were partially repeated under the emperor Paul, but they were discontinued at the accession of the emperor Alexander. This persecution was now systematically undertaken, and the Russian government, in 1839, induced several bishops of the Greek United Church to sign a declaration of their wish to break off the union with Rome, and of uniting with the Established Church of Russia. This declaration was followed by an *ukase*, ordering all the United Greek churches to imitate the example of their bishops; and the most violent measures were adopted to effect a wholesale conversion, so that a great number of clergymen, who refused to adopt the imperial *ukase* for the rule of their conscience, were punished by transportation to Siberia, imprisonment, &c. As a pretence for this compulsory conversion, it was alleged that these populations having formerly belonged to the Eastern church, should return into its pale,—a principle according to which the inhabitants

* *Tacitus Agricola*, 30.

† It is very remarkable that the governments of Chernigoff and Pultava, constituting the country of the Cossacks of the Ukraine, which was added to Russia by the treaty of Andrushow, 1667 (p. 56), retained, at their desire, and as a particular favour, the use of the statute of Lithuania, introduced under the Polish government,—an evident proof of the superiority of that code to the Russian laws.

‡ The history of the nuns of Minsk, which has produced such a sensation over all Europe, was an episode of this persecution. It may be observed, that whilst this persecution of the United Greek Church was going on, a great number of the Protestant peasantry of the Baltic provinces were seduced by every possible means to desert their religion for the Russian church, and all those who dared to oppose it severely persecuted.

of this country might be forced into the pale of the Roman Catholic Church, and even brought back to the religion of the Druids, and the worship of Woden.

This abominable system could be upheld only by equally bad means, such as *espionage*, imprisonment, transportation, confiscation of property, &c., and all this for crimes which the Russian government had itself created by prohibiting that which the same government had secured to the inhabitants by the most solemn declarations. The effects of this system proved, however, quite the reverse of those which it was intended to produce, because many persons, whose attachment to the Roman Catholic church or patriotism was very lukewarm, became zealous for that church and devoted to their country.

Yet, however bad the Russian policy towards the Poles may be, that of Austria proved still worse. The ferment which was agitating the minds in various parts of Europe, and finally ended by an almost universal outbreak in 1848, was, as is very natural, particularly strong in a country situated like Poland. The Russian government closely watched and severely repressed every attempt against its dominion by means of secret societies, &c.; but the Austrian government allowed a silly conspiracy, conducted by some hare-brained young men, almost openly to proceed, and, instead of adopting any measures against the participators in that foolish enterprise, considered it a good opportunity for strengthening its authority, which has been chiefly maintained by keeping up divisions between the classes, as well as nationalities, of the multifarious population of its states. The peasantry of Galicia was, like that of Bohemia and Hungary, emancipated to a certain degree by the *urbarium*,* or rural code of the empress Maria Theresa, which fixed the dues to be paid by them to their landlords, according to the extent of the land they held. The landlords had a kind of inferior jurisdiction over the peasantry on their estates, and were obliged to collect the government taxes from them. This circumstance placed these landlords in an invidious position between the government and the peasants, and often exposed them to the unmerited hatred of the latter,—a feeling which was usually promoted by the local *employés*.

The Austrian government was fully aware of the existence of this conspiracy, excited from abroad by some exiles. Nothing was more easy than to have suppressed it before any outbreak could take place, by arresting its participators, and which would easily have been accomplished by the local police, supported, in case of need, by a company of soldiers. The Austrian government, however, instead of acting in this manner, occupied the free town of Cracow with a considerable force, with artillery, under General Collin, but withdrew all its troops from those parts of Galicia where an outbreak was expected, and which the presence of a small force would have rendered impossible. The outbreak took place on the 17th February 1846 by a gathering of some insurgents; but the Austrian local authorities, who had been continually exciting the peasantry against the landowners, proclaimed a reward of ten florins, or £1 sterling, for every rebel brought dead or alive. The consequence of this was a perfect *jacquerie*. Crowds of brutal mobs, excited by lust of rapine, attacked

* An appellation derived from the word *urbar*,—arable, in German.

the seats of the landowners, the greater part of whom had no connection whatever with the conspirators, murdering them with their families, and generally with the upper servants of their households, so that in the course of three days about two thousand persons were murdered, and many others were dragged to the Austrian authorities under the greatest ill treatment, whilst the property of all of them was pillaged by these mobs. The Austrian government seems to have been itself amazed at the horrors perpetrated by its orders, and attempted to throw the guilt on the democratic machinations of some Polish exiles, whilst, instead of punishing the perpetrators of these atrocities, it rewarded them, and particularly the chief promoter of these disturbances, an individual called *Shela,* who had been a criminal convict.*

I have stated above that Cracow had been occupied by an Austrian force under General Collin. A report being spread that the insurgent leader, Patelski, was marching with ten thousand men, produced such an effect upon the Austrian commander, that he withdrew from Cracow, on the 22d February, with all his troops, and carried with him the authorities of the place. This retreat was so precipitate, that he left at Podgorze† an arsenal well stored with arms and ammunition. The inhabitants of Cracow, thus deprived of every kind of authority, organised a provisional government, simply for the maintenance of order. A small number of insurgents occupied the city, but soon retired before the approach of Russian and Prussian troops, and, entering the Prussian territory, laid down their arms.‡

The Austrians, who had left Cracow in a panic, were about to avenge their disgraceful retreat, or rather flight, by the pillage of that city. Such was, at least, the general apprehension of its inhabitants, who were saved from the impending calamity by the timely arrival of the Russian troops, pressed by the urgent messages of those inhabitants. A company of Circassians or Kurds,§ galloping through the city to the

* The following extract from the *Edinburgh Review* for April 1847 may give an idea of this nefarious transaction:—"If the Austrian government be really intent on discovering the cause and the authors of this horrible occurrence, which devastated the circle of Tarnow, and repeated some of the worst scenes of the French revolution on the persons of nearly two thousand victims, taken from the landed gentry of the province, it must look nearer home. The absurd and oppressive conditions of the tenure of land by the peasantry, the gross ignorance of the people, the criminal neglect of the supreme government, the vile deceptions and suggestions of their inferior agents, and the atrocious character of some of their principal instruments, are sufficient to account for one of the most sanguinary pages in the history of our time. Nor was the influence of the direst superstition wanting to complete the horrors of this modern edition of the massacre of St Bartholomew. The governor of the province of Galicia knew of the existence of the conspiracy, but he refused to send for fresh troops, and chose to rely for the suppression of this outbreak on the hateful, irritating deceptions which the Jews and the inferior agents of the government had practised on the peasantry. Yet, on the eve of this monstrous crime, the authorities hesitated; and it was not until they had received absolution from a Jesuit confessor, who gave it in consideration of the service about to be rendered to the house of Austria, that the order for the destruction of the Polish landowners was given. Such a fact as this can scarcely be known with absolute certainty, but it is thoroughly believed by those who are best acquainted with the history of these transactions: and the character of some of the actors in them renders it highly probable."—P. 283.

† A suburb of Cracow, lying on the right bank of the Vistula, and belonging to Austria even before the absorption of Cracow by that power in 1848.

‡ The principal leaders of this silly outbreak, who surrendered on the Prussian territory, were allowed to retire to America. There are many mysterious and strange things in that whole affair which my space allows me not to discuss.

§ Prince Paskiewitch had always with him, in Poland, regiments of Caucasian High-

bridge on the Vistula, prevented the entrance of the Austrians, declaring that the city was now under the protection of the Russians; and Cracow was thus saved from being pillaged by the troops of a great European and civilised power, by a handful of Asiatics. Such was, at least, the general impression of the inhabitants of Cracow, who received the Russians as their saviours, and were treated by them with great courtesy, and a studied contrast to the Austrian behaviour towards the same population. The conduct of the Russian authorities during the massacre of Galicia was the reverse of that of the Austrian ones. The victims of that horrible transaction, who had nowhere to fly for protection on the Austrian territory, found, on crossing to the Russian side, not only a safe asylum, but a most cordial reception, and had their wants supplied with great liberality by the public authorities. The natural consequence of this was as great a popularity for the Russians as an intense hatred to the Austrians; and these feelings were most powerfully expressed in several publications, advising the Poles cordially to unite with Russia against the common enemy of their race, the Germans.*

The affair of Cracow served for a pretence to destroy the independence of that little state, and to unite it with the Austrian dominions. The king of Prussia opposed, for some time, this measure; but his opposition was overcome by Austria and Russia, who, by giving that spot to Austria, increased the general hatred felt by the Poles against that power. England and France protested against this new act of spoliation, but without any effect.

After the successful insurrection of Vienna, in March 1848, a great excitement agitated Galicia, as well as all the other parts of the Austrian empire; but the scenes of Tarnow were not re-enacted anywhere, as the Austrian employés were too much alarmed for their places to think of any thing else. The deputies sent from Galicia joined the Austrian diet at Vienna, and one of them, M. Smolka, was chosen president of this assembly. He displayed an uncommon talent in this extremely difficult position; because whilst, on the one hand, he succeeded in giving universal satisfaction to the members of an assembly composed of various nationalities, and without any parliamentary experience, he maintained so strictly the legal order in the proceedings of this assembly, that the government could not find any fault with him. He continued, therefore, to preside in the Austrian parliament, after its translation to Kremsir from Vienna, till its final dissolution. It is well known that thousands of Poles joined the Hungarian insurrection of 1848–9, in the hope that it would lead to the emancipation of their own country,—and it is no less known that the part which they took in that struggle was not an inglorious one. It is, however, less generally known, that the Russian army, on its march through Galicia to Hungary, behaved in a most courteous and friendly manner towards the Poles, seizing every opportunity to contrast their conduct with that of the Austrians, towards whom they manifested sentiments

landers and Kurds of Persia, whom he had enlisted and organised during his campaigns in the east against Persia and Turkey.

* The most remarkable of these productions was a pamphlet, entitled, "*Lettre d'un Gentilhomme Polonois au Prince Metternich*," which produced considerable sensation over all Europe. I shall have an opportunity of returning to this subject when speaking of Panslavism.

which did not show either good-will or esteem.* The conduct of the Russians in Hungary was also as conciliatory as that of the Austrians harsh; and it is well known that, after the surrender of the Hungarian insurgent forces under Georgey, Prince Paskiewitch wrote a letter to the emperor of Austria requesting him to act with clemency towards his revolted subjects, and that this request met with a refusal. The publication of this correspondence, and the judicial murders at Arad, which completely threw into the shade the Russian severities in Poland, produced an immense sensation amongst the Hungarians, as well as the Poles, and gave to Russia a great popularity at the expense of Austria, so that, in the case of a rupture between the two states, the former may count on many partisans in the dominions of the latter.

As regards the Prussian part of Poland, or the Grand Duchy of Posen, the king of Prussia promised it, by a proclamation issued on the 15th May 1814, at Vienna, the national institutions guaranteed to all the parts of ancient Poland, by the article of the congress of Vienna, mentioned on p. 81. The Prussian government is undoubtedly far superior to those of Russia and Austria in respect to the administration,—courts of justice, personal freedom, and particularly public education, which is more zealously promoted by it than, perhaps, by any other in Europe. It would have been a good policy on the part of that government to have taken under its patronage the nationality of its Polish subjects, bestowing a particular care on its intellectual development, and giving it the greatest possible impulse. The Polish element in the Prussian states is too small to affect the harmony of the whole, whilst its intellectual development, superior to that which the same element could obtain under the governments of Russia and Austria, would have given to Prussia a moral power which would have strengthened it on the side of their neighbours more effectually than a considerable national force, as it would not only cause the Poles, but also the other Slavonians, who have not an independent national existence, to look up to Prussia as to a power under whose protection their oppressed nationalities might rally in case of a political commotion, which every observing mind knew to be inevitable. It would have established between the western Slavonians and the Germans a mutual bond of amity, founded upon their real interests, and consequently solid and durable; and, indeed, the true interest of the Germans would have been much better served by employing her advanced state of mental cultivation in assisting these Slavonians in the intellectual de-

* The following characteristic anecdote may serve as a specimen of the policy which was followed by Russia in Austrian Poland, on the occasion mentioned in the text. Count Joseph Zaluski, a general in the Polish army, who took a part in the national struggle of 1831, but retired, after its fall, to his estates in Galicia, was elected, in 1848, commander-in-chief of the national guard of that province. Notwithstanding such a high position as that which he now occupied in the Austrian empire, he was arrested by the Russians, and conducted to the fortress of Zamosc, in Russian Poland. His wife applied for protection to the Austrian general governor of Galicia, but he confessed his inability to interfere with this act of violence against a high functionary of Austria. Arrived at Zamosc, Zaluski was tried by a Russian court-martial, which passed on him sentence of death for having taken a part in the insurrection of 1831, after which he was immediately pardoned and sent back to his home. It was done in order to show the Poles, in a striking manner, the weakness of Austria and the power of Russia, and that the latter could do what she liked, but did not choose to do so. It is almost needless to add that this demonstration produced the desired effect.

velopment of their nationality, than by attempting to suppress that nationality; whilst, on the other side, it would have been much more beneficial for the western Slavonians to advance in the development of their nationality along with the intellectual and material progress of Europe, than to seek the future destinies of their race in Panslavism. Unfortunately for the cause of the Slavonians and Germans, as well as for that of humanity and civilization, things have taken a very different turn in Prussia.

Notwithstanding the solemn assurance given by the royal proclamation of the 15th May 1814, that the Polish nationality of Posen would be preserved, an undisguised system of Germanization was adopted towards that province. The Polish language, the use of which in all public transactions was guaranteed by the above-mentioned proclamation, was superseded by the German in the principal judicial and administrative departments, as well as schools, and its use reluctantly allowed only when it could not be withheld, from the reclamations made by the Poles on this subject. Every possible facility for acquiring landed property, by selling crown lands on long credits and advances of money, was given to the German settlers, who were arriving in the province of Posen from various parts, whilst the Polish population were excluded from such favours, and the same system of preference was followed with all the situations in the gift of the government.*

This systematic hostility to the nationality of the Poles naturally produced a general discontent, and a continual opposition to the Prussian government. The conspiracy which brought about the tragical events in Austrian Poland, described on p. 88, extended also to Prussia, but it found only few partisans; and the Prussian government acted on that occasion with strict legality, as these misguided individuals were arrested in the usual manner, publicly tried, and condemned to different terms of imprisonment. The year 1848, which excited everywhere such great hopes, ending in such bitter disappointment, produced in Prussian Poland most deplorable events; and, instead of reconciling, it excited the national antipathies between the Poles and Germans to perhaps a higher degree of intensity than had ever been the case before. These circumstances, which have powerfully advanced the views and hopes of the Panslavists, and which had produced at that time a considerable sensation in this country, deserve at this moment a particular notice. I shall, therefore, give my readers an account of these events, equally deplorable to the Poles and to the Germans, as it may serve to explain certain eventualities which it is much to be apprehended may be brought about by the present political complications, but the occurrence of which is, I think, the duty, as well as the inte-

* The manner in which the royal promise of maintaining the Polish nationality of the Grand Duchy of Posen was fulfilled, may be seen from a memoir published by M. Flotwell, governor of that province, on his administration from 1830-40, in which he says that the constant object of his efforts during the time of his office was to promote the intimate connection of the Grand Duchy of Posen with Prussia, by gradually removing all those tendencies, habits, and inclinations, which are peculiar to the Polish population, and opposed to such a connection, and to spread amongst that population the elements of German life in material and intellectual respects, in order that the final union of the two nationalities should be obtained by a preponderance of the German civilization. I would beg of my readers to compare this account of M. Flotwell with the opinion of Lord Castlereagh on the Polish nationality, given on p. 80.

rest, of western Europe to prevent. The misrepresentations of some German papers of this unfortunate affair had produced for some time a most unfavourable impression against the Poles in this country. Their conduct was, however, nobly vindicated in the House of Lords, on the 23d June 1848, by Lord Kinnaird, supported by Lords Harrowby and Beaumont, and all the calumnies of their enemies disproved by the publication of the official papers relating to this affair, by the efforts of the lamented friend of our cause, Lord Dudley Stuart, and the Polish Literary Association.

The revolutionary movement in Berlin commenced on Monday, the 13th of March; but it was not till Sunday morning, the 19th, that the popular party obtained a complete victory over the troops, and forced the king to comply with all its demands. During the whole of that week, the provinces, and especially the Duchy of Posen, were thrown into a state of the utmost anxiety and increasing agitation. On Sunday, the 19th, a great number of the leading gentlemen of the duchy assembled at Posen, in order to represent to the civil governor the state of the province, and to express the wishes of its inhabitants. On Monday, the 20th, amidst a vast concourse of the people, who had all assumed the national cockade, these gentlemen went in a body to the governor, and obtained from him the permission to form a committee and to send a deputation to the king. Meanwhile, the news of the popular victory at Berlin having arrived, the Prussian authorities became entirely paralysed, and the Polish committee, having transferred its quarters to the Hotel de Ville, assumed all the duties and functions of government. An instantaneous rising took place throughout the province: 25,000 men, at least, took up arms within the week from the 20th to the 27th of March. Strange indeed it would have been, if, whilst other provinces of Prussia were rising in arms,—whilst so many of its towns, and even its metropolis, were fighting for their rights and liberty,—the Poles, of all others the most oppressed and aggrieved, had remained quiet and submissive to the faction defeated in other parts of the empire. Had it happened so, the adverse party would have never failed to urge it as a convincing proof that all desire for national independence was extinct among them, and that at least the great bulk of the population was attached to Prussian ascendency. But it happened otherwise. Every district sent in its submission to the Polish committee, and perfect unanimity gave additional importance to this grand demonstration. The committee were all-powerful. They, however, neither expelled nor superseded any of the Prussian functionaries, but, finding them entirely helpless and inactive, they placed by their side Polish commissaries, who enjoined order, peace, and respect towards the king's authority. The committee published proclamation after proclamation to those whom they called "their German and Jewish brethren," assuring them of oblivion of all past injuries, perfect equality and fraternity, and calling on them to unite their efforts for the preservation of peace and security. Not a single act of violence occurred. As for the Germans and Jews, those amongst them who were to play so hostile a part at a subsequent period felt overawed, and put on the semblance of friendship and of satisfaction with the new order of things; others, mostly natives of the province, went further, and elected a committee to assist the Poles in their efforts.

The Polish committee lost no time in organising the levies. This they did with the view,—1st, To provide for the better security of persons and property, as it is well known that in turbulent times it is much easier to control men assembled in large bodies, and to keep them from mischief, than to infuse order and obedience into an aggregation of armed communities. 2d, To provide for the eventuality of an immediate attack on the part of the Russians, it having been reported that the latter were already marching on Berlin. No doubt the Poles were glad at the same time to show to Germany, and to Europe at large, the unity of purpose which prevailed among them, and the fruitlessness of the efforts with which the Prussian government had tried for so many years to estrange the peasants from the higher classes, and to make them indifferent to national independence. In fact, if no other result had been obtained by this measure than to prove the indestructible patriotism animating all classes of the community, it would have gone far to make the Poles forget the losses they have sustained.

Whilst this was going on in the Duchy of Posen, events of no smaller importance occurred in Berlin. On the 20th, the Poles incarcerated in consequence of the conspiracy in 1846, mentioned on p. 92, were liberated, and carried in triumph before the king. The Polish students at the University, and other Poles then present in the Prussian metropolis, had been armed by the chief of the burgher guard, Minutoli, formed into a legion, and entrusted by him with the defence of one of the principal posts in the town. The Posen deputation arrived on the 22d. Its president, the archbishop of Posen, submitted to the king the wishes of the province. The king referred the petition to the ministers. Whilst this was under discussion, a deputation from the German committee at Posen made its appearance, and having assured the ministers that the German population, far from being inimical to the national organization of the province, saw in it the safeguard of its own security, obtained from them a full compliance with the Polish demands. Nor was this all. On Friday, the 24th, General Willisen, a known German patriot of enlightened views and liberal principles, met the Polish deputation at the Hotel de Rome, and assured them that the king, whom he had just seen, had that moment decided to place himself at the head of his German and Polish subjects, and declare war against Russia. The general spent the whole day with the deputation, taking down notes and collecting statistical data for forming at once a large Polish army against Russia. However improbable, at this distance of time, the Prussian king's decision to declare war against Russia may appear, it must be recollected that it was then a period of most surprising changes and most wonderful enterprises. Nothing seemed to be beyond the pale of possibility. The king had but a very few days before resisted, with an armed force, the demands of his subjects; and yet he issued now, on that very day, the 24th, a proclamation in which he declared himself chief promoter of the liberal movement in Germany,—a measure which much offended all other German sovereigns, and made them suspect that he was on the point of proclaiming himself emperor of all Germany. Why should not a similar change have come over his mind with regard to his relations with Russia? Be it as it may, the report of the king's new intention

met with universal credence, and, whilst it drew closer the ties of friendship between Germans and Poles, it gave an additional incentive to the armaments in the Duchy of Posen.

The principal points of the Polish petition,—viz., 1st, National Administration; 2d, a Separate Polish Army; 3d, National Courts of Justice; 4th, Schools and Institutions for promoting the development of nationality,—having been agreed upon, it remained only to come to terms with regard to details. Much valuable time was lost in fruitless negotiations about minor provisions. It now became every day more and more evident that government was hesitating, trying to gain time, and to evade performance of the promises it had given. Had it been sincere in its intentions, it would have taken advantage of the then existing harmony of the two populations, in order to accomplish a final settlement of the affairs of Posen. At last they appointed General Willisen as the king's commissary, with full powers to enter immediately upon the reorganization of the Duchy of Posen.

In the meantime 45,000 Prussian troops had been brought into the duchy. Some of the regiments, still smarting under the defeat at Berlin, longed for an occasion to wash away the stigma cast on their military reputation. Fifteen thousand men occupied the town of Posen. The reactionary party, German functionaries, who were likely to lose their places under the new order of things, adventurers who had come on speculation,—in short, all those who knew that the only means left them for retaining their ascendency was to exasperate the two populations against each other, began to feel now that they were strong enough to undo what had previously been accomplished, and to foil the Poles in their reasonable expectations. Unfortunately, they found two ready instruments in the generals commanding in Posen, Generals Colomb and Steinecker. General Colomb proclaimed, on the 3d of April, martial law in Posen without the knowledge, and (as it appeared afterwards during the discussion in the diet at Berlin) against the wishes of the Minister at War. Moving columns were sent in every direction to scour the country and to disarm the levies. Those who but a day before looked complacently on the Polish battalions and squadrons exercising under the very walls of the citadel of Posen, proceeded now with unrelenting barbarity against the levies, who for the most part were as yet peacefully performing their duty of guarding the security of persons and property. M. Brocki, the Polish commissary, was killed whilst attending to the duties of his peaceful mission. Count Potocki was slain by the very soldiers whom he had but a moment before saved from the vengeance of Polish scythemen. The two brothers Lipski and twenty other Poles coming from beyond the Russian frontier were attacked by the Prussian hussars and wounded (the two former died of their wounds), although they carried a white flag as a sign that they had no hostile intention in entering the Prussian territory. In Germanised towns the Poles were everywhere insulted, the national cockade torn from their caps, and even defenceless women, if they were known to be mothers or wives of patriots, had to submit to all sorts of contumely and outrage.

General Willisen arrived at Posen on the morning of April the 7th.

He was received by the commanding general with the information of his being determined to attack the Poles (who, in the meantime, for better defence, had congregated in camps) on the following day. "The attack," says General Willisen, in his declaration, "appeared to me quite injudicious, at the moment when I arrived with the mission of peace. After a long discussion my reasons were accepted, and a three days' delay agreed upon." The general went to the Polish camp, and there concluded a convention with the Poles, on Tuesday, April 11th. In his declaration, made there in the name of the king, he confirmed all former concessions made by the king, and solemnly averred that "the army of Posen was to form a national body, complete in all descriptions of arms, and the Grand Duchy was to be constituted a distinct and compact territory, complete in itself." According to this convention, all those who wished to serve in the new Polish army were to remain unmolested in four different towns—Wreschen, Sroda, Xionz, and Pleschen. The remainder were to disperse, retaining their arms as their property. The arms were to be carried after them on waggons. The camp at Sroda was to disperse on the 14th, at Wreschen on the 15th, at Xionz on the 16th, at Pleschen on the 17th; and as soon as this was done the Prussian army was to be withdrawn, all military proceedings stopped, and the formal organization begun without delay. General Willisen, in a proclamation dated April 17th, said, "The conditions of the convention agreed upon at Jaroslawice have been executed most conscientiously, and with the utmost punctuality and vigour, by the Polish commanders." "Unfortunately," says the general, in his subsequent declaration, "a plan different from my own has been adopted by the commanding general of the Prussian troops. On the 14th of April, the camp at Wreschen, which had been for two days dispersing, was alarmed by the news that our troops had approached within four miles of the town. The bearer of a flag of truce, sent to get information, came back bearing marks of ill-treatment and violence. Then, and not until then, the Polish forces gave way to the utmost excitement. From similar causes, a similar convulsion took place at Miloslaw. Our outposts, placed too near the camp, from ignorance or mistake, pushed back some of the Polish detachments going home, an error which did not pass without effusion of blood." "I could not," adds the royal commissary, at the end of his statement, "by any possibility, consider any thing that had happened as a violation of the convention on the part of the Poles." The most authentic accounts of the barbarities perpetrated by the Germans against the Poles could scarcely add to the force of this testimony of a Prussian general and a royal commissary. Almost in every instance the Poles, as soon as they had laid down their arms, and were proceeding home, were attacked and ill-treated by the troops. At last, feeling assured by what they heard of the king's intentions from the royal commissary, that the commanding generals were acting against the orders emanating from Berlin, and having no other alternative before them but either to fall in open fight, or submit to ill-treatment and ignominy, the Polish leaders assembled their men again, and declared their intention to stand by their rights, and concessions made to them, in the name and by the authority of the king.

Another circumstance added much to the exasperation of the Polish

party. The king and the ministers had hitherto, both in their public acts and private communications, spoken always of the Duchy of Posen as an indivisible and integral unity. The provincial diet of Posen being assembled at Berlin, the king, by his ministers, submitted to it, on the 7th of April, the question, whether they would belong to the German Confederation or not. The diet did not exactly represent in its composition the relative proportion between the two populations, because, under the Germanising *régime* described above, the Poles felt no anxiety to sit in a body which could do little for the real improvement of the country; and yet that same diet, composed so unfavourably to Polish interests, decided, by a large majority, that it would never allow the Duchy to be incorporated with the German Confederation. In consequence of this determination, General Willisen, on entering upon his duties in the Duchy, delared in the name of the king, that "*the Grand Duchy was to be constituted a distinct and compact territory complete in itself.*" But the German minority decided otherwise. They sent petitions to the king, misrepresenting the wishes of some of the districts, falsifying the statistical data, and at last prevailed upon the feeble ministry to issue a decree, by which ten districts *and the town of Posen itself* were to be separated from the Duchy and incorporated with Germany. The Polish committee at once protested against this new partition of their country. The archbishop of Posen had, on his part, submitted irrefragable proofs that all the accounts of the numerical proportion of the two populations were falsified, and that signatures to the above-mentioned petitions had been for the most part obtained by bribery, intrigue, and other discreditable means. The ministry, to shift the responsibility upon others, sent the decree of partition to the Frankfort parliament, and this new act of spoliation against Poland was consummated, even before means could have been taken to ascertain the real wishes of the seceding districts.

This conduct on the part of the Prussian government increased the already existing irritation, and frustrated the efforts of the Polish leaders to come to an understanding with the Prussian authorities. The war broke out. The Poles were attacked on several points without previous notice on the part of the Prussian generals, or any provocation on theirs. At Xionz, one of the camps sanctioned by General Willisen, they were taken unawares, and after a horrible slaughter they were defeated. At Miloslaw and at Wreschen, although without arms or artillery, they put to flight Prussian troops four times more numerous than themselves. At Pogrzybow, the academic legion, which, in virtue of a special convention with General Willisen, was quietly pursuing their studies, was surrounded, forced to deliver up the arms given them at Berlin by order of the king, exposed to the most brutal behaviour from the soldiers, and sent first to Glogau, and afterwards to the fortress of Küstrin, where they suffered, for a considerable time, all sorts of privations and ill-treatment, although they never fought, or even made any show of resistance to the orders of the Prussian general.

The barbarities perpetrated by the Prussian troops would appear incredible if they had not been proved by irrefragable evidence. Even General Colomb himself has been obliged to animadvert on the crimes

committed by them.* Fischer, a high Prussian functionary, and assessor of the supreme court, has protested against the atrocious conduct of the military.† Persons who had taken no part in the struggle, surgeons whilst attending the wounded, priests whilst burying the dead, were mercilessly massacred by the soldiers. All the rules and usages of civilised warfare were totally disregarded by the Prussians. Prisoners were slaughtered; the wounded in the hospitals were killed, and in one instance burned to death, the hospital having been set on fire by the victorious party. Other prisoners were marked with vitriol on the hands and ears. And whilst all this was happening, the Prussian officers taken at Miloslaw published a warm acknowledgment of the humanity and civility with which they had been treated by the Poles. On the other hand, the Prussian authorities left nothing undone which was calculated to exasperate the Germans against the Poles;—the bodies of those who had been killed by the Poles in a fair and open

* Yesterday, during the passage of the army through Sroda, soldiers belonging to one of the landwehr regiments committed crimes contrary to all military discipline. A priest and his house have been plundered, and the windows broken. Besides, many reports of crimes of different kinds have reached me. Immediate inquiry has been instituted, and the guilty parties will be punished. Such misdeeds, if repeated, would throw a stigma on the whole army. I call, therefore, on all the commanders, officers, and non-commissioned officers, to maintain the strictest discipline among the soldiers. If any of them should show himself too lenient and careless, I will treat him with the utmost severity. As to the soldiers, I trust they will so far regard their own good name that they will not allow themselves to be sullied by individual excesses.—*General Order issued at Posen, on the 25th April* 1848.

† They proceed with the elections at a time when everywhere the most respectable Poles,—who have not yet fled their country,—if they allow themselves to be seized, without any legal ground but the pretence of precaution, upon a mere suspicion, upon the denunciation of a Jew, are arrested by the military, dragged to the fortress, sometimes liberated after a longer or shorter imprisonment, often detained;—when Polish prisoners, escorted by soldiers, are in the streets of Posen publicly beaten with clubs by Germans and Jews, excited by members of the so-called German committee;—at a time when hundreds of arrested and disarmed Poles are butchered by the soldiery with bayonets or the butt-ends of their muskets;—when mansions and villages are plundered and reduced to ashes;—when the Prussian soldier, after murdering and chasing away the inhabitants, burns the sick and wounded Poles in the dwellings which he has plundered;—when I hear German officers and officials ask each other, with a feeling of horror, whether this barbarity of the infuriated, uncivilised Germans, —whether this ferocious desire for murder, which delights in tormenting and exterminating even a conquered enemy, is inherent in the nature of the German:—they proceed with the elections at a moment like this, when no Pole can show himself in the streets of Posen without being ill used;—when Poles are disarmed, and Germans and Jews provided with arms;—when Poles dare no longer meet in consultation on their affairs, for fear of being attacked, maltreated, and arrested for some pretended plot;—at a time when, in a word, THE POLE APPEARS TO BE AN OUTLAW IN HIS OWN NATIVE LAND. These facts are here well known and publicly related; I do not doubt their truth, because I know the spirit of the civil and military authorities in this province, and I am ready to adduce more circumstantial facts, and bring forward witnesses, Germans as well as Poles. I do not believe that these facts, omitted by our authorities in their official reports, were unknown to them, because I have heard persons who surround them converse about them. As a test of the view which the authorities take of this state, it may suffice to mention, that on inquiring whether the prisoners were marked, as I was told by some Poles, I was informed that they had one hand and one ear blackened with some permanent chemical preparation; but, by an order of General V. Pfuel, they had now only one hand dyed. I think that, amidst such unfortunate circumstances, every upright German ought to abstain from the elections. He will, on German soil, among our honest German people, insist on his full political rights; but the rights which he claims for himself, he claims also for other men and nations. He desires a separation of the German and Polish nationalities,—unconditional protection of the Germans settled here; but he does not desire, in favour of those Germans who have left their German fatherland, to rob, by unjust means, the Poles of those rights which are due to them, as the ancient inhabitants of the soil.—*Christian Fischer, Oberlands-gericht assessor in Posen, 19th April* 1848.

fight were disfigured and mutilated by designing persons, and then paraded through German towns. The bodies of Prussian soldiers, instead of being buried near the field of battle, were conveyed to their native provinces. Prussian uniforms, steeped in blood, were publicly exposed at Breslau, and in other places, and reports of horrible cruelties perpetrated by the Poles industriously circulated by the German papers. But these reports have been contradicted on the authority of most credible witnesses.* Thus the report of a German committee, sent from Berlin to investigate the real state of the Duchy of Posen, says, "If we are asked what result do you bring back, what party is in fault, who has kindled the civil war?—we reply, that the ministry is to blame for all the blood that has been shed. That ministry has excited civil war in the Duchy of Posen, for it sent thither two generals with contrary instructions,—one breathing peace, the other cruelly treating a despairing people struggling for freedom." And if this evidence were not sufficient, the following passage from General Willisen's declaration would place beyond doubt the means employed to blacken the reputation of the Poles, and to exasperate public opinion against them. "On the 14th of April," says the general, "I received information that in the third camp, viz., at Xionz, the Polish force had revolted, killed its leaders, and would soon throw itself on the neighbourhood and devastate it. The information seemed so positive, and the details so minute (for even the names were given), that I felt obliged to believe it, and I expressed my opinion that on this point, and only on this point, the convention might be considered as broken. During two days the news remained uncontradicted, as beyond any possibility of doubt, and every preparation was made to

* Posen, *May* 5, 1848.—We are all very busy from morning till night making lint, charpie, and bandages, for several ladies have been here to request as abundant a supply as possible, and therefore all hands are at work. In short, the last three days have been full of feverish excitement, knowing that day after day so many brave sons of Poland were fighting and dying around us. Yesterday there was again an engagement at Buk, when 500 Prussians laid down their arms. Thank God, the Polish cause, as ever, has been distinguished, not only by heroic bravery, but by the chivalric honour of its defenders—whilst that of the Prussians is stained by acts of barbarity unheard-of amongst civilised people. Forty of the Poles, much wounded, laid down their arms and surrendered. The Prussians shut them up in a barn, murdered them in cold blood, and then set fire to the barn. Amongst the number was a German student from Berlin. He remonstrated with his countrymen when they commenced murdering the wounded, told them that they ought to respect the cause for which the Poles fought, for it was that of nationality. The monsters, instead of being touched, said, "You are a German, and have fought against us," and falling upon him *en masse*, cut him into a hundred pieces. If they had not set fire to the barn and murdered the prisoners, the Poles would have taken them back, as the day was ultimately theirs. Mieroslawski has, in consequence, very properly addressed a speech of the following purport to the people:—"My brothers, however badly you may be wounded, take warning from this sad lesson, and profit by it; die with your arms in your hands, fighting to the last, and never yield alive." At Wreschen the day was again decidedly in favour of the Poles, and the Prussian loss was very great. Severin Mielzynski has been most terribly wounded through the dastardly conduct of a Prussian major. He had been wounded slightly in the battle at Miloslaw, and, when all was over, had retired to a small farm of his in the neighbourhood. A Prussian major, at the head of his troops, advanced to him as he was walking up and down alone, in the court, and asked him who was the seigneur of the towns and villages around, knowing him well to be so. As soon as he replied, "I am," the Prussian said, "This for you, then," laying open his face and one side of his forehead with his sabre, and several of the soldiers running him through with their bayonets. He has seven wounds. Last night he was brought up here by Dr Cohn and his wife. This morning he was informed that if he had not left the town by four o'clock he would be arrested.—*Letter of an English lady to the Archbishop of Dublin.*

attack the camp, when suddenly M. Stefanski, who had been sent thither in order to prevail upon his countrymen to disperse, returned, and, surprised by the news, made a solemn declaration that it was false in every particular, and that the disbanding nowhere proceeded with such order as at Xionz. This slight example will be sufficient to show the *enormous fabric of lies and stratagems with which I was surrounded.* Having withdrawn the orders given to the army, I proceeded myself to Xionz, and I found there so profound a tranquillity that I remained for twenty-four hours without the slightest inconvenience." The general gives the same testimony to the other parts of the province, where the military authorities, acting according to his orders, left the Poles unmolested. Thus, whilst the Germans cannot adduce, on their side, any other testimony but that of interested parties among the Posen Germans, the Poles were exonerated from blame by the Prussian functionaries themselves, such as General Willisen, the king's representative, entrusted with the supreme command, and Fischer, one of the highest legal authorities in the duchy.

General Pfuel has been sent to supersede General Willisen, whose conduct has been approved by the king, but who, having experienced a most brutal attack on the part of the Posen Germans, would not return to that province. On entering upon his office, General Pfuel declared that the contemplated partition having produced so much irritation, the final arrangement was to be put off until the means were found to ascertain the true wishes of the people. But this was merely a new feint, for within forty-eight hours the general changed his mind, and published what he called an irrevocable separation of the German from the Polish districts of the duchy. In the so-called Polish part, high offices have been offered to some Poles of distinction, but the latter refused them, being determined by no complicity on their part to sanction this new act of injustice and spoliation.

The Prussian generals, now uncontrolled masters of the country, instead of endeavouring to pacify it by measures of conciliation, did every thing to exasperate still further the Polish population. It seems as if the dominant party were afraid lest war should terminate too soon, and reconciliation take place between the two races. Troops were sent to villages in which peace had not been broken, in order to force the peasants to take refuge in the forests, and drive them to despair. The palaces* and the estates of gentlemen who took no part in the last

* The *Cologne Gazette for May* 1848 says, "These Polish affairs are like an infected pit,—whoever goes into it is killed by mephitic air. Nameless horrors have taken place, and still continue on both sides. General Pfuel, who is represented by all who know him as a liberal and humane man, has proclaimed martial law, and marks the prisoners in the same manner as Indians mark the wild horses which they have caught. The *Gazette* of Posen of the 8th May relates with praise how General Hirschfeldt (whom all Poles unanimously designate as their *executioner*, and at whose feet a captain of his own troops has thrown down his sword, because there was no longer any honour in commanding soldiers who were but a band of robbers and assassins) draws forth the peasants from their forest hiding-places, in order to mow them down with shrapnell shot. The decree of amnesty, of which the term ends to-day, has been scarcely placarded in the larger towns, and remains unknown to the people, particularly to the insurgents, who do not read it; and the newspapers do not inform us that commissioners had been sent in order to inform them of this decree. With all this horrid misery, we have not even the consolation to think that it has been caused by the peculiar ideas of a single individual; no, it is the consequence of a thoroughly bad system, which paralyses the best intentions and the noblest wishes, entangling in its meshes whoever comes in contact with it. The

struggle were devastated. The peasants were instigated to make the landlords responsible for the losses and the disappointment sustained in the war. In short, although the Poles had already laid down their arms and dispersed for several weeks, the reactionary party tried by every means to prolong the war, for fear that as soon as hostile proceedings were terminated, the Polish cause would again become all-popular in Germany.

Notwithstanding the years of intrigue and discreditable efforts to alienate the agricultural population from the upper classes, and to destroy their attachment to national independence, that very population has shown itself during that struggle the most enthusiastic, the most willing to sacrifice all other considerations for the restoration of their country to its former existence. This mortifying evidence has elicited from General Pfuel a proclamation to the peasants, in which he denounced the gentry as instruments of their oppression, as their worst enemies, and the cause of all the misery entailed upon them. Such a proclamation could be considered in no other light than as an incentive of the same kind as that which led to the Galician massacres in 1846. Fortunately, however, events have shown the peasants who are their best friends and advisers, and have drawn the ties between the different classes of the Polish community too closely for the repetition of any such scenes, at the suggestion of foreign intrigue, to be now possible. Neither before nor during the struggle, nor even afterwards, when so much disappointment and suffering have been entailed upon the lower classes, has any the slightest act of hostility on the part of the peasants against the landlords taken place. Perfect harmony, mutual assistance, and a bond of union for any future effort, have been the result of that insurrection.

It is indeed most grievous to think, that a nation which justly prides itself on its high state of mental culture could behave on that occasion in a manner which would be a disgrace to the most ignorant and barbarous country, and that the Russian army has not been guilty, during the campaign of 1831 in Poland, of a tithe of the enormities committed by the Prussian troops in the course of a few days in the province of Posen. It was, therefore, no wonder that this circumstance led to strange reflections, and that what had formerly been considered as very bad gained much by being compared with what was still worse.

The affair of the partition of the Duchy of Posen between the Germans and Poles, mentioned above (p. 97), was referred to the German parliament at Frankfort, which had raised such splendid hopes, destined to end in the most miserable disappointment.* And,

observation made some weeks ago by a military officer occupying a high station, 'that in Poland not a single shot must be fired, or every thing will be lost,' has been verified in a dreadful manner. The same newspaper of the 15th May relates what follows:—'The chateau and the town of Rogalin were partly destroyed by flames, being set on fire by the troops. They (the troops) have behaved in a truly Vandalic manner, having destroyed every thing; they wantonly inserted the muzzles of their guns into the dry thatch of the cottages and thus fired them. Works in mosaic of the most beautiful description, and rare objects of antiquity, were destroyed in the chateau, and the whole damage done on that occasion is estimated at from 70,000 to 80,000 dollars (about £11,000 English money); and it is most remarkable that there are educated persons who excite the soldiers to act everywhere in the same manner.'"

* The author of this essay did not share these delusive hopes, as may be seen from the following opinion on this subject given by him in May 1848:—"Germany is now undergoing a momentous crisis. The resolution of the diet of Frankfort to abolish

indeed, this celebrated assembly, composed of the *elite* of what may be called the intellectual aristocracy of Germany, has proved that the greatest amount of theoretical knowledge without practice will make only political schoolboys. All kinds of blunders committed by an assembly which had still to serve its political apprenticeship are, however, very excusable, and would have been easily avoided after a few years of parliamentary experience. But history will condemn the parliament of Frankfort on a much more serious charge, for no assembly has, perhaps, more justly deserved the celebrated reproach addressed by Sieyes to his countrymen, "*Vous voulez être libre, et vous ne savez pas être justes;*" and indeed, nothing could be more illiberal than the manner in which those German liberals have acted, in asserting the rights of their own nationality, towards other countries. The conduct of that assembly was indeed, to say the least, passing strange; because I think that every man of ordinary common sense, who settles in a new establishment, will begin by providing all that is necessary for its internal order and his domestic comforts, instead of interfering with his neighbours, and quarrelling with them. It seems, therefore, that the German parliament, assembled at Frankfort, in order to construct the political edifice of the unity of their common fatherland, should have exclusively devoted all their energies to the accomplishment of this great and most arduous undertaking before attempting to meddle with other nationalities. This, I know, was the opinion of the most sensible and patriotic members of that assembly; but unfortunately for the cause of Germany, as well as for that of liberty in general, the dreams of some university politicians, whom "too much learning seems to have made mad," prevailed over the practical sense of the former, and this liberal assembly declared, at the outset of their deliberations, the intention of compelling the Slavonians of Bohemia, with the edge of the sword, to enter the German unity,*—excited a war against Denmark, in order to establish the supremacy of the German nationality over the Danish in Schleswig, which formed an integral part of Denmark since the middle ages; and, to crown all these liberal manifestations, voted a congratulatory address to the Austrian army on its

the sovereignty of the thirty-eight independent states which have composed the Germanic confederation in order to establish one German empire, is a bold undertaking indeed. It is, however, much more easy to pass such a resolution than to put it into execution, because it is difficult to admit that all these states, particularly the larger ones, should voluntarily resign their independent existence, and merge into one whole, which cannot be done without a great sacrifice of local and individual interests. The commercial interests of northern Germany, which have prevented its joining the *Zollverein*, must be sacrificed to those of the manufacturing countries of the south; Vienna, Berlin, and other capitals must sink into a kind of provincial towns; and a great number of individuals who fill now high and inferior situations in the ministries, foreign embassies, &c., of the different states, will be thrown out of employ. Nay, the monarchs themselves must become nothing better than hereditary governors of their respective states, and cannot reasonably hope to retain long even this subordinate position, as their office will be soon found unnecessary, and replaced by much less expensive magistrates. The German unity decreed at Frankfort must therefore meet with a serious opposition from all those conflicting interests; Hanover has already declared against this decision, Prussia seems by no means inclined to resign that most important position which her monarchs and statesmen have so long and so successfully laboured to establish for her, and it is more than probable that the Austrian parliament now assembled at Vienna will not submit to that of Frankfort."—*Panslavism and Germanism*, p. 331.

* It was the celebrated theologian, Dr David Strauss, who first uttered these not over-liberal sentiments, accepted with enthusiasm by the majority of the assembly.

success in preventing the Italians from accomplishing the very same object for which they were themselves striving at that time.

Much justice could not be expected by the Poles from an assembly animated with such a disposition as that of Frankfort, and notwithstanding all the arguments of the Poles, and some eloquent voices of their own members, it confirmed the partition mentioned above, whilst several members uttered on that occasion sentiments unfriendly to the Poles in general; and, indeed, the profound observation of Tacitus, that men usually hate those whom they have injured,* has perhaps never been more strikingly exemplified than by the conduct of the Germans towards the Poles on this, as well as on many other occasions. This whole affair, which produced so much bad feeling between the Poles and Germans, ended however in nothing, and things remained in the Duchy of Posen exactly in the same position as they had been before the events of 1848. This was the case with all the other resolutions of that celebrated assembly, which, instead of establishing the unity of their German fatherland, succeeded in nothing else than in a wanton provocation of a national hatred against the Germans on the part of the Scandinavians, Italians, Poles, Bohemians, and all the other Slavonians in general.

Should this essay ever attract the attention of a German who is a real lover of his country, let him be assured that it is not in anger, but in sorrow, that I am recording these events, because I know full well that the atrocities committed by the Prussian soldiery in Posen in 1848, and the strange conduct of the Frankfort parliament, were condemned and deplored by all truly liberal and enlightened Germans, no less than by the author of this essay. It is not in order to rake up the memories of past wrongs that I am bringing forward all these notorious circumstances, but in order to point out the dangerous consequences which they may produce to the cause of humanity and civilization, if the Germans will persevere in driving, by their senseless hostility, the Poles into the Russian Panslavism. I would therefore entreat every German, who has sincerely at heart the interest of his nation, seriously to reflect on these circumstances, and to use all the influence which he may have with his countrymen, in order to prevent them from pursuing a course which must inevitably lead to results equally fatal to themselves and to the Poles. Let them beware of those narrow-minded political bigots, or Russian hirelings, who are seeking to excite and to entertain amongst them feelings of animosity and prejudice against the Poles; but rather attend to the opinions of such of their own countrymen as a Raumer, a Willisen, a Fischer, a Knesebeck, and many others. Let them also be assured that the Poles will be glad to forget the deplorable events of Posen, as well as all those absurd vagaries directed against them by some German would-be statesmen and writers,—remembering only the cordial, the generous, the affectionate manner in which the Polish patriots were received in Germany, on their passage to France, after the fall of their cause in 1831, and that every German heart and hearth was then open to welcome them. Oh! may the feelings which animated on that occasion the great Teutonic nation be revived in the present momentous crisis, and they may be sure to find a response in every

* "Proprium humani ingenii est, odisse quem laesaeris."—*Agricola*, chap. xlii.

true Polish heart. The countrymen of Arminius ought indeed to understand those of Kosciuszko, and not condemn in the Poles those very sentiments in which they glory themselves. And finally, let them consider, and consider well, that the Slavonians shall be able to wrest from them infinitely more than what they are now refusing to concede to the Poles.

Though the project of partitioning the Duchy of Posen was abandoned, the Prussian government pursues, notwithstanding its having assumed a constitutional form, the same system towards the nationality of its Polish subjects as before the events of 1848. Thus, for instance, the repeated motions of the Polish members in the parliament at Berlin, to obtain the same educational advantages for the Polish population as those which are enjoyed by the Germans in the Prussian dominions, have been rejected by this parliament under the most frivolous pretences. The demand for the establishment of a Polish university at Posen was met by the reply that chairs of Polish literature had been instituted at the universities of Berlin and Breslau, thus placing the language of more than two millions of the inhabitants of the Prussian state on a par with the Arabic or Chinese. No better result was obtained by the representations of the Polish deputies about the insufficient number and defective condition of the inferior Polish schools, whilst the funds destined for educational purposes, and derived from various sources which existed previously to the establishment of the Prussian government in those parts, have been appropriated by that government to other uses. The Prussian government pursues, moreover, a harsh and most wantonly vexatious policy towards the Polish refugees from the Russian dominions, degrading itself into a department of Russian police. Thus, for instance, a great number of these refugees were established for several years in different parts of Prussian Poland, engaged in various trades, employed by the inhabitants, or, when unable to work, living with their friends. Several of them had purchased little properties, or taken farms; they carefully avoided mixing in any political concern, and their conduct was in every respect peaceful and inoffensive to every one. Their only crime was having been born in Russian Poland, and having escaped from the persecution of the Russian government; and it was solely on this account that they were expelled by the Prussian authorities, having thus their means of living destroyed, and themselves, with their families, set adrift, frequently in a state of destitution.*

Whether the conduct of the Austrian and Prussian governments, which I have described above, was the result of Russian influence, or simply of their own mistaken policy, there can be no doubt that it was admirably calculated to promote the great object of Russian policy, openly declared by the late emperor Nicholas,—namely, to persecute the Poles in every way until they will be taught to know, *that through Russia alone there is any salvation for them.* This same object has been pursued by the cabinet of St Petersburg in other countries. In France the interest for Poland has been one of the national traditions for more than two centuries, and which has been strongly re-animated

* It is chiefly for the relief of these unfortunate victims of the Prussian government, that the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland has been obliged to appeal to the benevolence of the British public by means of balls, concerts, &c.

by the wars of the republican and imperial governments of that country, in whose service an immense number of Polish lives were sacrificed, with the hope of reconquering in this way their national independence. It was, therefore, very natural that the Poles who sought refuge in that country, after the unsuccessful termination of their struggle for the above-mentioned cause in 1831, were received by the French as their brethren and ancient companions in arms. The French chambers voted considerable sums for the support of the Polish refugees, who received the most cordial assistance from the public authorities, as well as private individuals, in obtaining employment according to their talents, and in acquiring the knowledge of various professions and trades. The Russian diplomacy knowing well that every attempt to discredit the Polish cause with the French nation by its usual means of deception would not succeed, and only recoil upon its authors, adopted a different policy. It is well known that, notwithstanding all the talk about the *entente cordiale* with this country, the government of Louis Philippe was courting the cabinet of St Petersburg, and that many leading men of the Orleans party were, and I am afraid are even now, strongly inclined to a Russian alliance in preference to an English one; and this unfortunate bias led them into many acts of subserviency to Russia, unworthy of France, and repugnant to the feelings of the nation. Taking advantage of such a disposition, the Russian diplomacy organised a systematic persecution of the Polish refugees in France, by demanding and obtaining their expulsion from that country, for the most insignificant political manifestations on their part,—as, for instance, a speech denouncing the policy of Russia, made at a convivial entertainment, or some incautious proceeding of a similar importance. The object of Russian diplomacy in thus persecuting the above-mentioned refugees, was much more important than simply to vex those unfortunate individuals. It is too wise to indulge in such puerile acts of oppression, in order to prevent those refugees from hostile manifestations against Russia, for it knew well that, expelled from France, they might do it in England, and that it served only to produce on the French public an impression unfavourable to the authors and abettors of such proceedings. The real object in obtaining from the French government those acts of subserviency to its dictates was to show in Poland the power of Russian influence in France, and that the Poles had nothing to expect from the government of that country. They succeeded to a great extent in their object, as the Poles had begun to consider as a dangerous delusion those traditional hopes and sympathies which had for several generations formed a moral link between their country and France. The new order of things in France, and the present war, have re-animated these feelings, and let us hope that they will not be disappointed on the present occasion.

The political contacts between Poland and England were much less frequent and important than those with France; and during the wars between the last-named country and England, under the republican and imperial governments, the Poles serving under the French banner have encountered the English on more than one battle-field,—a circumstance which produced, however, on both sides, no other feeling than that which animates every brave heart towards a gallant adversary. There was, moreover, no lack of sympathy amongst the English

for the patriotic efforts of the Poles, and I have already had an opportunity of mentioning (p. 79) the cordial approbation which the constitution of the 3d May 1791 obtained from the most eminent statesmen of this country. The fall of Poland, and the heroic struggle of her patriots under Kosciuszko, met with the universal admiration of the British people, and it inspired the immortal bard of "The Pleasures of Hope" with strains that will ever rank amongst the noblest productions of the English language. The extraordinary struggle by which the Poles sustained, in 1831, the cause of their national independence, against such fearful odds as the undivided power of Russia, excited in this country a universal feeling of admiration and sympathy for a nation which, previously to that event, had been hardly known to the generality of the British public—and these feelings for our cause survived its fall. Russia saw at once the danger to which this circumstance might expose her in case of a war with England; and as her schemes are not directed by a from-hand-to-mouth policy, but prepared during many and many years before they are put into execution, she began to labour adroitly and perseveringly in order to remove this cause of danger, by misleading the public opinion of Great Britain on this subject. She had recourse for this purpose to the old but never-failing means of calumny, which, particularly when systematically directed against an individual or a cause, always ends by producing such an impression on the minds of many, that it will remain even when the falsehood of the calumny will become generally acknowledged. *Semper aliquid hæret*, or, to use a Scotch expression, "Something aye sticks to the cog." Thus, to the high Tory the Poles were represented as dangerous revolutionists, and to the Liberals as aristocrats, who had attempted a revolution in order to regain some obsolete privileges, &c. &c. It is, however, grievous to say that this policy found in a Briton one of its ablest and most successful promoters; and, indeed, nothing has more advanced the Russian objects in this respect than the celebrated production of Mr Cobden, "Russia, by a Manchester Manufacturer," published about twenty years ago, and which I have had already several opportunities to quote. This whole work, the object of which is to prove that Russia should be allowed to take Constantinople, because this would advance the cause of civilization, considering that it would introduce into that capital the elegancies of St Petersburg (p. 7), is a tissue of systematic, deliberate misrepresentations, in which every circumstance favourable to Poland is carefully omitted, whilst not only every thing which may throw blame upon that country is brought forward, but even pure inventions employed for this purpose. 'Tis true that this work has been satisfactorily refuted by several publications, but particularly by one entitled "Russia, in answer to the Manchester Manufacturer." Yet, as it was advertised at an immense expense, it obtained a very large circulation, and its effects could never be obliterated, though it is now evident that Mr Cobden's love of Russia has assumed the form of a monomania, and, as his recent speeches in parliament have shown, is certainly much stronger than his love for his own country. The most general accusation against the Poles was, however, that they were revolutionists, and every manifestation of national spirit was immediately proclaimed as a tendency fraught with danger to the repose of Europe, &c. I would

never end if I were to enumerate all the absurd accusations which have been preferred against the Poles, and I shall only mention, as a specimen of their justice, the following circumstances.

It happened, during the disturbances which took place in various parts of Germany that a few Polish exiles,—a dozen or two, and, in some cases, one or two individuals,—had joined in some popular movements, believing that they would ultimately lead to the liberation of their country; and this was sufficient for ascribing all the disturbances alluded to above to the instrumentality of the Poles, as if the Germans were so powerless as not even to be able to make a popular demonstration without foreign assistance. It has happened, also, that some unfortunate exile, driven to madness by persecution and misery, has committed some excess, or some other reprehensible action; immediately the whole Polish nation was rendered responsible for this solitary act of an individual belonging to it, though, I think, with as much justice as if the morality of the inhabitants of this or any other country was impugned because crimes and offences occasionally happen amongst them. 'Tis true that our cause has never been abandoned in this country by some few generous spirits, such, for instance, as the lamented Lord Dudley Stuart, and the eminent persons who compose the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland, amongst whom we quote, with a feeling of pride, that truly Christian philanthropist, Lord Shaftesbury, and who stood up for the cause of our country through good and bad report, against the unjust, but, unfortunately, very popular clamour about the revolutionary spirit of the Poles; but their opinions in this respect were far from being general. What, however, appears to me the most strange is, that the Poles, who, when there was no apprehension of a war with Russia, or as long as there remained a hope of avoiding it, were represented as a most unruly set, continually ready to revolt against their lawful oppressors, and immeasurably blamed on this account, are now, when this war is fairly begun, represented as a defunct nation, because they have not made an insurrection in favour of the allies.

Let us now examine the action which Russia is enabled to exercise upon other countries by means of her Polish provinces. The country which has suffered the most from this quarter is Turkey, as her European dominions had been covered from the attacks of Russia by the southern province of Poland. A single glance on the map of those countries will prove the correctness of this statement, which, moreover, is amply borne out by the evidence of history. The Russian territory was, previously to the treaty of Andrushow in 1667 (p. 56), entirely separated from the Turkish dominions in Europe by Poland. The only communication between the frontiers of these two states was a narrow strip of land surrounding the Turkish fortress of Azof, bordering on the country of the Cossacks of the Don, subject to Muscovy. This vicinity occasioned continual border forays, but these local hostilities produced no breach of peace between Constantinople and Moscow. Neither did the frequent wars with the khans of the Crimea, vassals of the sultan, and possessing the shores of the Black Sea from Azof to the cataracts of the Dnieper, lead to similar consequences. The only hostile collision between Muscovy and the Ottoman Porte was the unsuccessful attempt made in 1568 by Sultan Selim II. to conquer

Astrakhan by means of an expedition sent from Azof, but which was soon followed by the re-establishment of peaceful relations between these two powers. It was only after the above-mentioned treaty of Andrushow, by which Poland ceded to Muscovy the Ukraine, on the left bank of the Dnieper, that the last-named country obtained a frontier which was separated from the Turkish dominions by the same Dnieper, but to an inconsiderable extent. This new territorial arrangement brought about a war between Russia and Turkey in 1677, which produced, however, no consequences, and was terminated by the treaty of Radzin in 1681.

An alliance was concluded with Poland against the Turks, and an immense expedition was sent to conquer Crimea in 1687. It ended, however, in a military promenade to the gates of Perekop; but in 1698 Peter the Great besieged Azof, which he took the following year. He also caused the construction of the port of Taganrog on the Sea of Azof, and secured the possession of those two places by the treaty of Carlowitz, 1699. His unsuccessful campaign in 1711 compelled him, however, to restore Azof to the Turks, and to raze the fortifications of Taganrog.

In 1738 the Empress Anna declared war against the Turks, but the Russian operations were confined to the capture of Azof and Ochakoff, as well as the devastation of Crimea, without penetrating into the interior of the Turkish dominions.

This was effected in 1739, when a Russian army of 60,000 men, commanded by Field-marshal Munnich, crossed the Polish territory, violating the neutrality of that country, and entered Moldavia. The consequences of this measure were the defeat of the Turkish forces at Stavouchane, the capture of Chotim, and the occupation of Jassy by the Russians.

Munnich was making active preparations to march on the Danube, but his progress was stopped by the peace which the Austrians, who had taken a part in the war as allies of Russia, were compelled to conclude with Turkey on disadvantageous terms. Russia was, therefore, obliged to do the same, deriving, in spite of all the success which she had obtained in the course of that war, no other advantages than the razing of the fortifications of Azof, and an insignificant track of land on the right bank of the Dnieper.

I have related above (p. 68), that Turkey declared war against Russia on account of her interference with the affairs of Poland. No other powers of Europe shared the foresight shown on that occasion by the Ottoman Porte, which, abandoned to itself, met with great reverses, and lost by the treaty of Kuchuk Kaynardgi in 1774, Azof, Yenikale, Kerch, Kinbourn, and the deserts between the Dnieper and the Boh, which were ceded to Russia. The frontier line between those two powers on the European side was, however, limited by the course of the Boh, extending for about 100 miles from the mouth of the Kodyma to the Black Sea, into which the first-named river falls. From the river Kodyma to the Austrian frontier, the Turkish territory was bounded by the Polish provinces of the Ukraine and Podolia, which covered the most vulnerable part of its borders, as it could not be invaded from Russia except by the steppes extending between the river Kodyma and the Black Sea, and through which the march of a nume-

rous army was rendered exceedingly difficult, on account of the scarcity of water and provisions. During the war 1788–92 the Polish territory was no more respected, and Russia conquered, through the treaty of Jassy, by which that war was terminated, the shores of the Black Sea between the rivers Boh and Dnieper.*

The dismemberment of Poland, giving to Russia the Polish provinces bordering on Turkey, laid bare to her attacks the whole frontier of that country from the Austrian dominions to the Black Sea.

During the wars of 1807–12 and 1828–9, Russia could draw with great ease the resources necessary for the support of her armies from the fertile provinces of the Ukraine and Podolia, which are bordering on Moldavia, besides the facilities which they afford her for invading the Turkish territory on different points.

It is therefore evident that the restoration of Poland, having the course of the Dnieper to the Black Sea for its eastern boundary, would completely separate Turkey from Russia, and effectually prevent the extension of that power in this direction, even in case a Greek and Slavonic state or states should rise on the ruins of the Turkish empire in Europe.

The present position of Russia in Poland is no less menacing to Austria and Prussia than it is to Turkey. The Russian frontier is now only 60 German miles (280 English miles) distant from Vienna, and about 50 from Berlin.

In case of a war, one battle lost by the Austrians may lead a Russian army to Vienna or to Prague, and deliver to it Galicia, accessible to the Russian forces from Podolia, Volhynia, and the kingdom of Poland, and which can then only be defended from Hungary, with which it has no other communication except the military roads constructed across the Carpathian mountains, but which may be easily destroyed or blocked up by the invaders.

Prussia is exposed, in case of a war with Russia, even to greater disadvantages than Austria, because a Russian army may easily get possession of Breslau, only twelve German miles distant from the frontiers, where she would gain a strong military position on the Oder, and find immense resources in the rich province of Silesia. A still more vulnerable point is presented to a Russian invasion on the Vistula, because a Russian force entering at Thorn may easily occupy the banks of that river from the last-named town to its mouth, and entirely separate from the rest of the Prussian dominions the province of Prussia Proper, which, being surrounded by Russian possessions and the sea, may be attacked from all sides by land and naval forces. It is true that Prussia has made considerable preparations to meet such an eventuality, that she has the fortresses of Thorn, Graudenz, and Dantzic on the Vistula, and that she has recently erected the fortress of Lyck, in Prussia Proper, near the Russian frontier, and even fortified Konigsberg. But experience has proved that during the war of 1807 the fortresses of Prussia were no defence to that country, and that they fell one after another before the French conqueror. Supposing, however, that Russian forces should not be able to capture any of the Prussian for-

* It was during this war that Pitt had resolved to put a stop to the progress of Russia in Turkey, but was prevented from executing this resolution by the Opposition. —*Vide Annual Register for* 1791, chap. v.

tresses, or maintain their ground on the lower Vistula or on the Oder, the mischief which they may inflict upon the rich lowlands of Dantzic or in Silesia can never be retaliated upon the comparatively poor Russian provinces, which border the dominions of Prussia. Frederic II. was fully aware of these circumstances, having experienced their truth during the Seven Years' War; and the history of his times bears evidence to his constant efforts to keep on friendly terms with Russia.*

The same observation may be applied to Austria, because the devastation of such beautiful and rich countries as Moravia and Bohemia, to which they might be exposed even in case of a momentary success of a Russian invasion, can never be retaliated in the same degree, should an Austrian army penetrate even as far as the banks of the Dnieper.

The dangers to which Germany has been exposed from Russia obtaining the strategic position described above, were pointed out in a forcible manner at the Congress of Vienna by the Prussian general Knesebeck, who, though by no means friendly to the Poles, preferred the restoration of an independent Poland to an extension of the Russian territory in that quarter.

"One hundred thousand Polish troops," says he, "posted about Lenczyca (about fifty English miles to the west of Warsaw), may be balanced by an army of one hundred and twenty thousand Prussians stationed near Posen, Czenstochow, or Bromberg; but five hundred thousand Russians occupying the above-mentioned position will break the Prussian kingdom into pieces.

"In the first case, the projecting of the Polish territory into the Prussian is disagreeable, uncomfortable; in the second, a similar protruding of the Russian territory threatens the very existence of Prussia, and destroys her independence.

"The first may be suffered; the second renders life itself worthless.

"There is no security for Prussia when a large portion of the Russian territory will protrude into her own; none for Austria as soon as Russia crosses the Vistula."†

Now, let us admit an eventuality exactly the reverse of that which I have discussed, and suppose that Russia, instead of invading the Prussian or Austrian territories, should be obliged to defend her own possessions against the united forces of these two powers. The Russians would undoubtedly, in such a case, fall back upon the Vistula, and occupy a strong position between that river, the Wieprz, and the Bug, both falling into the Vistula. This position, defended in its front by the fortresses of Modlin, Warsaw, Demblin, and Zamosc, and in its rear by that of Brest, is considered, by high military authorities, to be most advantageous, and where a numerous Russian army may not only keep in check the forces of Austria and Prussia, but constantly menace their own dominions with an invasion, and prevent them by the same from penetrating further into the Russian provinces; whilst her army would draw, without impediment, from the interior of the country, the necessary supplies and reinforcements. Should the Russian army not be able to maintain itself in the position which I have described, it

**Histoire de Mon Temps*, vol. v. p. 42, as well as in many other places of this work.

† *Leben des minister's Baron Von Stein, von G. H. Pertz.* Berlin, 1851. Vol. iv., pp. 651-654.

may then retire to the Beresina and the Dnieper along the military chaussée constructed from Brest to Bobruisk, having its left flank covered by the impassable marshes of Polesia, and destroying behind it all means of subsistence and transport, so that its pursuit by the enemy would be rendered almost impossible.

The Russian possessions in Poland may be therefore considered as a *standing menace* to the rest of Europe, as much as Sebastopol was to Turkey, and consequently they must be wrested from her if the peace and security of Europe is to be established on a solid and permanent foundation, a desideratum which cannot be obtained by any other combination. There is a widely spread, but most erroneous, opinion in this country, that Russian Poland is inaccessible except through Prussia or Austria, whilst, in fact, it is quite the reverse, for it is very easily accessible on the most vulnerable points of the Russian empire, the invasion of which by the allied forces will offer them advantages not to be obtained anywhere else. The first of these points is Samogitia, or the north-western part of Lithuania, bordering on Prussia, the Baltic Sea, and Courland, the inhabitants of which, known for their bold character and stubborn resolution, are animated with a more intense hostility to the Russian dominion than perhaps any other population under its rule; and this on account of the following circumstance. The peasantry of Samogitia enjoyed, under the Polish dominion, a certain degree of liberty,—at least, their obligations towards the landowners depended not on the will of the latter, but were regulated by custom, which, having acquired the force of law, was religiously observed. This circumstance, united with a fertile soil, the proximity of the sea, and an entirely free trade, which was the case in Poland, rendered the Samogitian peasantry one of the richest of their class in Europe; and their welfare naturally gave them a feeling of independence, unknown to the peasantry of the adjacent provinces. This happy state of things has been entirely reversed since the establishment of the Russian government, because, as it did not recognise the liberties enjoyed by the above-mentioned peasantry, they were gradually reduced to a condition of absolute serfage, and their welfare declined in the same ratio as their liberty. This has been particularly the case with the *starosties*, or crown lands, which had been granted by the Russian government to several of its military officers and civil *employés* as a reward for their services, and who not only oppress the peasantry of those lands, but have even reduced many small freeholders, by their influence with the public authorities, to a state of serfage. This natural cause of hatred against the Russian government is still more increased by the circumstance that the Samogitians, who do not belong to the Slavonic race, speak a language so different from that of the Russians that they cannot understand each other, as is the case with all the Slavonic nations. The Samogitians proved their capabilities for an insurrectionary war in 1831, when, having risen, without any assistance from a regular army, they kept their ground for about five months against the Russian forces, and this in an entirely flat country.

The advantages which would be obtained to the cause of the allies by landing in that quarter, for instance at Liebau, a port in Courland, situated about thirty English miles from the Samogitian frontier, and which has been visited by the allied fleets during the present war, are

incalculable; but an essential condition to the success of such an expedition, and without which it would prove abortive, is, that it should be accompanied by a Polish legion. The formation of such a legion is a measure of the greatest importance in the present war, and which would have a decided influence upon its conduct and final issue, and it consequently deserves a particular consideration.

It has been said, over and above, that the population of Poland has been so much exhausted by the continual levies of recruits for the Russian army, that it would be unable to effect a rising if the allied powers had attempted to effect the restoration of that country. It is, however, precisely this very circumstance which may facilitate more than any thing else the accomplishment of this object. It is generally calculated that there are about two hundred thousand Poles in the Russian army; and we have positive proofs that their hatred to the Russian dominion, instead of being subdued, has been increased by their compulsory service, and that they would pass in crowds under the Polish standard as soon as it would be raised by the allied powers. This is sufficiently demonstrated by the following facts:—

On the 18th August of this year a Tahtar spy brought to the English camp the following letter:—"Our Polish brethren, who are with the English and the French, are requested to let us know whether it be true that a Polish army is now forming, and that Poland is to be reconstructed. If this be true, all of us, officers and privates who are in this brigade, shall leave the Russians, and pass over to you. But if not, we shall not do it, for we do not wish to expose ourselves to confusion. For the love of Christ, and for the sake of our Poland, give us a true, and not a false answer."

This being reported to the commander of the English staff, he could not honestly give to such a message any other reply, except that they should not expose themselves to confusion.

Thus these poor fellows were not afraid of being either shot or hanged by the Russians, but only not to meet with confusion in the camp of the allies; and, indeed, can there be any position more cruel than that of a Pole who passes now over to the allies, for he is treated, not as a patriot, but as a deserter? and will it be wonderful if he were driven by this circumstance into the most desperate courses?

Now, let us consider what would have been the effects if a Polish banner had been waving in the camp of the allies before Sebastopol? Would not this fortress, which has been only partly conquered at such an enormous expense of men and money, have fallen many months ago? Nay, had a small Polish force, but under its national colours, been sent with the expedition to the Crimea, it is more than probable that Sebastopol would have been captured immediately after the battle of the Alma, and all the horrors of its protracted siege avoided? But now, as the things stand, how many Polish soldiers have fought, for instance, in defending the Redan, who would otherwise have assisted in its capture?

I recommend, therefore, this circumstance to the particular attention of all those who have the loss of a friend or relative fallen in that unfortunate affair, or on any other occasion during the siege of Sebastopol, to deplore.

At the battle of the Tchernaya, on the 16th August, between 400

and 500 Russians, not wounded, fell into the hands of the allies; 120 of this number joined the Polish Cossacks in the Turkish service, of whom I shall speak hereafter.

The most remarkable circumstance of this kind is, however, the declaration of General Bodisco, governor of Bomarsund, who, being taken prisoner at the capture of that fortress, remained for some time in France, but having been exchanged, returned to Russia. He said, on leaving France, "I know that I shall be placed before a court-martial, but I am not afraid of it. How could I defend Bomarsund, having a number of Poles amongst my garrison?" From the small number of prisoners taken in that place, more than 500 have enlisted in the Polish Cossacks. No general can command with effect an army which contains such an element of weakness and disorganization. It is sufficient that the allies should excite the Poles, and the Russian army will be disorganised.

General Bodisco was perfectly right in his statement, because it may be added that the capture of the principal bastion of Bomarsund was accomplished chiefly by the co-operation of the Polish soldiers who were in it, and who wounded the Russian captain commanding that bastion, compelling him to surrender to the allies. This is a fact well known in high quarters, but not made public for some reason of state, which I am unable to explain.

Now, I would ask my readers whether, in the face of such facts as these which I have given above, there can be any doubt about the immense advantages which may be derived to the cause of the allies from the organization of a Polish legion. It must be, however, in order to be thoroughly efficient, formed as a separate body, and not as a part of the British Foreign Legion; it must have an entirely national organization, commanded by Polish officers; and it must not be exclusively in the pay either of England or France, but in the service of both the allied powers, and under the orders of that general, be he English or French, who shall command the expedition in which the Polish legion will be employed. The expense required for the maintenance of such a legion will be infinitely less than that of the foreign legion which is now in the course of formation in this country and abroad; because all the German, Swiss, or any other recruits who enlist in that legion, have no other motive for entering the British service than pay, or some other personal advantages. It is, therefore, very natural that they should receive a bounty on enlisting, and a high pay during their service. They, moreover, require time to be drilled; and, being unused to the hardships and privations of a campaign, must considerably suffer on taking the field for the first time. The case will be, however, quite different with the Poles, who, enlisting with the object of promoting the restoration of the independence of their country, whose duty it will be to reward their services, will not require any bounty on entering the service, and only a pay which may provide for their absolute wants.* They will be all, with the exception of some few young emigrants, who will join the national force, perfectly drilled, and inured to every kind of hardship and privation during their service in the Rus-

* It has been estimated that the enlistment and annual maintenance of 1000 Polish soldiers will cost 231,715 francs. Of the same number of the foreign legion 1,068,251 francs; consequently nearly five-fold the sum required by the Poles.

sian army. These troops would, moreover, fight with a desperate courage, having, besides the object of re-conquering their national independence, the sufferings of their compulsory service to avenge, and no quarter to expect, so that they would be equal to any other troops on the battle-field, and superior in a campaign to all those whom the allied powers may employ.*

The nucleus of a Polish legion could be very easily organised in this country and France from the Polish refugees, amongst whom there are many excellent officers and veteran non-commissioned officers and soldiers, as well as from the Russian prisoners, natives of Poland, who have generally shown the greatest willingness to enter such a legion as soon as its formation would be decided. This legion, composed of two or three thousand men, perfectly drilled, so as to be able to act as instructors of new levies landed at the place which I have pointed out on p. 111, and supported by an adequate Anglo-French army, with a sufficient store of arms, munitions, and all the necessaries of war for the organization of a new army, would produce an immediate and universal insurrection amongst the inhabitants of the country, and a desertion *en masse* of the Polish soldiers from the Russian ranks. A single glance on the map of that country will show the immense strategical advantages which will be obtained by such a combination. The insurrection, organised in the manner mentioned above, and supported by the allied forces, may soon reach Vilna, and even extend beyond that place, and one battle won by the united forces of the allies, and the insurrection will cut off the communication of the Russian troops stationed in Poland with St Petersburg, and thus compel them to fall back on the banks of the Dnieper. It will produce, at the same time, a powerful diversion in favour of the allied armies operating in the south, for we know, on no less high authority than that of the Premier, who certainly has the best means of obtaining correct information, that Russia had sent towards the Crimea her armies withdrawn from the north-western parts of the empire.†

Such an expedition would be a real *body blow* on Russia, and advance the cause of the allies, in a couple of months, much more effectually than the two naval expeditions into the Baltic Sea, which, according to the estimate of the *Times*, have cost the allies no less than twenty millions of pounds, without producing any other result than the capture and destruction of Bomarsund last year, and the destruction of the stores, but not of the fortifications, of Sweaborg, effected by a bombardment this year.‡

No other part of the Russian coasts of the Baltic presents advantages comparable to those which may be obtained by an invasion

* Napoleon I. expressed the following opinion on the military capacity of the Poles: —"They are a brave nation, and make good soldiers. In the cold which prevails in the northern countries, the Pole is better than a Frenchman. The commandant of Dantzic informed me that, during the severity of the weather, when the thermometer was 18 degrees (Reaumur), it was impossible to keep the French soldiers at their posts as sentinels, and that the Poles suffered nothing."—*O'Meara*, vol. i., p. 190.

† Speech of Lord Palmerston at Romsey, on the 5th Oct. 1855.

‡ The expediency of an expedition to Samogitia is acknowledged by all the military authorities who have paid any attention to this subject. It was forcibly pointed out in one of the letters on the chances of the present war, which appeared in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* of Augsburg, and was even discussed in some English papers. I have also endeavoured to call the attention of the British public to this subject, in my pamphlet, "Russia, Poland, and Europe," published in November 1854.

of Samogitia; because although there may be a considerable discontent in the Russian Baltic provinces (Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland), on account of the proselytism of the Greek church amongst the Protestant peasantry of those provinces, it is by no means such as to produce an insurrection,—whilst the gentry of these provinces occupy the most important places in the civil and military service of Russia, and are, therefore, notwithstanding their German nationality, generally more attached to the existing order of things than many real Russians. Neither can great things be expected, in this respect, from Finland, because this province, united with Russia in 1809, has been treated since that time with particular favour. It has a kind of constitution, a separate administration and army, all its ancient privileges and franchises, and even a much less restricted tariff than the rest of the Russian empire. The Finlanders, enjoying all these peculiar advantages, have, moreover, an open field for their talents and ambition in the military and civil service of Russia, where many of them occupy important situations. In short, Russia has done every thing in order to reconcile the Finlanders to her rule; and, therefore, it is no wonder that she has succeeded in creating among them a considerable party. To all these circumstances, it must be added that the inhabitants of the Finnish coast have suffered considerably from the destruction of their vessels, timber, tar, and other materials for shipbuilding, belonging to private individuals, and effected by the allied fleets, as well as from the blockade of their ports. It is very natural that they should ascribe these calamities more to their immediate authors than to their mediate cause, the Russian government; and we have seen that the Finnish militia fought on several occasions, as, for instance, at Gamla, Carleby, and Farosund. An insurrection in Finland is therefore not very probable; but, even supposing that it should be so, and that this province was wrested from Russia by the allies, what strategic advantages could be derived from the occupation of this extremity of Russia for further operations against that power? It is true that it may facilitate the capture of St Petersburg and the destruction of her fleets, but these losses, however heavy they may be, will not affect the real strength of Russia more than is now done by the blockade of her ports, and it will only serve to rouse the national spirit of the Russians, as was the case after the capture of Moscow in 1812. A success of this kind could not be, moreover, achieved except at an enormous sacrifice, considering that Finland is a mountainous rocky country, and which, consequently, it would be necessary to conquer step by step, as the Russians would undoubtedly fortify every pass, without speaking of Sweaborg and other fortified places. It would be, after all, only a blow inflicted upon an arm of the giant, whilst an invasion in Samogitia would be a real home-thrust, penetrating to the very heart of his power, and causing him to relax his grasp of Finland more effectually than a direct attack on this province.

Nothing, however, could facilitate more the success of a landing on the Russian coast of the Baltic than the co-operation of Sweden, which may easily furnish at least 50,000 excellent troops, who would bear the rigorous climate of these countries much better than English or French soldiers, and whom to subsidise it would cost about half of the sum which is required to maintain an equal number of troops which

are now employed by the allies. It is well known that the whole Swedish nation is desirous to take a part in the present war against Russia, which would be as much congenial with their national feelings as conducive to the most vital interests of their country; and the enthusiastic manner in which the capture of Sebastopol was celebrated at Gottenburg sufficiently shows the sentiments of the Swedes on this subject. It is, however, very natural that the Swedish government declines to join the alliance of the western powers, unless it will be materially secured from the revenge of Russia, and this object cannot be obtained in an effectual manner by guarantees on paper, but by a material reduction of the power of Russia, which cannot be accomplished except by the restoration of Poland, who will be the natural ally of Sweden against Russia, and prevent the latter from re-conquering the ancient Swedish provinces, which must be wrested from her on this occasion. This view is taken by the most enlightened and patriotic statesmen of Sweden, but whose wishes have unfortunately not yet obtained the approbation of the western powers.

Yet, though the importance of an expedition to Samogitia, as described above, cannot be overrated, nothing of this kind may be undertaken before the next spring. There is, however, another point where a Polish legion may be immediately employed with as much advantage as in Samogitia,—namely, in the south of Poland, which the allied armies cannot avoid entering as soon as they shall cross the Dniester, whose left banks belonged to Poland till its final dismemberment. A nucleus of a Polish legion has, moreover, been already formed by the Ottoman government, under the name of the Turkish Cossacks, and which may be easily developed into a considerable force, that would render the allies services far more effective than those which may be expected from the eastern troops, whom the English government is now organising in Turkey; and, therefore, I think that the following particulars of this nascent army will not be uninteresting to the British public:—

The Ottoman Porte, faithful to its sound political traditions, is as anxious to see the restoration of Poland as it was to free that country from the influence of Russia, when it declared war against that power on this account in 1768 (p. 67). The Sultan resolved, therefore, at the outbreak of the present war, to organise a body of Polish troops in his service, and he called for this object, in 1853, one of the most distinguished Polish officers, General Count Zamoyski (nephew of Prince Czartoryski), entrusting him with this object. Its accomplishment was, however, frustrated by the over-scrupulous, not to say timid counsels of western diplomacy; and the Ottoman government, thus crippled in its action, resolved to execute its project, at least in a modified form, by organising a regiment of light cavalry, composed of Polish volunteers, under the appellation of the second regiment of the Turkish Cossacks.

The existence of the Turkish Cossacks dates from an early period, and probably originated during the period when the Ottoman Porte began to interfere with the affairs of the Cossacks of the Ukraine, (p. 56.) Many of them, discontented with the Russian government, under whose suzerainty they came by the treaty of Andrushow (p. 56), emigrated, on various occasions, into the Turkish dominions. This was particularly the case with the Zaporoghians (p. 49), in 1709,

after the defeat of Charles XII., whose part they had taken, but chiefly after the final destruction of their community by the Russian government in 1775, as I have related above. These Cossacks were settled partly in the Dobrudja,* and partly near Broussa, in Asia Minor, where they obtained lands and considerable privileges, on condition of furnishing the Turkish government with a body of cavalry, which rendered good service on many occasions, but which the Ottoman Porte was latterly prevented from employing by the influence of Russia. M. Czaykowski, a Polish gentleman, native of the Ukraine, and who took a part in the insurrection of 1831, is a man of uncommon energy and talent. Thoroughly acquainted with the character, traditions, manners, and customs of the Ukraine, he published several novels, containing a lively and interesting picture of the population of that country. He was afterwards sent to Constantinople by Prince Czartoryski, where he had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the Slavonic population of Turkey, amongst whom, and particularly the Cossacks mentioned above, he obtained a great popularity. He afterwards entered the Turkish service under the name of Sadyk Pasha, and was entrusted with the organization of a body of light cavalry, composed entirely of Christians, under the name of the Turkish Cossacks, and invested with the title of the supreme commander of the Cossacks of Anatolia and Roumelia. He performed this task with extraordinary ability, and he organised very speedily a regiment of this description, which rendered such service during the siege of Silistria and the defence of Kalafat, that it was annexed, as a reward of them, to the imperial guard of the Sultan.

All the commissioned and non-commissioned officers of this body are Poles, and about a third of the privates belong to the same nation; the remaining privates are composed partly of the Turkish Cossacks, and partly of Turkish Slavonians, chiefly from Bulgaria. This force may be developed to a very considerable extent by voluntary enlistments among the Turkish Slavonians, and rapidly organised by the Polish officers, whose language is so nearly related to that of the above-mentioned Slavonians that they can freely converse with them. The advantages of such troops in the service of the Sultan are very great, because, in the first place, they have already proved their efficiency in the field, as I have mentioned above, and, which is perhaps of more importance, they will form amongst the Turkish Slavonians the nucleus of a party opposed to the influence which Russia is exercising on those populations, and which may powerfully assist their national development under the protection of the Porte.

Great, however, as these advantages may be, they are not to be compared to those that may be immediately obtained by taking this body into the service of the allied powers, and giving it at once all the development of which it is capable under the Polish colours. It has been calculated, by competent authorities, that the body in question could be in a very short time increased to twenty thousand excellent cavalry, by the Polish prisoners and deserters from the Russian army. It ought to receive an organization modelled on that of the ancient

* I have related, on p. 49, that a part of these Cossacks surrendered to the emperor of Russia in 1828. I believe, however, that many of them returned under the Turkish dominion.

Polish Cossacks, and the services which it could render on crossing the Dniester and entering the Ukraine are incalculable. The inhabitants of that country are the descendants of these Cossacks, whose memory is recorded in numberless ballads and tales, preserved in every family as the golden age of their country. The term of Cossack is itself employed by that population for designating what is free, bold, and grand, and frequently used, in addressing young men, as an expression of courtesy. The disturbances which have recently taken place in the Ukraine have considerably reanimated these recollections of the bygone times, and they have evinced tendencies of a much more elevated character than simply a discontent of the oppressive measures produced by the exigencies of the present war, as may be seen from the following particulars of this affair contained in the letter of an eye-witness:—

"In the spring of this year, a short time after the death of the Emperor Nicholas, an extraordinary movement amongst the peasantry of the Ukraine was generally observed. They frequently assembled in consultation, and it was reported that they were forming amongst themselves a kind of muster rolls. The landowners, alarmed at such an unusual occurrence, and fearing to incur a responsibility before the government, hastened to give information on this subject to the general-governor of Kioff, Prince Vassilchikoff. Yet though similar reports were arriving from all parts of the Ukraine, they did not produce any effect on the mind of the prince. He received them with perfect indifference, and laughed at the landowners, who, according to his opinion, having continually in mind the massacres of Galicia (p. 89), saw a repetition of them in every thing. 'Let them remain under this apprehension,' he was wont to say; 'I am not sorry at seeing them on the alert, and consequently attach themselves to the government whose protection they want.'

"Several landowners perceiving that the government was not adopting any measures for preventing an insurrection, began to make preparations for leaving their seats, in order to remove with their families from the apprehended danger. The peasantry, having observed these preparations, came to the above-mentioned landowners, saying, 'Of what are you afraid? of such crimes and massacres as in the times of Gonta?* Have no anxiety on this subject; we have no complaints against you. What we are doing now is our own work. We shall inform you about it when the proper time for it will come.' And when the landowners, not satisfied with this declaration, were pressing them to let them know their real intention, 'Well,' answered the peasants, 'we want to be free Cossacks, as was the case in former days. We are about fifty thousand; the Russians may do what they like: we are stronger than they are. As regards yourselves, our landowners, the only change we want to obtain for the present is not the abolition of labour which we perform for you, because we know that these estates are your lawful property, which you have purchased or inherited from your fathers, and that it would be unjust to deprive you of them; the only thing which we demand now of you is, that you should dismiss your stewards, and tell us every week what work we have to per-

* In allusion to the massacre perpetrated by the peasants of the Ukraine in 1768, and universally ascribed to the instigation of Russia. Gonta was the principal actor in that tragedy. He was taken and executed.

form, and it will be done. Several landowners agreed to the proposition of the peasants, who performed their work admirably; but on other estates, particularly on such as belonged to some rich Russian noblemen, the peasants refused to obey the stewards, and in some places ill treated and expelled them. One of these noblemen, Prince Lopukhin, hastened to Kioff, and represented to the general-governor, Prince Vassilchikoff, that he would incur a heavy responsibility if he continued to remain indifferent to these movements, and it was only then that the general-governor resolved to send by telegraph a report to St Petersburgh, asking instructions how he was to act under these circumstances. He received the energetic answer, that he ought not to have announced a revolt except when it had already been suppressed, or at least when he had already taken all the necessary means for the accomplishment of this object. Meanwhile, reports more and more alarming began to arrive from various parts to Kioff. Several employés of the government, who had tried to disperse the gatherings of the peasants, met with severe ill treatment, and a few Greek priests, known as agents of the government, were murdered. Terror spread over the whole province, and the Russians pressed the governor to act with vigour; but he desired, before adopting any decisive measures, to examine this affair himself. He therefore repaired to a place near the town of Vasilkof, where about six thousand peasants were assembled, and inquired from them who were their leaders. He was introduced into a cottage, where the following curious scene took place, and which was afterwards related by the governor himself.

"The authorities whom the peasants had chosen for themselves having been presented to Prince Vassilchikoff, he said to them, 'I am your governor; you know that I represent the person of the emperor, and you owe me a blind submission at every moment and in every place.' 'We don't care about such a governor as yourself,' replied the peasants. 'We don't want you. We have our own governor.' 'Who is this governor?' inquired the prince. A very old man then stepped forward, and after having saluted the prince in the usual manner, said, 'I am the man whom they call their governor, because I am old, and remember things which no other man in the whole of the Ukraine can remember. But I do not wish to be their governor, because they are fools, and do not follow my advice. Twenty-five years ago (1831), when the landowners were making war on the Russians, I told them, This is the moment you must join the landowners, and deliver the Ukraine from the Russians for ever. But they did not obey me, and misfortune befel ourselves as much as our landowners. Now I was saying to them, Remain quiet; you see that the landowners do not move yet, and they will not move before the red trousers (the French) will arrive here. But they have again disobeyed me, and so much the worse for them, and that is the reason why I do not wish to be their governor. You may, therefore, remain governor yourself.'

"Prince Vassilchikoff, excessively surprised by this speech, tried to suggest to them that they had grievances to complain of against their landowners, in order to give this affair an explanation agreeable to the government; but the peasants exclaimed, 'It is not true what you say; we have nothing with which to reproach our landlords; they are as un-

fortunate as ourselves. All the evil comes from you. You have taken away our children, so that there will be soon no hands to till our fields. This must be put an end to. We want to be as in former days, free Cossacks; and you Russians, you must return to your own country.' The prince tried to explain to them that this obstinacy would compel him to treat them as rebels, which they might avoid by an instant submission, and by delivering their ringleaders. They rejected his proposal, saying, 'We don't fear you; the whole of the Ukraine and Podolia belong already to the free Cossacks; we are stronger than you.' The prince immediately after his return to Kioff sent some infantry with cannon against these peasants. The opposed parties met near the town of Vasilkof. The troops thinking, however, that it would be easy to intimidate these peasants, who had no other arms than scythes and pitchforks, charged them without firing, but their attack was repelled by the peasants. The commander of the troops then ordered to fire with blank cartridge, but the peasants perceiving that none of them were hurt, and imagining that it was a miraculous interposition of Providence in their favour, and that the moment to exterminate the Russians had arrived, attacked the troops with great enthusiasm. Received by a discharge of artillery with case shot, they were, however, immediately routed, and the troops falling upon them, more than two hundred peasants were killed, and the remainder dispersed. They fled in all directions, believing that the Russians would give them no quarter. A great number of them sought refuge on the other bank of the Dnieper. And the inhabitants of that part of the Ukraine, occupied by Russia since the treaty of Andrushow, 1667 (p. 56), received them with great hospitality, but overwhelmed them with reproaches, saying, 'We predicted what would happen to you. Of what use was this untimely movement? You have undone us and yourselves. It was necessary to wait for the arrival of the *red trousers*.'"*

This account of the recent events in the Ukraine, which has been frequently mentioned by all the periodicals, is confirmed by intelligence derived from other sources on the same subject; and there can be little doubt that a body of light cavalry, organised as Polish Cossacks, and forming the van-guard of the allied forces, would produce, immediately on entering the Ukraine, by crossing the Dniester from Bessarabia, or after a march of two days along the banks of the Dnieper, a rising of the population in their favour, and that this insurrection would increase with their advance, so that the advantages which may be obtained in this manner, on the southern borders of Russia, would be no less great than those which may be effected by a landing in Samogitia, described above (p. 111).

Now, I think that the facts which I have adduced prove beyond every doubt the possibility of a Polish force co-operating with the allies against the common enemy, and the immense advantages which the allies would derive from this measure, and which cannot be obtained from any other combination of this kind. It remains only

* Several years ago a young peasant of that part of the Ukraine, called Shevchenko, had an opportunity of receiving a superior education. He composed several poems in the national dialect, breathing a patriotic spirit, and which became very popular. He was taken, by the orders of the government, as a recruit, and sent to a regiment in Siberia.

a question whether this measure is not liable to some inconveniences which may overbalance its advantages. Every one who has attentively watched the progress of the present war must be forcibly struck by the circumstance that it has been conducted in a manner which betrays a great unwillingness to strike a *too hard* blow on Russia; and this observation acquires a certain consistency by the fact that some of the members of the cabinet which had commenced the present war are now strongly opposed to its continuation, and that a considerable party of the opposition, represented by an influential periodical, the *Press*, which had been zealously urging a vigorous prosecution of the present war, has, immediately after the first decisive advantages obtained by the allies over the enemy, completely changed its opinion, and now maintains that enough has been already done in this respect. As an answer to those politicians who seem so anxious to preserve *the honour of Russia and the integrity of her territory*, I shall give the opinion expressed on an exactly similar subject, by one whom nobody has ever accused or suspected of revolutionary tendencies. The Duke of Wellington, when addressing the Earl of Liverpool from his head-quarters at St Sever, on the 21st March 1814, says, that a declaration on the part of the allies in favour of the Bourbons would set the whole of France in a flame, and speedily overturn the reign of Napoleon, and concludes with the following words :—

" I cannot discover the policy of not hitting one's enemy as hard as one can, and in the most vulnerable place. I am certain that he would not act so by us, if he had the opportunity; he would certainly overturn the British authority in Ireland if it were in his power."—*Despatches*, vol. xi. p. 549.

Now, I would submit to the decision of my readers whether the observation made by the Duke of Wellington on the means of overturning the power of Napoleon in 1814, is not applicable to that of Russia, and the employment for its overturn of the means discussed above? Russia certainly would not hesitate a moment if she had an opportunity of striking a heavy blow on the most vulnerable part of France or England, and she never scrupled to excite revolts against the Ottoman Porte. She did not even hesitate, in 1812, to address the Germans in language which strongly reminds of that which has been used in the proclamation recently issued by the republican triumvirate now sitting in London.* It is quite impossible, therefore, to under-

* The following is an extract from the proclamation which was addressed, by the orders of the Emperor Alexander, and in his name, to the German soldiers in Napoleon's army, by the General Barclay de Tolly, in June 1812:—" Germans,—unfortunate, disgraceful tools, employed for the attainment of ambitious objects,—rise like men, and consider that you belong to a great nation, distinguished in history by the arts of war and peace. Learn from the example of the Spaniards and Portuguese, that the firm and strong will of a people is capable of resisting its subjugation by foreigners. You are oppressed, but not yet degraded and degenerated; and though many amongst your upper classes have forgotten their duties to their fatherland, the great majority of your nation are loyal, valiant, disgusted with the foreign dominion, and true to God and their country.

" You, whom the conqueror has driven towards the frontiers of Russia, leave the standards of slavery, and gather round those of your fatherland, of liberty, and of national honour, which shall be raised under the protection of his majesty the emperor, my most gracious master. He offers you the assistance of every valiant Russian in a population of fifty millions of his subjects, who are all resolved to continue to their last breath a struggle for the national independence and honour," &c. &c.

Ten thousand printed copies of this proclamation, composed by the celebrated Baron

stand the cause of that tender solicitude which has been evinced by several British politicians for the interests of Russia, unless they believe that the present war is such a pleasant amusement to John Bull, that they are anxious to preserve the Russian game, so as to secure to him a periodical enjoyment of this sport.

I think that there can be little doubt that if the Duke of Wellington, enjoying all his natural vigour, had been directing the present war, he would not have exhibited the policy of not hitting Russia as hard as he could, and in the most vulnerable place, and that consequently he would have at once resorted to the employment of the measures discussed above; so that, according to all human probability, the war would have been terminated by this time, in a manner which would have secured Europe against its recurrence, in an effective and permanent manner. And, indeed, the necessity of using the co-operation of the Poles for a successful war with Russia is so obvious, that General Knesebek, whom I have quoted above (p. 110), and who was the very incarnation of all the German prejudices against the Poles, declares such a measure as indispensable in case of a war between Russia on one side, and Austria, Prussia, England, and other powers, on the other, and which he considered already, in 1814, as inevitable. "In case of this war," says he, in a letter addressed to the celebrated German patriot, Baron Stein, "*the Poles must not be neglected, but the above-mentioned powers must solemnly guarantee to them their emancipation from the Russian yoke, and the restoration of their country to an independent state, with the limitations mentioned before,*"—that is, the cession of some parts required for securing a good frontier to Austria and Prussia.*

The objection which is generally made in this country to the organization of a Polish force is, that it will meet with the opposition of Prussia and Austria. Well, granted that it should be so;—but let us examine of what nature will be this opposition. Can it be any thing more than some manifestation of diplomatic peevishness? The cabinets of Vienna and Berlin may fret, may chafe at such a measure, but never go to war against the Western Powers, particularly now when Sebastopol has fallen and the Russian fleet in the Black Sea is destroyed. They cannot have even a pretence for opposing an insurrection in Russian Poland, as their territory will not be invaded; and indeed it is quite preposterous to suppose that these cabinets should be so infatuated as to risk, particularly after the recent successes of the allies, a war which would commit the very existence of their states. Is it necessary to observe that a French invasion of Lombardy, combined with an attack of the allied fleets on the Adriatic possessions of Austria, would at once free her Italian provinces, and, capturing or destroying her military and mercantile fleets, as well as seaports,†

Stein, who was then at the imperial head-quarters, and corrected in some expressions by the Emperor Alexander himself, were scattered, by every possible means, amongst the German troops in Napoleon's army, and even in Germany.—*Vide Leben des Freiherrn von Stein, v. Pertz*, vol. iii. p. 78.

* *Life of Baron Stein*, in German, by Pertz, vol. iv., pp. 681-684.

† The mercantile fleet of Austria consisted, according to official data, in 1851, of 9511 vessels, with a crew of 31,831 men, while the whole naval force counted only 742 guns. All the Austrian seaports, as Venice, Trieste, Fiume, Zara, Raguza, are in an almost defenceless state against an attack from the sea.

reduce her exchequer in a few weeks to a state of complete bankruptcy? And would Hungary, which was, during all the wars of Austria with republican and imperial France, the main prop of her power, support it in such a crisis, or would she not rather use this opportunity for rising to reconquer her constitutional rights, which the Austrian dynasty has now openly violated for the first time after a connection of more than three centuries?* In short, Austria cannot take a part against the western allies without committing a political suicide. There is not much difference in the case of Prussia, whose commerce would be immediately annihilated by the capture of her merchantmen and the destruction and blockade of her seaports, without mentioning the invasion of her Rhenish provinces by France, and even a great probability of losing them. The apprehension that the introduction of the Polish element into the present war by the allies would throw Prussia and Austria into the arms of Russia is therefore a complete delusion. Nay, I have no hesitation to maintain that this measure would produce quite the contrary effect. It has been recently observed by the eminent statesman who is now placed at the helm of the affairs of this country, that if the nations of the continent were to determine the course which they should pursue simply according to their own sentiments and feelings, there are countries now resting in inglorious neutrality that would have joined the alliance, and done honour to themselves and the cause.† And indeed it is well known that the national party, represented by an immense majority of the population of Austria, as well as Prussia, are most decidely anti-Russian, and that they are kept down in both these countries by small influential minorities. A more decisive policy on the part of the allies than that which had been too long pursued, would have undoubtedly given to the national party the upper hand in the councils of Berlin and Vienna, because men will always rally round the strong and not round the weak, and strength will be always supposed to be where activity and decision are shown; whilst, on the other side, a timid and hesitating conduct will be immediately set down as a sign of weakness. Russia knows it well, and it was by acting on this principle that she succeeded in withdrawing Austria from the western alliance; because when that power made a demonstration against Russia, by occupying the Danubian principalities and by sending a considerable force into Galicia, Russia, instead of truckling to the susceptibilities of the Viennese cabinet, intimidated it by sending the *elite* of her troops to Poland. 'Tis true that she did not offer the slightest resistance to the Austrian occupation of the Danubian principalities, but it

* I have described above (p. 18) how the house of Hapsburg came into the possession of the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia. It had many wars for the support of its claims to the Hungarian crown against native competitors and other parties, generally supported by the Turks; and though it tried to curtail the nation's liberties, it never attempted to reduce Hungary into a simple province of the Austrian dominions. The differences between the Hungarian nation and the house of Hapsburg were finally settled by the treaty of Szatmar in 1711. Since that time Hungary was treated as a separate kingdom, having only the same monarch in common with the other Austrian dominions, occupying the same position as Scotland before the act of union in 1706. The Austrian government abolished, however, in 1849, the separate existence of Hungary, declaring it to be only a province of the united empire, and it was owing to this circumstance that the Hungarian insurrection became national.

† Speech of Lord Palmerston at Romsey, Oct. 5, 1855.

was because she knew well that even the most brilliant success of her arms in that quarter against the Austrians would not be attended with any result whatever, as the passes which lead from these provinces into Transylvania cannot be easily forced, whilst an invasion of the Bukovine, or eastern Galicia, would not inflict any material injury on Austria. She concentrated, therefore, her forces near Cracow, where the gain of one single battle might bring the Russian armies into the rich province of Moravia, and even lead them to the very gates of Vienna, whence, appealing to the discontented nationalities of the Austrian empire, she might at once upset its whole frame. The Austrian cabinet has quailed before this danger; and no wonder, for it cannot have forgotten the advice given by Pozzo di Borgo to his government in 1828, that if Austria was to oppose the Russian projects in Turkey, Russia should immediately attack Austria, proving to be *formidable, inexorable, and determined to pour upon her all the calamities of war, without sparing her any one of them.** Had Russia been attacked last spring by the allies in her most vulnerable point, Samogitia, in the manner described above (p. 114), and which I pointed out a year ago,† such a decision would have enabled Austria to brave the dangers of a Russian invasion, and even to attack her in Poland; and it is more than probable that the same circumstance would have given to the national party a preponderance over the partisans of Russia in the councils of Austria, who would not then have remained in that *inglorious neutrality* with which Lord Palmerston has reproached her.‡ But England having declared, by the mouth of Lord John Russell, her intention of *preserving the honour of Russia and the integrity of her territory*, and the conduct of this statesman during the conferences of Vienna last spring being perfectly consistent with this declaration, no measure of vigour could be anticipated from this quarter. Under these circumstances the Russian party could not but triumph over the national one, and the natural consequence was that Austria decided to conciliate Russia in preference to the Western Powers.§

It is a known fact, that Lord Palmerston has, from the beginning of the present war, fully appreciated the expediency of a Polish force in the service of the allies, and that the Emperor of the French took the same view, notwithstanding the opposition which was offered by some diplomats to this measure.‖ The hope of obtaining the co-

* *Despatch of Count Pozzo di Borgo to Count Nesselrode*: Paris, November 28, 1828. *Portfolio*, vol. i.

† *Russia, Poland, and Europe*, p. 14, *et seq.*

‡ Speech of Lord Palmerston at Romsey, Oct. 5, 1855.

§ The opinion which I have expressed in the text is fully corroborated by the following passage of the *Oesterreichische Zeitung (Austrian Gazette)* quoted by the *Times'* Vienna correspondent of May 14, 1855:—"It would have been Quixotic if a certain high personage had gone to the Crimea, but it would be the very reverse if he, at the head of half a million of men, should direct his steps to the banks of the Vistula. Then the German opponents of the allies would be dispersed to the four winds of heaven; then their allies would be able to join in the war; and a great and glorious peace might be concluded, which would leave Russia more Muscovite and less Polish, Swedish, German, and Turkish than she is at present. If this should occur, the world will laud the wisdom of the statesman who refused to conclude 'a three-point peace;' if on the contrary," &c.

‖ The late lamented Lord Dudley Stuart, whose unremitting devotion to the cause of Poland and to her exiled children will form one of the most interesting episodes of our history, and whose untimely death is a national calamity to our country, said, at the anniversary meeting of the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland, on

operation of Austria seems to have been the principal obstacle to the adoption of this measure, but this hope having now vanished removed entirely that obstacle, and yet the British ministry are still hesitating to adopt a measure the immense utility of which has been proved beyond every doubt by the facts which I have produced above. The reason of this hesitation on the part of the British ministry may be, however, easily explained. The organization of a Polish force under its national colours must necessarily give a decided character to the present war, and show to the whole world that the united powers are bent in earnest on an effective and permanent reduction of the power of Russia. It is therefore very natural that the British cabinet is loath to enter into so decided a course without being certain of the unanimous and cordial support of this line of policy by the British people. This consideration could not but acquire additional force from the circumstance that several British statesmen, who have been themselves instrumental in the declaration of the present war, have become on a sudden converted to pacific views, and are maintaining that the war should not proceed any further; while a similar change of opinion has been manifested by an influential organ of the Conservative party, as I have observed at p. 121. On the other side, the people and the press of this country, though unanimous in their approbation of the present war, have, with some exceptions, hitherto abstained from

the 31 May, last year, 1854, what follows:—"It has already been stated to you in the Report, that the project of establishing a Polish legion in the service of Turkey met the hostility of the ambassadors of England and France representing those countries in Turkey. Such was the case, although I knew that so long ago as last autumn, it was the opinion of Lord Palmerston that it would be wise on the part of Turkey to enrol a Polish legion. But it so happens that Lord Palmerston is not now Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,—the noble Lord is not the Prime Minister of England,—I wish he was. This, however, was Lord Palmerston's opinion as an individual. I am sure that it was also the opinion of the government of his Majesty the Sultan, and that they were favourable to the establishment of a Polish legion. You are aware that I had the pleasure, some months ago, of travelling to the East, and while there I had the honour of a conference with some of the cabinet ministers of the Sultan,—Redschid Pasha, the seraskier, and others, at Constantinople. They were perfectly ready and willing, and even anxious, to employ the Poles, who they knew were united with them by a common hatred of Russia. They were, however, burthened at that time with the weight of European diplomacy, and those exceedingly able and excellent diplomats, the English ambassador and the French ambassador, were opposed to it. With these obstacles in their way the Turkish government could do nothing. It was not long after, however, that the French government saw the error that they were committing; and I am happy to tell you, that so completely sensible did the French ambassador become of its advantages, that he communicated with, and at once received the support of his government; and I am also happy to inform you, that the government of this country has become favourable to it, and has addressed official despatches to the English ambassador at Constantinople, requesting him to give all the support in his power to the establishment of a Polish legion in behalf of Turkey. Yes, so completely has our government become favourable to the establishment of a Polish legion, that they have forwarded official despatches to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, directing him to give all the aid in his power to the formation of a Polish legion. The British government have not only done this, but they have given direction that a large supply of arms and ammunition shall be placed under the control of the commander-in-chief of the British army, for the use of the Polish legion when formed. The Polish legion will, therefore, I believe, soon have an opportunity of again meeting their relentless enemy in battle. But what is likely to be the effect of this Polish legion fighting under their national flag, in the service of the Sultan? It is well known that one-third of the troops of the tzar are Poles, forced into the service of the tzar by the conscription; and that the probability is, that when they find they have a Polish legion before them, fighting under the national banner of their country, they will desert *en masse* from the ranks of the soldiers of the tzar and join the standard of their country."

giving a decided opinion on this important subject, or even discussing it in an earnest manner. The great meeting which had been announced this summer in London, for a public discussion of this subject, and in which some eminent individuals of this country took a part, whilst other most influential persons expressed their approbation of its object, was rendered nugatory by the mischievous interference of some individuals known as advocates of a peace at any price. This was indeed a very unfortunate event, for it has thrown a considerable damp on the hopes which had been entertained abroad by all the opponents of Russia, that the British people were decided in their resolution to curb effectively the aggressive policy of that power, and produced a widely spread, though, I hope, unfounded impression, that the above-mentioned people are in fact indifferent to this question. Is it then a wonder that the British ministry are reluctant to adopt a decided course in an affair of such importance as the one in question, as long as the nation remains, at least, apparently indifferent to it, because, in a country constituted like England, a ministry cannot take up such a measure without exposing themselves to the violent attacks of their political opponents, unless they may be sure of being supported in their views by the public opinion of the nation at large. I have, therefore, no doubt that a great service will be rendered to the British government by the public discussion of the measure in question. I say *discussion*, and not *advocacy ;* because it is only by becoming thoroughly acquainted with the merits or demerits of this measure that the British nation can give a decided opinion on this subject. If such a discussion should prove the expediency of the measure, and that it may really and truly be instrumental in reducing the power of Russia in an effective and permanent manner, at a much less cost of blood and money than any other measure, a verdict in its favour by the British people will strengthen the hands of the ministry in carrying it out in an efficient manner. Should, however, such a discussion produce a contrary result, it will be no little advantage to remove every misconception on a subject of such importance to the present war. Consequently, only those who are interested in suppressing the truth can object to such a proceeding. Let, therefore, the people of Great Britain make use on this occasion of their high privilege of publicly discussing their national affairs, and pronounce their opinion on this measure, because this will assist the cause of the allies, morally and materially, in a much more efficient manner than all those foreign aids which this country is seeking to obtain in various parts of the globe at such a vast expenditure.

There is, moreover, a very important consideration, intimately connected with this subject, but which, I think, has not attracted the notice of the British public, and to which I would most particularly call its attention. It is almost superfluous to observe, that England and France, cordially united, may not only overcome Russia and reduce her power to a condition where it will be no longer dangerous to the security of Europe, but also dictate the law to all other countries; and it is very natural that such a combination should excite the jealousy of other cabinets and their adherents, who will consequently not omit any opportunity, or leave any means untried, in order to dissolve, or at least to weaken the English and

French alliance. The most common, but nevertheless the most effectual means for obtaining such an end, is to sow the seeds of dissension between the allied parties, by exciting mutual jealousies between the two cabinets and nations. And, indeed, all those who have carefully followed the continental press, particularly that which is in the pay of Russia, or advocates those interests which are supported by that power, must have observed the affected praises which are often given to the French at the expense of the English, and occasionally *vice versa;* as well as the continual hints, inuendoes, and even open assertions, about the instability of the Anglo-French coalition, as not being founded on the mutual interest of the allied countries. Amongst the reports spread by the adversaries of this alliance, that which seems to obtain the greatest vogue on the continent is, that England has no other object in this war than to secure, as much as possible, her maritime interests against the competition of other powers, as well as those of her Indian empire, and that, therefore, she desires only to destroy the fleets and naval establishments of Russia, and wrest from that power its trans-Caucasian possessions, but by no means to weaken it in such an effective and permanent manner as would have been done by the loss of its Polish provinces; that England, faithful to her old political traditions, thinks that Russia being once rendered, in the manner mentioned above, innoxious to herself, will be needful to her policy as a counterpoise to the power and influence of France. Further, that it is in conformity to this line of policy that England desires not the restoration of Poland, for fear that that country, owing to her long connection with France, would be always under the French influence, excluding that of England. And, finally, that it is this circumstance which explains the otherwise unaccountable change in the opinions of several members of the British cabinet who had been themselves instrumental in declaring the present war, as well as some leaders of the Tory party; and that it is for the same reason that the sentiments of the French emperor on the Polish question, expressed in an unmistakable manner by the insertion in the *Moniteur*, the official organ of the French government, of the hopes which the Poles repose in that monarch for the restoration of their country, and which was generally considered as a feeler of the public opinion on this subject, did not meet with any response from the British people, notwithstanding all the efforts of the friends of the Polish cause to obtain a popular demonstration in its favour.

Now, I don't know whether there may be found in this country some such political anilities, who, having neither learnt nor forgotten any thing, are still clinging to the antiquated notions of a Russian alliance and a jealousy of France, notwithstanding that these notions were completely disposed of by the conduct of the eminent Tory statesman, Lord Castlereagh, at the Congress of Vienna, 1815 (p. 80). I only know that the objection to the restoration of Poland, which had been seriously broached by some German politicians, that she will be always the ally of France against Germany, may be met with the answer which I gave to this objection several years ago,*—namely, that in case of such a combination, Germany may have an ally in Russia who will keep Poland in check, and that these two

* *Panslavism and Germanism*, p. 214.

powers will be then balanced against each other; whilst if France was to ally herself with Russia, when the Polish element shall be absorbed or conciliated by that power, the position of Germany will be much more critical. Poland restored to her ancient frontiers, and with an efficient political organization, will have enough to do in resisting the pressure of Russia, who, if she were even deprived of all her conquests made since the accession of Peter the Great, would contain a population of about forty millions, with an extent of territory allowing to treble this number without any inconvenience of over-population. Similar considerations are applicable to the foreign policy of England, though I do not think it necessary to press them on the attention of this country, because, of all the evil passions which unfortunately agitate the human heart, none is more alien to the British character than jealousy. The indifference with which the British public has hitherto treated the Polish question must be therefore ascribed to other causes than those to which it is attributed by the open and secret enemies of the Anglo-French alliance. Yet, however absurd and groundless all these reports may be, they are nevertheless very mischievous; and being adroitly used by the opponents of that alliance, may do it a good deal of injury, particularly in France, where public opinion, not having the means of manifesting itself in such a manner as in this country, may be more easily misled by designing machinations. The people of Great Britain cannot therefore do too much in order to confute these imputations, by disclaiming them in the most public and energetic manner.

It would be indeed repeating a truism, universally admitted by every enlightened and patriotic individual on both sides of the Channel, that the Anglo-French alliance is one of the most fortunate events of our times, not only for the two countries, but also for the cause of humanity and civilization in general, and one which amply compensates the sacrifices which it has imposed upon the contracting parties. It appears to me, however, to have one weak point,—namely, that the object for which these sacrifices are made is not defined with sufficient clearness. This circumstance may become the source of great misunderstandings, and consequently offer to the common enemies, who, unfortunately, are to be found in more than one quarter, as well as to false or vacillating friends, facilities for destroying, or at least for injuring to a considerable extent, the results which the people of Great Britain and France, as well as their allies, justly expect to obtain from these sacrifices. This would be a most deplorable contingency, because nothing loosens so much the bonds of an association, be it an alliance between states or a partnership between individuals, than a disappointment in the object for which it had been formed; and indeed this circumstance has already greatly weakened the moral influence which the Anglo-French alliance ought to exercise on the other countries, by creating much doubt and suspicion on the real designs of this alliance. Thus, for instance, people are greatly puzzled how to reconcile the avowed object of the present war, which is effectively to secure the liberty and independence of Europe from the dangerous preponderance of Russia, with the intention of *preserving the honour and the integrity of the territory of that power*, so emphatically declared by a British minister, considering that these two objects are perfectly

incompatible. Such contradictions are not well calculated to consolidate the Anglo-French alliance, or to rally round it the friends of real progress and liberty, but rather to increase their hesitations, and create a general feeling of disappointment, and even distrust. The most mischievous effect of this absence of a definite object is, that it gives a great handle to the pro-Russian party, which, though silenced, is by no means extinct in France, to propagate suspicion against the good faith of Britain, by the reports which I have described above (p. 127). The best, and I think the only means of effectually removing all the dangers to which the Anglo-French alliance may be exposed from without and from within, is openly to adopt a definite object, of such a nature as to render impossible a reconciliation with Russia before the accomplishment of an effective reduction of her power, by wresting from its grasp those territories which make it so dangerous to other countries. This will not only consolidate the western alliance in an indissoluble manner, but it will morally and materially increase its power, by deciding its hesitating friends and by overawing its secret and open adversaries.

I have shown above (p.107, *et seq.*), that the Polish provinces of Russia give her the most powerful means of aggression, and may be considered as constituting a *standing menace* against the security of Europe. Consequently its interest imperatively requires that they should be wrested from that power; and this measure naturally implies the restoration of Poland. Yet, however desirous I may be, as well as every Pole, to see the accomplishment of this great object, I fully admit, that considering the many complications with which it is surrounded, its definite proclamation by the western allies must be for the present left to the chances of war. This is, however, by no means the case with a measure which is a preparatory and indispensable step towards the accomplishment of that object,—namely, the organization of a Polish army, the immense advantages of which to the cause of the allies, but particularly to this country, which is obliged to beat about for recruits in all parts of the world, I have demonstrated by facts on p. 112, *et seq.* And indeed if it be perhaps unreasonable on the part of the Poles to require at this moment from the allies a proclamation of their national independence, which, as I have said above, must depend on the chances of the present war, nothing can be more just and reasonable than their demand to be allowed to promote this great object by co-operating in this war, under their national colours, and in those localities where their efforts may obtain the greatest advantages to their cause, which thus becomes inseparable from that of the allies. Although it may be premature for the cabinets of the allied powers to take up at this moment the cause of our national independence, it is by no means so for the public to discuss this question in all its bearings, because Poland must be reconstructed in the public opinion, before she is restored to the map of Europe. This cannot, however, be accomplished in a manner satisfactory to the interests of Europe, except by a calm and impartial examination of this important question. The injustice of the partition of Poland is now universally acknowledged, but unfortunately this circumstance alone will never induce any power or nation in the world to make the slightest effort in order to redress this political crime, which blots the pages of

modern history. The Polish question must be, therefore, reduced to the two following points: —

1. Whether the restoration of Poland to an independent state is required by the interests of Europe, or whether this necessity may be equally, or even better, satisfied by any other combination.

2. Whether Poland contains the moral and material elements required for its political reconstruction in a manner which will entirely satisfy the interests of Europe, for the sake of which this reconstruction is necessary.

As regards the first of these points, it is a universally admitted fact, that the necessity for reconstructing Poland as an independent state entirely arises from the danger with which Russia threatens the security of Europe, and which may be effectively prevented by such a measure. There is, however, much difference of opinion in western Europe as to the real nature and extent of this danger, as well as about the means of averting it.

The history of Russia clearly shows that her aggressive policy is not the result of some accidental causes, but a natural consequence of the political system invariably followed for four centuries, and which seems to be inherent in the very existence of that state. Every attentive reader of Russian history will be convinced that the expression of an English poet, "The child is the father of the man," has never been more strikingly exemplified than by the destinies of that state. I have shown on p. 14 the conquests of the tzar Ivan Vasilevich I., accomplished in the latter part of the 15th century; the ambitious views and progress of the power of Moscow under his son, Vasili (p. 15); and its rapid development under his grandson, the celebrated tyrant Ivan Vasilevich II. (p. 21). The letter of Sigismund Augustus, addressed to Queen Elizabeth of England in 1567, representing the dangers with which Europe was even then threatened from the power of Russia, and the speech of the Polish ambassador addressed to the senate of Lubeck on the same subject in 1568 (pp. 22, 23), as well as the speech of Zamoyski in the Polish senate, 1581, on the war with Muscovy (p. 27), clearly show that the dangers of the boundless ambition and aggressive policy of Russia had become evident to every intelligent observer even in the 16th century.* Nor was the Russian diplomacy less crafty and cunning at that remote period than it is now, as may be seen from its intrigues at Vienna, Rome, and London (p. 28, 31, 32). The same history proves that the disasters which had been suffered by Muscovy on several occasions, and the checks which had been imposed on her power by the treaties of Kiverova Gorka in 1584 (p. 31), of Divilino in 1618 (p. 48), and of Viazma in 1634 (p. 53), have lasted only as long as she was not

* The contemporary Thuanus relates, that the Hanse towns had prohibited, under the severest penalties, the commerce with Narva, which was then in the hands of the Muscovites, for fear that these barbarians should learn the arts of war, and become thus enabled to penetrate into Germany. And he observes, "that as Greece was overrun by the Turks, when instructed in navigation by the Genoese, so the communication of the arts of war to the barbarians of Muscovy might expose all Europe to a like danger from them."—*Historia*, lib. xxxix. cap. 8, an. 1563. And yet, in spite of these wise previsions, the whole of Europe continued, during three centuries, to teach Russia the arts of war, and to furnish her with all the necessary means for effectively conducting it. The defence of Sebastopol has shown that it did not meet with indocile pupils.

able to break them with advantage, and that she resumed her projects of aggrandisement at the first favourable opportunity, no more than twenty years after the conclusion of the last-named of these treaties (p. 54); and finally, the statistics of the Russian conquests since the accession of Peter the Great, which I have given on p. 4, must, I think, remove every doubt about the aggressive policy of Russia.

This policy depends not at all on the personal disposition of the ruling powers of Russia, but it has become a national instinct, which animates with all its intensity even those foreign princes and statesmen whom circumstances have called either to the throne or the councils of Russia; so that if the honourable member for Manchester, the stout defender of peace at any price, was to exchange his broad-brimmed head-gear for the imperial crown of Russia, he would immediately become as ambitious of conquest and dominion as the late Emperor Nicholas was accused to be. This is a fact proved beyond every doubt by the evidence of history, which shows that the entirely German cabinet which conducted the affairs of Russia under the reign of the Empress Anna, 1730–40, was no less intent on extending the dominions and influence of that country, than if it had been composed of native Russians. Catherine II. was a German princess of a highly cultivated intellect, professing the doctrines of the so-called philosophical school of the eighteenth century, which so powerfully contributed to bring about the French revolution of 1789, and to sweep away the feudal institutions in all Europe, and who had herself supported many liberal measures in her states, as public education, and even municipal institutions. She was nevertheless the most unscrupulous and successful promoter of the ambitious projects of her predecessors on the Russian throne, because the population subject to that throne, which at her accession, in 1763, was 23,000,000, numbered at her death, in 1796, 36,000,000, with an increase of territory surpassing the extent of the whole of Austria. It is well known that the Emperor Alexander I. was of a humane disposition, and sincerely animated with liberal opinions. He powerfully promoted public education, by the foundation of several universities, many chairs of which were entrusted to eminent German professors, who had been obliged to leave their native land on account of their liberal opinions. A great number of inferior schools were established under his government, and the instruction given in all these establishments was entirely gratuitous to all the students. The censorship was liberal, and many works of a liberal tendency were translated into Russian from other languages, and published at the expense of the government.* I have mentioned before, (pp. 77, 81), his liberal policy towards Poland; and it is well known that he had greatly assisted the establishment of a liberal government in France, after the restoration of the Bourbons in 1814. Well, did these liberal opinions of Alexander I. prevent him from being as anxious as any of his predecessors to extend the limits of the Russian empire? Did he not endeavour to persuade Napoleon I., during their interview at Erfurt, 1808, to allow Russia to have Constantinople, declaring that the Dardanelles were the keys of his house? Did it prevent him from trying to conquer the Danubian principalities? And did he not firmly resist all the remonstrances of

* As, for instance, Bentham on the Laws of England, edited by Dumont.

the representatives of Europe, assembled at Vienna, 1814, against the union of the Duchy of Warsaw with his dominions? Was not the late Emperor Nicholas lauded by the whole Conservative party of Europe for his support of peace and order, as immoderately as he was afterwards abused for being the great disturber of that peace and order? It is generally believed that Alexander II. is of a humane and pacific disposition; but however his heart may bleed at the countless miseries which the present war is inflicting upon his subjects, he cannot forget a moment that he is the successor and representative of a line of sovereigns whose reign was marked by the continual progress of the Russian empire; that having inherited their throne, he has inherited their policy; and that though he would not have probably begun the present war, he cannot withdraw from this contest by submitting to a limitation of his power abroad, without seriously damaging his authority at home. I have shown above that the policy of aggrandisement pursued by Russia, during several centuries, has become a national instinct, so powerful that even foreigners connected with the government of Russia become penetrated by it. It is, therefore, no wonder that it replaces, with the great bulk of the Russian people, all other political feelings and aspirations, and that even the most civilised and liberal Russians are not free from its influence.* Justice must be rendered to the Russian, that however he may be corrupted by the degrading influence of the despotism under which his country has groaned for so many centuries, he has a strong national feeling, and the poorest and most oppressed boor exults in the idea that his tzar is dreaded by the whole world, and identifies himself with this glory of his autocrat. And, indeed, long before Peter the Great, when Muscovy was considered in the west of Europe, not much better than is now Bokhara, or any other petty state of the east, the ambassadors of that country, who were literally prostrating themselves before their monarchs, often behaved abroad in the most insolent and overbearing manner. Even now, many a Russian who is civilised enough to feel the galling yoke of his government, seeks compensation for his slavery at home by playing the *Civis Romanus sum* in several parts of Europe, as for instance in Germany, virtually governed by the diplomatic proconsuls of his country; and, indeed, whilst other nations may find consolation for their want of political significance in their eminence in art or science, the beauty of their climate, or at least the past glories of their ancestors, the Russians have no other source of national gratification than the political predominance of their country over others, and which they have hitherto believed to be immense and indestructible.†

* Thus, for instance, Mr S. Tourgheneff, a man of great information and talent, author of the "Theory of Taxation," (the most liberal work that has ever been published in Russia), and who, after having occupied a high office in his country, is now an exile for his liberal opinions, strongly advocates the union of the Slavonic provinces of Turkey with Russia, in a work written with evident sincerity and full of noble and liberal sentiments. *Vid.* his *La Russie et les Russes*, 1847, chaps. ii. and iii.

† The following sketch of the political character of the Russians was drawn by the Marquis de Custine, and though it may appear to be painted with too glowing colours, its truth will not be denied by those who are well acquainted with the subject: —"An immense boundless ambition, one of those ambitions that can only animate the soul of the oppressed, and derive its aliment from the misfortunes of a whole nation, ferments in the hearts of the Russian people. This nation, essentially a conquering one, greedy

There can be no doubt that the real strength of Russia has been greatly exaggerated by many writers and speakers, but there has been no less misrepresentation in depreciating this strength. It has been repeated over and over again, that Russia is but a giant on feet of clay; that she is a huge puff, placarded in the face of Europe; that although she occupies the seventh part of the whole globe, a great part of it is uninhabitable; that her population, although amounting to more than sixty millions, is very thin, whilst the strength which a country derives from its population consists in the closeness of its texture, and the proportion of men to the soil; that a thin population is a weak one, and that in Russia it averages about eight souls to a square mile, while in France it is more than 170, and in England than 220, to the same extent of territory; and that the distances between the most important points of that empire are frightful. All this is very true; but it must not be forgotten that those very circumstances which are the cause of Russia's present weakness, are at the same time the sources of her future strength. The natural resources of that country are immense, but not yet developed, chiefly for want of means of communication, which makes the difference in the price of various of the first necessaries, but particularly corn, in districts situated at a distance of about three or four hundred English miles, to be sometimes as great as two or even three hundred per cent.; and whilst agricultural produce cannot be sold at a remunerating price in some of those districts, the inhabitants of another are literally starving. The same want of communication is the cause that many other sources of national wealth,—as mines, forests, &c.,—and which would be exceedingly profitable if their produce could be exported, give now their owners no other advantage than a few articles for their own consumption, or are not worked at all. This great defect may be, however, easily remedied by the construction of railways, which may be done in Russia at an infinitely lesser expense than in any other part of Europe, because hardly any other expense will be required than the price of rails and the cost of laying them down; and this work can be accomplished without much difficulty by British capital and skill, which will never

through its privations, expiates beforehand, by a degrading submission at home, the hope which it entertains to tyrannise one day over other nations. The glory and riches which the Russians expect make them forget their present state of ignominy; and in order to cleanse himself of the effects of an impious sacrifice of every kind of public and personal liberty, the kneeling slave dreams about the dominion of the world.

"It is not the man who is worshipped in the person of the Emperor Nicholas, it is the ambitious master of a nation still more ambitious than himself. The passions of the Russians are moulded on the pattern of those of the ancient nations; every thing amongst them reminds us of the Old Testament; their hopes and their sufferings are as great as their empire.

"There is no limit to any thing in Russia,—neither to sufferings nor rewards,—neither to sacrifices nor hopes. The power of the Russians may become enormous, but they will have purchased it at the price which the nations of Asia pay for the fixity of their governments—at the price of happiness.

"Russia looks upon Europe as upon a prey which, sooner or later, will be delivered to her grasp by our dissensions. She foments anarchy amongst us with the hope of profiting by our corruption, which she promotes because it is favourable to her views. It is the history of Poland recommenced on a great scale. Paris has read, for many years, revolutionary journals paid by Russia. 'Europe,' say people at St Petersburgh, 'is now entering the same road which Poland had followed; she weakens herself by a vain liberalism, whilst we remain powerful precisely because we are not free. Let us have patience under our yoke; we shall one day make the other nations pay for our degradation.'"—*La Russie en* 1839, *par le Marquis de Custine*, book xxxvi.

be wanting where it may find a profitable employment. The construction of railways, which has benefited every country where it has taken place, will bring about a complete revolution in Russia, by giving a new impulse to the great and manifold, but still very imperfectly developed resources of that country, and consequently produce a very great increase of national wealth, whilst it must immensely strengthen the power of the government, whose action is often rendered ineffectual by the enormous distances which separate the greatest part of Russian towns and provinces from its central seat. It will also facilitate the movement of the troops beyond any comparison with the manner in which it is now effected.* This facility of communication may powerfully advance every other kind of internal improvement; and there can be no doubt that if Russia devotes a quarter of a century, which, though a considerable period in the life of an individual, is but a moment in that of a nation, she may more than double her real power.

"Well, so much the better," many of my readers will probably say. "Let Russia advance in the career of improvement as rapidly as she may, and good speed to her! The richer she grows, the better customer she will be for our produce as well as for our unemployed capital: the cause of humanity cannot but gain by the advance which a nation is making from barbarity to civilization."

Yes, indeed, it would be so, if this progress were employed for the promotion of human happiness, founded upon peace and rational liberty, and not for that of dominion and conquest. The reforms of Peter the Great, by which that half-savage genius forced the western civilization upon his reluctant Muscovites, were the theme of the most exaggerated praises, and often the object of a sincere admiration, to some of the most accomplished writers of western Europe, who extolled his reign as having inaugurated a new era of civilization to a large portion of mankind. But what were the consequences of this civilization to Europe, and which it began to experience from the time of that reformer himself and continues to our own days? Has that uninterrupted progress of Russian conquest and influence in the east, west, and south, been productive of happiness or misery, of moral elevation or degradation, to those by whom it has been felt, though Russia has been, during all this time, not a bad customer to the produce of western Europe, and a not unprofitable field for the employment of its capital, as well as for the talents of many of its adventurous children? The results of an internal progress of Russia, such as I have pointed out above, will be nothing else than a farther development of those effects which the civilization of Russia by Peter the Great has brought upon her neighbours; because Russia may suspend, but never abandon, her projects of aggrandisement, which, as I have shown above (p. 131), have become with her a national instinct. To those, however, who believe that *money-making* is such a fascinat-

* It has been calculated by the military authorities of Russia, that an army of 50,000 men may be transported on a railway in waggons purposely constructed for this object, *in one week*, over the same distance which now requires *three months'* march. The advantages of this mode of transport consist not only in the saving of time, but also in that of the expense and fatigue to men and horses. Had the projected railway from Moscow to Crimea been constructed before the commencement of the present war, the expedition of the allies to that peninsula would have been attended even with greater difficulties than it has proved to be.

ing occupation to individuals and nations, that it entirely absorbs all other passions and aspirations, I would observe that no nation in the world may equal the Americans in the keenness of their commercial and industrial pursuits; and that this has not prevented them from being at the same time most ambitious of conquest, under the name of annexation; and, indeed, neither an individual nor a nation becomes less ambitious by increasing in wealth and strength.

It may be also said that if Russia will advance, the other countries of Europe will not stand still during that time. This observation may be however applied only to the mutual relations between the western countries, as England, France, Germany, &c., but it is by no means applicable to those of Russia, with the west of Europe. England, France, Germany, &c., may outspeed Russia in the progress of material and moral civilization, but they cannot keep pace with her in that of population. The increase of the population in the above-mentioned countries is becoming every day more and more disproportionate to the extent of their territory, so that they are obliged to free themselves from this inconvenience by emigration, which, considering the rapid improvement of the means of transport, will, in all human probability, continue in a progressive ratio at least for some time to come, and thus counteract the natural increase of population, render it stationary, or even diminish its present amount, as has been the case in Ireland. In Russia it is quite the reverse; the population is so scanty comparatively to the extent of territory, that it may be quadrupled without any inconvenience whatever, so that it is more benefited by immigration than by emigration. This circumstance may produce in the course of half a century consequences of a more momentous nature than a political revolution, because, whilst the population of Russia may increase to the double of its present number, that of other countries will be augmented by some 20 or 30 per cent., and in some parts remain stationary, if not diminished. Is it necessary to add, that the political preponderance of Russia cannot but increase with the superiority of her population over that of other countries?

It is very remarkable that the circumstances enumerated above, which seem to have escaped the attention of statesmen and philosophers, had forcibly struck a poet. It is now nearly a century ago since Oliver Goldsmith perceived, by a glimpse of genius, the whole extent of the danger with which Russia was threatening even then the security of Europe. His observations on this subject, published in 1760, consequently more than ten years before the first dismemberment of Poland, and the advantages obtained by Russia over Turkey, by the treaty of Kuchuk Kaynardgi, 1774, have been proved by subsequent events so true, that a reproduction of them at this moment cannot be, I think, uninteresting to my readers:—

"You tell me the people of Europe are wise;—but where lies their wisdom? You say they are valiant too,—yet I have some reason to doubt of their valour. They are engaged in war among each other, yet apply to the Russians, their neighbours and ours, for assistance. Cultivating such an alliance argues at once imprudence and timidity. All subsidies paid for such an aid is strengthening the Russians, already too powerful, and weakening the employers, already exhausted by intestine commotions.

"I cannot avoid beholding the Russian empire as the natural enemy of the more western parts of Europe,—as an enemy already possessed of great strength, and, from the nature of the government, every day threatening to become more powerful. This extensive empire, which, both in Europe and Asia, occupies almost a third of the old world, was, about two centuries ago, divided into separate kingdoms and dukedoms, and from such a division consequently feeble. Since the times, however, of John Basilides, it has increased in strength and extent, and those untrodden forests, those innumerable savage animals which formerly covered the face of the country, are now removed, and colonies of mankind planted in their room. A kingdom thus enjoying peace internally, possessed of an unbounded extent of dominion, and learning the military art at the expense of others abroad, must every day grow more powerful; and it is probable we shall hear Russia in future times, as formerly, called the *officina gentium.*

"It was long the wish of Peter, their great monarch, to have a fort in some of the western parts of Europe; many of his schemes and treaties were directed to this end, but, happily for Europe, he failed in them all. A fort in the power of this people would be like the possession of a flood-gate; and, whenever ambition, interest, or necessity prompted, they might then be able to deluge the whole western world with a barbarous inundation.

"Believe me, my friend, I cannot sufficiently contemn the politicians of Europe, who thus make this powerful people arbitrators in their quarrel. The Russians are now at that period between refinement and barbarity which seems most adapted to military achievements; and if once they happen to get footing in the western parts of Europe, it is not the feeble efforts of the sons of effeminacy and dissension that can serve to remove them. The fertile valley and soft climate will be ever sufficient inducements to draw whole myriads from their native deserts,—the treeless wild or snowy mountain.

"History, experience, reason, nature, expand the book of wisdom before the eyes of mankind, but they will not read. We have seen with terror a winged phalanx of famished locusts, each singly contemptible, but from multitude become hideous, cover like clouds the face of day, and threaten the whole world with ruin;—we have seen them settling on the fertile plains of India and Egypt, destroying in an instant the labour and hopes of nations,—sparing neither the fruit of the earth nor the verdure of the fields, and changing into frightful deserts landscapes of once luxuriant beauty. We have seen myriads of ants issuing together from the southern desert, like a torrent whose source was inexhaustible, succeeding each other without end, and renewing their destroyed forces with unwearied perseverance, bringing desolation wherever they came, banishing men and animals, and, when destitute of all subsistence, in heaps infecting the wilderness which they had made. Like these have been the migrations of men. When as yet savage, and almost resembling their brute partners in the forest, subject like them only to the instincts of nature, and directed by hunger alone in the choice of an abode,—how have we seen whole armies starting wild at once from their forests and their dens! Goths, Huns, Vandals, Saracens, Turks, Tartars,—myriads of men, animals in human form, without country, without name, without laws,—over-

powering by numbers all opposition, ravaging cities, overturning empires, and, after having destroyed whole nations, and spread extensive desolation, how have we seen them sink, oppressed by some new enemy, more barbarous, and even more unknown than they. Adieu." —(*Letter from Fum Hoam to Lien Chi Altangi, in "The Citizen of the World,"* Letter 87.)

It is more than probable that this admirable letter was considered by the contemporaries of Goldsmith as nothing better than the wild dream of a half-crazy genius. Certain it is that the British statesmen of that period, even when Russia's ambitious schemes had become much more apparent than when Goldsmith had published his observation, entertained very different views on this subject. Thus, when Mr Murray, the English ambassador at Constantinople in 1772, perceiving the dangers of Russia's advance in the east, encouraged the Ottomans to resistance, he was severely reprimanded on this account by his own government; and Lord Rochfort says, in a despatch addressed to Mr Murray, on the 24th July 1772, that should Russia prove unsuccessful in her war against Turkey, "it must greatly weaken an empire which, although there has been not lately shown on their part that openness and confidence in his Majesty which he justly deserves, he cannot but look upon it, nevertheless, as the natural ally of his crown, and with which he is likely sooner or later to be connected."*

The advantages which England derived from this strange policy were clearly shown eight years afterwards, by the armed neutrality devised in 1780 by the cabinet of St Petersburg, and which had done so much injury to the interests of this country during the American war.

It is curious to observe that the predictions of Goldsmith were corroborated half a century afterwards by no less an authority than that of Napoleon I. at St Helena,—consequently after mature reflection, and at a time when he might consider himself as no longer belonging to the present world:—

"Napoleon spoke about Russia, and said, 'That the European nations would yet find that he had adopted the best possible policy at the time he had intended *to re-establish the kingdom of Poland, which would be the only effectual means of preventing the increasing power of Russia. It was putting a barrier, a dyke, to that formidable empire, which, it was likely, would yet overwhelm Europe.* I do not think,' said he, 'that I shall live to see it, but you may. You are in the flower of your age, and may expect to live thirty-five years longer.† I think that you will see that the Russians will either invade and take India, or enter Europe with four hundred thousand Cossacks, and other inhabitants of the desert, and two hundred thousand real Russians. When Paul was so violent against you (the English), he sent to me for a plan to invade India. I sent one, with instructions in detail. From a point on the Caspian Sea he was to have marched on to India. *Russia*,' continued he, '*must either fall or aggrandise herself; and it is but natural to suppose that the latter will take place.* By invading other countries Russia has two points to

* Despatch of Lord Rochfort to Mr Murray, in Lord Mahon's *History of England*, vol. v., Appendix, p. 37.

† This was said on 22d May 1817, just thirty-eight years ago.

gain,—an increase of civilization and polish by rubbing against other powers, the acquisition of money, and the making friends to herself of the inhabitants of the desert, with whom a few years back she was at war. The Cossacks, Calmucks, and other barbarians, who have accompanied the Russians into France, and other parts of Europe, having once acquired a taste for the luxuries of the south, will carry back to their deserts the remembrance of those places where they had such fine women and fine living; and not only will not themselves be able to endure their barbarous and sterile regions, but will communicate to their neighbours a desire to conquer those delicious countries. In all human probability, Alexander will be obliged either to take India from you, in order to gain riches, and provide employment for them, and thereby prevent a revolution in Russia, or he will make an irruption into Europe at the head of some hundred thousand of those barbarians on horseback, and two hundred thousand infantry, and carry every thing before him. What I say to you is confirmed by the history of all former ages, during which it has been invariably observed, that whenever those barbarians had once got a taste of the south of Europe, they always returned to attempt new conquests and ravages, and have finally succeeded in rendering themselves masters of the country. It is natural to man to desire to better his condition; and those *canaille*, when they contrast their own deserts with the fine provinces they have left, will always have an itching after the latter, well knowing also that no nation will retaliate, or attempt to take those deserts from them. Those *canaille*,' continued he, 'possess all the requisites for conquest. They are brave, active, patient of fatigue and bad living; poor, and desirous of enriching themselves. *I think, however, that all depends upon Poland. If Alexander succeeds in incorporating Poland with Russia,—that is to say, in perfectly reconciling the Poles to the Russian government, and not merely subduing the country*,—he has gained the greatest step towards subduing India.* My opinion is, that he will attempt either the one or the other of the projects I have mentioned, and I think the last the most probable.'

"O'Meara observed to Napoleon that the distance to India was great, and that the Russians had not the money necessary for such a grand undertaking; but he answered, 'The distance is nothing; supplies can be easily carried upon camels, and the Cossacks will always secure a sufficiency of them. Money they will find when they arrive there. The hope of conquest would immediately invite armies of Cossacks and Calmucks without expense. Hold out to them the plunder of some rich cities as a lure, and thousands would flock to their banners. Europe, and England in particular, ought to have prevented the union of Poland with Russia. . . . . .

"'If I had succeeded in my expedition to Russia, I would have formed Poland into a separate and independent kingdom.'"†

"'Russia is the more formidable, because she can never disarm. In Russia, once a soldier always a soldier; barbarians who, one may say, have no country, and to whom every country is better than that which gave them birth. When the Cossacks entered France, it was indiffe-

* And a still greater one towards that of Turkey and Eastern Europe.

† *A Voice from St Helena*, vol. ii. p. 33.

rent to them what women they got; old and young were alike to them, as any were preferable to those they left behind. Moreover, the Russians are poor, and it is necessary for them to conquer. When I am dead and gone my memory will be esteemed, and I will be revered in consequence of having foreseen, and endeavoured to put a stop to, that which will yet take place. It will be revered when the barbarians of the north will possess Europe, which would not have happened had it not been for you,* (the English.)'"

"'In the course of a few years Russia will have Constantinople, the greatest part of Turkey, and all Greece. This I hold to be as certain as if it had already taken place. Almost all the cajoling and flattery which Alexander practised towards me was to gain my consent to effect this object. I would not consent, foreseeing that the equilibrium of Europe would be destroyed. In the natural course of things, in a few years Turkey will fall to Russia. The greatest part of the population are Greeks, who, you may say, are Russians. The powers it would injure, and who could oppose it, are England, France, Prussia, and Austria. Now, as to Austria, it would be very easy for Russia to engage her assistance by giving her Servia, and other provinces bordering upon the Austrian dominions, reaching near to Constantinople. *The only hypothesis that France and England may be ever allied with sincerity will be in order to prevent this.* . . . . . Once mistress of Constantinople, Russia gets all the commerce of the Mediterranean, becomes a great naval power, and God knows what may happen. She quarrels with you, marches off to India an army of seventy thousand good soldiers, and a hundred thousand of the *canaille*, Cossacks and others, and England loses India. Above all other powers Russia is to be feared, especially by you (the English.) Her soldiers are braver than the Austrians, and she has the means of raising as many as she pleases. In bravery, the French and the English are the only ones to be compared with them. All this I foresaw. I see into futurity farther than others, and I wanted to establish a barrier against these barbarians by re-establishing the kingdom of Poland, and putting Poniatowski at the head of it as king; but your imbeciles of ministers would not consent. A hundred years hence I shall be praised (*encensé*), and Europe, but especially England, will lament that I did not succeed. When they see the finest countries in Europe overrun, and a prey to those northern barbarians, they will say Napoleon was right.'"†

The only mistake which Napoleon may have made in his previsions is perhaps that of time, and that (if Russia will not be effectually reduced during the present war) they will be verified a quarter of a century later than he expected. It may be added that, during the wars of Russia with France, the great defect of her armies was the inferiority of her officers to those of the enemy. The extraordinary care which has been since that time bestowed upon military education in Russia, has completely remedied this defect, and the *Times* newspaper, which is far from being an alarmist about the power of Russia, gives the following opinion on this subject:—"Ardent in attack, undaunted in retreat, full of skill and energy under all circumstances, masters of the languages of the three belligerent powers, it makes one shudder to re-

* *A Voice from St Helena*, vol. i. p. 393.
† *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 67.

flect what such a band of officers might accomplish if supported by troops worthy of such leaders."—(*November* 9, 1855.)

I have quoted on p. 110 the opinions of General Knesebeck on the dangerous power of Russia, and I could adduce other authorities confirmatory of the same opinion, but I think it quite sufficient for every intelligent reader to examine the circumstances which I have described above, in order to arrive at a similar conclusion. Consequently it remains only to examine by what means this danger may be effectually averted, and the object of the present war thus satisfactorily attained.

I think that the delusion of counterpoise, into which the plenipotentiaries of England and France were seduced last spring, at the congress of Vienna, has now sufficiently exploded. And, indeed, admitting that a temporary check could have been imposed upon the external progress of Russia, by a mutual obligation of England, France, Austria, Prussia, and Turkey not to allow it, would it prevent Russia from increasing her internal strength in the manner described on p. 133, and from developing in the same proportion her military forces, which must compel the other powers to do the same, so that a peace established on such a foundation would be nothing better than an armed truce, and consequently as expensive as a war, without any prospect of its termination? And is it in the nature of such an alliance to be permanent, considering that it must entirely depend on the personal views and dispositions of its ruling powers, composed of mortal men? And is it necessary to repeat that Russia, having a party in France, and an immense influence in all the German courts, and even many influential friends in this country, will not be at a loss how to dissolve such a coalition, and that, taught by experience, she will know how to choose the time for renewing her aggression better than she has done it on the present occasion? And, indeed, nobody doubts that if Russia, in occupying the Danubian principalities in July 1853, had foreseen that it would lead to a war with England and France, she would have at once marched an army of 100,000 men across the Danube, raised the Greeks and the Slavonians of Turkey, and penetrated even to Constantinople, before the other powers, which, including Turkey itself, were completely unprepared for such an eventuality, would have had time for adopting the necessary measures of defence.

Austria was generally considered as the power which could most effectually arrest the progress of Russian aggression on Turkey; but it must be remembered that the Emperor Joseph II., seduced by the prospect of obtaining some Turkish provinces, joined Russia against that power in 1788, without the slightest provocation on its part. It will be, therefore, very easy for Russia to seduce Austria into a dismemberment of Turkey, as has been predicted by Napoleon at St Helena (p. 139). On the other hand, it must also be remembered, that when Prince Metternich, guided by a sounder policy than Joseph II., desired to attack Russia during her invasion of Turkey in 1828, his proposals met with a complete indifference from the British cabinet, whilst Charles X. threatened to attack Austria, in case she declared war with Russia. The internal condition of Austria is moreover very different from what it has formerly been. This power undoubtedly showed a considerable vitality during its wars with republican and imperial

France, because, though defeated in all these wars, and compelled to conclude peace on disadvantageous terms, it was always able to renew the struggle after the interval of a few years. The main prop of her forces during this protracted contest was, however, the loyalty of the Hungarians,—a loyalty which Maria Theresa secured at the diet of 1741, by her solemn confirmation of the *magna charta* of Andrew II.,* and to which that chivalrous nation responded by the celebrated exclamation, "*Moriamur pro nostro Rege Maria Theresa*," and by saving her throne through their valour and devotion, and which could not be shaken by the seductive offers of Napoleon (15th May 1809) to restore their country to an independent state. Things are now entirely changed. The Austrian dynasty having repaid the devoted loyalty of the Hungarians with the abolition of all their national rights, converted that feeling into a mortal hatred; and there can be no doubt, that an appeal like that of Napoleon in 1809, coming either from the west or the east, would now meet with a different reception from the Hungarians. The Austrian dynasty is no longer secure of the attachment of its Slavonic subjects, who saved its crown in 1848, in the hope of obtaining thereby the claims of their nationality, but who were repaid for this service by an increased system of Germanization. And is it necessary to observe, that the loyalty of the Italian provinces is preserved only by the presence of Austrian bayonets ?† These reasons, as well as those I have shown above

* The principal point conceded by that charter in 1231, was the right of defending the constitution, by force of arms, against its violation by the sovereign, without its being considered an act of rebellion. This right had been abolished by the Emperor Leopold I., and restored by Maria Theresa, on the occasion mentioned in the text.

† The views which I have expressed in the text on the position of Austria towards Russia, are confirmed by the opinions of an eminent Hungarian leader, as well as by those of a distinguished Russian writer. The first of them says :—"The western nations do not remember that the Austria of to-day is not the Austria of old, and that she is wanting in one indispensable requisite, viz., in the hearty co-operation of the people. Amongst the nations inhabiting the heterogenous countries represented by Austria, the most prominent is Hungary, where in former days she found her chief support, and which enabled her to play so active and conspicuous a part in the events of the world. Though constantly curtailed in their rights, the Hungarians, with unprecedented devotion and heroism, twice rescued the tottering throne of the Hapsburgs from certain destruction; once in the time of Maria Theresa, and later from the ambition of Napoleon; and that people would again have stood forward in the van of the Austrian forces in their attack upon Russia, had they not, in 1848 and 1849, been sacrificed to the wanton mania of the Austrian government for centralization. This unjustifiable conduct transformed the hitherto chivalrous and loyal Hungarians into the most deadly foes of the Hapsburgs, and they now only wait for a favourable moment, when they will rise to a man to avenge their wrongs, and for ever shake off the hated foreign yoke. The Hungarian portion of the Austrian army, superior to the rest both in point of dauntless bravery and physical power, has thus become a double-edged sword, which will at the first opportunity turn against Austria herself. The feelings of the Magyars are likewise shared by the Italians, southern Slavonians, and Wallachians; and these are the principal elements of the forces to take the field against Russia, as the other corps would in the meantime necessarily be employed in keeping down the probable national movements in the interior of the empire. But what would become of that army after one or two defeats, especially if, at the same time, an insurrection should break out in Italy and Hungary ? Why, the apparently splendid, but unnaturally conglomerated body of troops, would crumble to pieces, and the Russians would, without encountering any impediments, cross the Carpathian Mountains, to lend a helping hand to the rising Hungarians and Slavonians, as they did in the contest of the Serbians and Greeks against the Turks. With such a prospect in view, it is not astonishing that Austria does not hasten to declare war against Russia, but, on the contrary, prefers reducing her army in Gallicia 'on sanitary grounds,' as the English parliament has been officially assured, and sending back

(p. 123), have prevented Austria from joining the western powers against Russia, and not any excess of political gratitude, of which Austria has never been guilty, and it is for the same reasons that, instead of being able to counterbalance the power of Russia, she must depend for her very existence on its assistance, and consequently descend to the condition of her satellite.

Prussia, with a population amounting to less than the half of that of Austria, a disjointed territory, and the worst possible military frontier, is but a very inefficient barrier against Russia; and I have given, on p. 110, the opinion of one of her own military and political authorities on the danger with which she is threatened from this quarter. The only means of putting an effective stop to the aggressions of Russia is, therefore, to effect a change in its present map by curtailing her overgrown possessions. A peace concluded on other principles would produce effects diametrically opposed to the object for which this war has been undertaken, because what the allies would proclaim as their moderation would be considered by the world in general, and by Russia herself in particular, only as a sign of their weakness; and I had opportunities to show on pp. 32 and 43 the manner in which even the most enlightened Russians judge of the foreign nations and monarchs who had not known how to make use of favourable circumstances in order to weaken their own country.* It is,

the troops into their former garrisons."—*The War in the East, by General Klapka*, p. 159, *et seq.*

It is curious to compare the opinions of General Klapka with those of a Russian, Mr Pogodin, professor of history at the university of Moscow, a man remarkable for his great learning and independence of views, rarely met in Russia, a zealous Panslavist, and enjoying the universal esteem of his countrymen as well as the particular confidence of the government, by which he was sent, in 1842, to visit the Slavonic populations of Austria and Turkey. At the beginning of the present war the government demanded his opinion on the state of Europe, and he gave it with great frankness, but in that thorough Russian spirit to which I have alluded on p. 132. It has been printed by the government, and distributed amongst the principal officers of the army. Speaking of Austria he says:—"Austria, whom we have saved from an inevitable destruction, declares to us only her neutrality, and, according to the latest news, seems in many cases to act conjointly with the western powers. I must here explain the doubts which may occur in reading my former reports (in 1842). I have expressed in them that Austria was even more deficient than Turkey in the elements of internal strength and duration, and yet Austria issued in such a splendid manner from the perils of 1848, and is now performing such an important part in the system of the European powers, does this not refute my former assertions? Not at all, because Austria would have irrecoverably perished, and broken up into its component parts, if Russia had not come to her rescue. Russia has saved Austria, and continues to preserve her. Take away, even now, from the mind of the Hungarians, Italians, and Slavonians the opinion that Russia is ready to assist Austria whenever she will be in danger, and you will see how long she will preserve her existence. I therefore think that we might speak to her somewhat more seriously, and not consider her neutrality as any particular favour; and when the great monarch of Russia had, in the 29th year of his reign (1853) honoured Olmutz with his presence, the crowned boy of Austria ought not, I think, to have spoken to him about considerations to the interests of his artificial monarchy, which *literally* exists only by the grace of his magnanimous ally, but rather placed himself unconditionally under his orders. I may, however, accuse him unjustly, writing as I do under the influence of foreign newspapers, which ascribe to him a certain independence, offensive to a Russian who is entirely devoted to his monarch. Perhaps he is, as he ought to be, animated with filial sentiments towards his benefactor; but there are, besides himself, in Austria, the government, the diplomacy, the court military council, eternal foes of Russia, known by their treacheries (under the reign of Catherine as well as under those of Paul and Alexander),—these require to have their eyes rubbed, in order that they should not forget themselves."

* "The war with Russia is not one of boundary or gratified self-esteem, and woe to the western nations if they make it a question of money. It may be admitted that

moreover, bad policy to humiliate an enemy without effectually reducing his means of retaliation, and enough has been done, by injuring, materially and morally, the Russian people, to render hostility towards the west, but particularly England, whom the Russian government affects to represent as the real promoter of this war, quite a national feeling; and I had already an opportunity to show, p. 132, the political disposition of the Russian people. No doubt, therefore, can be entertained about the necessity of materially reducing the power of Russia, but there seems to be much difference of opinion on the extent of this operation. Many think that the wresting of Crimea would completely answer the object of the present war. No doubt the possession of Crimea is an essential condition of the Russian preponderance in the Black Sea, but the occupation of that peninsula by another power will be very precarious if Russia is allowed to retain the coasts of the Black Sea from the mouth of the Danube to that of the Dnieper, and will therefore require to be kept in a continual state of defence, because Russia may retake it at the first favourable opportunity. It is very probable that the trans-Caucasian provinces of Russia will be conquered by the allies, and never restored to that power.* This will undoubtedly be a considerable check on the progress of Russia in the direction of Persia and Asia Minor, but it will not at all impair her real strength, because the Caucasian provinces

Europe drifted into war; the problem now is, to give it such stability as will enable it to resist for the future the blasts which would drive it into new calamities. Far better would it have been never to draw the sword, than to pause at such a moment as the present. We should only teach Russia her strength and weakness. She would learn the probable point at which her territory would be attacked in any future war; the probable nature of alliances against her; how far she can depend on her subject-races; how far the neutrality of central Europe can protect her. Although Sebastopol has fallen, she would not have lost the fame of invulnerability. Her internal state may be menacing to her sovereign and full of elements of convulsion, but peace would cause these elements of danger to pass away, and the world would never hear of them. The tzar's influence would appear in a few years little shaken by a coalition which at one time included all European powers. France and England would seem to have waged a purposeless war, and, after proclaiming high principles, to have been content with military glory. Russia, with her moral strength unbroken, would believe herself victorious, and find others to agree with her. We have now an opportunity of inflicting on Russia deeper wounds than any made with shot or sword. . . . . But if we pause now, it is useless to think that we can commence again. A war like the present is not likely to be renewed after a first failure. If such opportunities and such efforts shall have so mean a conclusion, what statesman will be responsible for renewed hostilities?"—*Times*, October 10, 1855.

* It is sincerely to be hoped that the Christian population of the trans Caucasian regions will attract the serious consideration of the allied powers. Few nations, indeed, deserve a greater interest from Western Europe than the race Karthli, generally known by the appellation of Georgians. Converted to Christianity in the seventh century, they remained faithful to their religion during centuries of the most cruel persecution: and their national dynasty, whose reign began even before their conversion, maintained its throne in Georgia and Imerettia during centuries of Turkish and Persian oppression, but the protection of Christian Russia proved more fatal to its existence in the course of a quarter of a century than ages of Mahometan dominion. The details of this event may be read in the well-known admirable work, "The Progress of Russia in the East." I shall only add, that the Imerettians made in 1822, at the instigation of their clergy, an unsuccessful attempt to get rid of their Christian masters. An extensive conspiracy of the Georgian nobles for the same object was discovered and severely punished in 1832. A similar attempt was discovered in 1847 at the eve of its execution. Many members of the first families of the land took a part in both these conspiracies, and the head of the latter was Prince Chevchevadze, a general in the Russian service. The legitimate heirs of the crowns of Georgia and Imerettia live in Russia, reduced to a private condition. Why should they not be restored to their thrones under the protection of the western powers?

have hitherto been a continual drain on her finances and army,* whilst, employing in internal improvement the means thus wasted, she will greatly contribute to that increase of her real strength which I have described above, p. 133. She will be, moreover, able to reconquer the above-mentioned provinces, at the first favourable opportunity, by an expedition on the Caspian Sea, which may be very easily accomplished by means of steam navigation. The loss of Bessarabia, as well as that of the Aland islands, and even Finland, will not much affect her real strength, because all these eventualities will be only placing a bar to her advance, without depriving her of the power to break it. The only means of effectually reducing the power of Russia, is, therefore, to wrest from her the Polish territory, which, as I have demonstrated on p. 109, forms in her hands a *standing menace* against all her European neighbours. This territory gives to Russia not only immense strategical advantages for a war with all these neighbours, but it furnishes her also with the material means for conducting it. She will be thus not only deprived of the advantages which she possesses for attacking other states, but they will be then turned against herself. This double result cannot be obtained by any other combination, because, should Crimea, the trans-Caucasian provinces, and Bessarabia, in the south, and Finland and the Aland islands in the north, be wrested from Russia, their position is too eccentric to give their possessors any important strategical advantages against that power. They may serve as means of defence against her attacks, but not as those of retaliating them, and which, consequently, she will be able to do with comparative impunity. The case is quite different with her Polish provinces, because the power which would possess them having its frontier on the Dnieper, will be able, in case of a war with Russia, to threaten from Smolensko her very capital, and amply retaliate upon her old and richest provinces her attacks on its own borders. It must be kept in mind that Russia, deprived not only of her Polish provinces, but even of all her acquisitions made since the accession of Peter the Great, would contain a population of about 40,000,000,† with an extent of territory allowing to treble this number without any inconvenience of over-population. She will consequently remain a first-rate power, which, though no longer as dangerous to its neighbours as it is now, will, however, require to be constantly kept by them in check. The Polish territory is, therefore, the natural barrier of Europe against Russia, and cannot be replaced by any artificial combination, because it is no more possible to change its position between the Dnieper and the Dniester, than to remove the Pyrences from their position between France and Spain. It is a geographical necessity which cannot be avoided by any political scheme for effectually checking the progress of Russia, and which, if not founded upon this inevitable necessity, will be nothing better than a temporary expedient.

The wresting of the Polish territory from Russia naturally implies

* It has been calculated that the war against the Caucasian highlanders costs Russia every year about twenty thousand men and twenty millions of francs.

† According to the statistics of Russian conquest, given on p. 4, the population of Russia at the accession of Peter the Great, in 1689, was 16,000,000. It has been calculated by the statistical authorities, that the annual increase of the population of Russia is at the rate of one and one-third per cent. Its present amount is, according to official data, about 60,000,000 in Europe and 6,000,000 in Asia.

the political reconstruction of Poland. It may be, however, objected by some of my readers, that this assertion coming from a Pole is liable to the suspicion of being partial and interested. This is, however, a truth acknowledged by the highest political authorities, though widely differing on other subjects. I have quoted on p. 137 the opinion of Napoleon I., that the restoration of Poland was the only barrier to the formidable power of Russia; and the same view is taken by an eminent living historian of this country, who is far from being a blind admirer of that great conqueror, and who says, "In the very front of the great league of the western powers, which can alone preserve Europe from Russian subjugation, must be placed the restoration of Poland. Such a measure would not be revolutionary; it would be conservative. Restoration is a work of justice, of which no government, how strong soever, need be ashamed: the principle of revolution is spoliation, not restitution. To restore Poland is not to introduce new ways, but to return to the old ones. In the courage and heroism of the Sarmatian race is to be found the real and the only effective barrier against the encroachments of the Muscovite; in their indelible feelings of nationality, the provision made by Providence for its resurrection, like the Phœnix from its ashes. Such a barrier is not to be found in Turkey. England and France may fight their own battles in the Crimea or on the Danube, but they will not find their real allies in the Ottoman. The cross must defend itself; it is not to be defended by the crescent. Europe committed a great sin in permitting the barrier of Poland to be swept away; it can be expiated only by aiding in its restoration. The extension of Austria to the mouth of the Danube, and the acquisition by it of Moldavia and Wallachia, under the burden of the stipulated payment to the Porte, is the obvious mode, without doing injustice to any one, of winning its consent to the cession of Galicia. If Prussia casts in its lot with the Muscovites, it cannot complain if it undergoes the fate which it itself imposed on Saxony when its sovereign adhered to Napoleon in 1814. But to cement the league which is to achieve this mighty deliverance, the cause of independence must be severed from that of democracy; Poland must be restored by an effort of united Europe, not by arraying one section of it against the other." *

General Knesebeck, whom I have quoted on p. 110 as an authority unsuspected of an undue bias in favour of the Poles, says, "The safety of other states, therefore, requires that care be taken *to re-establish Poland in her integrity*, with the exception of the territories necessary for our security; that is to say, that sincere and energetic endeavours should be made to form Poland again *into a separate independent state, governed by sovereigns who shall not occupy another throne.*

"Should Russia refuse to consent to the integral restoration of Poland, her plans of universal empire will become obvious, the liberty of Europe will be menaced from this side, and another war for the object of saving the independence of other states will not be far distant." †

This was written in 1814, and the present events have fully established the correctness of these observations. The same opinion is expressed by the author of a most remarkable pamphlet, "Poland from

* *History of Europe*, 1815-52, by Sir Archibald Alison, vol. iv. p. 693.
† *Life of Baron Stein*, vol. iv. p. 682.

the German Point of View, by a German Statesman,"* ascribed to that eminent individual who for many years represented Prussia at the court of England,† and who resigned the high post which he filled with so much credit, being unable to approve the present policy of his government.

I have given on p. 80 the opinion of Prince Metternich on the restoration of Poland; and I could adduce many other evidences of this kind, if those which I have given did not incontestably prove that the restoration of an independent Poland is indispensable to the security of Europe from the aggression of Russia.

As regards the second point of the Polish question, alluded to above (p. 150), whether Poland contains the moral and material elements for its political reconstruction, in a manner which will entirely satisfy the interests of Europe, for the sake of which it is necessary, I would submit to the decision of every impartial reader, whether a country, which, in spite of a most defective political organization, the most violent external assaults and internal commotions, could preserve for centuries its independence, and fell only by the treachery of its neighbours, unprecedented in history, and which, notwithstanding its political dissolution, has resisted all the efforts to destroy its nationality, contains or not the necessary elements for resuming and preserving its self-existence? Nations, as well as individuals, must be judged, I think, not simply by the success which they had obtained, but by the efforts which they had made, as well as by the circumstances in which they were placed; and it is by this test that I claim for my country a fair trial before the tribunal of the public opinion of Europe. Far be it from me to excuse, or even to palliate, the grave errors of our forefathers; nor do I pretend that we, their descendants, who are now so severely expiating the *delicta majorum*, should be entirely free from blame; but where is the nation that may claim exemption from faults and errors? And our history is not, thank God, an uninterrupted record of such faults and errors. It shows that Poland, a state of inconsiderable extent in the fourteenth century, rapidly expanded into an immense empire, not by conquest, but by the voluntary union of the Russo-Lithuanian dominions, and increased its importance by a similar union of Prussia in the following century (pp. 13, 14); that it rapidly attained, during the sixteenth century, a high degree of material and intellectual development, and outsped the rest of Europe in the true notions of religious liberty (pp. 19–24); that, owing to a concatenation of adverse circumstances, described on p. 50, *et seq.*, it fell into a very melancholy condition, which I did not attempt to conceal, but described on p. 59 in all its sad reality; that, though plunged into such a miserable state, the Poles had made great and successful efforts to improve their intellectual and political condition (p. 65), but that the reforms which they had introduced into their defective constitution were destroyed by an unjustifiable interference of Russia and Prussia, who threatened Poland with an immediate declaration of war if the political reforms which she had introduced were not abolished (p. 67). It will be further seen (p. 70), that such a severe public calamity as the first partition, instead of breaking the national spirit of the Poles, had only

* An English translation of it has been published in London by Ridgway.
† *British Quarterly* for October 1855, p. 499.

roused it, and that they advanced during the subsequent twenty years in the political, intellectual, and material development of their country with, perhaps, a greater rapidity than it has been done during the same period by any other nation; and that the result of this progress was a new political constitution, which met with the universal approbation of the most enlightened statesmen of Europe, but that this great work of political regeneration, accomplished by the Poles, was destroyed by Russia, assisted by the treachery of their ally, the king of Prussia, as well as by the nameless conduct of their own monarch (p. 71, *et seq.*) I have also shown that the destruction of the political existence of our country has not abated the vigour of our national feelings and aspirations; and which may be seen from the following judgment given on this subject by a German writer:—

"The constitution of the 3d of May had introduced, as we have seen, hereditary monarchy and decision by majority of votes. This was quite enough to render it odious in the sight of the Russian government. It was similar to the Turkish tanzimat of the present day. Russia, in consequence, excited a counter-revolution against it, brought the German powers round to other views, and put an end to the existence of Poland, as a punishment for the unpardonable crime of having desired to escape from anarchy. But have the Poles continued in the direction of the salutary reaction that had taken place in their minds? We have seen how they acted in the duchy of Warsaw and in the kingdom of Poland from 1806 to 1830, during the short period in which they enjoyed a national government. They evinced during this period even a more enlightened and unanimous tendency towards order and rational liberty. No party amongst them, as far as we are aware, ever murmured against the hereditary succession to the throne, the equality before the laws, the abolition of the privileges of the nobles, the emancipation of the peasants, or the cessation of their tumultuous assemblies.* The only rivalry that existed amongst them was as to who should deposit the greatest number of offerings on the altar of their country. The little duchy of Warsaw, with a population of four or five millions only, placed at the disposal of Napoleon, in 1812, an army of seventy thousand men, which was a model of discipline. We will say nothing of the army which gained for itself the admiration of the whole of Europe during the insurrection of 1830." †

Now, I ask my readers who have examined all the evidence which I have produced above, and which amply refutes all those accusations which I have enumerated in the course of this essay, whether Poland presents or not the necessary conditions for receiving a political existence, which she had preserved during eight centuries of her known history (965–1795), and the destruction of which, by one of the foulest conspiracies upon record, has not broken the national spirit of her children? and whether the authority of those statesmen and writers, whom

* Compare these statements, founded on fact, with those of Mr Cobden, who says, "Those wise reforms, that gave to Russia, from the hands of Peter the Great, the seeds of a power which has since grown to such a greatness, and which, if adopted by Poland, would have in all probability conducted her to a similar state of prosperity, *were absolutely rejected by the profligate nobles, because they must have necessarily involved some amelioration in the fate of the people.*'—*Russia, by a Manchester Manufacturer*, p. 18.

† *Poland from a German Point of View.* By a German Statesman, p. 49.

I have quoted on this occasion,—as, for instance, that of Raumer, who says, that "the tenth part of the forces which they (the neighbours of Poland) set in motion for their unhallowed ends, would have sufficed to extirpate all that was wrong in Poland, and insure victory to all that was good" (p. 74),—ought not to outweigh, in every well-regulated mind, the assertions of all those political spouters, who cannot support them by any other evidence than that of their own ignorance or ill-will? Some of these assertions are really so absurd, that I cannot understand that any man of common sense can believe them. Thus, the Attorney-General for Russia, whom I have had so many opportunities of quoting, maintains, in his famous impeachment of Poland, that to restore Poland would be to plunge nineteen-twentieths of the inhabitants from freedom into bondage,—from comparative happiness into the profoundest state of misery.* And strange to say, I myself have heard similar objections to the restoration of Poland seriously made by educated persons. Now, without referring to the political reforms which the Poles had adopted, and which I have described above, I would ask any sensible man, Why should the Poles be exclusively condemned for the abuses which had prevailed in their country, when various great abuses were taking place during that period almost everywhere? Thus, serfage was abolished in Denmark and Holstein only at the end of the last century; whilst, in this very country, where I am penning these lines, in Scotland, the coal-miners were, previously to 1776, *slaves* almost as much as the negroes of America, and were emancipated by an act of parliament only that year (four years after the first dismemberment of Poland). Have not many other abuses formerly prevailed in this and every other country, but which have been now happily removed? And why should the contrary take place in Poland alone? The Poles are like every other nation, men of flesh and blood, liable to the same errors, and capable of the same virtues, and I cannot understand why it should be necessary for the restoration of Poland, as many seem to think it, that her inhabitants should be a nation of superior beings, and not simple mortals, like the rest of mankind.

I would never end if I were to enumerate all the unjust and absurd accusations against my country, and the origin of which may be traced to the desire of exculpating, or, at least, of palliating the crime of its political murder by those who had either committed it, or connived at it. I shall only remark, that some writers and speakers have represented that the Poles were dangerous to their neighbours. We were so indeed for some time to Muscovy and Turkey, for the security of western Europe; but as regards the latter there are only two instances in history of our interference in its affairs; and, namely, we obtained,

* *Russia, by a Manchester Manufacturer*, p. 20. Mr Cobden's Polonophobia has been well characterised by the following observations, contained in an admirable article of the *British Quarterly* for October 1855:—"It is amusing to hear Mr Cobden talk about the anarchy of the Poles during the former period of their history, and declare them on this account unworthy of self-government. If there was one thing more than another that led to their subjugation, it was their reliance on pacific measures, the absence of federal alliance with other states, the neglect of their national defence, and the reduction of their army; in fine, the adoption of the very course of policy which Mr Cobden so earnestly impresses upon this country as the only means of securing its greatness. Instead of reviling the Poles for the course they pursued from the end of the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, Mr Cobden ought, if he places any faith in his theories, to adopt them as his pet nation."—(P. 540, *note.*)

in 1573, by our friendly intercession, religious liberty for the French Protestants (p. 24), and we saved Vienna from the Turks in 1683. Now, were these two acts such unpardonable crimes committed by our nation as to deserve a political death-warrant from the public opinion of western Europe?

The conclusion of all these facts and arguments is, that the restoration of Poland to an independent state is as practicable as it is indispensable for the interests of Europe. It is, indeed, a *European necessity*, and consequently it must be treated as such, and not on any sentimental grounds,—not as a matter of feeling, but as one of reason; —as a *raison d'etat*, *ratio status*, in diplomatic language, but which can never be sound if it violates the principles of right and justice. Restored Poland must, in order to answer this necessity, have a territory sufficiently large to insure to her the means of self-existence, and to withstand the constant pressure of Russia, which, as I have shown above (p. 144), will be always a first-rate power, though no longer so preponderant as it is now. Her limits must necessarily extend to the banks of the Dnieper and the Dniester, the shores of the Black Sea (between the mouths of these rivers), and those of the Baltic in Samogitia and Courland, which, though under a separate administration, constituted a part of the Polish empire till its final dismemberment, and whose inhabitants had given proofs of a devoted loyalty to the crown of Poland on some of the most trying occasions of our history. In short, the territory of the reconstructed Polish state must be interposed between Russia and the rest of Europe, in order to fulfil its object in an efficient manner. The same reason demands that Poland should be consolidated internally in as firm a manner as externally. It must, therefore, be a hereditary kingdom, with a free constitution, such as will secure complete religious and civil liberty to every inhabitant, and perfect equality before the law, as well as promotion by merit alone in all the branches of civil and military service, without any regard to class or religion. The executive power must be strong, particularly as the first task of the administration of the new state will be to restore unity to a body which had been torn to pieces by the neighbouring governments. The same circumstance requires that it should be conciliatory, because it will be necessary to know, not only how to coerce, but also how to forgive and to forget, and particularly to avoid any kind of reaction.

With regard to the dynasty to be placed on the throne of reconstructed Poland, if the author of this essay were only to consult his feelings of national pride, he would prefer, above all, to have a native monarch, one of his own brethren. This great desideratum cannot be, however, obtained, except one of his countrymen should have an opportunity of distinguishing himself during the struggle for national independence by his valour and talents, so as to establish, beyond every doubt, his claim to such a distinction. This would be, indeed, a most fortunate event, and hailed as such by all the Poles, and by none more heartily than by the author himself. But, except in such a case, it would be very difficult to obtain this desideratum, because, at this moment, there is no native individual whose merits, however great they may be, have obtained such a general recognition in the national opinion as to constitute a predominant majority in his favour. The throne of Poland

must be, therefore, except in the case mentioned above, occupied by a foreign prince; and I think that it is very indifferent to which dynasty he may belong, provided he be not at the same time the sovereign of any other country than Poland, because he will thus become the founder of a new dynasty, having its interests identified with those of the country over which it will reign. This subject will be, however, easily settled by the wisdom of the monarchs and statesmen who shall preside over the reconstruction of the map of Europe according to its interests, as well as the territorial arrangements required by this particular object. I shall only observe, that as regards the compensation for the sacrifices demanded by the same arrangement, the territories which Russia has usurped from her neighbours on various occasions present a substance which may be largely carved from for this object. The first thing is, that the necessity of reconstructing Poland should be recognised by the public opinion of Europe as indispensable to its interests, because, as the French emperor has justly observed, the issue of the present war, as well as every great question of the day, must be decided by this opinion.* The remainder may be easily arranged, because where there is a will there is a way.

There are many of my countrymen, who, having despaired of ever obtaining justice for their country from the monarchs of Europe, sincerely believe that the only chance for Poland is to be reconstructed as a republic. Amongst those who entertain this opinion, there are individuals for whose personal character I have the highest regard, and therefore I would be very sorry if they could suppose me capable of any slight or want of consideration for opinions so respectable, because so sincere, as theirs. I would, however, ask them to show me in history the example of a permanently established republic, which was formed otherwise than by the development of local self-governments into a state by means of a confederation, more or less directed by a central government. This was the case with Switzerland, Holland, and the United States of America. The example of the latter is generally quoted by the promoters of the republican form of government in Europe; but I think that this example may be, on the contrary, employed as the strongest argument against their views. The United States of America did not gain their form of government in consequence of their revolt from the mother country, because they were colonies previously settled and developed under the most popular forms of self-government, established by charters granted to the first settlers by England,—the constitution of which was so democratic that it was hardly necessary to make any modification of it at the establishment of the Union; whilst one of the States (I believe Rhode Island) retained, without any change, its original constitution granted by Charles II. It is well known, indeed, that the war of independence was undertaken by the Americans on an entirely conservative principle; because they took up arms against the mother country, not to gain any thing which they had not before, but simply to defend the rights which they had inherited from their ancestors, and which were violated by England, who thus brought about that memorable revolution, and not America. The United States, in fact, had nothing more to do, in order to accomplish their emancipation from the mother country, than to trans-

* In his speech on the closing of the Paris Exhibition.

fer the seat of their supreme government from London to Washington, without any necessity of changing their internal organization. This is the reason why the emancipation of those British colonies produced such splendid results, whilst that of Spanish America, not prepared by self-government for a republic, proved such a miserable failure. France has certainly had better opportunities than ourselves of making practical experiments on various forms of government; and she rejected, by an unmistakable expression of the national will, the republican form, by electing in 1848 Louis Napoleon as president. There could not be, indeed, a nobler representative of the republican principle than General Cavaignac; whilst Louis Napoleon had not then had any opportunity of displaying those great qualities of a ruler which have since characterised his reign. The French nation declared, however, by an overwhelming majority, in favour of a Buonaparte, not on account of any personal qualities of the candidate, but because he represented the monarchical principle; and, indeed, his election was a virtual declaration of the restoration of the Empire, the final establishment of which became then only a matter of time. Now, if the French nation did not feel itself able to establish with advantage to the country a republican form of government, how could we adopt it without the greatest danger to our newly restored country? Moreover, the European powers, whose interest it is to restore Poland, can never agree to give her a form of government which would be so little in harmony with the political organization of their own states.

Amongst the many popular fallacies respecting Poland which prevail in this country, there is one so widely spread that I cannot omit noticing it; namely, that which confounds the cause of Poland with those of Italy and Hungary, as well as of the nationalities in general. This view would certainly be correct in case of a war of opinion,—in a struggle for the abstract principles of liberalism against those of absolutism, —but not in a war undertaken like the present one, simply for the sake of international interests, and for reducing the preponderance of Russia, which has become dangerous to the security of other states, or what is usually called the balance of power. The emancipation of Italy from its foreign and domestic oppression is indeed an object which must be ardently desired by every friend of humanity and civilization; for no country in the world has ever obtained a greater eminence in art, science, and literature, or produced more statesmen and warriors, than Italy, whose inhabitants have, notwithstanding ages of misrule and oppression, shown themselves, as it is the case in Piedmont, capable, and consequently worthy, of enjoying the advantages of a free government. We may, therefore, hope that that beautiful country will soon enjoy all the blessings of civil and religious liberty, and be again the

> "Magna parens frugum, Saturnia tellus
> Magna virum."

Yet, however strong and sincere may be our sympathies for Italy, her political emancipation, owing to her geographical position, cannot affect in any way the power of Russia; and I would ask the most advanced ultra-liberals of Italy, if, supposing that their *beau ideal*, the organization of their country as a republic, one and indivisible, were now accomplished, what would be its natural position towards Russia? Would it begin its foreign relations by declaring war against that distant country,

or rather conclude with it a commercial treaty? Similar considerations may be applied to Hungary, the emancipation of which, however desirable it may be, cannot affect in any way the power of Russia, because she does not possess a single span of Hungarian territory. The case is, however, quite different with Poland; because that country cannot be reconstructed without wresting from Russia those very provinces which render her power so formidable to the rest of Europe. Owing to this entirely geographical circumstance, though the emancipation either of Italy or of Hungary cannot be of any help to Poland, that of Poland must have a decided, though mediate, influence upon the destinies of the two above-mentioned countries; not that the Poles should undertake a crusade for the liberation of the Hungarians and Italians, any more than those two nations would do it for them, but because the restoration of their country must necessarily destroy that influence of Russia, which is generally acknowledged to be the main support of despotic governments in other countries; and this would immediately compel them entirely to change their present political system, so that what it was hitherto impossible to wrest from them by force of arms, would be in all probability soon obtained by pacific means.

A line of policy which is almost universally recommended for compelling Russia to sue for peace, is hermetically to blockade her ports, and to produce, by destroying her commerce, such a discontent amongst her population as to break the obstinacy of the government. This measure is, however, liable to many objections, and it is even fraught with great dangers. In the first place, the commerce of Russia can never be effectually crippled as long as her produce may be exported through the Prussian sea-ports, which is now the case. The stoppage of Russian exports will undoubtedly affect the interests of the landowners, but not those of the bulk of the population, who consume only home produce, which they will thus obtain at greatly reduced prices, whilst the amount of labour exacted by the landowners from their serfs, will naturally decrease with that of the value of its production.* Russia produces, moreover, in the greatest abundance, all that is necessary for feeding, clothing, and arming her troops, whilst the government may command these resources to any extent, by ordering the inhabitants either to furnish them gratuitously, or paid for with *assignats*, or paper currency issued by the treasury; the same currency may serve for the pay of the army, as long as it is employed within the limits of the country. It must be also borne in mind, that Russia possesses gold mines in her interior, the annual produce of which is about £4,000,000 sterling. She has therefore sufficient resources to brave for years and years the blockade of her seaports, without being reduced by it to any extremity. The only cause which may produce a dangerous discontent amongst the population of Russia is the military conscription, which heavily presses on the labouring classes. Now, supposing that the discontent of the Russian population should become so violent as to produce an internal commotion,

* It is almost needless to observe, that the progress of industry, but particularly improvements in farming, have considerably deteriorated the condition of serfs in Russia, through the increase of labour required by these improvements, and which the landowners may exact from their peasantry to any amount they choose to do, without paying them any remuneration.

what would be the consequences of such an eventuality? Massacres, rapine, and every kind of atrocity, which would throw into the shade all those scenes of horror that took place during the great revolution of France, or have ever disgraced a popular movement in any other country. Have those who wish to reduce Russia by an internal commotion ever thought of those inevitable consequences of a popular movement in that country? and can any Christian, or any one who is not bereft of every feeling of humanity, advocate a measure which would be a disgrace to a barbarian? Can the cause of civilization, for the defence of which the present war is said to have been undertaken, be promoted by the adoption of means which, I have no hesitation emphatically to declare, would be an outrage on humanity? The noble art of war, such as it has been always understood by every great statesman and leader, consists in obtaining the greatest possible result, at the cost of inflicting the smallest possible amount of suffering, not only on his own nation, but also on that with which he is contending. The object of the present war ought, therefore, to be the reduction of the dangerous power of Russia, by wresting from her power its means of aggression upon other countries, and not the infliction upon the Russians of any calamities or sufferings which may be avoided, and which are better calculated to promote the cause of barbarity than that of civilization. For my own part, I, who have endured for a quarter of a century the trials of exile, and assiduously laboured during that time to denounce by my writings to western Europe the dangers of the power of Russia, and the wrongs of my own country,—I most solemnly disclaim every personal feeling against the Russian nation, whose happiness will be much better promoted when their government, deprived of the means of injuring other countries, shall direct all its energies to the improvement of its own. And if it ever be the will of Providence, whose ways are as wonderful as they are inscrutable, that the Polish eagle, resuscitated like a phœnix from its ashes, should once more triumphantly perch on the towers of Moscow, our national glory would be then to revenge upon the Russians the massacre of Praga, and the innumerable sufferings which their government has inflicted upon our country, by breaking their chains and by not oppressing them; not by imitating the bloody deeds of their Suvarroff, but the noble achievements of our own Zolkiewski, who, appearing before the walls of Moscow as a dreaded conqueror, left it without having caused its inhabitants to shed any other tears than those of joy and gratitude,*—a triumph more glorious, indeed, than that which any other conqueror had ever obtained. These sentiments, I declare without any fear of contradiction, are those of every true Polish patriot; and whatever may be the future destinies of our country, I sincerely hope, and fervently pray, that we shall never forget that we are a Christian nation, and the descendants of those chivalrous warriors who defended, during centuries, the civilization of the west against the barbarians of the east and the north.

I must apologise to my readers for this digression on the political sentiments of my nation, which has so much to suffer not only from the persecution of its despoilers, but also from the calumnies of their sycophants. I return once more to my immediate object,—the expected popular movements in Russia. These movements would be not only

* *Vide supra*, pp. 48, 49.

accompanied with nameless atrocities, but they might easily degenerate into a terrible revolution, extending far beyond the borders of Russia. This must be the case if the popular discontent should gain the army, and produce a revolt in its ranks. I have had many opportunities to show in this essay, that an immense number of Poles has been pressed into the Russian army, and that, animated with feelings of revenge for their national and personal wrongs, they would seize the first opportunity for indulging in these unfortunate, but too natural feelings. Their position, moreover, will be such as not to leave them any other choice than to join the insurrection or become its victims. There are among them many individuals of superior education and talent, uniting these qualities with a most daring character, and who may thus easily become the leaders of that terrible movement. Once entered or driven into such a desperate course, nothing will remain to them except to advance or to perish, because if they attempt to stop this movement, they will fall by the hand of their own followers, or end like criminals, when the other powers, alarmed by the danger of such a commotion, will seize a favourable moment for suppressing it. The only chance for the leaders of such a movement, be they Poles or Russians, and the only means to relieve their own country from revolutionary horrors, will be to direct the excited masses towards the west, by pointing out to them its riches as an object of spoil, appealing, at the same time, to the discontented nationalities, as well as classes, amongst whom these appeals will undoubtedly find a ready echo, because it is well known that the labouring population of Germany is deeply infected with the most dangerous doctrines of communism. Europe, which seems now to be so much averse to a seriously conducted political war, will then experience all the horrors of a social one,—the consequences of which imagination shudders to contemplate, and no one can foresee; and yet, strange to say, the means which may bring about this terrible contingency are advocated by those very people who are afraid of touching the Polish question, ascribing to it a revolutionary character.

The means I have pointed out on p. 111, *et seq.*, for employing Poland as a principal agent in the present war are, however, quite the reverse of revolutionary, because they import the entering of that country with a regularly organised force, which, joined on its advance by insurgents and deserters from the Russian ranks, will develop itself into a regular army, which will conduct the war on the principles adopted by all civilised nations, and prevent every kind of excess which may be avoided on similar occasions. I most earnestly recommend these considerations to the attention of every thinking reader, particularly to those who are well acquainted with the history of political and social revolutions; for I am sure that they will soon become convinced that the dangers which I have pointed out above are not imaginary, and that those who count upon an internal movement in Russia for obtaining peace with that country, resemble the children who recklessly play with fire, without thinking that they may produce a conflagration which will consume their homes and themselves.

Let us now consider what will be the consequences if Russia is not deprived by the present war of her Polish provinces? I shall answer this question with the following opinion of that eminent German

statesman whom I have already quoted, and who is thoroughly acquainted with this subject:—

"As regards ourselves, the only serious fear we entertain in relation to Poland is, lest the nation, should it ever find itself entirely abandoned by Germany, should, in despair of a happy issue, throw itself into the arms of its most implacable foe. This observation is not a new one, and we may add that it is not simply a threat. We may be assured that Russia is anxiously looking out for the moment, and that she will throw off the mask as regards Germany, the instant she feels secure of having the Poles on her side. We will allude to one fact only, which occurred at the Congress of Vienna. The Emperor Alexander thought at that period that he had gained the hearts of the Poles by flattering their national feelings. As soon as the jealousy of the other powers rendered a dissolution of the Congress probable, he sent his brother to Warsaw with orders to raise the Polish army to 70,000 men; and at the same time he published a fiery proclamation, in which we find the following remarkable passage:—'That which others promise you, the emperor alone can grant you.'* These attempts of the Emperor Alexander, which were not very sincere, and were perhaps premature, at all events produced no effect upon the Poles. The Emperor Nicholas follows a different system; he seeks to achieve by force what his brother hoped to attain by flattery. His object has ever been to rule the Poles with an iron rod, until they have learned to see *that through Russia alone there is any salvation for them.* The only means of bringing them to this is constantly to hold up to their view the ineptitude of France, and to encourage an ever-growing hatred to Germanism. Let any one but examine the inexorable severity with which he supports every vigorous measure adopted by Austria and Prussia against the Poles. Every Russian subject, be he a culprit or not, enjoys a certain degree of protection from his government when abroad; the Pole alone never enjoys such protection, for the sole reason that he is a Pole. The Emperor Nicholas seems to have given *carte blanche* to whoever desires to persecute these pariahs without remorse, because the growing animosity between the Polish element and the German element is what he most desires. It is easy to conceive the joy he must have felt at the deplorable conflicts in Galicia in 1846, and in Posen in 1848. These conflicts have already been followed by their consequences; trustworthy travellers coming from Poland have assured us that among the high nobility a leaning towards a cordial union with Russia is becoming manifest. Those who have hitherto evinced the most zealous patriotism have now come to the conclusion, that the ineradicable hostility of Germanism having condemned them without pity, they have but the choice between two evils, and that this being the case, it is best to choose the least, by attaching themselves to the power with which they are besides connected by community of race, and which at least, as far as this is concerned, would offer a greater chance for the preservation of their nationality. The Russian government secretly encourages this opinion, and remains silent on the subject of the concessions that it will deem fit to make. These ideas have not, however, as yet penetrated into the masses, nor are they even prevalent among the majority of the nobles, who still look towards the west, particularly at

* General orders of the Grand Duke Constantine, dated 11th December 1814.

the present juncture; but what will be the consequence if Europe continues to exclude the name of Poland from all transactions, if she terminates this war without effecting any change in the fate of the Poles, and if the latter come to the conviction that the most terrible coalitions against Russia hold out no hopes to them? Would not their rallying round Russia be as natural as inevitable? Then Russia would openly unfurl the banner of Panslavism, and push its propagandism, not only among the Slavonic populations of Turkey and Austria, but among the Polish populations of Austria and Prussia. We may rest assured, that the bare idea of delivering their brothers from the yoke of Germany would doubly excite the Poles to support the arms of Russia. God forbid that we should doubt the courage of our armies; but would Germany be sufficiently united to oppose an efficient resistance to such an attack, and would she be able to rely upon the French alliance then, after her present rejection of it? Would she not in truth be placing herself between two fires? Let us suppose that the Poles had been reconciled with Russia previous to the present war; in this case Russia would have marched to the Danube the hundred and fifty thousand men which, under the actual circumstances, were required to cover Poland. Supposing further, that the half of this army had been composed of a corps of well-disciplined Poles, what would have become of Constantinople? Would Russia in that case have found it necessary to proceed so cautiously with regard to Germany, and to evacuate the Danubian principalities on a mere threat from Austria? Would she not, on the contrary, have raised in the bosom of that state, that is to say, in Galicia, in Hungary, in Transylvania, difficulties which might have paralysed its strength? We will not deceive ourselves:—If Poland were united heart and soul with Russia, the independence of Germany would soon be at an end, and the half of the continent would be under the rule of the Slavonic race."—(Pp. 60–64.)

These views may appear exaggerated only to those who never paid any serious attention to the subject in question, but who, having heard of the persecutions which the Poles suffered from Russia, believe that they never will be reconciled to their lot, and will always form the weak point of the Russian power. Many of these politicians are even selfish enough to count upon this circumstance as a safeguard against the danger of the Russian aggression upon Europe, and to place its security in the sufferings of the Poles.* This is, however, a very great mistake, because the continual opposition of the Poles against Russia has been kept up by the hopes that the western nations and cabinets would finally perceive, that their vital interests demand the restoration of Poland as a barrier against the progress of Russia, and that they will seize the first favourable opportunity for accomplishing this object. This hope was growing, particularly since the events of 1848, fainter and fainter, but it has been strongly reanimated by the present war, which is producing a general excitement amongst the inhabitants of

* These views have been openly stated by some German writers, and particularly by Wuttke, in a series of letters published in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* of Augsburg, 1846, and afterwards in a separate work, *Deutsche und Polen*, a production which has considerably advanced the cause of the Russian Panslavism.

all the ancient Polish provinces. The various reports which may be obtained from that quarter are unanimous in representing this excitement as very great, particularly amongst the rural population; and the rapidity with which the news relating to the various incidents of the present war circulate amongst that population is such as to be frequently a matter of surprise to the upper classes, who learn those news generally much later from the periodical press. Every manifestation, as pamphlets, articles in the newspapers, speeches on public occasions, &c., made in England or France, and having some reference to Poland, is circulated in that country, where the sentiments favourable to Russia and contrary to Poland, which have been uttered in the British senate on various occasions, have produced a most disheartening impression. Should, therefore, this war be terminated, leaving Poland in its present position, all hope of national independence must vanish from amongst its inhabitants, who will then have no other chance of improving their condition, and preserving their nationality, than cordially to enter the system of Russia; for it will be then established beyond every doubt, what the Grand Duke Constantine had declared to the Poles on the occasion quoted above (p. 155), that *Russia alone can give Poland what others can only promise to her.* The object of the systematic persecution directed by the Emperor Nicholas against the Poles, namely, to teach them that *there is no other salvation for them than through Russia,* will be then fully obtained, and the Russian government will be then ready, in order to consolidate its authority in Poland, to grant her nationality every concession which is not incompatible with the maintenance of its rule. It may grant to the Poles, without any danger to itself, full religious liberty, the use of the national language, and all those advantages which the Polish provinces had enjoyed under the reigns of Catherine, Paul, and Alexander, except political liberties, in which the rest of the empire does not participate, and a separate army, as it was the case in the kingdom of Poland created at the Congress of Vienna (pp. 80, 81), and these concessions, contrasted with the Germanising systems of Austria and Prussia, must be then considered by the Poles as real advantages, which it will be their interest to preserve by a loyal adherence to the Russian government. The natural position of Russia is, moreover, such that she may offer the Poles advantages which they can never obtain either under the Austrian or Prussian governments. Thus, for instance, the field for employment in various branches of the civil and military service of Russia is immense, whilst the number of educated individuals required by those services is comparatively small, and from this cause every one of average talent, education, and industry, is sure of rapid promotion in that country. The Russian government is constantly seeking to attract, or to force, by every possible means, the Poles into its service, considering it as the surest way of amalgamating them with the Russians. The Poles, thus forced into the Russian service, are, when they have once abandoned their opposition, as much favoured as they had been persecuted before; and there are many instances of individuals placed in those circumstances who have risen to the rank of general officers and councillors of state, &c. In Austria, but particularly in Prussia, it is quite the reverse. The number of individuals seeking for employment in the various branches

of public service exceeds that of the situations in the gift of the government, which systematically favours Germans in preference to the natives of the Polish provinces. Thus, for instance, in Posen, the natives were gradually replaced by Germans in every situation under the government, descending even as low as the lamplighters of the towns. This circumstance gives Russia an immense advantage over Austria and Prussia in assimilating the Poles to its general system of polity. They had hitherto been very reluctant to enter this system, in hopes of recovering, sooner or later, their national independence, but their hope, if not realised by the present war, must disappear, and they will then, instead of resisting, cordially enter this system, where, displaying that energy and perseverance which they have hitherto shown in opposing it, they will soon occupy the most prominent positions. Besides the personal advantages which a Pole acquires on cordially entering the Russian system, he may have ample opportunity of indulging in the national feelings of hatred and revenge against the Germans,—sentiments which, however deplorable in a moral point of view, are unfortunately but too natural, considering the conduct of Austria, Prussia, and Germany in general, which I have described in this essay, chiefly on pp. 88–104, and with which the Russians fully sympathise, and which form a kind of link between these two nations, as well as all other Slavonians, however they may differ on every other point.

These circumstances operate so, that if Poland is left at the termination of the present war in the same position as she is now, the Russian cabinet, which continually learns and never forgets, will, taught by experience, know how to take advantage of the above-mentioned circumstance, in order permanently to reconcile the Poles to its rule. This will give Russia a strength that will more than compensate all the losses which she may sustain during this war, or be obliged to submit to at its conclusion, because that which has hitherto been to her gigantic body the heel of Achilles, shall then become his spear in her hands. Poland has, indeed, no other choice than to be the barrier of Europe against Russia, or the vanguard of Russia against Europe. It is an inexorable necessity, produced by her geographical position, which cannot be avoided by adopting any other political combination, because every such combination must necessarily be destructive of the nationality of the Poles, and therefore resisted by them to the utmost.

The most powerful means possessed by Russia for assimilating the Poles to her system is, however, the circumstance to which I have alluded at the beginning of this essay (p. 5); namely, the national affinity between the Poles and the Russians, who equally belong to the same Slavonic race, speaking dialects of the same mother tongue, so nearly connected, that they may easily understand one another. It is upon this important circumstance that the great scheme of *Panslavism* was founded, a scheme which, after having been considered for many years as nothing better than an offspring of the imaginative brain of some political dreamer, has finally produced a considerable sensation in Germany, and has become, particularly since the events of 1848, an object of serious consideration to all the thinking politicians of that and other countries. It deserves, therefore, the particular notice of

the British public, whose attention to this important subject I have already endeavoured to attract by my former writings.*

The origin of Panslavism, which signifies the union of all the Slavonic nations into one whole, is of a purely literary character. Kollar, a Protestant clergyman of the Slavonic congregation at Pesth, in Hungary, recently deceased, and who enjoyed a considerable reputation as a poet in the Bohemian language, proposed, in some writings published with this object, to establish a literary reciprocity amongst all the Slavonians; that is to say, that every educated Slavonian should be conversant with the languages and literature of the principal branches of their common stock, and that the Slavonic literati should possess a thorough knowledge of all the dialects and sub-dialects of their race. He proved, at the same time, that the various Slavonic dialects did not differ amongst themselves more than was the case with the four principal dialects of ancient Greece (the Attic, Ionic, Eolian, and Dorian), and that the authors who wrote in those four dialects were, notwithstanding this difference, equally considered as Greeks, and their productions as the common property and glory of all Greece, and not as exclusively belonging to the population in whose dialect they were composed. If such a division of their language into several dialects did not prevent the Greeks from creating the most splendid literature of the world, why should the same cause act as an impediment to the Slavonians in obtaining a similar result? The advantages which all the Slavonic nations might derive from the establishment of such a reciprocity are certainly very great; because it cannot but give a considerable extension to the literature of all the Slavonic nations, and at the same time greatly raise the intrinsic worth of their productions, as it would afford the authors a wider field for the spread of their fame, and a better chance for the remuneration of their labours.

About the time that Kollar began to advocate the establishment of a literary connection between all the Slavonians, another Bohemian writer, who has now acquired, by his researches on the ancient Slavonic history, a European reputation—Szaffarik—published a sketch of all the Slavonic languages and their literature. This work powerfully assisted the object promoted by Kollar, as the Slavonians perceived, by means of this publication, with joy and amazement, their own importance as a whole race; and this fact could no longer be questioned by other nations, who became acquainted with it through the medium of the same work.

Kollar's proposition, supported by Szaffarik's work, found a ready echo amongst all the scholars of the Slavonic nations. The study of cognate languages and their literature became more and more general amongst all those nations; and already, at this moment, few, if any, Slavonic writers of any merit are unacquainted with the languages and literature of the sister branches of their common race.

This is the origin of what is called Panslavism, and which was originally intended only as a literary connection between all the Slavonic nations. But, was it possible that this originally purely intellectual movement should not assume a political tendency? And was it

* I believe that I was the first who brought this subject before the British public in my essay on Panslavism and Germanism, published in the first part of the year 1848.

not a natural consequence, that the different nations of the same race, striving to raise their literary significance by uniting their separate efforts, should arrive, by a common process of reasoning, at the idea and desire of acquiring a political importance, by uniting their whole race into one powerful empire or confederation, which would insure to the Slavonians a decided preponderance over the affairs of Europe? This idea is gaining ground every day more and more, particularly amongst those Slavonic nations who, having no political existence of their own, have every thing to gain and nothing to lose by its realization.

The Slavonic nations constitute the most numerous race of Europe. They occupy the largest portion of its territory, and extend their dominion over the whole north of Asia. The population belonging to their race amounts to more than eighty millions of souls, living under the governments of Russia, Austria, the Ottoman Porte, Prussia, and Saxony.* Attachment to their nationality is a distinctive trait of the Slavonic race; it animates as much the illiterate boor as the most accomplished scholar; and it is now as strong as it was a thousand years ago. The Emperor Leo the Philosopher (881–912) says, that "the Slavonians preferred being oppressed by their own princes to obeying the Romans and their laws;"† and the Croats of our own times took up arms against the Magyars, with whom they had remained for centuries in the closest political union, enjoying all the advantages of their constitution, without ever having attempted to dissever it, only because their national feelings were irritated by a scheme of forcing upon them the language of the Magyars. This feeling is much less strong in the Teutonic race, whose patriotism is of a local nature. The Germans of Alsatia are French in their feelings, and glory in their name; and it is the same with those of the Baltic provinces of Russia. The case is, however, different with the Slavonians; and a German writer has justly observed, "that the patriotism of the Slavonian is not attached to the soil, but that they are kept together by one powerful bond,—by the bond of their language, which is as pliant and supple as the nation who speaks it;"‡ and, let me add, that its various dialects are so nearly connected amongst themselves, that the sailors of Ragusa can freely converse with the fishermen of Archangel, whilst the inhabitants of Prague can easily communicate with those of Warsaw and Moscow.

* According to the *Slavonic Ethnography* of Szaffarik, who is considered to be the greatest living Slavonic authority, the number of Slavonians in 1842 was as follows:—

Under Russia,		53,502,000
„ Austria,		16,791,000
„ Turkey,		6,100,000
„ Prussia,		2,108,000
„ Republic of Cracow, since united with Austria,		130,000
„ Saxony,		60,000
	Total,	78,691,000

With regard to their religious persuasion, there were, according to the same authority, belonging

To the Eastern or Greek Church,	54,011,000
„ Roman Catholic,	19,359,000
„ Greek united with Rome,	2,990,000
„ Protestants,	1,531,000
„ Mahometans,	800,000

† *Tactica*, chap. xviii. sect. 99.

‡ Bodenstedt, "Slaven und Deutschland," in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* of May 11, 1843.

The early history of the Slavonians has been sketched by one of the most eminent writers of Germany in the following manner:—"The Slavonic nations occupy a much larger space on the earth than they do in history, the principal cause of which is, amongst others, the remote distance from the Roman empire of the lands which they originally inhabited. We meet with them for the first time on the Don, amongst the Goths, and afterwards on the Danube, amidst the Huns and Bulgarians. They often greatly disturbed the Roman empire, in conjunction with the above-mentioned nations, chiefly, however, as their associates, auxiliaries, and vassals. Notwithstanding their occasional achievements, they never were, like the Germans, a nation of enterprising warriors and adventurers. On the contrary, they followed, for the most part, the Teutonic nations, quietly occupying the lands which the latter had evacuated, till at length they came into possession of the vast territory which extends from the Don to the Elbe, and from the Adriatic sea to the Baltic. On this side (the northern) of the Carpathian Mountains, their settlements extended from Luneburg over Mecklenburg, Pomerania, Brandenburg, Saxony, Lusatia, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Poland, and Russia; beyond these mountains, where already at an early period they were settled in Moldavia and Wallachia, they continued spreading farther and farther until the Emperor Heraclius admitted them into Dalmatia. The kingdoms of Slavonia, Bosnia, Servia, and Dalmatia, were gradually founded by them; they were equally numerous in Pannonia; they extended from Friuli over the south-eastern corner of Germany, so that the territory in their possession ended with Styria, Carynthia, and Carniolia. In short, the lands occupied by them form the most extensive range in Europe, which even now is inhabited mostly by one nation. They settled everywhere on lands which other nations had relinquished, enjoying and cultivating them as husbandmen and shepherds, so that their peaceful and industrious occupancy was of great advantage to the countries which had been laid waste by the emigration of their former inhabitants, as well as by the ravaging passages of foreign nations. They were fond of agriculture, and of various domestic arts; they amassed stores of corn and reared herds of cattle; and they opened everywhere a useful trade with the produce of their lands and of their industry. They built along the shores of the Baltic, beginning with Lubeck, several sea-port towns, among which Vineta, situated on the island of Rugen,* was the Slavonic Amsterdam, and they maintained an intercourse with the Prussians and Lettonians, as is attested by the language of these nations. They built Kioff on the Dnieper, and Novgorod on the Wolchow, which both became flourishing emporiums, uniting the trade of the Black Sea with that of the Baltic, and conveying productions of the east to the north and west of Europe. In Germany they exercised mining; they understood the smelting and casting of metals; they prepared salt, manufactured linen cloths, brewed mead, planted fruit trees, and led, according to their custom, a joyous and musical life. They were charitable, hospitable to prodigality, fond of freedom, yet submissive and obedient, enemies of robbery and plunder. All this, however, did not help them against oppression, nay, it even

* This is a mistake. Vineta or Julin was situated at the mouth of the Oder, and not on the island of Rugen.

contributed to bring it upon them. Because, as they never strove for the dominion of the world, never had warlike, hereditary princes amongst them, and willingly paid a tribute for the mere privilege of inhabiting their own country in peace, they were deeply wronged by other nations, but chiefly by those of the Germanic race.

"Those aggressive wars upon the Slavonians began under Charlemagne; commercial advantages were their evident cause,* although the Christian religion was used as a pretence; because certainly it was more convenient for the heroic Franks to treat as slaves an industrious nation, which exercised agriculture and commerce, than themselves to learn and to exercise those arts. What the Franks had begun was completed by the Saxons. The Slavonians were either exterminated or reduced to bondage by whole provinces; and their lands were divided amongst bishops and nobles. Their commerce on the Baltic was destroyed by the northern Germans; Vineta came to a melancholy end through the Danes; and their remnants in Germany are in a state resembling that to which the Spaniards reduced the Peruvians." †

It was thus that the Slavonians, who had occupied the whole of the north of Germany, were either exterminated or Germanised, after having defended for more than two centuries their national independence and idolatry, which they considered inseparable, because their German conquerors were converting Christianity into a tool for their oppression.‡ The last successful effort which the Baltic Slavonians made to reconquer their national independence was in 1066, the year of the Norman conquest of England. They completely swept away all the vestiges of German dominion and Christianity which had been introduced into those parts, for about seventy years, from the country between the lower Elbe and the Baltic, and established a powerful state under Crooko, prince of the island of Rugen. This sovereign defeated the Germans and the Danes, and conquered the whole of Holstein, uniting it with his dominions, which extended from the German Ocean to the mouth of the Oder, and from the shores of the Baltic to the Elbe. Peace was finally concluded with the Danes and Germans, and the Slavonians enjoyed a tranquil existence during the reign of Crooko, which lasted forty years. Crooko was murdered in Holstein, and his states were attacked by the Danes and Germans. The Slavonians continued to maintain their national independence and idolatry with various fortunes, however, till 1170, when their sovereign, Pribislav, finally embraced the Christian religion, and was created a prince of the German empire. His lineal descendants continue in the sovereign house of Mecklenburg, which is the only real Slavonic dynasty in existence. About the same time the island of Rugen, the last stronghold of the Slavonic idolatry, was conquered by the Danes, and Arcona, the fane of Sviantovid, a Slavonic deity celebrated over all the north, destroyed on that occasion.

Christianity being now established, the Slavonic princes and nobles

* Spoil and rapine would be more appropriate terms.

† *Ideen zur Philosophie der Meuschheit*, vol. iv. chap. 4.

‡ This is a fact established by the unanimous evidence of all the German missionaries who had laboured to propagate Christianity in those parts. The introduction of the Christian religion, which met with a desperate resistance from the Baltic Slavonians, was, however, easily accomplished amongst their brethren in those countries where it was not employed as a means for the establishment of a foreign dominion.

were soon Germanised, and became persecutors of their own nationality, which the common people continued to preserve for a considerable time, but which was finally eradicated by a severe and systematic persecution. Thus the Slavonic language lingered in the environs of Leipzic till the end of the fourteenth century, and the last man who spoke it in Pomerania is said to have died in 1404. The only Slavonians of northern Germany who have preserved their nationality are those of Lusatia, living partly under the Prussian and partly under the Saxon dominion. They are called by themselves Syrbs, and by the Germans, Wends.* This little population, which numbers only about 150,000 souls, not only preserves a strong feeling of nationality, but has lately made great and successful efforts in developing its national literature.

The state which will be affected in the most direct and immediate manner by the system of Panslavism adopted by Russia is Austria, because the majority of her population is composed of Slavonians. The most important portion of the Austrian empire in this respect is undoubtedly Bohemia, on account of the strong national feeling that animates its Slavonic population, which centuries of persecution could not destroy, and amongst whom the Panslavistic opinions are prevailing to a very great extent. This population, whose real name is Chekhs, occupied, during the great migration of the Slavonic nations, alluded to by Herder, p. 161, the country called *Bojohemum*, from the Celtic nation of the Boi, who had possessed that country at the beginning of our era. Hence the name of Bohemians, which has been given them by the western nations. The Bohemian monarchy was finally constituted under Boleslav I. (936-961), and it early fell under the influence of the German emperors, whose suzerainty was acknowledged by the Bohemian monarchs. It acquired during the thirteenth century, for a time, a great political importance, and its condition became very flourishing under the dynasty of Luxemburg during the fourteenth, but particularly so under the Emperor Charles IV., king of Bohemia (1346-78), who was a great patron of the national language and literature, which obtained a rapid development through the university of Prague, founded by that monarch. The same object was powerfully promoted by the celebrated Bohemian reformer, John Huss, whose extraordinary success was chiefly due to the decidedly national tendency which he gave to the religious movement produced by his doctrines. The celebrated Hussite leader, John Ziska, was strongly animated by these sentiments; and the proclamations which he addressed to his countrymen appeal as much to their national as to their religious feelings, for he identifies in them the cause of religion with that of Bohemia, and even with that of the whole Slavonic race, whilst Germans and enemies of God are rendered synonymous. I have described the Hussite movement in another work,† and I shall now mention only, that the impulse which it gave to the progress of the national intellect continued with great vigour during two centuries, in the course of which Bohemia came, in 1526, under the dominion of

* The appellation of Winidae, Wenden, Winden, has been, and is now, given by the Germans to the Slavonians in general, and to those who inhabit Lusatia, Styria, and Carniolia, in particular.

† *Religious History of the Slavonic Nations*, chapters ii. iii. iv.

the Austrian dynasty, in the manner described above (p. 18). Protestantism made in the sixteenth century such a progress in that country, that the university of Prague was surrendered to its followers in 1609 by the emperor, Rudolph II. A great number of Germans having settled in Bohemia during the reign of the Austrian dynasty, which frequently resided at Prague, this circumstance created such a jealousy amongst its Slavonic population, that the Bohemian states passed in 1615 a law prohibiting every foreigner who was not conversant with the national language from permanently settling in their country.

It is well known that the Bohemians, alarmed at the encroachments on their political and religious liberties made by the Emperor Ferdinand II., revolted against his authority, calling to their throne the palatine of the Rhine, son-in-law of James I., king of Great Britain, and that their cause was lost chiefly by the incapacity of that unfortunate prince. The Bohemians were defeated by the imperialists in 1620 at the battle of Weisenberg, and this event was followed by the most terrible reaction. Many noblemen, and other persons of note, were executed, and almost all the landowners, even those who had not taken any part in the revolt, had their property entirely or partly confiscated. A great number of Protestants, belonging to different classes of society, emigrated abroad, and those who remained in the country were obliged to abjure their religion, or at least outwardly to conform to the Roman Catholic church. The national liberties and language were systematically destroyed, and every possible effort was made to eradicate all that was national and Protestant, these two things being considered synonymous by the reactionary party. Every production of national literature, without any regard to its contents, was declared heretical, and burned as such,—a Vandalism which called forth the indignation of many Roman Catholic Bohemian writers, and particularly of the Jesuit Balbinus. The effect of this persecution against the Bohemian nationality was such, that the native language fell into contempt, and was replaced by the German, which was exclusively used for preaching in the churches of the towns, so that the Bohemian, retained only in the villages, was called the language of the peasants. Bohemia was, moreover, extremely depopulated by the Thirty Years' War, and a great number of immigrants, from various parts of Germany, settled in the devastated towns and villages. The estates of the Bohemian landowners, confiscated by the Austrian court, were either granted by it to German officers and foreign adventurers, as a reward for their services, or purchased by German capitalists, and all these new proprietors attracted to their estates German colonists, so that whole districts of Bohemia were completely Germanised. All the public schools were in the hands of the Jesuits, or other monks, devoted to the Austrian court, and so opposed to the nationality of Bohemia, that they carefully suppressed all the vestiges of its history and literature, representing to their pupils that the past of their country was nothing but ignorance and barbarity.*

The vitality of the Slavonic element proved, however, so strong as to resist the ordeal of this terrible persecution, and the Bohemian na-

* I have extracted these particulars from Pelzel's *History of Bohemia*, published at Vienna under the Austrian censorship.

tionality began gradually to revive. It was, however, again threatened with a great danger from a quite different quarter than before; and what the bigotry of the monks could not accomplish, was attempted by the philosophic despotism of their adversary. The Emperor Joseph II., who introduced into his states many real and salutary reforms, conceived the impracticable idea of establishing a complete uniformity in his heterogeneous dominions. It is said that, considering the great majority of the Slavonic population, he had hesitated for some time whether he was to adopt for the official language of the whole empire the Bohemian or the German. He decided for the latter, which was consequently introduced into the university of Prague and all the schools as a medium of instruction. He even went so far as to order, in 1789, that the children who had not spent two years in a normal school, *i. e.*, where German is taught, should not be apprenticed to any trade. This measure, so oppressive to poor parents, for whom it is of the greatest importance to have their children apprenticed as soon as possible, and who have not the means of keeping them so long at a school in order to learn a language which often proved entirely useless to them, could not be executed, whilst this systematic persecution of the Bohemian nationality produced a strong reaction in its favour. Several patriotic voices were raised in behalf of the national language. They found a ready echo amongst their countrymen, and its literature began to be zealously cultivated. A national theatre was established, old valuable works were reprinted, and new composed. A society was formed for the promotion of Bohemian literature, which has steadily advanced since the beginning of the present century. It is now in a very flourishing condition, and may boast of several writers of the highest merit, such as Palacki, Szaffarik, Jungman, &c. The number of the population in Bohemia and Moravia who speak the national language was, notwithstanding all the persecution described above, in 1842, 4,370,000 souls, whilst that which spoke German amounted only to 1,748,000.* The national language is now cultivated by the highest aristocracy; and the descendants of those foreign families who had been established in Bohemia as supporters of the Austrian dominion and Germanism, are now zealous patrons of the national literature, and take the lead in promoting all that is national.

It is but a very natural consequence of the circumstances described above, that the Slavonic movement of Bohemia, which has produced a great effect upon all the populations belonging to the same race in Austria, must be an insurmountable difficulty to the system of centralization and Germanization of the whole empire, which has now been adopted by the government of that state, in spite of its solemn promises of securing equal rights, *Gleich berechtigung*, to all the nationalities under its rule. It was this Slavonic movement which, being undervalued by the Magyars, has brought upon Hungary the terrible calamities which have led to the interference of Russia, and its unfortunate consequences. This circumstance, the importance of which, particularly at the present moment, cannot be overrated, is, however, not generally understood in this country, and I shall therefore give a short account of it to my readers.

The Hungarian state was founded at the beginning of the tenth

* Szaffarik *Slavonic Ethnography*. Prague, 1842.

century, when the Asiatic nation of the Hungarians or Magyars, having arrived from the country about the Ouralian mountains, destroyed the Slavonic state of Great Moravia,* and conquered the lands forming the ancient Dacia, inhabited by Slavonians and partly by the Wallachians, who are considered as the descendants of Roman colonists settled in those parts during the time of the Roman domination, or Romanised Dacians. Christianity was established in Hungary (972-97), and its frontiers were considerably extended at the beginning of the twelfth century, by the Slavonic kingdom of Croatia, which, after the extinction of its native dynasty, voluntarily chose for its monarch Coloman I., king of Hungary. The Hungarian state was thus composed of three different populations, viz., the Hungarian Proper, the Slavonic, and the Wallachian, to which was gradually added a number of Germans who immigrated into that country at different periods, but particularly under the Austrian rule.

At an early period, and perhaps simultaneously with the establishment of the Christian religion, the Latin language was adopted for all the official transactions of Hungary. This was a very wise measure, as it established a common medium of communication between the heterogeneous elements of the population. It removed the most active cause of dissension between nations of entirely different origin and language, and established in some measure an equality between the conquerors and the conquered, by placing them both on a neutral ground. History shows that whenever a nation was conquered by another, a long struggle ensued between the two races, represented by their languages, until the nationality of the conquered was exterminated by that of the conquerors, as was the case with the Slavonians of the Baltic; or that the nationality of the conquerors became absorbed by that of the conquered, who were superior to them in numbers, as was the case with the Franks in Gallia, the Danes in Normandy, and in some measure with the French Normans in England. The annals of Hungary present no struggle of this kind, and although that country was exposed to foreign invasion and internal commotions, the parties by which it was torn were either political or religious, but we never see any contest between the different races which compose its population. Thus Hungary presents a rare instance in history of a state composed of the most heterogeneous populations, and united only by the common tie of the same language, foreign to them all, but equally adopted by them, which, notwithstanding this diversity of its constituent elements, withstood the most terrible storms by which it was outwardly assailed and inwardly agitated, and even preserved its free constitution under a line of monarchs who ruled with absolute power over the rest of their dominions. This fact, perhaps unparalleled in history, is, we believe, entirely to be ascribed to the circumstance which had removed the most active cause of disunion between the different races, and caused the Magyars, Slavonians, Wallachians, and Germans to consider themselves all equally as Hungarians, and as politically constituting one and the same nation.

One would have supposed that the knowledge of their own history

* The kingdom of Great Moravia was not limited to the province which now bears this name, but it extended over the greatest part of the present Hungary and some adjacent countries.

would have induced the Hungarian statesmen to continue a line of policy which had enabled their ancestors to preserve the integrity of their country and its constitution, notwithstanding the natural elements of dissolution which it contains. This has not, however, been the case; and the Magyars, or Hungarians Proper, having conceived the idea of replacing the use of the Latin language by that of their peculiar idiom, which is not that of the great majority of the inhabitants, efforts for attaining this object began at the diet of 1830, and continued through several successive diets, gradually advancing towards its consummation, until the diet of 1844 enacted the following resolutions, which received the Imperial assent:—That the Hungarian language should be employed in all the official transactions of the country; that it should become the medium of instruction in all the public schools; and that the diets should deliberate in Hungarian. The deputies of the annexed kingdoms (Croatia and Slavonia) were, however, permitted, in case they should not understand Hungarian, to give their votes in Latin, but this privilege was to be in force only at the diets which should take place within the next six years. The authorities of the same annexed kingdoms were to receive the correspondence of those of Hungary in Hungarian, but were permitted to address their own to the Hungarian authorities in Latin. The Hungarian language was to be taught in all the schools of the above-mentioned provinces.

These enactments, which were calculated to destroy the nationality of the non-Magyar populations, raised a violent opposition amongst the Slavonians. The provinces of Croatia and Slavonia, who had the advantage of possessing a provincial diet, passed strong resolutions against the introduction of the Magyar language into their province, and made urgent representations to that effect at Vienna, demanding even a separate administration, and finally declared their firm resolution to substitute for the Latin language in their province, not the Magyar, but their own Slavonic dialect. The Slovacks, who had not the legal means possessed by the Croats to counteract the measures devised for the destruction of their nationality, tried to do it by private exertions. The national party, composed of almost the whole of the younger generation of the educated class, strove to promote by all possible means the cultivation of their national language and literature, and to defend it against the encroachments of Magyarism. The clergy, Roman Catholic as well as Protestant, united their efforts for the promotion of this patriotic object. It may be also remarked, that the Slovacks, who have adopted for literary purposes the pure Bohemian, possess a literature of some importance; and two of the most eminent Bohemian writers of the present day, whom we have already mentioned as having created the idea of Panslavism (p. 162), Kollar and Szaffarik, belong to the Slovacks.

The attempt to impose the Magyar language on the other nationalities of Hungary, and chiefly on the Slavonians, was, to say the least, very impolitic, for it gave the Austrian court a powerful weapon against the liberties of that country; * and I think that the promoters of that

* The consequences of this ill-judged policy were so evident that the author of the present essay was able to predict them in his "Panslavism and Germanism," in May 1844, when the Magyars were on the best terms with the Austrian cabinet, by the tol-

measure ought not to have forgotten that the same court had, in 1790, employed with great effect the southern Slavonians for coercing the liberal tendencies of the Hungarian diet. Already, then, when the Slavonians of southern Hungary, supported by the cabinet of Vienna, demanded a separate administration, the dangers proceeding from their national affinities with Russia were forcibly pointed out by a member of the Hungarian diet (Charles Yeziernitzki, deputy of Nyitra), who said on that occasion, "Let them who seek to divide our forces by supporting this hostile faction (the Slavonians), beware of what they are doing, because the brethren of this nation will arrive some day from Russia, and, uniting with them, shake the imperial throne to its very foundation." A strange prediction indeed; and the individual who uttered it probably little thought that, about half a century afterwards, the Austrian throne would be saved from imminent ruin only by those very Slavonians, and the arms of their brethren from Russia, a circumstance which certainly has not much added to its stability.

It is well known that the revolution of Vienna, in March 1848, produced a universal commotion amongst all the populations of the Austrian empire, and that the Austrian court, after having cajoled for some time the Magyar party, excited against them the Croats and the other Slavonians of southern Hungary, which produced a war of races, attended by all the atrocities natural to such a struggle. The other Slavonians of Austria were meanwhile not idle or backward in asserting the claims of their nationality. The pretensions of the German parliament of Frankfort to compel the Bohemians to enter the German unity, which I have mentioned before (p. 102), produced a strong irritation, not only amongst that population, but amongst all the Slavonians of Austria, who convoked a national congress, which, attended by deputies from all their branches, met at Prague, and commenced its deliberations on the 31st May 1848. It adopted several resolutions, the most important of which was the establishment of a confederation amongst all the Slavonians of the Austrian empire, for mutual assistance, by all legal means, in maintaining the rights of their nationality. The proceedings of this congress assumed such a decided character as to excite the apprehensions of the Austrian government, whose interference produced a terrible riot, ending in the bombardment of some parts of Prague by the Austrian troops, and the imprisonment of several influential Bohemian leaders. The vigorous proceedings of the Hungarian diet, and the development of the democracy at Vienna, induced the Austrian cabinet to flatter the Slavonians, alluring them with the hope that it would assume a Slavonic instead of its hitherto German policy, by giving to the Teutonic element a subordinate posi-

lowing passage, where, after having described the circumstances mentioned in the text, he says:—"This, we fear, must lead to the entire dissolution of Hungary as a state, and it will be a melancholy event indeed; for no friend of liberty can withhold the due meed of praise from the Hungarians, for the unceasing efforts which they have of late been making in order to develop their constitutional liberties, and to extend them to all classes of the inhabitants. We in particular, as Poles, cannot but feel the strongest interest in the welfare of a nation which always evinced the most sincere sympathy for our country. Let us, therefore, hope that the catastrophe which seems now menacing Hungary will be averted from that noble country, notwithstanding the lowering aspect of its political horizon, which forebodes storms of the most terrific description."—(Pp. 187, 188.) I leave it to the public to judge how far this prediction has been fulfilled.

tion, proportionate to the number of its population in the empire. The Bohemian leaders, imprisoned after the riot of Prague, were liberated, the proceedings instituted against them were quashed, and various other means were employed for securing the loyalty of the Slavonians. Excited by the hostility of the Germans and Magyars, it was no wonder that the Slavonians took the bait. They declared against the Magyars, who were joined only by a number of Poles, strongly blamed on this account by the other Slavonians, whilst the Croats marched upon Vienna, and putting down the insurrection of that capital, saved the crown of the house of Hapsburg.

The policy of adopting a Slavonic character, mentioned above, was advocated by many influential members of the Austrian government; and it is said that the same view was taken by the archduchess Sophia, mother of the present emperor, a woman of strong intellect and superior talent. Be it as it may, the Austrian cabinet resumed, after the fall of the Hungarian insurrection, its former Germanising system, and pursues it with increased vigour. This naturally produced a universal discontent amongst the Austrian Slavonians, and the Croats became so irritated by these proceedings, that they proposed to adopt the Russian language * for all the public transactions of their province. This was a serious warning, not only to Austria, but to the whole of Germany, about the consequences which must follow the policy of Germanising the Slavonians. It produced a very painful sensation in those countries, but without effecting any change in that lamentable policy.†

The idiomatic quarrel between Magyarism and Slavonism, which was the true origin of the terrible calamities that have befallen Hungary, ought to prove to the statesmen of our day how dangerous it is to trifle with the national feelings of a population, and that no advantages whatever will ever be accepted as a compensation for an offence to those feelings. It was, indeed, a most deplorable event, because, excepting this unfortunate circumstance, the Magyars have displayed, in the development of their political institutions, a truly enlightened and liberal spirit, which deserves the warmest admiration and sympathy of all the friends of real progress and rational liberty. Let us therefore hope that the dark clouds which are now lowering upon the political horizon of Hungary will be soon dissipated by a cordial reconciliation

* It is very nearly connected with the Croat dialect.

† The author's essay on *Panslavism and Germanism* having obtained, in its German translation, a wide circulation amongst the southern Slavonians, he received several communications from that quarter, entreating him to bring before the British public the dangerous consequences of the Germanising policy adopted towards those Slavonians, not only to Austria herself, but also to the whole of Europe, because it was driving them into the Russian Panslavism. They were, therefore, very anxious to make their case known to the British public, in the fond hope that it would perceive the immense importance of the subject, and that its voice might produce a salutary effect on the public opinion of Germany, inducing Austria to abandon a line of policy which is as contrary to her true interests as it is favourable to the ambitious schemes of Russia. The author of this essay has made, indeed, without waiting for these communications, every possible effort in order to attract the attention of the British public to the religious, political, and intellectual condition of the great Slavonic race, and to point out the momentous consequences to the whole of Europe which must inevitably follow the extension of the Russian dominion or paramount influence over that race, two-thirds of which are already under its rule. Unfortunately these efforts have hitherto been far from successful. May the British public give their serious consideration to this important subject before it will be *too late*.

between the various races which inhabit her territory, and that futurity has in store for that noble country destinies no less glorious than those which it enjoyed under the reigns of a Louis of Anjou or a Mathias Corvinus.

The Slavonic population of Turkey, amounting to more than six millions of souls, occupies the whole country extending from the shores of the Black Sea, between the mouths of the Danube and the town of Vasiliskos, to Dalmatia and Albania, and from the Danube to the vicinity of Adrianople, and only the few towns which are situated in that territory are inhabited by the Turks. This population is divided into Servians, who have obtained a political existence under the protectorate of the Porte; and the Bulgarians, who have had no national government since the fall of their kingdom in 1389. They are all followers of the Eastern church, with the exception of about 800,000 souls in Bosnia, who, having embraced the creed of the Alcoran, remain, however, faithful to their Slavonic nationality. The Slavonic population of the Prussian dominions, numbering more than two millions, is, with the exception of about 80,000 Wends, entirely composed of Poles.

Now, let us consider what must be the consequences of a union into one political body of the whole Slavonic race, or rather nation, as I have shown it on p. 160; which would form an empire extending from the shores of the Baltic to Cattaro on the Adriatic, from Archangel to Adrianople, from the borders of Italy, the banks of the Oder, and those of the Upper Elbe, to the Pacific. Is it a wonder that the prospect of becoming the citizen of such a state is dazzling to many a Slavonian, particularly to those whose branch has not the advantages of an independent national existence, and which, excepting the Russians, is now the case with all of them? The accomplishment of this object, by means of a republican confederation, which is dreamt of by many Panslavists, is undoubtedly nothing more than an Utopia; but it may become a terrible reality, if all the Slavonians who live under governments belonging to a foreign race will finally despair of ever having the just claims of their nationality satisfied by these governments, and become convinced that the only chance which remains to them is to merge the destinies of their separate nationalities in that of their whole race, represented by Russia; and this idea is daily gaining ground amongst many thinking Slavonians. The accomplishment of this idea has been, strange to say, powerfully promoted by those very parties which have the most to apprehend from such a contingency; *i. e.*, by the Germans. I have described in this essay the affairs of Galicia in 1846 (p. 88), those of Posen in 1848 (p. 92, *et seq.*), as well as the proceedings of the German parliament of Frankfort, on p. 106, and the favourable effect which these occurrences have produced to the influence of Russia. The German press seem to take delight in abusing the Slavonians in every possible way, and declaring that their race is naturally inferior to the Teutonic one, and consequently must remain politically in a subordinate position to the latter. These sentiments have been proclaimed over and above by numerous articles in newspapers, pamphlets, and books, the most remarkable of which is undoubtedly the work of Mr Heffter, entitled, *Der Welt Kampf der Deutschen und Slaven*,— *i. e.*, "The World Struggle of the Germans and Slavonians," published 1847, and which, considered as an exponent of the true sentiments of

the Germans towards the Slavonians, produced a considerable and lasting sensation among the latter. It is a well written work, with a great knowledge of the subject it treats, containing a detailed description of the subjugation of the Baltic Slavonians by the Germans, mentioned above (p. 162). Few productions are, however, more calculated to rouse amongst the Slavonians the most violent national animosity against the Germans; for its whole tenor is a continued pæan of the events pithily described by Herder in the following words:—"The Slavonians were either exterminated or reduced to bondage by whole provinces, and their lands were divided amongst bishops and nobles."* And the learned author, after having adduced all the historical evidence which he was able to collect against the national character of the Slavonians, systematically excluding every favourable testimony given to that character by his own countrymen, declares, on p. 459, that the Slavonians cannot even claim any interest excited in their fate, having deserved it by their own conduct. He further observes, that the last act of this national struggle was the incorporation of Cracow with Austria; and he exults on this occasion in the idea that Germanism will steadily pursue its conquering progress in the Slavonic lands; and generously condescends to allow the Slavonians to cultivate their language and literature, on condition of making no attempt at political emancipation, declaring that the Slavonians, under the German dominion of Austria and Prussia, cannot have any hope of ever attaining this object, which the Germans shall never allow. The authors of similar sentiments, with which the German press is swarming, forget, however, in their infatuation, that they are thus playing into the hands of Russia, because every insult offered to the Slavonic race is as much felt at Moscow and St Petersburgh as it is at Agram, Prague, and Warsaw; and that the anti-German feelings, easily produced by such wanton insults, in a race so excitable as the Slavonians, form a bond of unity amongst all the branches, however they may differ on every other subject. This feeling acquires a most dangerous intensity, pervading all the classes, notwithstanding the unprincipled machinations of the Austrian and Prussian governments to excite the lower against the upper,† and is one of the most efficient means which the partisans of the Russian Panslavism employ for propagating their opinions; and they do not neglect to make use of other circumstances, which, though considered as insignificant in this country, have been of no little service to that party. Thus, for instance, it was the case with the articles of the British press hostile to the Polish cause, and

* *Vide* above, p. 162.

† I have related on p. 93, *et seq.*, the patriotic zeal of the Polish peasantry in Posen in 1848; and the following characteristic anecdote shows the spirit which animated those of Galicia, where, as I have related it on p. 88, "the misguided peasantry, excited by the rewards offered by the Austrians, and allured by the pillage of the landowners' property, murdered many of them, with their families, in 1846. It was natural that such an abominable policy should have created many informers, who, under pretence of their attachment to the existing government, accused their landowners of treason and disaffection towards the sovereign. It happened once that a peasant accused his landowner before the Austrian magistrate of having abused the emperor in the most violent manner. When asked by the magistrate what word of abuse it was, the peasant, wishing to bring the strongest possible case against the person he accused, replied, 'Oh, sir, he has made use of the most horrible expressions against the emperor; he even called him a German.'" *Naturam expelles furca tamen recurrit.*

similar speeches in parliament, or on other public occasions, generally originating in a momentary excitement, produced by a wrong impression, or simply uttered in opposition to the English political party favourable to the Poles, and sometimes without any other reason than a fit of ill-humour in an individual, who vented it against the Poles because they gave him the first opportunity of doing it. The impression produced by these manifestations of ill-will towards the Poles and their cause upon the British public, accustomed to violent expressions of political sentiments, was therefore not lasting; and perhaps many of the parties who had indulged in those manifestations forgot them soon afterwards themselves. The impression produced in Poland by such displays of ill-will was, however, deep and painful, because they were sedulously circulated in that country, whilst all the expressions of sympathy made at the same time, either by the British press or public men, for that country, were carefully withheld from the knowledge of its inhabitants, and could not reach them, except with great difficulty.

The advantages of Panslavism have been depicted in colours most seductive to the imagination of a Slavonian, whilst the opponents of this combination have been branded as traitors to the cause of their whole race, by many productions, in prose and verse. The Polish obstinacy, as the Panslavists call it, is regarded by them as the greatest obstacle to the accomplishment of their favourite scheme, and many are the arguments and reproaches addressed to the Poles on this account. It must be, however, remarked, that the advocates of Panslavism are by no means composed only of Russian hirelings, but that there are amongst them many individuals who are perfectly sincere in their conviction, that Panslavism is the only chance which remains to the Slavonians who have not a national independent existence,—*i.e.*, to all of them except the Russians; and it must be confessed, that the arguments which they address to the feelings and interests of the Poles, in order to gain them over to their views, are not without considerable force. They are in substance as follows:—"How can you be so infatuated as to place any longer your hopes on Western Europe, and to believe in sympathies which have no foundation in reality? All these pretended sympathies have never been any thing else than hatred or fear of Russia, against whom, according to the opinion of Western Europe, it will be easy to excite you whenever its interest shall require it. You are despised by the majority of the inhabitants of the west, like the very dust of their feet, and considered in no better light than a pack of bloodhounds, which they may slip against Russia whenever it will suit them to do so. Western Europe worships only success, and has no other object than wealth. Compare the reception given to a Pole who visits Paris or London, under the auspices of a Russian, Austrian, or Prussian embassy, living in a fashionable hotel, and who has no other merit than the appearance of wealth, with that of a poor, broken-hearted patriot, who has sacrificed every thing to his cause. The first is courted and respected; the second shunned and despised. Has not the very name of a Pole become in those countries a by-word, expressive of contemptuous pity? Was not that miserable pittance, those crumbs which, falling from the tables of the pampered sons of western luxury, are occasionally thrown to you, bitterly reproached in

the face of the whole world? What advantages has your nation ever derived from all the manifestations of sympathy which Western Europe is sometimes making, in order to diversify its amusements? Can you expect any thing from those countries where the leading statesmen are most anxious to be reconciled with Russia? How long will you indulge in these delusive hopes of a national independence, which have brought upon your country so much misery of every kind? Give up these unattainable objects, and the persecution which is morally and materially crushing you will cease. Is not every Pole who has sincerely entered the system of Russia an object of especial favour, instead of persecution? Your individual as well as national interests require, therefore, that you should cordially unite with Russia, who will then grant your nationality every concession compatible with the security of her dominion. Merge your separate interests with those of your whole race, now exclusively represented by the great Slavonic power, and which is evidently destined to become the mistress of Europe, and even of Asia. You will thus reunite your brethren, now under the German yoke, because the boundaries of those parts of Poland will then become perceptible only on the map, and in the difference of colours on the frontier posts, and soon disappear altogether. You deserve the persecution of which you complain so much for acting as traitors to the interest of your own race, and for preferring Polish helotism to Slavonic greatness,—to crouch as Poles before those very nations whom you may command as Slavonians. History will brand you as political madmen, who raise their parricidal hand against their mother, *Slava*,* who prevent the moral progress of our race, the development of a truly Slavonic civilization, by keeping up a painful wound in the gigantic body of Russia, which poisons her best sap, and is barbarising her by the severities which she is obliged to exercise against you, the refractory children of our common mother, *Slava*. You who sacrifice the interest of your own race for those of envious, arrogant, selfish Germany, how can you be so blind as not to see that those eternal foes of our race have proved, by their deeds in Galicia and Posen, and by their words, wherever they could do it, that they are now, in the midst of the nineteenth century, animated by that very spirit which, during the middle ages, inspired their ancestors to exterminate our race between the Elbe and the Baltic? Don't you know that the most enjoyable sight for a German is a Slavonian murdering a Slavonian,—a sight which he contemplates with that very feeling with which the vile mob of Rome gloated over the agony of the unfortunate Goth or Scythian condemned, for the crime of having defended his home against greedy and depraved conquerors, to die for the amusement of the cruel and corrupted inhabitants of the Eternal City? It was a similar feeling which applauded those fratricidal combats, the arenas of which were the battle-fields of Grochow, Ostrolenka, Dembe,† and many others, upon which

* The appellation Slavonians is generally derived from the word *Slava*, signifying in their language *glory;* and this etymology is supported by the circumstance that a great number of Slavonic names are undoubtedly derived from that word. Thus, for instance, Vladislav signifies ruler of glory; Stanislav, establisher of glory; Yaroslav, furious for glory, &c. Whether this derivation of their name be true or not, it is very natural that it should be a favourite one with all the Slavonians, and a constant theme for their poets. It is a favourite manner amongst them to call those who belong to other branches of their common race than themselves, their brethren in *Slava*.

† In 1831.

the best Slavonic blood was shed in torrents for the advantage of the common enemy of our race. The whole of Western Europe hates us. It may suffer a Russian, a Pole, or a Bohemian, but it shudders at the very name of a Slavonian, because it instinctively feels that the time is not distant when our race will assume on the stage of the world a position proportionate to the extent of its population and territory. This is a truth reluctantly acknowledged by the most sagacious of their own writers,* and it is only the ignorant, or the wilfully blind to the unmistakable signs of the times, who cannot see that the inevitable destiny of the old world is to belong to our Slavonic race, whilst that of the new one is to be possessed by the Anglo-Americans. You talk about liberty, and reproach Russia for her strong government. Well, has your country profited by its liberty? and what advantage has the west derived from what is called liberal opinions and institutions, and which signifies, in other words, the freedom of publicly talking as much nonsense as one likes?† Has not this kind of freedom nearly upset the whole frame of society in Europe, which was saved by the arms of Russia in Hungary, and a year afterwards by her moral power, which alone prevented the Germans from mutually cutting their own throats?‡ The internal administration of Russia may be still imperfect, but it is a defect which may be easily remedied; and your own foolish attempts to disturb the system of her unity have greatly retarded her internal improvements. But look to her external policy. What an admirable skill, what an almost superhuman foresight, has directed all its movements! How puny, how miserable, are the workings of all the cabinets of Europe, if compared to the gigantic schemes of Russia! It is true that she committed mistakes, and that she suffered reverses; but history shows that these circumstances never proved any thing more than temporary checks upon her progress. Therefore do not imagine that her present position, however difficult it may appear, threatens her with any real danger. Has the most formidable league that ever existed been able, during a war of two years, to obtain any other result than the destruction of some of her outworks, which may be easily rebuilt? And has her moral power, her admirable political skill, which she is displaying on the present occasion, ever been equalled by any other cabinet? Has not that moral power put down all the vapourings of Austria, and rendered nugatory all the efforts of western diplomacy to draw this power into its interests? Has it not spell-

* It alludes to several German writers; as, for instance, Falmerayer, who said already, in 1831, "It seems that the dominion over mankind is now to pass from the Romanic and Germanic nations, to be transferred to the great Slavonic nation."—*Geschichte von Morea*, vol. i. p. 5. The well-known Hegelian and ultra-republican German writer of our days, Bruno Bauer, who took a prominent part in the events of 1848, declared, in a pamphlet entitled, *Russland und Deutschthum* (Russia and Germanism), "that, considering the rapid extension of the power of Russia, and particularly the *Roman earnestness* which guides her policy, her dominion over Europe, and the destruction of western civilization, are inevitable; and the only question which remains to be solved is, whether Germanism will survive this unavoidable catastrophe, or be absorbed by Russianism." Amongst the more western authors, the one who has perceived the dangers of Panslavism was the eminent politico-religious writer, Donoso Cortes, Marquis de Valdegamas, who lately died as Spanish ambassador at Paris, and who, having filled the same post at Berlin, had an opportunity of studying this subject.

† Compare Custine's account of the Russians, given above, p. 132, *note*.

‡ Allusion to the differences between Austria and Prussia, which threatened a war between these two countries in 1850.

bound Prussia, as well as all the petty German courts, and rendered them morally her faithful vassals? But, above all, what an admirable skill, an almost magic power, she has displayed against her most inveterate enemy, England, having converted those very statesmen who had caused or supported the present war into the most efficient advocates of her interests; and there can be no doubt that their influence will go on increasing every day: whilst the number of her friends in France is such that they can be kept down only by the strong arm of its present ruler. Russia, therefore, is sure to emerge from this struggle, not weakened but braced by this severe but salutary trial, in order to recommence, at a no distant time, the contest, with renewed vigour and under more favourable circumstances;—a combat, but not against France, with whom she will unite her interests, by giving that power the banks of the Rhine, and taking to herself those of the Oder, the mediæval limit of your own country. It is with the haughty, overbearing, selfish Albion, which looks on all the other nations simply as objects of her commercial speculations, and values them accordingly, that Russia will sooner or later engage in a mortal strife; for their mutual interests must clash every day more and more. England, who has conquered the south of Asia, is looking with jealousy and apprehension on the Russian giant, who, having occupied its whole north, leans upon the pole, and thus, invulnerable in his rear, frowns upon the rich plains of India as upon a prey that cannot escape his grasp, because he knows that, by an immutable law of nature, the north has always conquered the south. It will be the struggle between Rome and Carthage* on an immense scale; the final issue of which cannot be, however, doubtful, because history teaches us that a nation which strives for the dominion of the world must overcome that which only seeks for its wealth. Therefore stand fast to Russia, and seek your salvation from the east, and not from the west,—from the rising sun of Slavonia, and not from the setting star of an alien and hostile race," &c.

Such are the arguments which the Russian Panslavists address to the Poles, and which, though often couched in an inflated language, contain, amidst many commonplace poetical expressions, some very painful truths, particularly in respect to the relations between the Germans and the Poles. They have not, however, as yet produced any considerable effect, though, as I have mentioned above (p. 172), some few Poles have become sincere converts to these opinion; because, as I have observed in my former publications, the Poles will not enter into such a combination (a cordial union with the Russians, under the common name of Slavonians), as long as they retain a reasonable hope of obtaining the complete restoration of their country as an independent state. A nation which has a history of nine centuries, containing many bright and glorious pages, cannot so easily divest itself of its individuality, in order to become only the part of a whole, although that whole be its own race, and although it does nothing thereby but change the name of the species for that of the genus. Besides this feeling of national self-love, or pride, there are powerful interests of a more material nature, which must make the Poles, as well as every

* It is a favourite simile with the Russians to compare themselves with Rome, and England with Carthage.

other nation, to prefer a separate political existence to a union with another more powerful state; because the first-named position presents a much better chance of success for the talents and ambition of individuals than the last-named combination.* This hope is now stronger than ever, and, as I have said above (p. 157), all hearts and minds in Poland are turned towards the west, awaiting, in an agony of suspense, from its rulers and people, the decision of their fate. If, however, they continue to be treated with the same indifference as undoubtedly they have hitherto been; if their just claim to co-operate in the great work of the liberation of Europe, as Poles, and which (as I have already demonstrated by facts on p. 112, *et seq.*) would be of immense advantage to the allies, will be refused; and if the Polish question, which has been acknowledged by the most enlightened statesmen of Europe to be the most vital in the present political complications, instead of being openly and publicly discussed, shall continue to be eschewed as one which may retard the conclusion of peace with Russia,—will it not become evident that Poland has nothing to hope from the west, except some unmeaning expressions of sympathy,—that the object of the present war is not a permanent reduction of the power of Russia, but only to get out of it as decently as possible? I submit, therefore, to the decision of every impartial reader, what are the Poles to do under such circumstances? Will it not become evident that there is indeed *no salvation for them except through Russia*, as has been declared by the late Emperor Nicholas,—that they must gratefully accept such concessions as that power may grant them, uniting their destinies for better, for worse, with those of Russia? This is a melancholy but inevitable contingency, if the unaccountable policy of *doing as little harm to Russia as possible* will be continued, because it gives an immense force to the Panslavist arguments which I have quoted above. And is it a sound policy to damp the hopes of the Poles, by refusing them the simple practical measure which they are urgently demanding,—*i. e.*, the formation of a legion under their national colours,—until the unfortunate but widely-spread impression, *that the allies are so reluctant to take up the Polish cause that they will not do it, except when, compelled by circumstances, they shall not be able to do otherwise*, becomes universal in Poland? I hope and trust that this impression is erroneous; but it may produce an immense harm, by giving a powerful support to the opinions propagated by the Panslavists, and thus greatly injure, if not destroy, all the advantages which I have shown on p. 112, *et seq.* This must be particularly the case if Western Europe will wait until Russia has proclaimed some concessions to the Poles.

I have stated above (p. 158), that if Poland be left at the conclusion of this war in its present position, she must become, instead of being, as is now the case, the weak point of Russia, a source of strength to that power, and the most formidable weapon in her hands; because the Poles shall have no other chance of improving their moral and material condition than cordially to enter the Russian system. This is, indeed, a most painful idea to a Pole, particularly to those who have spent their lives in opposing that power; so that several of them are quite horrified at such a thought, and loudly protest against it. Unfortunately this contingency is not a matter of feeling, but a

* *Panslavism and Germanism*, p. 217. *Russia and Europe*, p. 23.

terrible fact. There can be no doubt that a Pole who has spent many years of exile in Western Europe, particularly if he can pass the remainder of his days in a tolerable manner, will prefer continuing his humble existence there to the enjoyment of many advantages under the Russian government. But what are those who remain in their native land, particularly the generation which has grown since our last struggle in 1831, to do under these circumstances? Are they to continue a hopeless, and consequently purposeless, opposition, which only renders them objects of persecution at home, and of a contemptuous pity abroad, where those very parties which profit the most by their opposition are the loudest in branding them as rebels and disturbers of public peace? Will it not be rather required, by their most vital interests, personal as well as national, and the duties they owe to their families, that they should adapt themselves to what will become inevitable, and, cordially entering the Russian Panslavism, seek compensation for the loss of their national independence in those dazzling prospects that form the political creed of the advocates of this combination, and which may then become much less unreal than they now appear? And will it not be the duty of those patriots who are now making continual efforts to oppose the Panslavistic propaganda, by fostering amongst their countrymen the spirit of national independence, to abandon what shall then become hopeless for what will be practical? And, indeed, if an individual may without reproach sacrifice his own self, and seek the glory of martyrdom for the cause which he has embraced, however hopeless and delusive it may be, he cannot draw others into such a course without incurring the heaviest moral responsibility. Many people believe, indeed, that the severities of the Russian government have alienated the Poles so much as to make reconciliation impossible. I have repeatedly explained the object of this persecution, which once fully attained, the means employed for it must cease. It must be also observed, that Alexander II. is not the author of the persecutions directed against the Poles, but Nicholas; and that, consequently, if he abandons this line of policy, he cannot be the object of the same feelings which animated the Poles personally against his sire, a circumstance of immense importance in the combinations enumerated above. And finally, I appeal to the feelings of every Briton, whether the greatest amount of persecution may not be sooner forgiven and forgotten than contempt; for it is only to similar sentiments of Western Europe that the Poles may ascribe the policy of wantonly rejecting the most important and effective agent for bringing about a speedy and successful issue of the present war. And is it not in the nature of the human heart to be more easily reconciled with our open enemies, than with those whom we had supposed to be our friends? And can any Pole in his senses,—if his country is, after the conclusion of this war, left in its present condition,—consider every expression of sympathy coming from Western Europe otherwise than the most insulting mockery?

The Poles having once given up the idea of a national independence, the development of Russian Panslavism will become a very easy task. The emperor has only to grant the Poles some concessions of the kind alluded to on p. 157, and to add to his titles that of the Emperor of the Slavonians, which he has undoubtedly as much the right to assume

as that of the Emperor of all the Russias, because all the principalities which had formed the empire of Vladimir the Great and Yaroslav I. do not belong to his dominions; as, for instance, that of Halich (pp. 6–8), which forms the Austrian province of Galicia. The assuming of the title of the monarch of the Slavonians will undoubtedly give great umbrage to the court of Vienna, and be not agreeable to other cabinets of Europe, but it will produce nothing more than protests, and end in a little vapouring, because the present war being once concluded without effectually reducing Russia, she may have no fear of its being soon recommenced, as was justly observed in the passage of the *Times*, quoted on p. 142. The appellation of Slavonians will be, indeed, a most powerful means for reconciling the Poles to the Russian dominion, because it entirely removes the idea of their being a subjugated nation; and they will be no more humiliated by adopting the name of Slavonians, which belongs to them as much as to the Russians, than the Scotch were by taking that of the Britons. Slavonism will thus become the Euthanasia of Polonism, and soon expand into Panslavism. The Poles will then rally round the standard of their common race, instead of persevering any longer in the hopeless attempts of raising the banner of their individual nationality. They will thus gain the advantage of becoming, from a subjugated and oppressed nation, one which, by its numbers and the extent of its possessions, must necessarily assume a prominent part in the future destinies of mankind, whilst Russia will acquire thereby an accession of real strength that will more than compensate all the losses which she may sustain by the present war, and which, united with the improvements pointed out on p. 133, must give her a power unexampled in modern history. Thus the dangerous contingency predicted by Lord Castlereagh (p. 70), by Napoleon I. (p. 138), and by the German statesman (p. 155), will be fully realised, and Europe, which remained deaf to all those warnings, will soon feel the consequences of its wilful blindness.

I would refer those who may think me an alarmist to the testimony of the English and other travellers who have visited, during these last few years, various parts of Poland, and conversed with the most intelligent natives of that country, there and abroad, whether the contingency which I have just described is not considered by them as inevitable, when the Poles shall have lost every hope of reconquering their national independence, which must be the case after the conclusion of this war, without accomplishing the object in question.

The means which Russia will employ for consolidating the loyalty of the Poles, and for establishing her influence on the Slavonians of other countries, precursory to her direct dominion over them, will be, to foster the national antipathies against Germany, and thus obliterate every feeling against herself. It is, indeed, almost superfluous to observe, that nations are, like individuals, capable of the most elevated sentiments, as well as of the worst passions. They are capable of generosity, kindness, and gratitude, but no less of pride, arrogance, and revenge, with this difference, that the last-named feelings, though always condemned in an individual, are but too often regarded as virtues when animating a nation,—they assume the garb of patriotism. This observation, applicable to every nation, is particularly so to the Poles, and to the Slavonians in general, whose national feelings cannot

but be irritated by the recollection of the historical wrongs which they have suffered from the Germans in former times, renewed in our own days, and which the Germans themselves are so infatuated as to boast of in the manner I have related (p. 170.) The government of Russia may, therefore, easily give such a direction to the patriotic feelings of the Poles, by the arguments employed for this object by the Panslavists (p. 172), and thus form Poland, morally as well as materially, into a vanguard of the great Slavonic empire against Germany. The means which Russia may employ with great effect for promoting the feelings mentioned above is undoubtedly literature, particularly the periodical and educational. She has already made some attempts in this respect, by cajoling the most celebrated Slavonic writers of other countries, by establishing chairs of Slavonic literature in all the Russian universities, which bestow academical honours in that special branch of learning, as is done in divinity, philosophy, law, and medicine; and she may immensely promote her influence on all the Slavonians by systematically developing this policy. Russia may employ many other means for this purpose, and she needs not to be taught how to attain an object when she has once perceived its utility for her political ends.

In pointing out, as I have done, the dangers of the Russian Panslavism, and the only means of preventing it, *i. e.*, the restoration of Poland, I most solemnly declare that I am no less desirous than any other Slavonian to advance the national development of every branch of our common race, and I freely confess myself a strong believer in its future greatness, because no other race has ever passed through more terrible trials, which, however, have neither arrested its gigantic growth, nor impaired the strength of its national feelings. But I fondly hope and fervently pray that this greatness should be founded upon the moral and intellectual progress of all its branches, and not upon a mere combination of brute force, cemented by the common animosities against a foreign race, and political ambition, tending towards the conquest and oppression of other nations. I, however, firmly believe that the first-named contingency may be accomplished, and the second avoided, only by the re-establishment of the Slavonic state of Poland, which, breaking the despotic influence of Russia on the rest of the Slavonians, will promote amongst them liberal tendencies.*

In concluding this subject, I cannot help remarking on the strange but widely-spread opinion in this country, which confounds the idea of *nationality* with that of political liberty, whilst the two things are perfectly distinct and separate. Nationality is that feeling which inspires a population with a strong attachment to its peculiar manners, customs, ideas, traditions, and, above all, language, the principal representant of a nationality, which dies with the extinction of this representant.

* I have attempted to trace the internal and external relations of the Slavonians in the following works:—1. "Panslavism and Germanism." Newby, London, 1848. Translated into German by W. Lindau, entitled "Slaventhum und Deutschthum," Arnold, Dresden, 1848;—and into Danish, published in a series of *feuilletons* in the "Faedrelandet" for May 1849. 2. "Sketch of the Religious History of the Slavonic Nations." Edinburgh, Johnstone and Hunter; London, Theobald: 1851. Two French translations of this work simultaneously appeared in 1853: one revised by the author, and illustrated with many etchings, published by Cherbulliez, Geneva and Paris, and the other published by Freres Granier, Paris. 3. "Montenegro and the Turkish Slavonians," published in the "Railway Library," by Chapman and Hall, London, 1853.

The feeling of nationality animates the population of every country, and is, amongst the barbarous and ignorant, generally stronger than amongst the refined and intellectual. The wants of political and even civil liberty cannot be, however, felt, except by a people which has made some advance in civilization. Russia may, therefore, appeal to nationalities as much as the most liberal government, and it is a most powerful weapon in her hands against the countries which contain Slavonic populations.

People of Great Britain, I have spoken throughout the whole of this essay, not in the language of flattery, but in that of plain truth, because I am addressing a nation of Christians and freemen on a subject of the most vital importance to your own interests, as much as to those of humanity and civilization at large. It is generally acknowledged that the present war is essentially a people's war. The interests of the people require, therefore, above all, that it should have a clear understanding of the real object for which it is making so cheerfully great sacrifices, as well as of the manner by which it may be attained in a most speedy and effectual way. There can be no doubt that this object is a safe and honourable peace; but there is much difference of opinion about the real meaning of these words. The greatest opponents of this war do not promise you that the peace by which it is to be terminated shall be a permanent one. Lord Aberdeen, who honestly confessed his reluctance to this war, into which he was drifted by a pressure of circumstances which he was unable to resist, dared not to promise you more than five-and-twenty years of peace with Russia. I do not think that a peace concluded without a material reduction of the power of Russia can last even the half of this time; but admitting the views of his lordship on this subject as perfectly correct, can this respite be of any real advantage to your country? Must you not, during all this interval, be constantly arming and preparing for a new struggle, so that this peace would be in fact nothing better than an armed truce, without any certainty of its duration, on account of the circumstances which I have explained above (p. 140). Now, let me ask you, whether any father of a family, who is an honest man, would, in order to save himself a little trouble, abandon a work on which he had already bestowed much labour and expense, with the knowledge that in thus acting, he must expose to great dangers and hardships the child which he is now fondling on his knees, when it will be grown to man's estate, whilst in persevering a little longer he might provide for it a comfortable existence? Or would any sensible young man, now in the full vigour of manhood, act in the same way, preparing thus a similar fate for his old age? Now, if such improvidence and neglect of individual interests is blameworthy, how much more is it the case when it affects those of a whole nation, which shall be obliged to engage, perhaps single-handed, in a war with Russia, when that power will have trebled its moral and material forces? There are many persons who advocate the conclusion of peace without attempting any further reduction of Russia's power, because the object for which this war was undertaken has been accomplished, by rescuing Turkey from an imminent danger. In answer to this view of the question, I would ask you, whether any man in his senses, who, having engaged in some undertaking, with no other hope than that of

earning thereby a livelihood for himself and his family, and who should become so successful as to have a prospect of speedily realising a fortune, and to make thus a provision for his children, would, instead of continuing his promising business, stop short, because he had not originally expected to succeed so well as he did? And would not this be exactly the case of the allies, if, having declared war against Russia in order to repel her aggression on Turkey, but having advanced, by the success of their arms, beyond their original design, they should not take advantage of this success in order permanently to remove the cause of this war, only because, in commencing it, they did not expect to be able to accomplish such a desideratum? The advocates of an immediate peace maintain that Russia is so much reduced as not to be able to continue the war without risk of her dissolution, and that consequently she will be obliged to sue for peace, urging this circumstance as a reason for its being accepted by the allies. Such a condition of Russia will be undoubtedly a strong reason for her government to be anxious for peace; but it would be, I think, a very strange one for the allies to accept it, because, if this war was to be continued a little longer, it would completely reduce the power of Russia. Now, I submit to the common sense of the British people, who have so nobly borne the immense sacrifices of blood and money required for the prosecution of the present war, whether the prospect of bringing it to such a successful issue as to prevent the possibility of its recurrence is a reason for continuing this contest, in order to obtain such a great national boon, or for stopping it, from fear that this object may be attained? This last-named reason must undoubtedly be all-powerful to an advocate of the interests of Russia, but not to one of those of England; and such opinions can be entertained only by those English or French politicians who are so infatuated as to give way to those miserable feelings of jealousy which the enemies of the Anglo-French alliance are endeavouring to excite, in order to dissolve or weaken this alliance, and which I have pointed out on p. 127.* Remember that there is a tide in the affairs of a nation as well as in those of an individual, which once lost, never returns again. Such a tide, not only for this country and France, but for the cause of humanity and civilization at large, is now represented by the Anglo-French alliance, which, however, cannot be considered as a common occurrence, produced by natural circumstances, but rather as a signal favour of a bounteous Providence for the cause alluded to above; because such a combination would never have taken place under the reign of the eldest branch of the Bourbons, entirely devoted to Russia, or the Orleans, whose sympathies are known to be more Russian than English; and it is entirely due to the wisdom and firmness of Napoleon III., who, disregarding all selfish and petty considerations, cordially entered that line of policy for which his great predecessor had vainly wished. Would it not be guilty on the part of the allies to neglect such a rare opportunity for removing the danger which threatens Europe, and for accomplishing the great work bequeathed by Napoleon I. to an Anglo-French alliance, and which will become the firmest bond of this fortunate union.

* The statements which I have made on this subject in the above-mentioned place (p. 127), have been fully corroborated since they were printed by the foreign correspondents of several newspapers.

People of Great Britain, I do not ask from you any demonstration in favour of my country, by the expression of your sympathy for its cause, because I have not the slightest doubt that such a feeling animates every true British heart, but I ask you to take up this question in a practical, business-like manner,—in a manner which will forward your national interests as much as those of my own country. It matters not to discuss the wrongs of Poland, or the expediency of its restoration, but to adopt a measure conducive to this object, such as may be accomplished under the existing circumstances,—namely, the formation of a Polish force, the advantages and the feasibility of which I have amply demonstrated on p. 114, *et seq.* I have also shown on p. 124, *et seq.*, that this measure was approved by the French monarch, as well as by the eminent individual who is now at the helm of the British state, and pointed out the obstacles which impede its execution, as well as the means of removing them. The truth of these statements, which I made about a year ago,* has now been fully established by the resolution which the British government has adopted of forming a Polish legion in Turkey for the nucleus of such a force, which I have described on p. 116, and entrusting this task to the same general, Zamoyski, whom I have mentioned on that occasion. It is, however, as yet only a very imperfect measure, because the most essential condition for enabling this force to render to the cause of the allies those immense services which I have described on pp. 113–120, namely, the permission that it should combat under its own national colours, has not yet been conceded by the British government. The Poles who have joined this force have done so in the hope that it is a preliminary step to the formation of a *bona fide* Polish army; but "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick;" and it cannot but excite a fear in many Polish minds, natural enough to those who have been the victims of so many delusions as ourselves, that they are to be allowed to shed their blood, but not for their country, and are intended only to be used as tools, which are generally broken and cast away when no longer needed. Let me add, that these Poles have made great sacrifices on this occasion, as many of them abandoned means of subsistence, which they had obtained by dint of industry and perseverance. There are amongst them old field-officers who commanded battalions in 1831, and are now fulfilling the duties of sub-lieutenants, submitting cheerfully to the most severe privations of every kind. Much reason is, therefore, for apprehending that a prolonged denial of this permission may destroy all those advantages which this measure, if fully carried out, is sure to give the allies, and serve those of Russia, because it gives a great handle to her partisans for spreading suspicion against the intentions of the allies. The means of preventing this lamentable occurrence are, however, in the hands of the British people, if they choose to employ them, and they are very simple. Let the British people make use on this occasion of its high privilege of publicly discussing their national affairs, and take up this subject in that practical business-like manner on which they justly pride themselves, and which makes all their undertakings so successful. Let them examine it in all its bearings, and consider that every soldier added to the Polish legion is a saving of English blood and treasure; because, as I have shown on p. 113, the Polish troops, demanding no other

* *Russia, Poland, and Europe*, p. 39.

bounty than the permission of co-operating in this war *as Poles*, their maintenance will cost this country less than one-fourth of what is expended on every other force engaged in the present war; and as regards their efficiency, I shall only observe, that whatever may be the accusations heaped upon the Poles by our enemies, that of not knowing how to wield the sword was never made, even by the bitterest revilers of our nation.* If, after having fully examined this subject, you will arrive at the conclusion that the measure which I am advocating is really as important and useful as I have endeavoured to prove, then pronounce your opinion upon it in a manner worthy of yourselves,—in a truly British manner. This will at once remove all those obstacles which are now impeding its execution, because it will strengthen the hands of your government against all the domestic or foreign influences which are opposing this measure; and I think that the successful issue of the present war may be much more effectually promoted by the people's support given to such definite objects as the one in question, than by indiscriminate censures bestowed on the government, whose hands must not be weakened, but strengthened, by public opinion, in carrying out bold and decisive measures. It will go a great way in strengthening the Anglo-French alliance, because you may be certain that a voice raised by the British people in behalf of this measure will find a universal response amongst the heroic French nation, in whose hearts a generous idea always meets with a ready echo, and whose sympathies for Poland are a national feeling, cemented by long years of intimate connection with that country (p. 105), and who will rejoice at the prospect of contemplating again our white eagle, which has shared in their triumphs on so many a battle-field, reappearing again between their own golden eagle and the British lion, resuscitated by the happy union of the two great countries represented by those glorious signs.

Let me also observe, that the present ruler of France has lived in this country long enough to be fully aware that no question of importance may be effectively resolved in it except when taken up by the people themselves; he will, therefore, in his policy always rely much more on the British people at large, than on the ephemeral power of a political party. As regards the opposition of the Prussian and Austrian governments, which has been urged by some persons as an objection to the measure, I have shown on p. 122 the futility of their opposition; and I would ask the British people, whether the conduct of these two governments towards this country, in arresting and trying like criminals the English recruiting agents in Germany, or by the nameless proceedings in the Danubian principalities toward servants of your government, was so very considerate as to make you over-anxious not to offend their feelings?

* This is a fact to which even Mr Cobden bears testimony in the following words:—"Notwithstanding that the insurrection in that country (Poland in 1830) broke out at a moment when the preparations were not matured (owing to the rashness of the military youth of Warsaw), and although the nation possessed no strong places, as in Belgium, and their territory is destitute of mountain fastnesses, such as are found in Spain, Scotland, or Switzerland, yet a mere handful of insurgents baffled the whole power of the tzar for twelve months, several times defeating his ill-equipped armies with great slaughter, and at last were subdued only by the perfidy of the Prussian authorities."—*Russia by a Manchester Manufacturer*, p. 27. Mr Cobden ascribes this resistance of the Poles to the complete inefficiency of the Russian troops. The present war has not, however, entirely confirmed this opinion; and will not that army become more efficient if the Poles shall once fight in its ranks as Slavonians?

I know that the open and secret friends of Russia will endeavour to refute my statements by supercilious sneers, by raising suspicions as to their veracity, as coming from an interested quarter, or by simple denial, without supporting them by any proof. I am, however, not afraid of such attacks, because they cannot have any weight except with those who have no opinion of their own, and must fall to the ground as soon as they shall be examined by the plain common sense of the British people. It is to the judgment of this common sense that I am anxious to submit the cause which I have pleaded in this essay, demanding the most searching investigation for the facts which I have brought forward, and the arguments which I have deduced from them, because only those who are interested in suppressing the truth may seek to avoid it. A good cause is never in danger from an honest adversary, but may be greatly injured by its false friends. This, unfortunately, has already been the case with that which I am now pleading on several public occasions, when some people, instead of frankly entering into its merits or demerits, have smothered discussion by bringing forward irrelevant matters, as some commonplace theories, or general and vague suspicions against the government of this country, or that of France, so that the real question at issue was lost sight of in the excitement produced by these manœuvres. Beware of those machinators, because, wittingly or unwittingly, they act as the most efficient tools of Russia. I have already shown the injustice, as well as inexpediency, of accusing your own government on its general conduct, instead of pressing upon its attention some definite measure; and this observation is, perhaps, even more applicable to similar language in which some people and papers of this country indulge against your great ally. They maintain that the present war against Russia cannot be advantageous to the cause of humanity and civilization, because the present government of France is invested with absolute power, and therefore as dangerous to this cause as that of Russia. They, however, forget, or will not see, that the present form of government in France is nothing more than a temporary dictatorship, established by the will of an overwhelming majority of the people of that country,—an expedient to which the republic of Rome recurred in its most palmy days more than once in moments of a great crisis; and that the difference between the two dictatorships lies, not in their essence, but in their form, and that what was given by the senate of Rome has been only confirmed by the people of France. Napoleon III. knows, moreover, quite well, that he can hold the absolute power with which he is invested only as long as its necessity will be acknowledged by the public opinion of France, and he will modify it as soon as it shall be required by that public opinion, adapting it to the exigencies of this moral power. The nature of the despotism of Russia is, however, entirely different, because what is only an accident in France is a principle in that country, introduced by the dominion of the Mongols, and continued by the tzars of Moscow; and it is entirely upon this principle that the polity of the Russian state has been developed with such a terrible consistency, that it has become a predominant feature of the national character;* and it is this native strength of Russian despotism which makes it the main prop of all

* This melancholy truth is fully admitted by the eminent and patriotic historian of Russia, Karamsin.

the absolutist parties in Europe, which can become free only when that power will be broken.

People of Great Britain, you have been blessed by Providence above many nations; but a great responsibility is attached to these blessings, "for to whom much is given, from him much is required." Your country stands in the position of the city that is set on a hill, and cannot be hid. The eyes of the whole world are, therefore, directed upon you,—of many who are animated with feelings of hope and admiration, but also of not a few excited by those of envy and hostility, for the cause of rational liberty is now entrusted to you. Remember, therefore, that this cause is advanced by the increase of the *prestige*, the moral power of your country, and injured by its decline. The celebrated order of your naval hero, "England expects every man to do his duty," has become your national motto. Your gallant soldiers and sailors have nobly done their duty on every occasion; but the present war is not only a physical contest between opposing armies, but a no less arduous moral struggle between opposite principles,—between the cause of despotism and barbarity on one side, and that of liberty and civilization on the other,—a struggle in which every one of you has a duty to perform. And, indeed, what would be said of a man who, having perceived the danger with which his town or village is menaced from fire, or any other cause, would, instead of warning its inhabitants, hold his peace? Could he act in this manner without a dereliction of his duty as an honest man? How much more would it be the case with every citizen, particularly in a country like yours, where opinion has such a freedom of utterance, if, having perceived a circumstance injurious to its interests, he would remain silent, instead of rousing the attention of his fellow-citizens to this danger! The cause of humanity and civilization expects, therefore, *every Briton to do his duty* in this momentous crisis; and it is sure to be gained if they do that duty in a manner worthy of themselves.

THE END.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

Works of Special Interest in the Present Critical Juncture of Affairs in the East.

Lately published, in demy 8vo, Second Edition, elegantly bound, and illustrated with 17 etchings, price 10s. 6d.,

SKETCH OF THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF THE SLAVONIC NATIONS.

The great Slavonic power, Russia, has now proclaimed a religious war, and seeks to rouse the religious fanaticism, not only of its own subjects, but also of the other branches of the Slavonic race, amongst whom a great excitement is already manifesting itself. It is generally admitted that this must lead to consequences which no one may foresee, and the importance of which cannot be overrated. Under these circumstances it will not be uninteresting to the British public to become acquainted with the religious struggles and tendencies of the most numerous race of Europe,—which is now assuming a prominent part in this terrible drama, now in the first act,—because the knowledge of the past is undoubtedly the best means for judging of the future.

"A book of peculiar, and, to the general reader, of novel interest. . . . . His Lectures deserve to be read; and we think they will be read."—*Athenæum.*

"The movements of an extended nationality, the settlement of which will form one day the great difficulty of Europe,—the rise and fall of the earliest European liberty,—the vicissitudes of a people of singular originality, boldness, wisdom, and absurdity,—have been detailed by the present writer in one of the most interesting volumes we have met with for a long time."—*Atlas.*

Lately published, Second Thousand, demy 8vo, price 1s.,

RUSSIA AND EUROPE;

OR, THE PROBABLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE PRESENT WAR.

"Without identifying ourselves with all the views which the author entertains, it is due to him to say that we know of no publication which has yet appeared on the Eastern question which displays a more intimate acquaintance with the subject."—*Morning Advertiser.*

"Count Valerian Krasinski will have many grateful readers; for he has had the rare ability to throw new light and additional interest on the subject of the quarrel between felonious Russia and indignant Europe."—*Church and State Gazette.*

"In all questions regarding Panslavism, Count Krasinski has already proved himself the highest authority we have."—*Edinburgh Advertiser.*

Lately published, Third Thousand, demy 8vo, price 6d.,

RUSSIA, POLAND, AND EUROPE;

OR, THE INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE PRESENT WAR.

When the best blood of your country is shed in torrents, when an increase of taxation becomes inevitable, and when the first necessities of life threaten to rise to famine prices,—a practical measure suggested for lessening these evils and shortening their duration deserves to be examined by those who are interested in this subject: and is there a man, woman, or child with whom this is not the case? These are the grounds upon which the Author of this pamphlet requests half an hour of your leisure for its perusal.—*Dedication to the Tax-payers of Great Britain and Ireland.*

London: Chapman & Hall. Edinburgh: Johnstone & Hunter.

In fortune's frown, on danger's giddiest brink,
Despair and Poland's name must never link.

Campbell