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POLICY OF RUSSIA.

THAT the French Revolution has overthrown the ancient system of the Balance of Europe to its foundations, is a truth universally acknowledged; and the oscillations which have taken place in the policy of almost every state since that event, sufficiently prove that none of them yet has settled itself in its new situation and regained equilibrium. A few years ago all Europe was leagued against France. Prussia, however, soon deviated into a suspicious neutrality.—Russia entered into the war in a passion and left it in a pet. She formed an intimate union with the Ruler of France to adjust the new territorial arrangements and political influence of the Germanic Body; and now we see Russia and France fallen into open hostility, to the indulgence of which, in deeds of arms, physical obstacles seem alone to interpose.

Some of the French politicians have much recommended a steady and constant alliance between France and Russia, as calculated to secure the tranquility of Europe, both in the North and South, by equally countervailing the powers that influence in each. But that system, though perhaps it might answer extremely well in quiet times, & after a state of power & possession to which European nations have been reconciled by the time & habit, is not likely to succeed when a general discontent prompts every one to covet & pursue some object to change or improve its situation. Far less will it succeed when both or one of the parties is actuated by a violent and insatiable spirit of ambition. France is now animated by that spirit. The French Government is not disposed to secure the repose of Europe and its own acquisitions by forbearance, but by action. It is not in the nature of things that the French government at present should be inactive; indeed, if it were to descend to that system, its neighbours would, by mistaking quiet for imbecility, soon rouse it again to activity. All ambition of conquest and aggrandisement is impelled by two principles. It is in its own nature active and stirring; but as it always excites jealousy and ill-will, it always has enemies ready to take advantage of its indolence or want of foresight. Thus a conquering power is, in a certain view of the case, always acting in self-defence, even when it attacks. We do not believe that the French government dare cease to be restless, turbulent and offensive. The moment it adopts a pacific system, it will be assailed in its turn and forced to defend itself, because in its pacific system would its neighbours discover a favourable opportunity to regain or to acquire. Our situation in India affords an apt illustration of this necessity. No enlightened statesman ever expects our vast empire there to be long at peace. The moment we cease to do mischief we shall be called to account for what we have done.—Our moderation will be weakness, so that we must be in perpetual hostilities with the enemies we find or make.

It is evident, therefore, that France and Russia are not likely to agree in sharing the government of the rest of Europe. Buonaparte indeed, there is reason to believe, has deceived the Emperor of Russia as to various stipulations which formed the conditions of their momentary union. But we doubt much whether Russia, either seriously expected that the King of Sardinia would be restored, or obtain an adequate indemnity. But the French Government has probably disappointed the expectations of Russia, in points of which the public is at present but imperfectly informed.

If however the French Government has not kept good faith with the Court of St. Petersburg in promoting the objects of its ambition, the ministers of Russia have shewn considerable dexterity in pursuing its policy. The establishment of the Republic of the Seven Islands, which has, in fact, become a Russian colony, was a master stroke, and it has been very skillfully followed up. Buonaparte never committed a greater error than in concurring in that establishment for Russia. He has bitterly repented of it, and there was a time when he meditated that occupation of the Republic of the Seven Islands, which Russia under the favour of the present circumstances of Europe, has so happily effected. It will be remembered, that in the report of Sebastiani, which, with inconceivable madness, Buonaparte caused to be published, that vapouring coxcomb gave an account of his reception at one of the Islands, and of the favourable disposition of the natives to receive the French. This puerile publication, of the French designs would have induced Russia to anticipate them, had not the Court of Petersburg been already sufficiently disposed.

Many circumstances have concurred to show the extreme anxiety with which Russia has laboured to advance her position to the South. Experience has shewn that the scheme of Peter the Great, of establishing a great naval power in the Baltic has failed. It is almost the only great design of that singular barbarian, which has failed; yet in trying that scheme he did all that nature and circumstances allowed, and he partly suc-

ceeded. But those who are best acquainted with Russia, confess the absurdity of attempting to raise a great and commanding naval force in a sea that is frozen up six months in the year, and manning that navy with boors. The events of an hundred years, and the steady prosecution of a political system, which in the hands of a great power always ensures success, has effected Peter's objects, and not only brought Russia into the Black Sea, but given her the entire dominion of it. The navigation of that Sea, connected with the navigation of the Mediterranean, and commerce which Russia may carry on, must by degrees give her that navy which she coveted, and with it almost all the other objects of her ambition in the South-East of Europe. She soon may have the whole sources of the Turkish marine, once far from being despicable. She will with more facility gain the influence she desires. Her influence in the North was acquired by bloody wars, in which she gained comparatively nothing but reputation and experience. A more splendid reward awaits her if she continues to pursue her obvious policy in the Black Sea and Mediterranean.

Even during the wild and extravagant career of Paul, the Mediterranean was the grand object with which the war against France was connected. It was to Italy that the Russian army was sent. The Russian fleet was sent to the Mediterranean. Russian troops were sent to Naples. The Kings of Sardinia and Naples were taken under the protection of Russia. The fame of Russia was spread round every shore of the Mediterranean, that her reputation might precede and facilitate her dominion. The same connection with Italy and the States of the Mediterranean, has since assiduously and affectingly been maintained. There can be no doubt, therefore, that now Russia, having obtained an establishment in the Archipelago, from which she can influence all the adjoining countries of Greece, is determined to extend and consolidate her power in the south of Europe. She now will send forth her fleets and armies by the South, instead of the North, and her name will rise to a splendour round the shores of the Euxine and the Mediterranean, which it could never have gained in the black and inhospitable regions of the Baltick.

The war between England and France has afforded to Russia every facility she could have desired for the attainment of her ends. She has strengthened and fortified her position in such a manner as to bid defiance to a coup de main. It would require a powerful expedition to dislodge her; but there is little probability that this country would permit France to dislodge Russia from an important position in which she wished to establish herself. Our fleet in the Mediterranean therefore is the Russian fleet. Under its protection Russia completes her designs in the Grecian Islands. Nor do we conceive that our fleet in the Mediterranean is ill employed in that service. We can anticipate no danger to our interests from the growth of a power in the south-east of Europe, which in all probability, must always be the rival of France for greatness and dominion. It is an ascendancy which in the present circumstances of Europe, can neither prove injurious to our commercial nor political interests, though for reasons which will be mentioned, it will tend for the moment to destroy every chance of an efficient continental confederacy against France. It may not hurt our future interests, but it will not serve our present purposes. There is every reason to believe however that Ministers have not been aware of the consequences of the Russian schemes in the Archipelago. Nor have they been insensible how this country was indirectly promoting their success.

Some conjecture too, that unless the Grand Seigneur affords every facility to the Russian projects—unless he gives them the entire command of the Bosphorus, the Turks will be attacked and the magnificent views of Peter and Catharine may be realized. The Russians have a port and a depot in the Archipelago, and they may attack Constantinople on every side. At any rate the overthrow of the Turkish power in Europe is but deferred, even if the present favourable opportunity were to be lost.

If our view of the subject then be correct, the whole object of Russia, in the event of a war with France, will be to strengthen and confirm her position in the Archipelago, and by consequence extend her influence and authority in the Morea, without risking any thing to the shock of war and battles. She will reserve her force and her resources for that quarter in which France is likely to excite opposition to her views, and where too she has most solid advantages to acquire.

We have ever been of opinion, and are still, that Russia will not at present attempt to bring any forces to act in the North, or on the Northern frontiers of France. It would be risking every thing, and nothing to gain but reputation, which may be better acquired in another quarter. Not to mention the want of financial resources, the hopelessness of shaking the military power of France unaided; it is

not to be assumed that Russia is animated by that disinterested zeal that has been imputed to her. Doubtless it is a desirable thing that the power of France should be reduced, but will that feeling prompt Russia to acts when her losses would be her own, and the advantages redound to her rivals or her enemies? If Austria will not move, will Russia move further than her own interest dictates?

It is not to indulge political reveries, the construction of which requires some small collection of materials and knowledge; but it is downright folly and ignorance to talk of Russia landing men in Holstein, driving the French out of Hanover, and such like absurdities. We have constantly warned our readers against paying any attention to these fooleries; and if our Ministers expect to create a division in the North of Europe by means of Russia and Sweden, they will shew themselves grossly ignorant of the means, the interests, and the aims of that power with which they are desirous to confederate.

In the preceding part of this article we have endeavoured to shew that there was very little probability of Russia making any considerable efforts by sea or land against France, in the North, and that her policy would be to strengthen her position on the Mediterranean, bidding defiance to the hostility of her opponent.

It is evident that the French Government entertains much more apprehension of the consequences which may result from Russia being permitted to pursue her schemes of aggrandisement in that quarter, than from her exertions in the North. Buonaparte is fully sensible that he cannot directly, by force of arms, prevent the completion of the designs which the occupation of the Seven Islands has begun. His fleets are blockaded up in Toulon, and no impediment exists to the indefinite extension of the Russian forces in the Ionian Islands, if the Turks continue to grant a free passage through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.

In order therefore, to put a stop to the growing power and influence of the Russians, in the Ionian Sea and the adjacent country, the French Government seems to employ every effort to prevail upon the Grand Seigneur to shut the passage of the Bosphorus. It perhaps, may be doubted however, whether the Turkish Government will venture to do so. That passage was granted to the Russians, not from ignorance of the danger with which the concession was pregnant, but from a conviction that it might be extorted by force. The Turks have now fallen into an abject terror of the Russian power, and though they cannot doubt the views of that nation, they are willing to purchase a respite at the expence even of increasing the further danger. If the Turks were to declare that no more Russian ships and troops should pass the Bosphorus, Russia it may be easily imagined, would not quietly submit to that interruption of her plans. It is the object of the French government, however, to stimulate the Porte to this measure, trusting that they should be able to support their ancient Ally in her resistance, were Russia to attempt maintaining this advantage by force.

The Turks, of themselves, are little able to resist the power of Russia, which in the event of a war, would, perhaps, be brought directly against the capital itself. Indeed an attack upon Constantinople, by sea and land, which the Russians could make, would in all probability, be successful, as the Turkish government is in no respect prepared to resist it. The French, indeed, would supply them with officers, but the Turks are too stupid and presumptuous to be guided by them. It was in Constantinople that the Greek Empire was overthrown by the Barbarians of the Cross and Crescent, while the provinces were a prey to anarchy and confusion. The present state of the Turkish Empire justifies the comparison.—The Russians by their fleet in the Black Sea, might even reduce Constantinople by famine, by intercepting the supplies which come from the provinces on which it is now, in a great measure, forced to depend, since disorder and civil war have raged in those from which it formerly derived its subsistence.

But in case the Turks should, from a dread of the Russian power, still continue to grant every facility for the extension of that power, which they know threatens their very existence, the French government have not failed to employ every act and suggestion to alarm the Court of Vienna, respecting the Russian establishment in the Ionian Islands, and its probable consequences. It certainly wears a suspicious appearance, that Russia should be collecting so great a force in the islands of the Ionian Sea. It is ridiculous to suppose that these forces are meant to attack the power of France in Italy, and to preserve the allies of Russia there.—Unless the armies of Austria were to occupy the French elsewhere, all the troops Russia could at present land in Italy, would immediately be defeated. That cannot be the object. The Court of Vienna not only must entertain some jealousy of a Russian estab-

lishment in the Mediterranean, or on the shores of Greece, which probably interferes with its own maritime prospects, but it cannot be indifferent to the possibility of an attack on Constantinople itself, either now or at some future period, when Russia has united and consolidated the great means now within her reach. In a very short time all the Grecian Islands, with their supply of seamen &c. will be at the disposal of Russia.

It was considered very doubtful policy of Joseph II. to concur so far with the views of Catharine, in her plans of overthrowing the Turkish Empire. To reduce to impotence an enemy by whom the Austrian Monarchy had so often been brought within a hair breadth of destruction, was doubtless political and wise, but it never can be the interest of that house to suffer the seat of the Turkish power in Europe, and with it, probably, its most valuable possessions, to be transferred to Russia. M. Segur, the elder, states, in his notes on Favier's celebrated Memoire, that he has frequently heard Joseph II. say, "That though Austria had often been in imminent danger by the Turks, it would be in a much worse state if the Russian Bonnets got Constantinople." Considering, indeed, that Russia is a neighbouring power to Austria, considering her vast power and unbounded ambition, it cannot be the interest or policy of Austria to connive at any acquisitions that would render her still more formidable. It therefore is as much the interest of Austria as of France, to watch the growing power of Russia. The views of ambition which are natural to every great state, and which the House of Austria has always cherished, must now take a new direction. The loss of the Netherlands, has rendered all acquisition in that quarter impossible. France and Prussia will never suffer her to obtain any farther, or at least considerable, accession of territory in Germany. The Turkish Empire on every side presents tempting booty. But Russia is the rival of such views, and will oppose them, unless some plan of partition can be adjusted to satisfy both. In the same manner Austria must naturally resist any exclusive plan of conquest which Russia may entertain at the expence of the Turkish Empire.

In this respect the views of Prussia, must be the same with those of Austria. She must be led to oppose every acquisition of Russia, for which she receives no equivalent, because she already feels the preponderance of Russia in the politics of the North.

If then there be any reason to apprehend that Russia still entertains those gigantic views of ambition, which the overthrow of the Turkish power is to satisfy, and which her present conduct seems to countenance, there is little doubt that Austria and Prussia, both will concur with France in opposing her. It is evident indeed that the French government has laboured, and not without success, to alarm the jealousy of the Court of Vienna. Should Russia persist in these schemes, which manifestly aim at the very heart of the Turkish Empire, it would not be surprising to find Austria opposing her by force of arms. It may therefore be the policy of France to instigate the Turks to a rupture with Russia, in order to give employment to the arms of the latter; and knowing too, that in case she were to be successful Austria would interfere to obstruct her complete triumph, and the entire gratification of her ambition.

We shall not at present enter into any examination how far the arms of France and Austria, or how far a French army, with the concurrence of Austria, marching by the shores of the Adriatic, might oppose the designs of Russia in the Morea, or even defend the Turkish Empire, should it be attacked on any other side. We have no doubt, however, that every effort would be employed to compel Russia to abandon her prey. That enquiry, however, at present might appear unnecessary.

If, however, the Russian government be sincere and disinterested in the hostility which it professes to the system and principle of aggrandisement pursued by France, it will give no room for suspecting the purity of its intentions. While Russia continues to pursue objects of ambition, which the other powers of Europe must naturally oppose, it is in vain to expect that they will confederate with her to act against France. Her professions, therefore, are vain and nugatory. She in effect confirms and strengthens that Power against which she avows hostility. The suspicious conduct of Russia in the Mediterranean, is one cause (among others,) why Austria cannot be expected to co-operate in a war against France.

If then the Emperor Alexander means to exert the force of his Empire in the cause of independence and of Europe, let him disclaim all personal views—let him hold forth grounds of conduct in which other nations would concur—grounds of war on which it would be glorious to succeed, and in the maintenance of which, even failure would be free from disgrace. [Lon. Morn. Chronicle.]

RATES OF STORAGE FOR SALE AT THIS OFFICE.