

May 10, 1856

PEACE AND ITS PROSPECTS.—It is now decided that the Plenipotentiaries of France, England, Sardinia, Turkey, Austria, and Russia, shall meet in Paris as a conference for the discussion of the terms of reconciliation. The representatives named are, we think, just the persons to be desired by those whose wishes are strongly in favor of peace. Baron Brunow, who was formerly ambassador for the Czar in London, is named for Russia. This appointment is unquestionably pacific, and fitted to conciliate the British Government. Lord Clarendon is to represent England and his appointment is of such a nature as to assure those who are afraid of our being overreached in the negotiations, while we regard it as very much more conciliatory than would have been that of our Prime Minister.—Count Buol for Austria, is an appointment of a similar nature, while the unquestionable peace tendencies of the French Emperor, secure the conciliatory nature of the influence brought to bear by France. In addition to all this, the fact of Paris being unanimously adopted as the place of meeting, looks very like a thorough giving in on the part of Russia, in the confidence that France is to be regarded as at once her most powerful and least implacable foe, and that it is safer to bow to the behests of a power so situated and disposed than to continue the war. It is not to be concealed that England is the least disposed for peace of all concerned. If the conferences are now broken up, it will be from this quarter that the disruptive difficulty will arise. Our cabinet, our army, our navy, our press, and those who have high notions of Britain's warlike prestige, are in anything but a mild mood. The prospect which 1856 presented of 'lots of martial glory' to England, and of a redemption of our fame, so sadly obscured by the failures of our first essays in the war, is most reluctantly believed to be extinguished. The feelings thus reigning tend to mislead us in estimating the true effects of the war, and the real desirableness of its being now closed. We are inclined to think however, that all this will be overborne by the immense considerations weighing on the other side, and influencing the parties chiefly concerned, so powerfully, as to make them irresistibly influence our councils in return. John Bull may turn away from the contest in which he is now thoroughly embarked, with a grudge, and anything but a feeling of satisfaction at the pacific leanings of his great ally, but grumbling, as no doubt it will be, his acquiescence will not be the less real. Such is the phase which the all-important question of peace or war presents to us at the present hour.—It is not unnatural at such a stage to look calmly at what has been effected so as to entertain a rational hope (if that be possible) as to the prospect opening on the nations. When the Emperor Nicholas died, we felt and said that the backbone of Russian aggressive policy was broken. He left a frightful spirit still alive and rampant in his second son, and a strong party in the empire, but it was a spirit so much of his own creation, and so dependent on his personal influence for its maintenance in those whom he continually inspired, that even in them it has visibly declined since his death. Though his successor, as a matter of necessity, came forth to the world with the determination to follow his father, he could not come forth with a spirit like that of him who had just departed, nor is it ever possible for one who walks in another's shoes to do as Nicholas had done. An Emperor constantly requiring the inspirations of his mother, and the furious counsels of his brother to urge him on, can never, in the nature of things, follow up the policy of either Peter, or Catherine, or Nicholas. Whatever may prove the destiny of Russia in years to come, it is most absurd to suppose that it is destined to extend its dominion in the present reign. In addition to the change on the throne, there is another change of no small importance in Russia, which will now receive a greater impulse probably than ever it has received.—the trading section of the community, or as it is called, the German party in the empire, is represented by the present Emperor. The influence of this party waned under the prevalence of the spirit of Nicholas—it has been kept down by the influence of Constantine and the necessities of war. It will rise with the advent of peace. Look to the position of all that is warlike in our own land, as compared with its position before the present struggle, and consider how the tables are turning already that peace is felt to be near. The life of Nicholas was devoted to foster a tremendous military organization, but reaction will characterize the reign of his son, and we may reasonably look for this reaction raising into ever-advancing prominence those who will encourage the present Czar in every enterprise of internal improvement, as opposed to the folly of conquest and the ambitious extension of his overgrown territory. It is from the point of view thus furnished, that we are disposed to regard

the prospective results of the hoped-for reconciliation. We could place very little dependence on treaties, or even on material successes, if these stood alone; but we are disposed to regard the utter destruction of Sebastopol, and the Russian fleet of the Euxine, with the abandonment of the Danube by the Czar, as results not certainly to be reversed as matters now stand. Nor will Bomarsund be rebuilt by him who has accepted the terms of peace, which have just been acknowledged by Alexander. His father would never have yielded to such stipulations; no, not if St. Petersburg had been destroyed and Moscow taken. It is true that Constantine is warlike, and, with the section of nobles who act with him, must exercise great influence; but it is also clear that he lacks the genius of his father, and we are persuaded, will find himself very much divested of power when the reaction of peace has fairly set in. It took Nicholas thirty years to mature a system of armament, which has crumbled to pieces in less than three. This is a fact which will not be lost on those who have endured the bitter consequences of his ambition, and of the failure of his schemes. With such considerations before us, we must confess our want of sympathy with those who seem in dread of peace before another blow has been struck at Russia. The material causes of alarm that existed, and threatened Europe in 1852, exist no longer, and what is far more important, the moral power that yielded them is broken and fast dissolving. We look not only for peace, but for such a peace as will not be broken from the same quarter for generations to come.—*From the Christian News.*

THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.—The Emperor of Russia is either sincere or insincere in his acceptance of the Austrian propositions—four of them definite and one indefinite. If he be sincere, as many people are willing to believe, it is essential for the proper conduct of the negotiations that the Allies should keep in remembrance the agencies by which he has been brought to so wholesome a state of mind. If he be insincere—as, judging from the avowed and long-pursued policy of his country and his dynasty, and from his own antecedents, as well as those of his immediate predecessor, it is not very uncharitable to suppose that he may be—it is equally essential that Great Britain and France should remember that insincerity understands no argument so well as that of the strong arm; and that in order to restrain him whom words will not bind, they must retain in their hands the physical power to coerce and punish.

Assuming it as true that the Czar sincerely desires to end the war, and that he has consented to take upon himself the humiliation of acceding, without *arrière pense*, to the demands of Austria, it must be clear that no abstract love of peace, no mere sympathy with Quakerism of the school of Sturge and Bright, has operated his conversion to sentiments so praiseworthy. If he be willing to take peace from the dictation of that Francis Joseph whose empire was not long ago saved from destruction or dismemberment by the legions of his father, it is not because he loves peace, or Francis Joseph, or because he had ceased to covet Constantinople, but because he fears the might of France and England; because he was beaten at the Alma, at Inkerman, and at the Malakoff; because Sebastopol is in our power; because his southern fleet is at the bottom of the sea; because his northern fleet dares not show more than the topmasts which peep from behind the granite defences of Cronstadt in a security that is not likely to be perpetual; because Bomarsund and Sveaborg have been destroyed; because his maritime trade has been annihilated; because the Crimea trembles in his grasp; because defeat has followed upon defeat, and humiliation upon humiliation; because he can no longer depend upon the aid or the neutrality of Germany; because Sweden, longing to repossess her ancient Finland, has entered into alliance with his enemies and because there reaches him in St. Petersburg the mighty sound of the preparations of England for a Baltic campaign; and because he knows that such an amount of gun-boats, and of other ships of war for the great enterprise, will appear before Cronstadt in the early spring, if peace be not made in the mean time, as will dim the prestige of his arms to the uttermost confines of his empire and inflict upon his power a shock that will reverberate through Europe and Asia. It is the conviction that the Allies have done so much, and are ready to do so much more, that has made the Czar reasonable—if reasonable he is. And shall Great Britain and France, at the first rumour that the enemy is weary of the war, lay down their arms as if the final victory was won? Shall they, because he consents to accept a basis for negotiation, be such "green-horns" as to stop short in their preparations for another campaign? Shall they act as if it were only in the affairs of great nations, that there never comes "a slip between the cup and the lip?" Shall

they forget that between a desire to negotiate and the result of negotiation there is a wide gulf? and that if they throw down their arms they will cut away the bridge which can best enable them to cross it? Surely the people and Governments of these two mighty nations are not such fools? There are no merchants in the city of London, or speculators in the Bourse of Paris, who in their commercial transactions would act on such a principle; or rogues would never honour their acceptance, and trade would give place to brigandage. There has been some talk of an immediate armistice, and it is even asserted that Russia has sent orders to the Crimea for the suspension of hostilities; but we believe all such statements are premature or unfounded. If Russia have sent such orders, the Allies have no cause to display any extraordinary gratitude—for it is the elements which have suspended hostilities. This is one of the reasons why negotiation has been proposed; but, until a treaty of peace is signed, sealed, and guaranteed, it would be in the highest degree unwise in the Government of Great Britain and France to consider the war at an end, or to intermit a single preparation for its vigorous prosecution, when the elements shall permit.

Of course, if the Czar be insincere—if he merely seek to gain time, and pretend to negotiate, in the hope that dissensions from which he may profit may arise among the Powers of Europe, before the terms of a peace mutually acceptable to all parties can be agreed upon, every argument that was strong on the supposition of his sincerity is strengthened a thousandfold. It is safer and wiser to believe in his sincerity, until he himself remove all possibility of doubt by his actual concessions, and the guarantees he gives, then to believe in the good faith which never declared itself until it was treated as bad faith, and operated upon by sword and gun. Neither the Czar nor his friends can complain of a mistrust which the whole policy of his country for a hundred and fifty years has created and strengthened. Words and treaties have never been able to prove what Russia really meant. The passage of the Pruth and the massacre of Sinope were facts of which no one could mistake the meaning or the intention. It is much better to be accused by the Russians and pro-Russians of want of generosity than to be laughed at for want of common prudence and common sense. If the British Government stop the building of a single gun-boat on the faith of the new conferences; if it interfere to prevent the already ordered destruction of the docks of Sebastopol; if it relax in the slightest degree its efforts for the continuance of the war—it will commit an error which may yet cost Europe seas of blood, and prepare the way for the downfall of England.

The Allies are willing to negotiate; but they know too much of Russian ambition and treachery to place any faith in negotiations commenced in Russian interest—not in theirs—and carried on by the friends of the Czar, for purposes which are only partially theirs, and in a less degree those of Turkey. No one is wicked enough to refuse to listen to terms of peace, whether proposed by Russia herself, or by Austria in her behalf; but, in order that peace may result we must negotiate with arms in our hands. Peace is probable, because we have been successful in war. It will become more probable the more we show our determination neither to be bamboozled by diplomacy, nor to be dismayed at the probable cost or the possible penalties of war. Thanks to the events of 1855, we know both the strength and the weakness of Russia, and how to deal with her.

THE RUSSIAN PRESS AND THE PROPOSED PEACE.—The Russian press is lavish in its abuse of France and England, particularly against the latter, for the demands they make upon the peace question.

THE PIEDMONTSE PRESS ON PEACE.—The *Piemonte* of Turin has an article against peace on the proposed terms couched in as strong, if not stronger, language than any that has been employed by any English journal. The *Piemonte*, says Russia knows what she is about, while the Western Powers apparently do not. In leaving Russia still mistress of Poland she will be left with her principal instrument of aggressive force. She will soon recover her strength. The proposed arrangements is a miserable expedient—a truce and not a peace.

"Ma, here's a word in the paper I want to know. What is homicide?" "A homicide, child, is one who murders another." "Well, Ma, when Jack Nebb killed our old Tom cat, that was a Tommycide, wasn't it?" "Pshaw, child, go away and don't bother me."

A young man residing at Dorchester, died Saturday morning last, from disappointed ambition.—He had a pair of "stand up" trowsers made so tight that they stopped the circulation of the blood and mortification set in, resulting in a speedy death. A coroner's inquisition exculpated the tailor from all blame.—Shocking!

THE ACTOR AND THE INNKEEPER.—Here is a story of just retribution, recorded in the life and times of the elder Kean, the renowned but erratic actor, whose remains repose in St. Paul's Church-yard, in this city, under a monument bearing an appropriate inscription from the pen of our eminent townsman, the venerable Dr. John W. Francis:—

"While playing at Exeter, in England, at the height of his popularity, Kean was invited to dine with some gentlemen at one of the principal hotels. He drove there in his carriage. The dinner was announced—the table sumptuously decorated—and the landlord, all bows and submission, hoped that the gentlemen and their distinguished visitor found every thing to their satisfaction.

"Kean stared at him for some moments, and then said:

"Your name is——?"

"It is, Mr. Kean. Fortune has been kind to both of us, since then. I recollect you, Sir, where you belonged to our theatre here!"

"And I, Sir," said Kean, jumping up, 'recollect you! Many years ago I came into your paltry tavern, after a long journey, with my suffering wife, and a sick child, all of us wet to the skin.—I asked you for a morsel of refreshment. You answered me as if I were a dog, and refused to trust it out of your hands, until you had received the trifle which was its value.

"I left my family by your inhospitable fire-side, while I sought for lodgings. On my return, you ordered me, like a brute, to 'take my wife and brat from your house,' and abused me for not spending in drink the money I had not for food. Fortune as you say, has done something for us both since then; but you are still the same, I see—the same cringing, grasping, grinding, greedy money-hunter. I, Sir, am still the same. I am now in my zenith—I was then at its nadir: but I am the same man—the same Kean whom you ordered from your doors: and I have now the same hatred to oppression that I had then; and were it my last meal, I'd not eat nor drink in a house belonging to so heartless a scoundrel!"

"Gentlemen," said he, turning to his friends, 'I beg pardon for this out-break; but were I to dine under the roof this time-serving, gold-loving brute, the first mouthful, I am sure, would choke me."

"Kean kept his word, and the party adjourned to another hotel.

"This plain talk of Kean to a landlord reminds the writer of a scene between the 'great George Frederick Cooke,' and an English Boniface in one of the provincial towns, Chichester. The owner of the principal hotel, where Cooke was stopping, frequently remonstrated with him, and endeavored to curb his noisy propensities; until, tired out by a repetition of drunken brawls, quarrels, rows, and fights, he indignantly ordered the Thespian bacchanal to seek other quarters, and no longer bring odium on his establishment.

"Do you, fellow! dare address such words to me—fellow!—to George Frederick Cooke? You, a pitiful publican and sinner—a rinsor of tumblers—a frother up of mugs—a dirty decenter of bad wine—you, a servant to any body and every body—my servant? Fetch me another glass of brandy and water, and, do you hear?—let it be hot and strong!"

"There are many persons yet living in New-York, who will remember George Frederick Cooke; and they will call to mind how he must have looked while this scene was taking place; his long, inimitably effective finger pointing to the shrinking landlord, and his whole face and form suffused with the passion which he so forcibly represented upon the stage."—*Knickerbocker Magazine.*

LET HER BE.—A Detroit mercantile gentleman who was travelling eastward a short time since went to the clerk of one of the Ontario boats to be shown to his room. The clerk handed the applicant a key, at the same time pointing to a door at some little distance, marked B.

Our friend went in the direction indicated, but opened the next door to his own, marked A, where he discovered a lady passenger making her toilet, who upon the stranger's appearance, uttered a loud scream.

"Go away! go away!" screamed the lady.

"Letter B," yelled the clerk.

"I am not touching her at all!" shouted the indignant merchant.

"What's that?" asked Mrs. Partington, looking up at the column on the Place Vendome during her late visit to Paris. "The pillar of Napoleon," was the answer. "Well, I never did!" she exclaimed, "and that's his pillow! he was a great man to use that!—but it is more like a bolster.—And it's made of iron, I do believe. Ah, Isaac! see what it is to be great! how hard his head must have been seated on that ironical pillow."