

THE GLEANER.

AND
NORTHUMBERLAND SCHEDIASMA.

VOLUME II.]

"Nec araneorum sane texus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes."

No. 17.

MIRAMICHI, TUESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 3, 1832.

THE GLEANER.

FROM THE METROPOLITAN FOR OCTOBER.

POLAND—ITS FATE AND CONSEQUENCES.

We have from the commencement of the struggle of the immortal Polish people, given their cause our feeble support. We have this month presented to our readers a Map of the present territory of the Duchy of Warsaw (as its flagitious spoilers call it), that its limits may be imprinted on the memory of our readers, that the country of the brave and noble four millions of Poles—the remnant of an ancient and great nation, may be treasured up in our memories before it is forever annihilated, utterly blended with the domains of the modern Scythians, and extinguished forever. The robbers have been successful; physical strength has purchased them a fearful victory—a fresh harvest of blood, spoliation, and plunder. The knout and the dungeon of the northern despot are to be gorged anew with victims in the noblest cause that can adorn human nature; and this, the latest struggle of Poland, will in all probability be her last. How inscrutable are the decrees of Omnipotence! When we see guilt and crime successful over the most hallowed cause in support of which a people can lift up their hands in prayer or in combat, we are more than ever lost in blindness to human destiny.

"Poland is fallen!" Again the atrocities of the Muscovite savage, Suvarreni, have been repeated, and the dust of his victim is moistened with the blood of a fresh sacrifice. Again the Muscovite has shouted his *Deum* to the God of Justice and Mercy, for his success in carnage and injustice; erasing the sanctification of his murders, and the making holy his waste of innocent blood. Our hearts seem withered beneath such a triumph of oppression. Our belief in the creed of retributive justice is shaken, and we almost despair of virtuous effort and high-mindedness ever meeting their due reward.

"Poland is fallen!" The nations of Europe will do well to remember these ominous words. The pestilence of the north is now free to carry its work of desolation to the doors of the western empires, to march and strike at freedom wherever it rears its head. From Petersburg to Belgium the success of tyranny is complete; and Austria is only withheld from a more cordial alliance by the knowledge (that Metternich has not been slow to acquire) of the ambitious designs of Russia, and by a jealousy of her power, by no means ill-founded. On France alone rests the cause of freedom in Europe. France that is accused of vanity and insincerity so unfoundedly, owes her security alone to the jealousy of Austria towards the Czar. She knows and feels this; and the sentiment which pervades the French people, at the fall of Poland, is but the result of an honest and just apprehension for themselves. They know that before long they must arouse, and very naturally think, that while Russia was occupied with Poland, it was the moment most favourable to them for anticipating the designs of their foe. But Prussia is at the beck of Russia. While, on the one hand, she has violated all neutrality in the contest with Poland, and openly and boastfully aided by every means, short of marching her troops, the enemies of the freedom of mankind; she has, on the other, been recruiting the ranks of the Dutch king from her slaves, and aiding disturbances which it is the interest of Europe to put down. Not long can the present complexion of things continue. The war of opinion is far distant. They who have imprudently provoked will rue its consequences: they will one day see that justice will appear in all its terrors, and the lespot crowns of Europe will moulder into dust before they who have ceased to rule in righteousness, and have bathed their hands in innocent blood. Men feel differently now from what they were formerly wont; they know their own power and their own rights.

Let England beware of her part in the coming contest. The government of England has a choice of two courses. No one will dream she can remain neuter in a strife of such magnitude. She must either ally

herself with the semi-barbarians of the north, in their conspiracies against the freedom of the world, or she must take the side of the free nations and France, and range herself opposite the self-called Holy Alliance. Russia is resolved to be the arbitress of Europe. The great barrier that England, France, and Austria, should have erected against her in Poland, is now out of the question. One opportunity for successful resistance is lost; and Prussia, uniting with Russia, will open a free march for the Cossacks to the borders of every European state, that, in their hatred of freedom, they may be inclined to invade. One lesson, it is true, has been learnt from the Polish contest, and that is, how much, in the way of effort, a war costs that government, and how much less formidable are the armies of a power that were so long kept at bay by a handful of brave men, than was before suspected.

We are yet without the official accounts of the Russian operations. The truth, is, we shall never perhaps exactly know the state of facts. But the success of Nicholas will embolden rather than make him inert, in any favourite object of ambition which may present itself. The jealousy of Austria may be turned to good account by France and England, if they manage adroitly; and this seems the only mode of preserving Europe from the dangers of Muscovite aggression. Prussia opposed to France, single-handed, is no object of apprehension; it is her Russian alliance alone which renders her formidable. With Austria inimical, the Russian communication with its home resources may be easily broken by that power. But Austria may overcome her jealousy of Russia by a more powerful motive; her hatred of freedom; and, in that case, France will bring the forces of all three powers upon her head. This she would inevitably have done, had she assisted the Poles in their recent contest.

We have the averments of the French Ministers, that there was no lack of negotiations on the part of France with the Czar. Of what value they were, a little time will show. It appears that M. Sebastiani had obtained from the Russian cabinet a promise that Poland should be preserved, and had made it feel that there was an European as well as a Russian question, depending upon the integrity of treaties respecting it. We repeat that we have no faith in such promises, but still it is a proof that Poland was not neglected as far as negotiation could be of use to her. Whether the British Ministers were equally regardful of their duty remains to be seen. It is the custom here to affect a mystery in all cabinet matters in which there is no necessity for preserving secrecy. France has been open, and it becomes the British government to be the same. We hope that Earl Grey has not overlooked or neglected any means which he could render available in favour of the brave Polish people; but we know what cold-blooded calculators some Ministers on former occasions have shown themselves. We remember Parga betrayed, Genoa basely sacrificed, in defiance of British faith and other examples equally dishonourable; and we are, therefore, perhaps less inclined to trust the Government than we ought to be, now a different set of men are in power. Had the champion of the Portuguese tyrant and his priests, Lord Aberdeen, been Foreign Minister, we should have had no suspicion of interference on the behalf of the Poles. His Lordship's sympathies are so deeply in unison with despotism and its tools, even where despotism puts on its meanest aspect and most revolting form, that it will take something more than the generous efforts of the Duke of Wellington, or the froth, fury, and obscurity of Lord Londonderry's oratory, to extricate him from the charge of advocating Anti-British principles, whenever opportunity occurs for his so doing; or from the general contempt with which not only England, but foreign nations, so justly view the loftiest of his political achievements. The conduct of the present Ministers with respect to Poland we have yet to learn.

One consolation remains, in the midst of the disasters which liberty and humanity have sustained in the fate of Poland. It has caused delay in the projects of the Governments of Europe opposed to freedom, and given it a little longer time to extend its principles, and mature itself, undisturbed, in the bosoms of high and generous spirits. Poland, whatever may be the

fate of the survivors in her late noble attempt to burst her chains, will have gained something, in that no Russian tyrant can oppress her more than her half-demon governor Constantine. We have heard it said by the friends of Nicolas, in the way of apology, that his fear of his brother's conduct, had he recalled him nearer home, and for the stability of his throne in consequence, made him deaf to the cry of the Poles, that he might avoid the worst of two evils. We hope, for the sake of Poland, this weakness ascribed to Nicolas may be true, and that a better doom awaits the Poles than we apprehend at present. Yet, weak indeed must the sovereign be, who, on such a paltry pretext, could suffer every stipulation with the Polish people to be violated—every sacred promise to be forsworn! He should have reasoned—(alas! do tyrants ever reason?)—that there were limits to human suffering, and that the most submissive may be goaded into resistance by usage which renders existence itself no longer a benefit.

To conclude, we must again leave events to work out for the good cause of liberty on the continent. Often, when least expected, the most cheering prospects arise; while the best hopes are baffled, and the laudable desire for the benefit of our fellow-creatures, which is innate in every generous bosom, is once more disappointed. It will not, however, be long before the cause of freedom must triumph everywhere. Except the ultra-Tories, who will chuckle over the fate of Warsaw, the people of England see and feel, in the defeat of Polish freedom, that a great and virtuous cause has suffered—for a reason inscrutable; in contemplating which, to use the words of a powerful writer, "Religious men find exercises for their faith, and make it the last effort of their piety not to repine against Providence."

EXTRACT FROM MR. MERCER'S SPEECH IN THE VIRGINIA CONVENTION, ON THE BASIS OF REPRESENTATION.

"The natural equality of man is written on his heart and stamped upon his visage, by the Author of his being, after whose 'express image he was made.' While other animals look to the earth,

Os homini sublime dedit ad sidera tellere vultus, his rights spring from his affections and his wants, and these he derived from God, the author of his nature. He cannot exist out of society, because society is essential to his existence. His first relations are those of husband and father. That period, which in other animals is short of dependence on a parent's care, is in man protracted for purposes the most beneficial. The infant gathers his first instruction in his mother's lap. His best virtues he imbibes from a father's care, a mother's tenderness. When age overtakes the parent, the son repays with kindness the kindness he has received. If the crutch drops from the feeble grasp of his sire, he picks it up and restores it to his trembling hand. Patriotism is but filial love enlarged. When we think of our country, we dwell on the memory of our early years, on the forms of those who gave us our being and watched over its imbecility. When they are gone, we visit their remains and from unconscious urn imbibe anew the inspiration of their virtues. Does not the savage cherish these affections? The Tartar wanders over the interminable plains of Asia, from climate to climate, accompanied by his flocks and herds; the Indian of America roams through forests yet more wild; but they revisit the tombs of their progenitors, and recount to their children the story of their deeds.

Are not these natural affections at the foundation of all the moral rights and duties of man? Sympathy, is it not as natural to man as the gregarious animals whom he gathers around him? Out of these feelings spring the elements of society. Is there no property known to savage life? Even the bird defends her nest, as the lion does his den; the former with less vigour, but with equal zeal. The hunter decorates his cave with the fur of the animals he has killed; and stores away in time of plenty the provisions which a season of want may require. He has his bow and arrows for the mountain deer; and when he approaches the water side, his lance and spear for the finny tribe. In contempt of danger, armed with rude instruments, he traverses the land and the water under the influence of the same feelings.