

der any possible circumstances be expected to meet the former Nancy Hine?

I need not say how the whole question served for a week's wonder; and how every body knew every other body's thoughts and intentions a great deal better than 'other bodies' themselves. Half the village was out at door or window, when on this memorable afternoon the several carriages were seen driving up to Mrs Rochdale's house.

Within, we were quiet enough. She had few preparations,—she always lived in simple elegance. Even on this grand occasion she only gave what cheer her means could afford—nothing more. Show was needless, for every guest was not a mere acquaintance, but a friend.

Dressed richly, and with special care—how well I remembered, that is, if I had dared to remember, another similar toilette I, Mrs Rochdale sat in her chamber. Not until the visitors were all assembled did she descend to the drawing room.

Entering there—she did not enter alone; on her arm was a lady, about thirty; large and handsome in figure; plainly, but most becomingly attired;—a lady, to whose manners or appearance none could have taken the slightest exception, and on whom any stranger's most likely comment would have been—'What a fine-looking woman! but so quiet.'

This lady Mrs Rochdale at once presented to the guests, with a simple unimpressive quietness, which was the most impressive effect she could have made,—

'My daughter, Mrs Lemuel Rochdale.'

In a week, 'every-body' visited the manor-house.

Perhaps I ought to end this history by describing the elder and younger Mrs Rochdale as henceforward united in the closest sympathy and tenderest affection. It was not so; it would have been unnatural, nay, impossible. The difference of education, habits, character, was too great ever to be wholly removed. But the mother and daughter-in-law maintain a sociable intercourse, even a certain amount of kindly regard based on one safe point of union, where the strongest attachment of both converges and mingles. Perhaps as those blest with superabundance of faithful love, often end by deserving it, Mr Rochdale may grow worthy, not only of his wife, but of his mother, in time.

Mrs Rochdale is quite an old lady now. You rarely meet her beyond the lane, where her small house stands; which she occupies still, and obstinately refuses to leave. But, meeting her, you could not help turning back for another glance at her slow, stately walk, and her ineffably beautiful smile. A smile which, to a certainty, would rest on the gentleman upon whose arm she always leans, and whose horse is seen daily at her gate, with a persistency equal to a young man going a-courting. For people say in our village that the squire, with all his known affection for his good wife, is as attentive as any lover to his beloved old mother, who has been such a devoted mother to him.

One want exists at the manor-house,—there are no children. For some think this is as well; and yet I know not. However, so it is; and since it is, it must be right to be. When this generation dies out, probably the next will altogether have forgotten the fact, that the last Mr Rochdale made what society ignominiously terms 'a low marriage.'

A PREMIER'S WORK.

I made no memorandum of what took place at Cabinet meetings and in personal conferences with the Duke of Wellington, and those of my colleagues with whom I was in habits of the most confidential intercourse. I had in truth no time for this, as will be readily believed when it is considered that I had to superintend the general conduct of the administration, to undertake the lead of the House of Commons, to carry on the requisite communications with the King, to find time for the ceremonies of the Court, to give personal audiences to the various parties from whom information was to be gained, or who had (what they thought) grievances to complain of, or pretensions to enforce, to transact the proper business of my own department, the Treasury (of all the details of which, being in the House of Commons, I ought to be master), and lastly to carry on the daily correspondence with all those who addressed the Minister. The extent of that correspondence may be judged of from the amount to which it accumulated in a few weeks.—*Sir R. Peel's Memoirs.*

A BEAUTIFUL STYLE OF HAND.—Two charming women were discussing one day what it is which constitutes the beauty of the hand. They differed in opinion as much as they did in the shape of the beautiful member they were discussing. A young gentleman presented himself, and, by common consent, this question was referred to him. He thought of Paris and the three goddesses. Glancing from one to the other of the beautiful white hands presented to him for the purpose of examination, he replied at last 'I give it up, the question is too hard for me, but ask the poor, and they will tell you that the most beautiful hand in the world, is the hand that gives.'

A PROPHECY.—Is Lord Palmerston wrong in supporting his subordinates at Canton? Cobden says 'Yeh.' The country will say 'Nay.'

LECTURE.

[We have much pleasure in publishing, at the request of the Committee Messrs. McCulley, Phillips and Sinclair, the annexed Lecture, delivered by Mr BLAIR, at the Mechanics' Institute, on the 26th ult.]

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

IN rising to address you to-night, I find myself placed in a somewhat new and peculiar position, and I must therefore beg your most favorable consideration.

It is customary with some Speakers, in addressing an audience, to commence by lamenting their inability to do justice to the task they have undertaken, and to regret exceedingly that it had not fallen to the lot of some more talented individual—while at the same time they fancied themselves, as Sam Slick would say—*all-fired clever fellers*, looking as meek, and feeling as proud as Pharisees. This is a sort of humility I do not intend to assume just now, it is all humbug—or, as a distinguished Baronet across the water said the other day, in speaking of Sir Charles Napier and that *frank, open-hearted Sailor* the Grand Duke Constantine—it's all soft-sawder you know.

The subject I have chosen for to-night is—Russian Aggression, in connection with the late War. It is a subject that would afford ample material for a course of Lectures, and I shall not therefore be able to enter into the matter very elaborately, but shall endeavour to give as comprehensive a summary as the time will permit. If I were a Russian I might be able to throw a great deal of *light* on the subject, because it is said they are very fond of eating tallow candles—and as there are a great many Russians in Paris just now, it does appear that although eating tallow candles may be very good for their *livers*, it must be very bad for the Frenchmen's *lights*—but be that as it may, I can only say—whether my remarks may contain much in little, or little in much—you will be better able to form an opinion some thirty minutes hence.

Russian Aggression, and particularly the late War, has, I presume, engaged the serious consideration of you all, involving as it did the honor and welfare of the British Empire of which we have the good fortune to form a part. I have too high an opinion of those I see before me to believe there is one whose heart did not bound with rapture, when the glorious tidings were wafted to our shores of Victory after Victory being gained by the Allies, until the whole was triumphantly crowned by the fall of Sebastopol itself. As Freemen we can have no sympathy at all with Russia; at home her system is one of unmitigated despotism; abroad it is one of encroachment; her battle cry is ever onward. She conquers not to enlighten and make happy, but to subject men and realms to the rapacious grasp of her double-headed Eagle. It may be said the policy of England has ever been one of aggression; that it is owing to this she is enabled to boast—on her dominions the sun never sets. But permit me to say that here the comparison (if comparison indeed there can be between England and Russia) altogether ceases. While England has gone forth in the mightiness of her strength, conquering and to conquer, she has carried in her train freedom and all its attendant blessings. If Russia was bound on the same high and holy mission, our opposition to her would altogether cease, we would beat a loss or a single argument to direct against her; but, alas! such we know, is not the case. Were it necessary, I could cite proof of this strong as Holy Writ—but it is a fact established beyond doubt or cavil. She conquers but to forge the chains and to rivet the fetters upon mankind, and reduce them to a state worse than Egyptian bondage.

To whom are we indebted for the late War, which caused the blood of the bravest and the best that ever sprang from our warrior race to flow like water, and a cry of mourning to go up from every corner of the Earth. I affirm it without fear of contradiction—to the Czar of Russia. No one will say England entered into that War willingly—she was forced, nay, absolutely dragged into it—and on what grounds, or the shadow of a ground, did the Czar inflict this tremendous calamity upon mankind? Certainly not on the score of religion. We all know that in the Czar's conversations with the British Ambassador, Sir Hamilton Seymour, this religious pretence was completely abandoned, and the sick man's inheritance was the open and avowed object of Russian cupidity. If England had acquiesced in the infamous proposal then made to her, or if she had shrank from affording aid to Turkey in the encounter that followed, she would have been a traitor to the cause of freedom, civilization, and humanity—the prestige of her greatness would have departed—her sun would have set, and she would have become a bye-word and a reproach among the nations of the earth. So well was this understood by the people, that to it Lord Aberdeen owed his dismissal from Office—the nation became dissatisfied with him—they thought he had not shown that bold face and determined front to Russia that he ought to have shown, and by his vacillating policy he had tarnished the national honor. As Englishmen we ought to feel proud of the position Great Britain now occupies; it became her, nay, it was her duty as the mightiest nation on earth, to save to Russia—thus far shalt thou go and no farther, and

here shall thy proud steps be stayed—and well and nobly has she perform that duty, she has shown herself worthy of her ancient renown. She stands as a beacon amid the surrounding gloom, cheering and encouraging the oppressed of all climes.

Having thus briefly introduced my subject, permit me now to turn your attention to the aggressive policy of Russia. In surveying the History of Europe, from the commencement of the last century, and setting aside from it the career of revolutionised France, between 1792 and 1815, we are struck by nothing so much as the progress made during that time by Russia, in extent of territory and influence over the affairs of other States. In the middle of the fifteenth century, what is now Russia, consisted only of the grand duchy of Moscow, a limited territory in the centre of northern Europe—scarcely known even by name in the countries of the West.

From that nucleus in pursuance of an ambitious policy, and by a series of skilfully executed novres, it has been enlarged in all directions until it now embraces the vast region lying between the Arctic Ocean on the north, and the Black Sea on the south, with the Pacific as its eastern and the Baltic as its western boundary. Previous to the reign of Peter the Great, who ascended the throne in 1689, the history of Russia presents only a succession of savage struggles with surrounding nationalities—Slavonic in race and language, and professing the Greek form of Christianity, the Russian people had never intermingled with the western nations, but may be said as a race to partake of that character, which we associate with the semi-civilised inhabitants of Asia.

Amidst the rude Slavonians, Peter arose as a reformer of manners, and notwithstanding some grave faults, deserves to be spoken of as one of the greatest men in an age prolific of distinguished persons. Peter was animated with great aspirations; assuming the title of Emperor of all the Russias, he vastly enlarged his dominions, built cities, created a navy and a well disciplined army, and aiming at trade with India, pushed his conquests to the borders of the Sea of Azof. In these projects may be perceived the first encroachment upon the Ottoman dominions, which during a period of two centuries would appear to have been the coveted prey of Russia.

After Peter's death, which occurred in 1725, the throne was held by his widow Catherine, who reigned two years. After her death there was a succession of feeble reigns, during which Russia was too much occupied with domestic affairs to attend to foreign conquests.

Catherine II. during her reign from 1762 to 1796, was the great representative of Russian aggression. Her tyranny over the tribes near the Caucasus, in the early part of her reign, was such that the Circassians took refuge in the almost inaccessible fastnesses of their mountains—the Nogays sought refuge with the Khan of the Crimea, then an independent Tartar state—the Kabardans of Circassia abandoned Christianity for the faith of Mahommed, as a means of exchanging Russian for Turkish rule, and the Kalmecks took the wonderful resolution in 1771 of departing in a body to their own original territory in Chinese Tartary, on the borders of the Tibetan dominions. History has perhaps recorded nothing more wonderful than this voluntary journey of half a million human beings, to a distance of probably two thousand miles, as a means of escaping from Russian despotism.—When at a later date, troubles broke out in Georgia, and Persia and Turkey struggled for its possession, Russia stepped in and offered to assist the one against the other, and ultimately took Georgia itself as her reward.

While these affairs were in progress in Asia Catherine was not idle in Europe. Poland had fallen into difficulties concerning the succession to the crown, and Catherine succeeded in placing one of her dependants on the throne, and overrunning Poland with her agents. Turkey now became uneasy at the progress of Catherine, for the possession of Poland would bring Russia too near the Ottoman dominions, and the Sultan having a stock of injuries to complain of, declared war against Russia in 1769. England assisted Russia in this war with a fleet, and the results were so disastrous to Turkey, that she was forced to conclude a most humiliating treaty in 1774. By this treaty Russia secured the free navigation of the Black Sea, the passage of the Dardanelles, the privilege of having one sloop-of-war in those regions, and the acquisition of Azoff, Taganrog, Kertch, and Kinburn. She secured, an extension of her frontier to the river Boug, assumed the sovereignty of Kabarda, and obtained the renunciation by Turkey of Suzerain, or lord paramount power over the Khan of the Crimea.

These successes were not all that Catherine wished, but they paved the way for more. In 1775 she established a line of fortresses from the Black Sea to the Caspian—a few years afterwards the Christian Princes of Georgia, Imeritia, and Mingrelia, all on the southern base of the Caucasus, flattered by Russian gifts or intimidated by Russian threats, transferred their allegiance from Turkey to Russia, as did also the chiefs of many petty principalities in the Persian dominions.

The treaty of 1774 had rendered the Crimea independent of Turkey, and Russia immediately began to protect the Khan.

The Russians determined to obtain Constantinople also about this time, began to be openly acknowledged, and hostilities again commenced between the Russians and the Turks. Troops were poured into the Caucasian region, while other armies under pretext of assisting the Khan against the Turks, forcibly seized the Crimea, expelled and deposed the Khan, and slaughtered all the Tartar nobles, who tried to maintain the independence of their sea-girt peninsula.

About the same time she offered her protection to the Princes of Wallachia and Moldavia, and that they should look up to her rather than the Sultan, as a Suzerain. The Christians in Bulgaria and Seriza were also encouraged to revolt, and to claim her protection whenever they pleased, against the Sultan—all in defiance of any pre-existing treaties. The conquest and massacre in the Crimea occurred in 1783, but there had previously been a treaty signed at Constantinople in 1779, containing a few clauses, which effected but little in settling the relations between the two countries. They made a commercial treaty together in 1783, but Catherine did not announce her determination to seize the Crimea until after this signing.

Again did Russia and Turkey go to war, and again was the war ended by a treaty signed in 1792—disastrous to the latter power; she was forced to yield the territory between the rivers Bug and Dneister, to relinquish all control over Georgia and the neighbouring provinces, and to give Russia a certain claim to influence in other quarters without actual sovereignty.

While making these aggressions towards the south, Catherine was not less successful in extending her empire towards the west—the territory acquired from Poland was immense—the last partition took place in 1795, which blotted Poland from the list of nations.

During the reigns of Paul and Alexander, from 1796 to 1825, Russia obtained a larger area of territory from Persia than Turkey. Paul seems to have inherited from Catherine two great desires—for a road to India through Persia, and a road to Constantinople through the Danubian Provinces.

During the first quarter of the present century there was almost an unceasing struggle between Russia and Persia, marked now and then by the cession of provinces to the former. Thus Georgia was permanently annexed in 1800, Mingrelia and Imeretia in 1802, Sheki in 1805, and various other patches of country in 1812 and 1814.

Turkey had a few years release from open war with Russia after the death of Catherine, but the intrigues in Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia, became so intolerable, that the Sultan declared war upon the Czar in 1806.

In 1804 during the complexity of European politics, a friendly alliance was on the point of being formed between Russia and Turkey, but the Sultan luckily looked closely at one of the clauses, and found that the Czar claimed as part of the price paid for his friendliness, that all the subjects of the Porte professing the Greek religion, should be placed under the immediate protection of Russia. The Sultan refused to concede this, and a war ensued some time afterwards.

The Peace of Tilsit gave a short respite to Turkey, but hostilities soon recommenced, and continued several years.

When a settlement of accounts took place by the treaty of Bucharest in 1812, the Czar obtained Bessarabia, secured the navigation of the Danube to merchant ships, obtained for his ships of war a right to ascend the Pruth up to its junction with the Danube—procured an amnesty for the rebellious Servians, who had aided him and stipulated for the demolition of the fortresses recently erected by the Turks in Servia. The treaty of Tilsit sanctioned a few juggling arrangements, by which portions of Poland were banded about from one spoiler to another, but all these changes ended in the permanent annexation of the greater part of that kingdom to Russia.

Sweden was destined next to suffer. Taking as a pretext, the refusal of this state to close her ports against England during a disagreement between Russia and England, the Czar suddenly despatched an army to Finland, without any declaration of war—and when Sweden thereupon declared war; two years hostilities ensued, which ended with a treaty concluded in 1809. By this treaty Sweden surrendered Finland, the whole of East Bothnia and a part of West Bothnia lying east of the river Jornea. With her most fertile Provinces she lost more than one fourth of her inhabitants. These transactions were without sufficient warrant, or any principle of justice. The czar invaded a neighbour's country without declaring war—and when the injured Monarch resisted the inroad, he was punished for his resistance by a vast loss of territory.

The Congress of Vienna, which settled the affairs of Europe in 1815, left Russian possession of the whole of her ill-acquired conquests in Poland, Finland, Turkey, and Persia.

In later years, when Nicholas had succeeded Alexander in 1825, Russia fomented disturbances in Greece—then offered her military aid to Turkey to quell the disturbances, and then professed to be offended at the refusal of her kind offices. Nicholas also incited Persia to attack Turkey. In July 1827, England and France signed with Russia the treaty of Lon-