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J. Chapman sc.

LEABHARLAN. ÁIR,
NA MBRÁITHRE CRÍSTAÍ.

L I F E

OF

CATHARINE II.

EMPRESS OF RUSSIA.

WITH ELEVEN ELEGANT PORTRAITS,
A VIEW OF THE FORTRESS OF SCHLUSSELBURG,
AND A CORRECT MAP OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE.

THE FOURTH EDITION,

WITH GREAT ADDITIONS, AND A COPIOUS INDEX.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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Siad Bráithre,
a bhronn an leabhar seo.

ADVERTISEMENT.

WITH the same freedom that Mr. Castéra has adopted, according to his own candid avowal, great parts of this work into his, the Author has carefully availed himself, in this fourth impression of the Life of Catharine II. of all the fresh materials which that Gentleman has inserted in his new edition.

It is chiefly owing to the stupendous event of the french revolution, that the private papers of the several ambassadors from that country at the court of St. Petersburg, and who played such distinguished parts in all its transactions, have been brought to light.

The secret correspondence of the marquis de la Chetardie, M. Champeaux, M. de l'Hôpital, le comte de Breteuil, de Beauffet, le marquis de Juigné, ministers from the court of France; and of

the chargés des affaires Béranger, Sabathier, Rosignol, and Durand, form the basis of this work. Le comte de Ségur too, another minister from the court of Versailles to Russia, whose distinguished talents and amiable qualities procured him a familiar acquaintance with Catharine II. and prince Potemkin, was not sparing of such communications as depended on him.

Count Rantzau-Afchberg, ambassador from Denmark at the court of St. Petersburg, and intimately connected with prince Gregory Orlof, furnished minutes of such transactions as fell under his observation there.

From a manuscript dictated by count Soltikof himself, is taken the account of the connections that chamberlain had with Catharine during the early period of her married state.

Colonel l'Harpe, who was ten years successively tutor to the two grand dukes Alexander and Constantine Pavlovitch, and is at present at the head of the swiss revolution, contributed to the undertaking with the same civility as M. de Ségur.

General

General Kosciuszko, on being shewn the narrative of all the events that relate to him, and in which he acted so manly and virtuous a part, declared that it was drawn up with the utmost accuracy.

Judicious observations have been furnished by several officers, english and others, both in the army and navy, as well as those mentioned by Mr. Castéra, Hermann, Thurot; by a person who had connections with the Orlofs and count Panin, and by other intelligent correspondents.

These communications are here extended, elucidated, and amplified from private notes and other sources, particularly from a large stock of oral information acquired from several persons of the court and the diplomatic body of all nations during an acquaintance for a series of years, and from long habits of intimacy with one of the prime actors in the revolution that ended by seating Catharine on the throne of her husband.

In short, no man of sense and information who has lived in Russia, has ever disputed one single fact related in the former editions of this work,

or

or the circumstances that are mingled with the biography, either for displaying the character of Catharine, or the manners of the Russians.

From a long and agreeable sojourn among that people, the Author naturally acquired such a familiarity with the proper names of persons and places, as to enable him to give them in english letters as accurately as the sounds of our alphabet will allow.

For the ease and convenience of the Reader, a copious index is added.

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PRE-

PRELIMINARIES.

SECTION I.

Extent, Division, Population, and Revenue of the Russian Empire.

BEFORE we enter on the principal subject of the present undertaking, it will be proper to furnish the reader with some general knowledge of the vast empire to which it so intimately relates.

Russia, in the year 1785, was reckoned to contain within its limits 110 degrees of longitude, and in its breadth 32 degrees of latitude; its superficies was about 305,000 german square miles*, whereof 63,000 are in Europe, and 242,000 in Asia†.

But this empire has been greatly extended since, by the conquest of a vast territory in the Crimea,

* A german mile is nearly six english miles.

† From Riga to the banks of the Oby in Kamtschatka are reckoned 11,000 versts, or 2200 leagues of 25 to a degree. Three versts make two english miles.

by the dismemberment of Poland, and by the addition of Courland.

Russia actually occupies more than a seventh part of the known continent, and almost the twenty-sixth part of the whole globe. The greatest extent of Russia from west to east, viz. from the $39\frac{1}{4}$ to $207\frac{1}{4}$ degree of longitude, contains 168 degrees; and, if the islands of the eastern ocean be included, it will then contain 185 degrees: so that the continental length of Russia, viz. from Riga to Tchukotkoy Nofs, the easternmost promontory, will constitute about 8500 versts. The greatest extent of this empire from north to south, that is, from the 78th to $50\frac{1}{4}$ degree of latitude, contains $27\frac{1}{4}$ degrees. Hence the breadth of Russia, reckoning it from the cape Taymour, which is the north-eastern promontory to Kiakta, will make about 3200 versts.

To reconcile Ebeling, Krome, Busching, and the other writers on the population of Russia, this population was estimated in 1785 at twenty-four millions of inhabitants, whereof twenty millions are in Europe, and only four millions in Asia.

Hence it appears, that the mean term of the population of Russia, by the german square mile, is a little more than seventy-eight inhabitants, but that there are three hundred and eighteen to the square mile in european Russia, and only sixteen per square mile in asiatic Russia. Now this population seems very trifling in comparison with that of England and France; where it is calculated that

there are two thousand five hundred inhabitants per square league, that is, nearly five-eighths of a german mile.

Towards the year 1785, Russia was divided into forty-six governments, containing in all about five hundred and forty towns, one hundred and ninety-three whereof were built in the reign of Catharine II. At that period, the empress caused a new division of the empire to be made into vice-royalties, which have since her death been changed into governments by the emperor Paul, who has likewise added to their number the polish provinces.

According to the last revision, the population of Russia amounts to twenty-six millions. But it is to be noticed that the nobility, clergy, land as well as sea forces, different officers, servants belonging to the court, persons employed under the government in civil and other offices; the students of universities, academies, seminaries, and other schools; hospitals of various denominations; likewise all the irregular troops, the roving hordes of different tribes, foreigners and colonists, or settlers of various nations, are not included in the above-mentioned number: but with the addition of all these, the population of Russia, of both sexes, may be supposed to come near to thirty millions.

The revenue of Russia is estimated at upwards of forty millions of rubles. The expences in time of peace never exceed thirty-eight millions; the

remainder is employed in constructing public edifices, making harbours, canals, roads, and other national works.

M. Hermann, in his book on this subject, in 1790, justly says, that the russian empire, in its present extent, contains a surface, the like of which is not to be found in history. Neither the monarchy of Alexander the great, nor the old roman empire, nor the modern China, are equal to it in magnitude. It comprises about the seventh part of the firm land of our earth, is as large as the half of all Asia, and more than twice as big as Europe. Its superficies contains about three hundred and twenty thousand geographical square miles, or above fifteen millions square versts, whereof seventy-eight thousand square miles belong to the european, and two hundred and forty-two thousand square miles to the asiatic part. The two parts consist of forty-six vice-royalties, the dimensions whereof differ from four hundred to one hundred and forty thousand square miles. Their magnitude is determinable by an inverted ratio of their population: and in this regard they may be divided into three classes. The first includes the most populous; and consequently, according to the circuit of country, the smallest governments; which are St. Petersburg, Vyborg, Reval, Riga, Polotsk, Mohilef, Smolensk, Pskove, Tver, Yaroslaf, Kastroma, Vladimir, Mosco, Kaluga, Tula, Ræzan, Tambof, Orel, Kursk, Voronetzsh, Karkof, Novgorod-Seversk, Kief, Tschernigof,

gof, Penfa, Nishney-Novgorod, Kazan, Simbirsk. In the second class follow those whereof the circuit is considerably larger, but their population not greater, and partly is yet inferior, as, Olonetz-Novgorod, Tavrida, Viætka; and in the third class, lastly, the most extensive, and therefore the proportionably least peopled, are to be placed, Archangel, Vologda, Ekatarinoslaf, Caucasus, Saratof, Ufa, Permia, Tobolsk, Kolyvan, and Irkutsk.

If the difference among authors concerning the territorial extent of Russia be great, it is not less so in regard to its population. The author of the "*Essai sur le commerce de Russie, &c.*" Amst. 1777, admits it in general to be no more than fourteen millions. Voltaire gives the russian empire for the latter years of the reign of Peter I. eighteen millions of inhabitants, but which is certainly by between three and four millions too many. Marshall estimates the population at eighteen millions; Williams likewise for 1768, sets it down at only eighteen millions. M. Busching makes the population of Russia amount to twenty millions; M. le Clerc states it at nineteen millions; and M. Lefevre at nineteen millions and fifty thousand; M. de Voltaire, M. Süssmilch, and professor Ebeling, about twenty-four millions; professor Crème and the statistic tables printed at Prague, reckon twenty-five millions; and professor Albaum, for 1774, twenty-two millions. In the historical *porte-feuille*, part ii. 1786, the population is marked at twenty-

seven millions, and captain Pleschtscheyef in his *Obozrenie rossiskaia imperie*, states it to be (but for the year 1782 undoubtedly too high) thirty millions. M. de Beaufobre, so early as the beginning of the year 1770, gives it at thirty millions, a number which at that time was almost a third part too high. Mr. Coxe, on the other hand, states the population of the whole empire at 22,838,516 souls; which, for the time when he visited the country, was by far too little.

According to the census taken at several times, the increase of the population has appeared to be as follows:

In the year 1722	the number of people was	14,000,000
1742	-	16,000,000
1762	-	20,000,000
1782	-	28,000,000
1788	-	30,000,000

During the reign of Catharine II. then the empire gained in population not less than ten millions, whereof, if we deduct (at the utmost) for the newly acquired countries and colonists three millions, there will still remain an increase of seven millions, arising from the annual surplus of births over the deaths.

SECTION II.

Of the Climate of Russia.

THE temperature of the atmosphere and the weather in this prodigious empire, is as various as its circuit is extensive. It comprises many regions which enjoy the mildest sky and the purest air; but still more where the weather is extremely rude and cold; and several where the exhalations from the earth are unfriendly to health. The empire, in regard to its weather, and the productions of nature dependent upon it, may generally be divided into three grand departments: 1. The territory which lies above the 60th degree of north latitude, and extends to the 78th; 2. The territory lying between the 50th and the 60th degree of the same latitude; and, 3. The territory which lies more to the south than 50 degrees N. L. and extends southwards from the 50th to the 43d degree. The FIRST is the rudest and coldest. It contains the greater part of the governments of Irkutsk, Tobolsk, and Vologda: the whole of those of Archangel, Olonetz, and Vyborg, with a part of the governments of Perme, Novgorod, and St. Petersburg. All these regions lie in a very cold climate, having a winter, especially Siberia, extremely severe. In Ustiug-Velikiye, in the government of Vologda,

situate 61 deg. N. L. and 15 deg. more to the north than Petersburg, quicksilver froze in open air the 4th of November 1786, in a cold of $30\frac{1}{2}$ degrees by Reaumur's thermometer; the 1st of December from 40 degrees it fell the same day to 51, and the 7th of December even to 60 degrees. The quicksilver froze to a solid mass, on which several strokes of a hammer were struck, before any parts fell off. In Krasnoyarsk, the quicksilver froze at 235 and 254 by de l'Isle. (Pallas, Travels, tom. iii. p. 419.) In Solikamsk, the same thermometer is said to have fallen in 1761 even to 280. — The second department, in regard to fertility, is called the temperate; in one half whereof, namely, from the 55th to the 60th degree N. L. though the weather is pretty severe and cold, it yet allows all the fruits of the field and many of the orchard to grow. In the other half, namely, from the 50th to the 55th degree, the climate is much milder, and with the usual products yields still others, which in the former do not well succeed. The whole of this extensive, beautiful, and important territory of the Russian empire comprehends the governments of St. Petersburg, Reval, Riga, Polotsk, Moghilef, Smolensk, Pskove, Novgorod, Tver, Yaroslaf, Kostroma, Viatka, Perme, Kolyvan, a good part of Irkutsk and Ufa, the governments of Mosco, Vladimir, Nishney-Novgorod, Kazan, Kaluga, Tula, Rязan, Voronetsh, Tambof, Penfa, Simbirsk, Kursk, Orel, Novgorod-Sieverfk, Tchernigof, and the greater part

part of Kief, Karkof, and Saratof. — The third department is the hot, in which products are common, *e. g.* wine and silk, which do not thrive at all in the former. In this lie Tavrida, Ekatarinoflaf, the greater part of Caucasus, with a part of Kief, Karkof, Voronetsh, Saratof, Kolyvan, and Irkutsk.

Tavrida possesses a very agreeable climate. The inhabitants, for three quarters of the year, enjoy fine and warm weather; and Nature here requires but three months at most to recreate her powers. The spring season commences here commonly with March; and from the middle of May to the middle of August generally the greatest heat prevails. This is usually so intense, that it rarely happens that winds do not continually blow from ten in the morning till six in the evening every day, which render it almost insupportable. Thunder and storms of rain are here also not unfrequent, whereby the air is refreshed. September and October are, generally speaking, the finest months. The autumnal weather comes on about the middle of November. The frost appears in December and January, but is very moderate; seldom lasting for more than two or three days. Here, however, it is to be remarked, that the level part of this country is in this circumstance to be distinguished from the mountainous; the heat and cold are commonly more intense in the former, and rain and snow less frequent. The air in all the regions of Tavrida, except some few places on the Sibash, are reckoned very healthy. — About Kursk, (in

(in the Ukraine,) all sorts of fruit, arbutus*, melons, and apples, are ripe in August; and the corn is already got in. The rivers freeze over at the end of November and in December; and in May they are again free from ice.

These four several departments, so different from each other, should constantly be kept in view whenever we hear or read of the climate of the Russian empire. Hence we see that there are governments which partake in the climate of two; others (for example, Kolyvan) of three; and the government of Irkutsk even of all the four. Whatever Nature produces in these parallels, Russia possesses or might possess; and therefore has advantages of which not one other European state can boast.

The high northern latitude of St. Petersburg, and its situation in a low, marshy, and woody flat, with many large rivers, render its climate cold, rude, and in many respects singular. The imperial academy of sciences has kept a meteorological account, from its foundation in 1725, of the weather of the place; and the freezing of the Neva has been regularly marked annually from the year 1718.

The frost and its effects are here remarkable. The number of frosty days is annually from 150 to 190; and their continuance and severity freezes the ground every winter from 2 to 2½ and sometimes above 3 feet deep; and the ice of the Neva

* Water-melons.

is from 24 to 36, but generally 28 inches in thickness. Though this body is formed by sheets of ice gliding horizontally upon each other, yet when large square blocks of it stand in the sun upon the ground in spring, they gradually fall to pieces in perpendicular spiculæ of the thickness of one's finger. Likewise in walking over the river in spring, while the ice is still thick, the walking-stick is easily pushed through the ice, by pressing down some of the spiculæ out of their contiguity.

The covering of the Neva with ice, and the breaking-up of it, are remarkable phenomena. At first small distinct flakes of ice are seen floating on the surface, which soon increase into large sheets, of such momentum that the bridges must be removed in all haste to prevent their being carried away by the frozen element. These sheets of ice drive down the stream for a day or two; during which people pass in boats among them across the river, till at last the ice stops, or the sheets of ice freeze on one another. Immediately the river is passable on foot; and nothing is more common than to see boats rowing over, and in an hour or two afterwards foot-passengers walking to the other side in great numbers.

The breaking-up of the ice comes on as suddenly. In spring, at first the snow-water stands on the ice; then the ice becomes spongy, or parts in spikes, admits the water, and assumes a blackish hue. At length it gives way, but leaves the beaten roads still standing;

standing; in consequence of which foot-walkers are often seen upon the roads, and between them and the floating masses of ice, boats rowed in various directions. When at last the roads too break, the ice continues driving for a few days to the gulf, and the river appears with its clear and beautiful current. In a week or a fortnight afterwards the drift ice comes down from the Ladoga, and continues floating about with the wind for two or three days, making for the time the atmosphere uncommonly cold.

The ice and the cold are made serviceable in various ways. Distances are much shortened by their means, inasmuch as people, horses, and carriages of all sorts, and of ever so great burden, can cross the Neva, and the other rivers, lakes, and canals, in all places and directions: and the Cronstadt gulf supplies in some measure the want of navigation during the winter, by the transport of commodities of every denomination over the ice. As ice-cellars here are a necessary of life, for keeping provisions of all kinds during the summer, so every house in every quarter of the town is provided with one filled annually with large blocks of ice cut out of the river. This operation generally takes place about the beginning of February. The ice also administers to the pleasure of the inhabitants, by affording them an opportunity for the diversion of sledge and horse-racing, and for that of sliding down the ice-hills so much admired by the populace.

populace. The weight of these ice-hills, together with that of a multitude sometimes of five or six thousand persons standing about them on holidays, give the spectator a surprising idea of the strength and solidity of the ice.

What may be executed in ice was shewn by the ice-palace which the empress Anna caused to be built on the bank of the Neva in 1740. It was constructed of huge quadrats of ice hewn in the manner of freestone. The edifice was 52 feet in length, 16 in breadth, and 20 in height. The walls were three feet thick. In the several apartments were tables, chairs, sofas, beds, and all kinds of household furniture, of ice. In front of the palace, besides pyramids and statues, stood six cannons carrying balls of six pounds weight, and two mortars, of ice. From one of the former, as a trial, an iron ball, with only a quarter of a pound of powder, was fired off. The ball went through a two-inch board at sixty paces from the mouth of the cannon; and the piece of ice-artillery, with its carriage, remained uninjured by the explosion. The illumination of the ice-palace at night had an astonishingly grand effect.

In and about Mosco the rivers freeze over in the middle or towards the latter end of November, old style; and break up in March or the beginning of April. The buds of the birch-trees expand in May, and the trees shed their leaves in September.

—The

— The river Ural usually flows, near Gurief, free from ice about the beginning of March.

The greatest degree of cold since the building of the city of St. Petersburg was, by Reaumur, $32\frac{1}{2}$, the 6th of January 1760, and again in January 1799.

The greatest heat, in the shade, was $28\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, the 23d of July 1757, and the 5th of July 1758.

By taking the average of all the thermometrical observations made at the Imperial Academy of Sciences, it is found that the greatest cold happens in the month of January; and that its mean intensity may be estimated at 22 degrees. Again, that the greatest heat falls in July; and that its mean force is 23 degrees of Reaumur.

Months.	The mean intensity of the greatest cold.		Mean cold of nights.		Mean heat of days.	
	Degrees.	Degrees.	Degrees.	Degrees.	Degrees.	Degrees.
Jan.	22	$\frac{1}{2}$	$11\frac{1}{2}$	8	—	—
Feb.	$19\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$	$9\frac{1}{2}$	5	—	—
March	14	7	7	1	—	—
April	$6\frac{1}{2}$	13	$1\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	$4\frac{1}{2}$
May	* 1	19	—	—	5	10
June	* 6	$21\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	$9\frac{1}{2}$	$14\frac{1}{2}$
July	* 9	23	—	—	12	$17\frac{1}{2}$
August	* $5\frac{1}{2}$	$21\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	$10\frac{1}{2}$	16
Sept.	* $1\frac{1}{2}$	$15\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	6	11
Oct.	$3\frac{1}{2}$	10	—	—	2	$5\frac{1}{2}$
Nov.	11	$4\frac{1}{2}$	$3\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	—	—
Dec.	18	2	$7\frac{1}{2}$	$4\frac{1}{2}$	—	—

The mark * signifies the degree of heat.

In

In turning over the pages of history, we come to passages where we almost stand astonished at the then climate of Germany, where, for instance, it is said: These countries northward beyond the Danube and the Rhine are covered with vast snows, so that they are uninhabitable from their almost perpetual winters. Virgil and Ovid would not have affirmed, that on the borders of the Danube and in Thrace it was the custom to divide the frozen wine in pieces, if at that time these countries were not subject to so severe a frost. Pliny the elder complains of the immense snows, which will not permit the objects the least remote, in European Scythia, to be seen. Speaking of Thrace, Pomponius Mela tells us, that the clusters of grapes never come to maturity; and all the ancient writers talk of the northern districts of Germany as countries consisting entirely of forests, lakes, morasses, snow, and ice; complaining of the piercing winds that bring from these parts tempests, snows, and frosts. That it is at present of a totally different temperature is known to every inhabitant of that country. But from these historical passages we might perhaps deduce a cause why one part of Russia, though lying under the same parallel with Milan, Bourdeaux, and other countries and towns enjoying the most agreeable climate, is nevertheless of an atmospherical temperature entirely different. Thus, for example, Mosco lies under the same parallel with England: and yet, on the 14th of April, notwithstanding the mild winter and an uncom-

uncommonly early spring, the whole country round was covered with snow. The ice had begun to break up on many large rivers, while the Volga was yet fast frozen. The degree of cold, which frequently in Mosco is not inferior to that at St. Petersburg, and likewise reaches to 22 and more below the freezing point, will, on a comparison with the temperature in England, shew an extraordinary difference; consequently there must be some material reasons, occasioning such considerable differences under the same degree of latitude. Considering these countries in this point of view, they are to us what Germany and the countries lying above the 50th and 55th degree were to Italy while they still remained in an uncultivated state. We may therefore partly ascribe this colder temperature to the great number of morasses, lakes, the extraordinarily large forests and tracts of uncultivated land: and the rather, as it cannot be attributed to the high situation or the mountains, which in this region are of no extraordinary height, and the generality of the country is a flat. As it is a well-known observation how much loose heat is absorbed by water when it goes off in vapour, of course those regions which contain such a quantity of water on their surface must be constantly absorbing heat, which, by uniting with that element, is rendered insensible. The alterations in the atmospherical temperature that have been observed in our times, by the draining of morasses and the diminution of forests, likewise

wife shew, that this difference may be attributable to the woods and swamps that are still so numerous. As far as relates to the northern regions, it is very comprehensible how the cold must so extremely increase, as by the flattening of our earth at the poles, they in the same proportion are deprived of light by the southern declination of the sun: so that, for instance, in Archangel in the month of December, when the days are at the shortest, the sun remains above the horizon only 3 hours and 12 minutes, on the contrary in the month of June is visible 20 hours and 48 minutes, and the still more northern countries must be entirely deprived of it during the winter. The winds blowing from these regions are in this season of an extraordinary dryness; as no heat is let loose, so there is no evaporation from ice or snow; whereas, on the other hand, the quantity of heat that in summer is set free, tempered by the quantity of rain, ice, and snow, lastly the water that goes off in vapour, confines a still greater quantity of heat than was before necessary to liquefaction, whereby the sensibility of the particles of heat must considerably decline.

The observations made by count Sternberg during seven months in St. Petersburg will shew the long duration of the cold. The first snow fell the 20th of September, and the surface of the earth was not seen again till the 25th of April. The dry state of the air, as appeared by the hygrometer,

meter, was 95 drought. — The height of the barometer evinced the low situation of the country, and the pressure of the atmosphere. According to the mean station of the barometer, Petersburg lay 137—12 lin. lower than Prague. The first frost 1791 was the 14th of September, and the 3d of May 1792 the last; the interval consequently was two hundred and thirty-two days; during one hundred and nineteen whereof it never ceased to freeze, and twenty-five on which it did not freeze at all, and one hundred and seventy-three when the thermometer stood below the point of congelation, one hundred and sixty-nine days the sky was partly clouded, and one hundred and twenty-three entirely overcast. Fogs he reckoned forty-one. During sixty-nine days it snowed, one hundred and twelve days it rained, and two days hailed. These observations relate to St. Petersburg; and we may easily conclude from them, that in such a climate but few days remain to the husbandman for the culture of his field; and it is absolutely impossible, with so few men and such poor implements, to lay out his ground properly in so short a space of time. That as well in the higher regions as in those that are at a greater distance from the sea, still fewer days are capable of being employed in culture, is well known; consequently still less can be performed, until the number of people be larger, the implements better, and they are in possession of whatever can facilitate labour; or the atmospherical temperature be softened

ened by the gradual alteration of the surface; namely, by grubbing up the vast forests, and draining the swamps and morasses.

SECTION III.

Of the Commerce of Russia.

THE whole of the great and intricate business comprehended under this head, is naturally reducible to the following branches: Export, import, and the exchange. We will briefly touch on each of them apart.

It is hardly possible to give a true statement of the value, quality, and nature of the exports, without entering into a dry detail of custom-house lists. The publicity given to these matters here saves a great deal of trouble to the collectors of statistical accounts, in their relations concerning this branch of national affairs. The following statements are the result of a period of ten years, from 1780 to 1790. During that space were annually exported,

2,655,038	poods of iron
19,528	- - saltpetre
2,498,950	poods of hemp
792,932	- - flax
2,907,876	arshines of napkins and linen
214,704	pieces of sail-cloth and flems

106,763	poods	of cordage
167,432	-	- hemp-oil and linseed-oil
192,328	-	- linseed
52,645	-	- tobacco
129	-	- rhubarb
105,136	-	- wheat
271,976	-	- rye
35,864	-	- barley
200,000	-	- oats
1456	malts	
1,193,125	planks	
85,647	boards	
7487	poods	of rosin
9720	-	- pitch
37,336	-	- tar
81,386	-	- train-oil
10,467	-	- wax
943,618	-	- tallow and tallow-candles
31,712	-	- potashes
5516	-	- isinglass
8958	-	- caviar
5635	-	- horse-hair
69,722	horse-tails	
29,110	poods	of hog's bristles
106,045	Russia mats	
292,016	goat-skins	
144,876	poods	of hides and sole-leather
621,327	pieces	of fur
9982	ox-tongues	
73,350	ox-bones.	

This

This list, which is complete to the exception of a few articles of inferior consequence, contains, besides napkins, linen, sail-cloth, cordage, tallow-candles, pot-ashes, isinglass, caviar, furs, and leather, no wrought goods; and even some of these have only such a preparation as is necessary for the transport and preservation of the product. The employment of the nation, considerably as it has increased since the time of Peter the great, is still always more directed to production than to manufacture. This is the natural progress of every human society advancing to civilization; and Russia will continue to confine itself to the mere production and the commerce in products, till the quantity of its population and employment be sufficient to the manufacturing of its raw materials.

The buying up of the foregoing articles, and their conveyance from the midland, and partly from the remotest regions of the empire, form an important branch of the internal commerce. The majority of these products are raised on the fertile shores of the Volga; this inestimable river, which, in its course, connects the most distant provinces, is at the same time the channel of business and industry. Wherever its water laves the rich and fruitful coasts, industry and diligence have fixed their abode: its course marks the progress to internal civilization. But even from a distance of from five to six thousand versts, from the heart of Siberia, rich in metals, St. Petersburg receives the stores of its enormous magazines.

zines. The greater part of them, at least the hardwares, are brought hither from the easternmost districts of Siberia, almost entirely by water. The Selenga receives and transfers them to the Baikal; which wafts them by the Angara to the Yenissey; whence, passing along the Oby into the Tobol, they are conveyed over a tract of about four hundred verst by land to the Tchuffovaiya; thence, falling down the Kamma, they proceed along the Volga, shooting the sluices at Vishney-Volotshok, into the Volkhof; and, passing out of that into the Ladoga-lake, they lastly, after having completed a journey through two quarters of the globe, arrive in the Neva, and are conveyed to the place of their destination. This astonishing transport becomes still more interesting by the reflection that these products conveyed hither from the neighbourhood of the north-eastern ocean, tarry here but a few weeks, in order then to set out on a second, perhaps greater voyage; or after being unshipped in distant countries, return hither under an altered form, and, by a tedious and difficult navigation, come back to their native land. How many scythes of the Siberian boors may have gone this circuitous course!

The number of the vessels which, according to a ten years' average, from 1774 to 1784, came by the Ladoga canal to St. Petersburg, was 2861 barks, 797 half barks, 508 one-masted vessels, 1113 chaloups—in all, 5339. Add to these 6739 floats of barks. Sum total, 12,078.

The

The prodigious value in money of these products is, by the want which Russia has of wrought commodities, and by the ever-increasing luxury, so much lessened, that the advantage on the balance is proportionably but very small. A list of the articles of trade with which St. Petersburg annually furnishes a part of the empire affords matter for the most interesting economical commentary.

The annual imports at St. Petersburg for the space of ten years, from 1780 to 1790, were

- Silken stuffs to the amount of 2,500,000 rubles.
- Woollen stuffs, 2,000,000 rubles.
- Cloth, 2,000,000 rubles.
- Cotton stuffs, 534,000 rubles.
- Silk and cotton stockings, 10,000 dozen pair.
- Trinkets, 700,000 rubles.
- Watches, 2000.
- Hardware, 50,000 rubles.
- Looking-glasses, 50,000 rubles.
- English stone-ware, 43,800 rubles.
- English horses, 250.
- Coffee, 26,300 poods.
- Sugar, 372,000 poods.
- Tobacco, 5000 poods.
- Oranges and lemons, 101,500 rubles.
- Fresh fruit, 65,000 rubles.
- Herrings, 14,250 tons.
- Sweet oil, 20,000 rubles.
- Porter and english beer, 262,000 rubles.
- French brandy, 50,000 ankers.

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Champagne

Champagne and burgundy, 4000 pipes.

Other wines, 250,000 hogsheds.

Mineral water, 12,000 rubles.

Paper of different sorts, 42,750 rubles.

Books, 50,150 rubles.

Copper-plate engravings, 60,200 rubles.

Alum, 25,500 poods.

Indigo, 3830 poods.

Kochenille, 1335 poods.

Glass and glass wares, 64,000 rubles.

Scythes, 325,000, &c.

A very great part of these commodities remain and are consumed in St. Petersburg. The rest is conveyed by land-carriage to various parts of the empire, as to go up the navigable rivers against the stream would be tedious and expensive. The carts or sledges made use of in this conveyance are mostly drawn by only one horse, each having a driver; who all together make up a caravan of from 25 to 100 carts: sometimes, on long journies, there is but one driver to every three carts.

The statements of the exports and imports above given are taken from the custom-house registers. In order to judge of the worth and validity of them, it is necessary to observe, that all vessels, on their arrival, undergo a strict examination both at Cronstadt and at St. Petersburg, and are obliged to unload at the custom-house. The proper officers examine the commodities according to the statement of the merchants, who are obliged to particularize
not

not only the nature of them, but, when the duty is to be paid *ad valorem*, must also fix that value. If upon examination it appears, or affords cause to suspect, that the articles are rated below their proper value, the officer has a right to detain them, at the price thus set upon them, with an additional allowance of 20 per cent. for the profit. This method, which is called *underwriting*, obliges the trader to mark these articles of importation at a value rather too high than too low: and this practice therefore stamps a great authenticity on the custom-house lists. Whether, however, no fraud can be practised in the statement is a question, the solution whereof is only to be had from such as have the greatest interest in denying it. For the rest, it is the general opinion that the prudent precautions are nowhere in the whole empire so good as at St. Petersburg; and that consequently any frauds in the customs are nowhere so difficult. That this cannot be said of all custom-house officers is proved from the experience of late years, when those on the borders of Poland were displaced. Yet these matters do not come properly qualified to the statistic till several years after, as the facts are too recent for obtaining sure *data* and results.

It remains to be mentioned, that the importation of diamonds, books, instruments, and the like, is duty-free; and that therefore these considerable articles either have no place in the entries, or are set down at pleasure.

According

According to what has been seen, we are now enabled to state the value of the imports and exports, and the balance of the trade to St. Petersburg. By the most probable estimation, on an average of ten years, from 1780 to 1790, the account is as follows:—

	Rubles.
Exports - - - -	13,261,942
Imports - - - -	12,238,319
Profit - - - -	1,023,623
In coined and uncoined gold and silver, in the three last years, were annually imported -	337,064
This, added to the foregoing, makes	1,360,687

The amount of the whole commerce was therefore in the said period, from 1780 to 1790, annually 25,837,325 rubles.

The increase of the commerce appears in a striking progression from the following statements:—

	IMPORTS.	EXPORTS.
1780.	8,600,000 rubles.	10,900,000 rubles.
1785.	10,000,000	13,400,000
1789.	15,300,000	18,700,000

If

If we admit, upon the most probable computation, that the whole commerce of the empire amounts to about 50,000,000 of rubles, it will then follow that St. Petersburg has more than the half for its share. The next place in the commercial scale, after the residence*, is held by Riga; the commerce of which collectively may be estimated at about 6,000,000. This proportion may serve to shew the rank on this scale that may be allowed to the other trading towns that come after Riga.

The commerce of St. Petersburg is chiefly carried on by commission in the hands of factors. This class of merchants, which consists almost entirely of foreigners, forms the most respectable and considerable part of the persons on the exchange. In the year 1790, of the foreign counting houses not belonging to the guilds, were eight and twenty english, seven german, two swiss, four danish, several prussian, six dutch, four french, two portuguese, one spanish, and one italian. Besides these, were twelve denominated burghers, and of the first guild one hundred and six, with forty-six foreign merchants and seventeen belonging to other towns, though several cause themselves to be enrolled in these guilds who are not properly merchants.

In order to form an idea of the exchange and the course of trade, the following brief account will

* So St. Petersburg is styled, from being the usual residence of the later sovereigns. Mosco is the capital of Russia, as every reader knows.

suffice.

suffice. The russian merchants from the interior of the empire repair, at a stated time, to St. Petersburg, where they bargain with the factors for the sale of their commodities. This done, they enter into contracts to deliver the goods according to the particulars therein specified, at which time they commonly receive the half or the whole of the purchase-money, though the goods are not to be delivered till the following spring or summer by the barks then to come down the Ladoga canal. The quality of the goods is then pronounced on by sworn *brackers* or sorters, according to the kinds mentioned in the contract. The articles of importation are either disposed of by russian merchants through the resident factors, or the latter deliver them for sale at foreign markets; in both cases the Russian, to whose order they came, receives them on condition of paying for them by instalments of six, twelve, and more months. The russian merchant, therefore, is paid for his exports beforehand, and buys such as are imported on credit; he risks no damages by sea, and is exempted from the tedious transactions of the custom-house, and of loading and unloading.

The clearance of the ships, the transport of the goods into the government warehouses, the packing and unpacking, unloading and dispatching of them, —in a word, the whole of the great bustle attendant on the commerce of a maritime town, is principally at Cronstadt and that part of the residence called Vassiliostrof.

Vassiliostrof*. Here are the exchange, the custom-house, and in the vicinity of this island, namely on a small island between that and the Peterburg island, the hemp warehouses and magazines, in which the riches of so many countries are bartered and kept. In all the other parts of the city, the tumult of business is so rare and imperceptible, that a stranger who should be suddenly conveyed hither would never imagine that he was in the chief commercial town of the russian empire. The opulent merchants have their dwellings and counting-houses in the most elegant parts of the town. Their houses, gate-ways, and court-yards, are not, as in Hamburg and Riga, blocked up and barricaded with bales of goods and heaps of timber; here, besides the counting-house, no trace is seen of mercantile affairs. The business at the custom-house is transacted by one of the clerks, and people that are hired for that purpose, called expeditors; and the labour is performed by *artelschiki*, or porters belonging to a kind of guild.

The factor delivers the imported goods to the russian merchant, who sends them off, in the above-mentioned manner, or retails them on the spot, in the markets, warehouses, and shops.

* The Petersburg island was formerly called Berefovoioistrof; the Vassilioistrof, while Ingria was in possession of the Swedes, bore the name of Givisaari; the Apothecary's island was called Korpofaari; Kammenoioistrof was then Kitzisaari; and the parish where Peterhof stands was called Tirief.

There

There would be no exaggeration in affirming, that it would be difficult to point out a people that have more of the spirit of trade and mercantile industry than the Russians. Traffic is their darling pursuit: every common Russian, if he can but by any means save up a trifling sum of money, as it is very possible for him to do, by his frugal and poor way of living, tries to become a merchant. This career he usually begins as a *rasnoschik*, or feller of things about the streets; the profits arising from this ambulatory trade and his parsimony soon enable him to hire a *lavka* or shop; where, by lending of small sums at large interest, by taking advantage of the course of exchange, and by employing little artifices of trade, he in a short time becomes a pretty substantial man. He now buys and builds houses and shops, which he either lets to others, or furnishes with goods himself, putting in persons to manage them for small wages; begins to launch out into an extensive trade, undertakes prodigious contracts with the crown, deliveries of merchandize, &c. The numerous instances of the rapid success of such people almost exceed description. By these methods, a Russian merchant, named Sava Yacovlef, who died not many years ago, from a hawker of fish about the streets became a capitalist of several millions. Many of these favourites of fortune are at first vassals, who obtain passes from their landlords, and with these stroll about the towns, in order to seek a better condition of life, as labourers,

labourers, bricklayers, and carpenters, than they could hope to find at the plough-tail in the country. Some of them continue, after fortune has raised them, and even with great riches, still slaves; paying their lord, in proportion to their circumstances, an *obrok* or yearly tribute. Among the people of this class at Petersburg are many who belong to count Sheremetof, the richest private man in Russia, and pay him annually for their pass a thousand and more rubles. It often happens that these merchants, when even in splendid circumstances, still retain their national habit and their long beard; and it is by no means rare to see them driving along the streets of the residence, in this dress, in the most elegant carriages. From all this it is very remarkable, that extremely few Russian houses have succeeded in getting the foreign commission trade; a striking proof that there is *something* besides industry and parsimony requisite to mercantile credit, in which the Russians must hitherto have been deficient.

All the ways of gaining a livelihood among the working class have an intimate connection. The raising the products, their manufacture, and the barter of them, are equally the capital of the nation, and the source of its prosperity and wealth. Among the manufactories the imperial establishments are so distinguishable for the magnitude of their plan and the richness and excellence of their productions, that they may enter into competition with the most celebrated

celebrated institutions of the same kind in any other country. The tapestry manufactory, which weaves both hangings and carpeting, produces such excellent work, that better is not to be seen from the Gobelines at Paris. The circumstance that at present only native Russians are employed, enhances the value and the curiosity of the establishment. Nowhere, perhaps, is the progress of the nation in civilization more striking to the foreigner than in the spacious and extensive work-rooms of this manufactory. The porcelain manufactory likewise entertains, excepting the modellers and arcanists, none but Russian workmen, amounting in all to the number of four hundred, and produces ware that for taste and fineness of execution approaches near to their best patterns. The clay was formerly got from the Ural, but at present from the Ukraine, and the quartz from the mountains of Olonetz. It is carried on entirely at the expence of government, to which it annually costs 15,000 rubles in wages, and takes orders. But the price of the porcelain is high; and the general prejudice is not in favour of its durability. The fayence manufactory has hitherto made only ineffectual attempts to drive out the queen's ware of England; but the neat and elegant chamber-stoves made there, give it the consequence of a very useful establishment. Almost all the new-built houses are provided with the excellent work of this manufactory; and considerable orders are executed for the provinces. — A bronze manufactory,

factory, which was set up for the use of the construction of the Isaak church, but works now for the court and private persons, merits honourable mention, on account of the neatness and taste of its executions. — More remarkable by the mechanism of their construction are the stone-cutting works at Peterhof. All the instruments, saws, turning-lathes, cutting and polishing engines, are worked by water under the floor of the building. Fifty workmen are here employed in working foreign, and especially Russian sorts of stone into slabs, vases, urns, boxes, columns, and other ornaments of various kinds and magnitudes. — Many other imperial fabrics for the use of the army, the mint, &c. are carried on in various places; but the description of them would lead us beyond our limits.

The number of private manufactories at present subsisting in St. Petersburg amounts to about one hundred. The principal materials on which they are employed, some on a larger and others on a smaller scale, are leather, paper, gold and silver, sugar, silk, tobacco, distilled waters, wool, glass, clay, wax, cotton, and chintz. Leather, as is well known, is among the most important of their manufactures for the export trade; accordingly here are sixteen tanneries. The paper manufactories amount to the like number, for hangings and general use. Twelve gold and silver manufactories sell threads, laces, edgings, fringes, epaulets, &c. Eight sugar-works. Seven for silk goods, gauze, cloths,

cloths, hose, and stuffs, and several others. Here must not be forgotten the great glass-houses set up by prince Potemkin, where all the various articles for use and ornament, of that material, are made; but particularly that for looking-glasses, where they are manufactured of such extraordinary magnitude and beauty, as to exceed anything of the kind produced by the famous glass-houses at Murano and Paris. Among many others which we have not room to particularize, are no less than five letter-foundries, one manufactory for clocks and watches, &c. &c.

That in so large and opulent a city, the residence of a brilliant court, the necessary and useful trades should find employment, may be easily imagined; but perhaps it is not generally known, that in a city of so modern a date, that for the supply of not only the most necessary, but also of the most frivolous demands, for the simplest not more than for the most artificial conveniencies, for the most curious as well as the most ordinary luxuries, here are artists and workshops of all descriptions. Allured by the numerous wants of a great city, and the profusion of a court, many thousands of industrious and ingenious foreigners have been induced to settle here; by the continual influx of whom, and the communication of their talents, this residence is become not only the seat of all ingenious trades, but likewise a source of industry, which flows in beneficial streams through all the adjacent provinces.

No

No country has contributed in so great a degree to effect this salutary change as Germany; all useful trades, and a great part of those for the accommodations of luxury, are carried on by Germans and Russians alone. Next to the Germans in this respect come the Swedes: some few French live here in the capacity of *restaurateurs*, cooks, friseurs, clock-makers, and some others. Two or three breweries and some handicrafts are prosecuted with success by Englishmen. Germans are dispersed all over the empire: upwards of twenty thousand families dwell in the Crimea and on the shores of the Volga; in Mosco, Archangel, and several of the inland provinces, many, and some of them considerable families, have been domesticated from the beginning of the eighteenth century and earlier.

Of the trades which are followed almost exclusively by the Russians, are those of the bricklayer and carpenter. Besides the bricklayers and masons that live constantly at St. Petersburg, above six thousand of them come annually from the provinces to work during the short summer. Spacious and handsome buildings are usually constructed after the plans of an architect, of whom the court has some of the first eminence in its service, and under the inspection of a surveyor; but all the rest is performed by Russian builders. These and the masons are for the most part boors, who employ their passport in working for the use and embellishment of the city. It is impossible to refrain from being

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surprised

surprised at the talent for imitation that forms the prominent feature in the character of this nation, on seeing how quickly these clownish people, destitute of all idea of art, attain to the utmost dexterity and the nicest judgment in the execution of these works. The *plotniki*, or carpenters, are equally expert in the use of their axe, which, though so simple in its construction, supplies with them the place of the hammer, the plane, the saw, and the chisel. With this compendium of all tools they build houses, make tables, chairs, carts — in short, all the necessities of common life that can be made of wood. On account of their dexterity and the cheapness of their labour, they are employed in the construction even of brick and stone houses, for executing the coarser carpentry.

The potteries and glazed tile works are all in the hands of Russians. Besides these, the natives are the only butchers and gardeners. The latter cultivate everything which the soil and climate can produce. As the greatest advantage of this profession is to produce vegetables at extraordinary seasons, the utmost endeavours of these people are exerted to that end; and perhaps nowhere under the same parallel are all the vegetables of the kitchen-garden produced so early as here. This trade is mostly followed by boors from Rostof and the adjacent country, who, after a few years stay, return home with considerable property, the fruit of their industry. How profitable this profession must be, from

from the prevailing luxury of the table, may be easily conceived. — Prince Potemkin, during his last sojourn in the residence, dining one day with count Chernichef, an experimental *selentschik*, green-seller, announced himself with five uncommonly fine cucumbers, which exactly at that time of the year were extremely rare, and of which the prince was known to be particularly fond. The house-steward took them of the man, and presented them to his master, who was sitting at table with the prince. The cucumbers were devoured in a trice; and the count ordered a hundred rubles to be given to the green-seller, as a present for the agreeable surprise: but the latter who had already learnt that his goods were irrevocably gone, rejected the present, and demanded the payment of five hundred rubles; till at length he was with great difficulty persuaded to be contented with a smaller sum.

These and a few other less important trades are confined solely to the Russians. In all the rest the Germans are as numerous, and often more so than the Russians. This is principally the case in all handicrafts that depend on fashion, as the prejudices here are greatly in favour of foreigners. Thus, for example, there are more german tailors than shoemakers, in proportion to Russians. Among the former are many substantial and even wealthy persons, who, besides their house in town, have another in the country, keep an equipage, and whose wives wear diamonds. Nay, several of them

give weekly concerts and routs, and on each of the family festivals spend one hundred or one hundred and fifty rubles on the table. People of this sort rise above their trade; they become artists; it is not so much for the work as for the fashion that they are paid. One of these artists in dress, whose good fortune and reputation have raised him to opulence, now undertakes nothing more than the cutting out of the clothes, and then gives them to other tailors to sew them together; for this trouble, under the article *pour la façon*, he charges five and twenty rubles. Many of these people too are not merely tailors, but belong to the class called in France *marchands-tailleurs*. Their greatest profit is in buying, they make advances, and give credit to people of rank, of whom they have frequently several thousands of rubles to demand.

Besides the trades already mentioned, that of the smith is one of the most profitable; as the masters can employ boors in the coarse work, and who, on first coming from the country, are to be had at very low wages. The generality of german smiths succeed very well, build themselves good houses, and leave their children wherewith to begin the world. But in general, the german mechanic, all things considered, lives nowhere so well as here, as he can nowhere earn so much with so much ease. The business of the master consists in looking after his workmen, in regulating the day's work, in taking of orders, and getting in his debts. At

noon

noon he sits down to a well-furnished table, and the evening he passes in one or other of the numerous clubs in various parts of the town. Far worse fares it with the russian artisan. His work is in some cases (though certainly not in all, for the german master has often only russian journeymen and apprentices) indeed not quite so good; but the price of his workmanship is always far inferior to the value of his labour. In very many of the mechanical trades the Russians already perform all that can reasonably be expected; and from this, and from the insolence of the german masters, their customers increase from year to year.

Most of the trades that relate to luxuries are here carried on to such an extent, and in so great perfection, as to render it, at least for the residence, unnecessary to import those articles from abroad. The chief of these are works in the nobler metals. Here are forty-four russian and one hundred and thirty-nine foreign, consequently in all one hundred and eighty-three workers in gold, silver, and trinkets, as masters; and besides them several gilders and silverers: — a monstrous disproportion, when compared with those employed in the useful and indispensable businesses. The pomp of the court, and the luxury of the rich and great, have rendered a taste in works of this kind so common, and carried the art itself to such a pitch, that the most extraordinary objects of it are here to be met with. Several of them are wrought in a sort of manufactory: in one set of premises are all the various

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workmen

workmen and shops for completing the most elegant devices, ornamental and useful, from the rough bullion. Even the embroiderers in gold and silver, though they are not formed into a company, are yet pretty numerous. The works they produce are finished in so high a taste, that quantities of them are sold in the shops that deal in english or french goods, and to which they are not inferior. This business, which is a perpetual source of profit to a great number of widows and young women of slender incomes, forms a strong objection to the declamations against luxury. Perhaps the remark is not unnecessary, that sham laces and embroidery cannot here be used, even on the stage. Next to these may be ranged the host of milleners, who are mostly of french descent; and here, as in Paris, together with their industry are endowed with a variety of agreeable and profitable talents. Their numbers are daily increasing; and, surprising! the greater their multitude, the better they seem to thrive. Their work is neat, elegant, and modish; but they certainly bear an enormous price: a *marchande des modes*, if she understand her business, is sure to make a fortune. The generality of them, after completing this aim, return to their native country.

The coachmaker's trade is likewise here in a flourishing state. The great concerns in which this business is carried on in all its parts, from the simple screw to the finest varnish; the solidity and

durability,

durability, the elegance and the taste of the carriages they turn out, the multitude of people, and, in short, the large sums of money that are employed in them, which would otherwise be sent abroad for these vehicles, render this business one of the most consequential of the residence. In the judgment of connoisseurs, and by the experience of such as use them, the carriages made here yield in nothing to those of Paris or London; and in the making of varnish the Russians have improved upon the English; only in point of durability the carriages are said to fall short of those built by the famous workmen of the last-mentioned nation; and the want of dry timber is given as the cause of this failure. With all these advantages, and notwithstanding the vast difference in price of those that come from abroad, which is greatly enhanced by the high duties, yet they are yearly imported to a great amount; the blame of which practice is generally laid by the Russians on the prejudices of the English merchants (who lead the fashions in most instances) in favour of the carriages of their own country. The Russians have succeeded in appropriating the far greater part of this business to themselves; the shape of their carriages is in the height of the mode, the varnish is excellent, and the outward appearance elegant and graceful; but for durability their reputation is still inferior to those even of the german workmen here. This censure applies to all the russian manufactures: their

their exterior is often not to be found fault with; but they are deficient in the solidity, which so much recommends the work of other countries. In excuse for the Russians, one thing ought not to be forgotten, that they have to contend with an obstacle that renders it impossible for them to employ so much time, labour, and expence on their work, as are necessary for bringing it to the utmost intrinsic perfection; and which, as long as it continues, will confine and impede the progress of national industry. This obstacle is the general prejudice in favour of english commodities, which indeed is the case, more or less, in all countries; but nowhere in so high a degree, and with such exclusive effects as here. The russian manufacturer, therefore, naturally strives to impose his work on the customer for foreign, and to press it upon him under foreign names: where this is not practicable, (as with the carriages in the Yæmskoi, which everybody knows to be russian,) he is forced to sacrifice solidity to outward appearance, for which he can only expect to be paid. A chariot made by a german coachmaker is not to be had under six or seven hundred rubles; whereas a russian chariot can be bought for half the money; and it sometimes happens that the latter is even more lasting than the former.

Joinery is practised as well by the Russians as the Germans; but the cabinet-maker's art, in which the price of the ingenuity far exceeds the value of the

the materials, is at present solely confined to some foreigners, among whom the Germans distinguish themselves to their honour. The artists of that nation occasionally execute master-pieces, made at intervals of leisure under the influence of genius and taste, and for which they find a ready sale in the residence of a great and magnificent court. Thus not long since one of these made a cabinet, which for invention, taste, and excellency of workmanship, exceeded everything that had ever been seen in that way. The price of this piece of art was seven thousand rubles; and the artist declared, that with this sum he should not be paid for the years of application he had bestowed upon it. Another monument of german ingenuity is preserved in the academy of sciences, in the model of a bridge after a design of the state-counsellor Von Gerhard. This bridge, the most magnificent work of the kind, if the possibility of its construction could be proved, consists of eleven arches, a draw-bridge for letting vessels pass, distinct raised footways and landing-places, &c. The beauty of the model, and the excellency of its execution, leave everything of the sort very far behind. The late empress rewarded the artificer with a present of four thousand rubles, and he has ever since been employed by the court. Among the more capital undertakers of this class are people who keep warehouses of ready-made goods for sale; one in particular, who has by him to the amount of many thousand rubles, in inlaid

or

or parquettèd floors of all kinds of wood, patterns, and colours, that only require to be put together, which may be done in a few days. Another confines himself to the making of coffins, of which he keeps a great quantity, of every form and size, and at all prices. Several of these dealers on a large scale have neither shop, nor tools, nor journeymen, but engage only in podriads; for example, to execute all the timber and wood-work in a new-built house, and then take on the necessary workmen, over whom they act as surveyors. — Before we dismiss this subject, a man and his work must be mentioned, who does honour to his country, Germany; and in his line has excelled anything that the most refined industry of England and France has ever produced. The name of this man is Rœntgen; he is a native of Neuwied, and belongs to the sect of Moravian brethren. He has lived many years, at several times, in St. Petersburg, and has embellished and enriched the palaces of the empress and the great personages of the court with the astonishing productions of his art. In the imperial hermitage are a great many pieces of furniture, cabinets, clocks, and other works, of his invention and execution. They are composed of the greatest variety of woods, to which the artist, by a certain preparation, has given a peculiar hardness and durability; and which, by the most laborious and extraordinary mode of polishing, have received a gloss which needs no rubbing for its preservation.

preservation. The workmanship of these pieces is not less wonderful than their invention; not a joint is visible; all is fitted so exactly together as though it were molten at one cast; some are inlaid with bronze-work of the most beautiful and diversified gilding; others with bas-reliefs, gems, and antiques. But the most superlative production of this artist is a bureau or writing-desk, which the empress presented to the museum of the academy of sciences about eight years ago. Here the genius of the inventor has lavished its riches and its fertility in the greatest variety of compositions: all seems the work of enchantment. On opening this amazing desk, in front appears a beautiful group of bas-reliefs in bronze superbly gilt; which, by the slightest pressure on a spring, vanishes away, giving place to a magnificent writing-flat inlaid with gems. The space above this flat is devoted to the keeping of valuable papers or money. The bold hand that should dare to invade this spot would immediately be its own betrayer: for, at the least touch of the table-part, the most charming strains of soft and plaintive music instantly begin to play upon the ear; the barrel-organ whence it proceeds occupying the lower part of the desk behind. Several small drawers for holding the materials for writing, &c. likewise start forward by the pressure of their springs, and shut again as quickly, without leaving behind a trace of their existence. If one would change the table-part of the bureau into a reading-desk,

desk, from the upper part a board springs forward, from which, with incredible velocity, all the parts of a commodious and well-contrived reading-desk expand, and take their proper places. But the mechanism of this performance of art, as well as its outward ornaments, should be seen, as nothing can be more difficult to describe. The inventor offered this rare and astonishing piece to the empress Catharine II. for twenty thousand rubles; but she generously thought that this sum would be barely sufficient to pay for the workmanship: she therefore recompensed his talent with a farther present of five thousand rubles.

Several other branches of trade and commerce might be mentioned; but these may suffice for the information of the readers of the present work, especially as in this part of it we must necessarily consult brevity.

For want, however, of a true statement of weights, measures, and coins, readers justly complain of difficulties in comprehending the authors who treat of foreign countries: we will therefore conclude our Preliminaries with the necessary information on those subjects with regard to the present work.

The russian foot is exactly the same with the english, which was adopted by Peter the great for the fleet, and is now become the standard for the whole empire. It is divided into twelve inches; every

every inch into ten lines, and every line into ten scruples.

The russian yard is called arshine. It is in length 28 english, or $26\frac{3}{4}$ french inches. It is divided into 16 vershoks, each of which is therefore $1\frac{5}{8}$ english inches—93 $\frac{3}{4}$ arshines make 100 ells of Berlin—97 $\frac{1}{8}$ arshines make 100 ells of Amsterdam—80 $\frac{1}{2}$ arshines make 100 ells of Hamburgh, &c. At Riga they sometimes measure by the ell, formerly in common use there, whereof 100 make only 77 $\frac{1}{8}$ arshines.

The russian fathom (sajéne) is 7 english feet or 3 arshines; the english and the dutch are no more than 6 feet.

A russian verst is the length of 500 fathoms (sajéne), which are equal to 3500 english feet. A geographical mile contains 6 versts 475 sajénes and 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ arshines; and a geographical degree 104 $\frac{1}{4}$ versts, or, exactly speaking, 104 versts 131 $\frac{1}{4}$ sajénes and 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ vershoks. An english mile is 1 verst 368 sajénes and 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ arshines; 60 english miles are equal to 1 degree of latitude, as are 104 russian versts; a french league 4 versts 84 sajénes; a swedish mile 10 versts and 17 sajénes.

Superficies are always reckoned by square versts, desattines, and square sajénes, but most commonly by desattines. A desattine is 80 sajénes or 560 english feet long, and 30 sajénes or 210 feet broad. It contains therefore 2400 square sajénes or 117,600 russian and english square feet.

WEIGHTS.

WEIGHTS. — The least russian weight is a solotnik, weighing 68, but, according to the russian pharmacopœia, 70 medicinal grains. In the common course of trade the solotnik is divided into $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, and $\frac{1}{8}$; but the assayers, jewellers, and goldsmiths, divide it into 96 parts, and call each a *part*: a diamond, for example, weighs $2\frac{7}{8}$, &c.

A russian lote weighs 3 solotniks.

A pound contains 32 lote or 96 solotniks, which make 8512 apothecary grains, or 7452 dutch asse. Five-and-forty russian pounds are 38 hampburgh pounds. The parts of a pound are usually named by solotniks; what, for instance, weighs 7 lote, is said to weigh 21 solotniks.

Thirty-six pounds english, or 40 pounds russ make a pood.

COIN.	Gold.	Imperial	- - -	10 rubles.
		Half Imperial	- - -	5
Silver.	Ruble	- - -	- - -	100 copeeks.
		Half-ruble	- - -	50
		Quarter-ruble	- - -	25
		Twenty-copeek piece	- - -	20
		Fifteen-copeek piece	- - -	15
		Grievnik	- - -	10
Copper.	Petaki (5-cop. piece)	- - -	- - -	5
		Grosch	- - -	2
		Copeek	- - -	1
		Denufhka	- - -	$\frac{1}{2}$
		Polushka	- - -	$\frac{1}{4}$
			- - -	

* * It

* * It is necessary to mention, that the relative value of the ruble to the money of other countries varies with the course of exchange; it will be, however, generally adequate to all historical purposes, if the reader reckons the ruble at four shillings. Dividing by five will then give him the sums specified in pounds sterling. This may serve for the period of this history: but at present, 1798, the ruble is worth no more than two shillings.

TABLE I. ANHALT-ZERBST.

JOHN, prince of Anhalt-Zerbst, born March 24, 1621, died June 4, 1667.
Married Sophia Augusta, daughter of Frederic, duke of Holstein-Gottorp.

Charles William, prince, born Oct. 26, 1662; succ. 1667; died Nov. 8, 1718.
Married Sophia, daughter of duke Augustus administrator of Magdeburg.

John Augustus, prince, born July 29, 1677; succ. 1718; died Nov. 7, 1742.
Mar. 1. Frederica, daughter of Frederic duke of Saxe-Gotha.
2. Hedvig Frederica, daughter of Frederic Ferdinand duke of Wittenberg-Weittingen.

John Lewis, resided at Dornburg, born March 4, 1656; died Nov. 1, 1704.
Mar. Christiana Eleonora von Zentseh.

John Lewis, prince, born June 12, 1688; succ. conjointly with his brother 1742; died Nov. 5, 1746.
Christian Augustus, prince, born Nov. 29, 1698; succ. with John Lewis 1742; prussian general, field-marshal, and governor of Stettin; died March 16, 1747.
Mar. Johanna Elizabeth, daughter of Christian Augustus, bishop of Lubeck, Nov. 8, 1727.

Sophia Augusta Frederica, born May 2, 1729; afterwards
CATARINA ALEXIEVNA.

William Christian Frederic, born Nov. 18, 1739; died Aug. 26, 1742.

Frederic Augustus*, last prince of Zerbst, born Apr. 9, 1734; died March 3, 1793.
Mar. 1. Carolina Wilhelmina Sophia, daughter of Maximilian, landgraf of Hesse Cassel; died May 22, 1759.
2. Frederica Augusta Sophia, daughter of Victor Frederic, prince of A. Bernsburg.

* There were also three princesses, but who all died in their infancy.

TABLE II. HOLSTEIN-GOTTORP.

Christian Albert, duke of Holstein-Gottorp, born Feb. 3, 1641, bishop of Lubeck from 1655 to 1666.
Died Dec. 27, 1694.
Married Frederica Amelia, daughter of Frederic III. king of Denmark.

Frederic IV. born Oct. 18, 1671; died July 19, 1702.
Mar. Hedvig Sophia, daughter of Charles XI. of Sweden.

Charles Frederic, born April 30, 1700; died June 18, 1739.
Mar. ANNE PETROVNA, daughter of tzar Peter the great.

CHARLES PETER ULRIC, born Feb. 21, 1728, afterwards Peter III. emperor of Russia, and husband of Catherine II.

Christian Augustus, born Jan. 11, 1673; bishop of Lubeck; died Apr. 25, 1727.
Mar. Albertina Frederica, daughter of Frederic Magnus, margraf of Baden-durlach.

Adolphus Fred. king of Sweden, died 1776.
Mar. Luisa Ulrica princess of Prussia.
Gustavus III. king of Sweden, assassinated 1792.
Gustavus Adolphus, present king of Sweden.

Frederic Augustus, bishop of Lubeck, died 1785.
Hedvig Elizabeth, married to the duke of Sudermania.

Johanna Elizabeth, born Oct. 24, 1712; died May 30, 1760.
Mar. Christian Aug. prince of Anhalt-Zerbst.
SOPHIA AUGUSTA FREDERICA, afterwards wife of Peter III. and empress Catherine II.

George Lewis, born March 1, 1749; died Sept. 7, 1783.
Peter Frederic Lewis, present prince bishop of Lubeck.

TABLE III.
RUSSIA.
Tzar Alexey Mikhailovitch succeeded in 1645, died 1676.
Married 1. Maria Iliichna Miloslavskaya.
2. Natalia Kirilovna Nariskina.

1. Tzar Feodor III. Alexeyvitch, succ. 1676, died 1682.	1. Tzar Ivan III. Alexeyvitch succeeded with his brother Peter 1682, abdicated 1689; died 1696.	2. Tzar Peter I. Alexeyvitch the great, succ. with Ivan 1682, reigned alone from 1689, first emperor 1721; died 1725.	2. Anna Petrovna. Mar. 1725 to Charles Fred. duke of Holstein-Gottorp; died 1728.	2. Elizaveta Petrovna, empress 1741; died Jan. 5, 1762.
Mar. Procopia Feodorovna Solticova.	Anna Ivanovna, empress 1730; died 1740.	Mar. 1. Evdokia Feodorovna Lapoukina, died 1699.	Peter III. Feodorovitch (Charles Peter Ulric), emp. Jan. 5, 1762, de-throned July 9; died July 17.	
Catharina Ivanovna, died 1733.	Mar. Charles Leopold, duke of Mecklenburgh, 1716; died 1747.	2. Catharina I. Alexievna reigning empress 1725; died 1727.	Mar. Catharine II. Alexievna (Sophia Augusta Frederica), reigning empress, July 9, 1762; died Nov. 17, 1796.	
Anna Carllovna (Elizabeth Catharina Christina), regent of Russia 1740, pulled down and imprisoned 1741; died 1746.	Mar. Anthony Ulric, prince of Brunwic-Wolfenbutter, 1739.			
Put into prison 1741. Died 1776.				
Ivan IV. (III. VI.) Antonovitch, born Aug. 23, 1740; emp. Oct. 28, 1740; deposed Dec. 6, 1741; put to death July 16, 1764.	Catharina Antonovna, born Nov. 1745; died Oct. 1782.	Peter II. Alexeyvitch, emp. 1727, died 1730.	Paul Petrovitch, born Oct. 1, 1754; emperor Nov. 17, 1796.	Anna Petrovna, born Dec. 20, 1757; died March 19, 1759.
	Elizabeth, born Nov. 1743; died Oct. 1782.		Mar. 1. Natalia Alexievna (Wilhelmina), princess of Hesse Darmstadt, died 1776.	
			2. Maria Feodorovna, (Sophia Dorothea Angustia Louisa), princess of Wittenberg, Issue nine children, all alive.	

L I F E

OF THE

EMPRESS CATHARINE II.

CHAP. I.

Events previous to the Revolution in the Year 1762.
— Birth and early Years of the Empress. — Marriage with the Grand Duke Peter Fedorovitch. — Transactions till the Death of Elizabeth.

IT is now scarcely possible for any great events to escape the pen of history; and those which it seems to record with most delight are the sanguinary catastrophes that shake empires to their base, or cause the reins of government to pass from one hand to another. Vain then would be the attempt to conceal or disguise the causes of that revolution which, in 1762, brought the throne of Russia under another sovereign. Many will, doubtless, be the writers who will endeavour to unveil them; and therefore it is of consequence that posterity should faithfully be made acquainted with that transaction.

In order to form a true judgment of the character of Peter III. of his failings and misfortunes, we must first cast an eye over the reign of Elizabeth, to discover the intrigues that were formed against her nephew by the ambitious and faithless courtiers of that princess.

Elizabeth Petrovna was the daughter of Peter the great and the first Catharine; who, notwithstanding her great power, was obliged, at her death, to leave the throne to the young * Peter II, son of the unfortunate tzarovitch Alexius, decapitated by order of his father.

Peter II, reigned only three years, and was followed † by the empress Anne, daughter of the czar Ivan, elder brother of Peter the first.

To Anne, in 1740 ‡, succeeded Ivan III. her nephew, being yet in his cradle; and who, by a conspiracy headed by a german surgeon of french extraction, named Lestocq, was dethroned, thirteen months afterwards §, for the purpose of raising Elizabeth to the sovereign power §.

Elizabeth,

* May 18, 1727.

† February 1, 1730.

‡ The 28th of October.

§ December 7, 1741.

§ Lestocq became, in his turn, the victim of a cabal that was formed against him. The chancellor Bestuchef, and several other courtiers, accused him to the empress Elizabeth of holding a dangerous correspondence with the ambassador of Prussia; and the deluded princess sacrificed to their animosity the man to whom she owed her crown. Lestocq was deprived of all his property, and exiled to a miserable village in the province of Archangel,

Elizabeth, it is said, bore a likeness to the handsome Catharine her mother, and even transcended her in beauty. She was of an advantageous height, and of a figure remarkably well proportioned; and though her features were rather large, her countenance displayed an inexpressible sweetness, still increased by the charms of her conversation, which was often gay, and almost always flattering. But if she equalled her mother in those advantages which render the society of a woman so agreeable; if she surpassed her in the immoderate love of pleasure; she was very far from possessing, like her, that strength of mind which gives to them to whose share it falls, the irresistible ascendant over all that surround them. Instead of having the art of commanding, Elizabeth submitted herself continually to the guidance of others; and this weakness was a primary cause of the misfortunes of Peter III.

That she might secure her independence, Elizabeth constantly refused to take a husband, with whom she must have shared the empire; but she did not the more abstain from voluptuous gratifications, or even tasting the pleasures of the mater-

Archangel, where he was abandoned to the extremest indigence. Peter III. recalled him; but a part of his property was lost, which he did not regret, any more than the court, where he ceased to appear, as he was now apprised of its dangers. He died at Petersburg in 1767.

nal state; and as, with her other infirmities, she had that of being a bigot, the field-marshal Alexey Gregorievitch Razumoffky, her grand-veneur, succeeded in determining her privately to give him her hand. The counts Tarrakanof and their sister* were the fruit of this clandestine union. Razumoffky†, however, was not the only lover of Elizabeth; she found it agreeable to make frequent changes; but the crafty favourite permitted none to be presented to her view, except such as he thought to have too little understanding or ambition to attempt a competition with him.

To her propensity to voluptuousness, Elizabeth first added the love of good cheer, and then gave herself up to the pleasures of wine. Banquets, balls, masquerades, the most frivolous amusements, were preferable in her mind to the perplexities and

* We shall hereafter relate the unhappy end of this young princess, and the cruel treatment she experienced from Catharine II. and Alexius Orlof, when she was brought off by the latter from Rome, whither she had been conducted by prince Radzevil. One of the brothers, Tarrakanof, is still alive. The other died miserably at Petersburg. Being designed to be admitted into the college of Mines, he attended a course of chemistry under professor Lehmann: and in setting on the furnace a vessel filled with poisonous ingredients, he broke it, and was suffocated.

† The empress Elizabeth loaded Alexius Razumoffky with benefits. She made him a present of the palace Annitzkoi, which, after the death of that favourite, lapsed back to the domains of the crown: and it is a remarkable circumstance, that Catharine II. afterwards bestowed this palace on prince Potemkin.

troubles

troubles of business; and therefore consumed the days she had promised to employ for the prosperity of the empire.

Count Ivan Ivanovitch Shuvalof was one of the favourites of Elizabeth; but he made no other use of his influence than as a means of augmenting his wealth, which was already enormous; leaving the arts of intrigue to his cousin Peter Ivanovitch Shuvalof*. Skilled in the ways of flattery, Ivan Shuvalof made humanity and glory the chief subjects of his discourse with the empress. He extorted from her, by various means, presents of immense value, and inspired her with the desire of causing the history of Russia to be composed; a desire which he was artful enough likewise to turn to his advantage, by attracting to himself the praises of Voltaire.

But the person who had for a long time the most influence on the mind of Elizabeth, was the grand chancellor Alexey Bestuchef Riumin†, the boldest

* Peter Ivanovitch Shuvalof had conceived the hope of seizing the throne to the prejudice of the grand duke; but this project appeared so extravagant, that Elizabeth herself only made it a subject for laughter.

† The grand chancellor was the son of a scottish officer, named Best, whom Peter the great brought with him at his return from England. Best, which in the russian language signifies *beast*, is a horrid term of abuse, when applied to a man or woman; therefore Peter familiarly told him to change it. "If your majesty does not approve of my name," said the lieutenant, "I beseech you to alter it to your own mind." — "Well then," returned the czar, "let it be Bestuchef, and thou art a russian at once."

and

and the ablest man of all that attended the imperial court. Though not her lover, he governed at once the empress, her favourite, and the ministers of state; he, in a manner, directed the affairs of the empire both at home and abroad.

Bestuchef had applied himself to business and intrigue for more than forty years. After having accompanied the russian ambassadors at the congress of Utrecht, he had improved himself in England under the ministers of George I. At his return to Petersburg, he was appointed minister to the court of Stockholm, and afterwards to that of Copenhagen. At length he became attached to Anna Ivanovna, duchess of Courland, who, on her coming to the throne, commissioned him to repair to Hamburgh in quality of envoy extraordinary to the circle of Lower Saxony. Being devoted to the ferocious Biren, he was at first arrested with him, but he was dextrous and lucky enough to escape partaking in his exile. On Elizabeth's accession to the crown, Lestocq presented to her Bestuchef, who, being soon promoted to the place of grand chancellor, on the death of prince Tscherkaski, successor of Ostermann, employed his influence in repaying the friendship of Lestocq with the blackest ingratitude.

Bestuchef was not only jealous of the favour which Lestocq enjoyed, but hated him besides for his partiality to France. The departure of La Chetardie had left at the court of Petersburg an open field

field for the intrigues of Austria and England, the effects whereof at his return he was not able to stop*. Bestuchef found means to persuade Elizabeth that the french ambassador was only returned to form cabals against her. He had the infamous audacity to procure the assassination of a courier of that minister, and having seized the dispatches in cypher, which he interpreted according to his own pleasure, he repaired to the empress and laid them before her, with assurances that they were replete with calumnies and dangerous machinations. What he said gained credit with Elizabeth, who in consequence gave orders for La Chetardie to leave her court. The ambassador accordingly set out. Having been informed of the murder of his courier, he had some apprehensions that a similar act of violence might be perpetrated upon himself: and in this he was not deceived; for, before he could reach the borders of Russia, he was assaulted by the emissaries of Bestuchef, who fired at him several times, and killed a servant that stood behind his carriage.

Some time after this Bestuchef succeeded so far as to raise suspicions in the mind of the empress against Lestocq. The unhappy Lestocq was arrested, stripped of all his property, and banished to a village in the province of Archangel. Thus the two men who

* Austria and England furnished Bestuchef with large sums of money. This minister was a great gamester; and whenever he lost, he paid, not with russian coin, but with guineas or with german ducats.

had most contributed to raise Elizabeth to the sovereignty, were on a slight suspicion sacrificed by her: a lamentable example for those who reckon on the gratitude of princes!

In the meantime, Elizabeth, determining to deprive the family of Anna Ivanovna of all hope of re-ascending the throne, nominated as her successor Charles Peter Ulric, son of the duke of Holstein Gottorp by Anne daughter of Peter the great; and, having called him to Petersburg in 1742, she made him abjure lutheranism and adopt the greek religion, assume the name of Peter Fedorovitch, and declared him grand duke of Russia and her presumptive heir; this prince being at that time only fourteen years of age.

The very next day to that whereon Peter was appointed successor to the empress Elizabeth*, three ambassadors from Sweden arrived at Petersburg to announce to that young prince, that the senate of Stockholm had made choice of him to fill the place of Frederic I. who from his great age was no longer able to sway the sceptre. Peter, having just devoted himself to Russia, thought himself not at liberty to accept the election of the Swedes; fortune seeming to offer him two crowns almost at once, only to render that which he should prefer more fatal to him. Returning thanks to the swedish ambassadors,

* He was named grand duke the 17th of November, and the Swedish ambassadors arrived the 18th. — These ambassadors were count Bonde and the barons Hamilton and Schœfer.

the prince charged them to exhort the senate to chuse for their king the bishop of Lubeck, Adolphus Frederic of Holstein, his uncle, who was accordingly elected at the expiration of some months.

Peter might by his birth have sooner preferred his claim to the imperial crown; but the law enacted by his grandfather Peter I. concerning the freedom of choice in naming a successor*, and several revolutions, had been against him. On the death of Peter in 1725, his widow Catharine I. got possession of the throne, more by the boldness

* Peter I. pushing despotism to its utmost extremity, had made a law, which authorized the sovereign to designate for his successor whom he would. This law was easily eluded in a country where the existing monarch considers what has been enacted by his predecessors as obligatory only, when it is his interest to do so, where the constitution and the form of government have no securities. However, the law was made and adopted; and it was not for the legislator to be the first to infringe it. Peter died without designating his successor, without even knowing who should fill his throne. That monarch put his son to death, that his sceptre might not fall into hands which he thought not able to wield it; thus stifling the sentiments of paternal affection from attachment to the empire he had formed. Though apprehensive that his painful and glorious labours would not be continued, that prince, instead of naming his successor, and thereby declaring to his people him on whom he founded his hopes, died without foreseeing the troubles, the incalculable misfortunes, such a neglect might produce. What an error in a legislator! what inconsistency in the conduct of Peter! So true it is, that the greatest man is sometimes guilty of faults which an ordinary person would have avoided.

of Mentchicof, than in consequence of her husband's will. After her death, which happened in 1727, the descendants of Peter recovered the succession. His grandson, the son of the unfortunate Alexey Petrovitch, inherited the throne, which had been bequeathed him by his step-grandmother; but with this condition, that in case he should die without an heir, then her children by Peter the great should succeed. By the premature death of Peter II. in 1730, the male line of the russian tzars of the house of Romanof became extinct: the female succeeded of course. But, during the last reign, a council of its own erection, assuming the style of the high privy council, and taking upon itself the despotic decision in all matters of state, in order to secure its authority, found it necessary to circumscribe that of the princes. This council justly imagined, that the family of Peter the great would never submit to any binding capitulation, and arbitrarily passed by his daughters. Anna Petrovna, the eldest, already deceased in 1728, was the mother of Charles Peter Ulric, duke of Holstein Gottorp, who, therefore, for this time, lost the succession. The second daughter, Elizabeth, was likewise passed over: and the views of the nation were turned to the female posterity of the emperor Ivan Alexieyvitch. But that elder brother of Peter the great, and for a time his partner in the empire, had voluntarily relinquished the government,

vernment, and left it to the latter alone: accordingly the offspring of the latter should of right succeed to the sovereigns their progenitors, even if no regard were to be paid to the testament of Catharine. But in respect to the family of Ivan, the council now pursued a like arbitrary conduct, by excluding the eldest daughter Catharina and her posterity from the throne, because they dreaded the impetuous temper of her husband, Charles Leopold duke of Mecklenburg. The second daughter Anna Ivanovna became empress in 1730, under a very limiting capitulation, which in a fortnight afterwards she tore in pieces. The posterity of Peter was farther and farther removed from the succession. Anna named her nephew, the infant son of her elder sister Catharina, who in the meantime died, to be her successor: and this child was called to be emperor, under a regency, upon the demise of his aunt in 1740. Three weeks after, a revolution displaced the guardian Biren duke of Courland; and from that event a year had scarcely elapsed when a second revolution deposed the infant emperor, the regent-mother, and the whole family. Elizabeth Petrovna was raised to the throne in December 1741, who immediately, as was before observed, called Peter, the only son of her deceased elder sister Anna, in order to nominate him grand duke and heir to the imperial throne. — Thus then, though late, the succession was recovered by the rightful heirs, according to the

the law of primogeniture observed in all the rest of Europe.

Peter having, as we have before observed, publicly adopted the greek religion, and received at his confirmation the name of Peter Fedorovitch*, was now solemnly proclaimed grand duke, with the title of imperial Highness, and declared successor to the throne; at the end of which ceremony all present took the oath to maintain his succession.

In 1745, the empress resolved to provide him a spouse. Elizabeth and the great Frederic of Prussia were still upon amicable terms. They took up the affairs of Sweden; and the empress first made the proposal, in 1744, to marry the new heir-apparent with Louisa Ulrica, the king of Prussia's sister. For, it is said in the contemporary accounts, that Elizabeth proposed to the king a connection between his youngest sister, Anna Amelia†, and her nephew. But Frederic, who was not fond of the

* It is usual in Russia to add to the christian name the christian name of their father, with the termination *ovitch* or *evitch*, which denotes the son, as *ovna* or *evna* implies the daughter. By this means foreigners, on coming into this country, drop the name they have hitherto borne, and are known by another. Thus a Mr. John Jennings, if his father's name were John, on his arrival here is Ivan Ivanovitch, and his sister Anne will be Anna Ivanovna. — Theodore, in russian orthography, is Feodor or Fedor, and is also adopted for Frederic.

† She died abbess of Quedlinburg in 1787.

changes

changes of religion required in this country on such occasions, declined the offer; the acceptance of which might perhaps have occasioned him one formidable foe the less in the seven years war. In his turn he amicably proposed the princess Sophia of Zerbst, as a relation of the grand duke*; and this proposal met her full approbation.

The father of Sophia Augusta Frederica was Christian Augustus, prince of Anhalt-Zerbst-Dornburg, at that time major-general in the prussian service, commander in chief of the regiments of infantry, and governor of the town and fortrefs of Stettin. Her mother, a woman of parts and beauty, a friend and correspondent of Frederic prince royal of Prussia, of about the same age with herself, was born princess of Holstein, and therefore nearly related to the three great families of the north. — On the death of John Augustus, reigning prince of Zerbst, the 7th of November 1742, without issue, he was succeeded by his two cousins conjointly in the government, John Lewis and Christian Augustus. The eldest of these brothers died, unmarried, the 5th of November 1746; the now sole prince Augustus survived him not long, only to the 16th of March 1747, when he died a general feldt-marshal in the prussian service, and governor of Stettin. Beside his daughter, he left behind him only one son, who had not yet completed his thirteenth year. The dowager princess was called

* Their grandfathers were brothers.

to the regency, and governed in his name till July 31, 1752, when the young prince, on being declared of age by the emperor, took the government upon him. The mother, as in similar cases had often been done by the princes of Germany, retired to Paris, where she died the 20th of May 1760. The son Frederic Augustus bore no resemblance, either in mind or dispositions, to his illustrious sister. He died in 1793, in foreign parts, where he had latterly lived, lamented by none. He had been twice married, but was always childless: the branch Zerbst of the house of Anhalt become extinct with him.

The princess Sophia, of whom we are now to speak, and whom fortune early called to act a part upon a higher stage than that of Zerbst, was born at Stettin in prussian Pomerania, the 2d of May 1729; consequently four years after the death of Peter the great, and two years after that of the first Catharine, and in the territory of Frederic, with whom she afterwards shared the renown of the eighteenth century. Her mother took the care of her education on herself. Burghers are still living in Stettin, who remember in their childhood to have played with the princess; for she was brought up in the simplest manner, and was called by her parents, in the common diminutive of her name, Fiékè. Good-humour, intelligence, and spirit were even then the striking features of her character. Whatever was the play, she always took upon herself the principal

principal part, making also her little companions know theirs, and that sometimes with the full emphasis of command. A lady of quality, who frequently saw her, describes her in the following manner: "Her deportment from her earliest years was always remarkably good; she grew uncommonly handsome, and was a great girl for her years. Her countenance, without being beautiful, was very agreeable; to which the peculiar gaiety and friendliness which she ever displayed gave additional charms. Her education was conducted by her mother alone, who kept her strictly, and never suffered her to shew the least symptoms of pride, to which she had some propensity; accustoming her, from her earliest infancy, to salute the ladies of distinction, who came to visit the princess, with the marks of respect that became a child; an honour which my mother on all such occasions enjoyed, and which she was obliged never to omit, by the express command of the princess."

These days, which Sophia passed in easy seclusion, were always recollected by Catharine with pleasure. While arbitrary sovereign of the russian empire, she still retained sentiments of affection for the place of her birth, and for several persons of her former acquaintance. She annually sent to the magistrate of Stettin the medals she caused to be struck in commemoration of the events of her reign, as well in gold as in silver. Shortly after her coming to the crown, she sent to the society of mark-

men of the town a present of 1000 ducats. In her youth she had frequently attended the amusements of these burghers, and at times even shot at the mark. Soon after her arrival in Petersburg, she sent the lady who waited upon her, and gave her the first lessons in the french language *, some beautiful furs; and to her writing-master †, a sum of money. In the very late years of her life, she transmitted her picture, accompanied with the most flattering expressions of esteem, to a lady formerly her playmate. This lady, who has permitted herself to be named as the communicator of these anecdotes of the early life of Catharine, is the countess von Mellin, at Gartz. The particulars, though trifling in themselves, yet, as authentically relating to the illustrious subject of these memoirs, are of consequence enough to be inserted here.

She lived till her fifteenth year alternately in Stettin and in Dornburg or in Zerbst; but she always accompanied her mother on several little journies, which contributed much to the forming of her mind and manners. The princess often made some stay at Hamburg with her mother, the widow of the bishop of Lubeck, at whose court was a M. von Brummer, filling the post of a gentleman of the

* A demoiselle Quardel, then married to a burgomaster of Demmin.

† Laurent, the schoolmaster belonging to the french congregation in Stettin.

bed-

bed-chamber*, who communicated to the young princess the most instructive works of the then living authors, which had a beneficial effect on her mind and heart. She was always addicted to reading, to reflection, to learning, and to employment. Still oftener was the Princess at Brunswick, with her relation and former preceptress, Elizabeth Sophia Maria, dowager duchess of Wolfenbuttel, born princess of Holstein-Norburg. Here she used sometimes to pass the whole summer; where she was also in December 1743, and caused her daughter Sophia to be daily instructed in the doctrines of the lutheran religion, by the court-preacher Dovè, who at that time little thought that his illustrious disciple would so suddenly afterwards adopt the very different faith of another church. The visits to Berlin were likewise not unfrequent; for example, in January 1742, on occasion of the marriage ceremony of the prince of Prussia, father of the present king; and for the last time about the beginning of the year 1744, whence the journey was farther continued to Russia.

Three years after Peter had been called to Russia, it was therefore agreed to marry him with Sophia Augusta of Anhalt-Zerbst, who was about one year younger than himself, and who, on embracing the greek religion, changed her name to that of Ca-

* Afterwards an oberhof-marshal von Brummer went from Holstein with the grand duke Peter to Russia. *Query*, whether the same?

F 3

tharina

tharina Alexievna, a name which she has rendered so illustrious since.

All Europe was deceived on the causes of this alliance, which was attributed to the intervention of the king of Prussia. It is true that Frederic was desirous of seeing it brought to effect, but, without a motive unconnected with politics, the solicitations of that monarch would have fallen to the ground.

Long ere she mounted the throne of the tzars, Elizabeth had been promised to the young prince of Holstein-Eutin, brother to the princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, mother of Catharine; but at the instant when the marriage was about to be celebrated, the prince fell sick, and died. Elizabeth, who loved him to excess, became inconsolable; and in the bitterness of her grief made a vow to renounce the nuptial tie: a vow which, as we have already observed, was, at least as to the public, religiously kept. Even if Elizabeth was seen afterwards to yield to the gallantries of several of her courtiers, she nevertheless retained a lively tenderness for the object of her first affection. She paid a sort of worship to his memory, and never mentioned him without tears.

The princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, not ignorant of the tender remembrance preserved by Elizabeth for her brother, resolved to take advantage of it for securing a throne to her daughter. She trusted her plan to the king of Prussia, who applauded her
for

for it, and shortly after supported it with all his might.

The princess of Zerbst repaired to Petersburg, where Elizabeth received her with friendship. Her daughter, who was handsome, and endowed with all the graces of youth, immediately made a pretty forcible impression on the heart of the young grand duke; and as he himself was at that time well made, and of a very good figure, the attachment became reciprocal; and it was soon the subject of the conversations at court. Elizabeth herself remarked them without seeming to be displeased. The princess of Zerbst, who spied the favourable moment, lost no time, but ran and threw herself at the feet of the empress, represented to her the inclination of the two young lovers as an unconquerable passion; and calling to her mind the love she had herself borne to the prince of Holstein, her brother, she conjured her to promote the happiness of the niece of that so much regretted prince.

There was, doubtless, no need of all this for determining the empress to consent to their union. She mingled her tears with those of the princess of Zerbst; and, embracing her, promised her that her daughter should be grand duchess.

The day following the choice of Elizabeth was announced to the council and to the foreign ministers. The marriage was fixed for a day shortly to arrive; and preparations for its celebration were

arranged with a magnificence worthy of the heir of the throne of the Russians.

But fortune, which had hitherto seemed so favourable to the grand duke, now began to change its course; and Catharine was threatened with the loss of her lover, as Elizabeth had been deprived of hers. The grand duke was attacked with a violent fever; and a small pox of a very malignant nature soon after made its appearance*. The prince, however, did not fall under the violence of this disease, though he retained the cruel marks of it. The metamorphosis was terrible. He not only lost the comeliness of his face, but it became for a time distorted, and almost hideous.

None were permitted to approach the young princess from the apartment of the grand duke; but her mother regularly brought her tidings of the turns of the prince's distemper. Observing how much he was altered, and desirous of weakening the effect the first sight of him might have upon her daughter, she described him as one of the ugliest men imaginable; recommending her, at the same time, to dissemble the disgust she must naturally feel at his appearance. Notwithstanding this sage precaution, the young princess could not revisit the grand duke without feeling a secret horror; she was artful enough, however, to repress her emotion, and running to meet him, fell upon

* It was on returning from Kief in the Ukraine, whither the devout Elizabeth had been on a pilgrimage with her court.

his

his neck, and embraced him with marks of the most lively joy. But no sooner was she retired to her apartment than she fell into a swoon; and it was three hours before she recovered the use of her senses.

The uneasiness which the young princess had just experienced, was however no inducement to her to endeavour at deferring the period of her union with the grand duke. The empress contemplated this alliance with pleasure; the princess of Zerbst was passionately desirous to see it concluded; and the suggestions of ambition, acting more powerfully on the heart of Catharine than even the will of her mother, and that of the empress, permitted her not a moment's hesitation.

The nuptials were accordingly solemnized; but, notwithstanding the attachment which was so manifest between the grand duke and the princess from the first moment of their meeting, their love was fated not to be of long duration; however, they lived some time in an apparently good understanding, which Catharine supported as long as she conceived it to be necessary.

This princess, brought up with all possible care under the eye of a prudent mother, and at no great distance from the court of the great Frederic, where reigned such a taste for the sciences and the fine arts, added to the beauty, and to the quickness of understanding which she had received from nature, a very extensive knowledge, and the facility

cility of expressing herself with elegance in several languages.

Peter too had sense ; but his education had been totally neglected. He possessed an excellent heart ; but he wanted politeness. He was of a good stature, but ugly and almost deformed. He frequently blushed at the superiority of his wife, and his wife often blushed at seeing him so little worthy of her ; the alteration that had taken place in the features of the prince's visage was not the sole cause of the indifference of his young consort : in short, though young and affectionate, he was not capable of making her happy*. Hence arose that mutual dislike which the people of the court were not long in finding out, and which was visibly augmenting from day to day.

By one of those strange perversions of judgment, which often appear in the uncultivated mind, Elizabeth pretended to think that her nephew was too well informed, and that he was in danger of

* Il avoit une imperfection qui, quoiqu' aisée à détruire, sembloit bien plus cruelle : la violence de son amour, ses efforts réitérés ne purent le faire réussir à consommer le mariage. Si ce prince étoit confié à quelqu'un qui eut un peu d'expérience, l'obstacle qui s'opposoit à ses desirs eut été vaincu. Le dernier rabin de Petersbourg ou le moindre chirurgien l'en auroit délivré. Mais telle étoit la honte dont l'accablé ce malheur qu'il n'eut pas même le courage de le révéler, & la princesse, qui ne recevoit plus ses caresses qu'avec répugnance, & qui n'étoit pas alors moins inexpérimentée que lui, ne songea ni à le consoler ni à lui faire chercher des moyens qui le ramenassent dans ses bras.

becoming

becoming too amiable by his manners, and too enviable by his knowledge. From the very moment of her choosing him for her successor, she regarded him as a rival. For this reason it probably was, that she took him from under the tuition of the enlightened Brummer, who had begun his education in Holstein ; and placed about him Tshoglokof, a man of mean talents and a narrow mind. In vain did a few disinterested persons at the court of Petersburg, for there are some such in all courts ; in vain did some estimable women, for there were some such even about Elizabeth ; in vain did these persons, lamenting the ignorance and the sort of desertion in which the young Peter was left, endeavour to represent to his aunt the danger he incurred : the empress was deaf to their remonstrances, and even on some occasions repulsed them with harshness.

Among many examples one only need be mentioned, that of a woman of the bed-chamber named Johanna, who had the spirit to ask this princess why she kept the grand duke from all the deliberations of the council. " If you permit him not to know anything of what is necessary for governing the country," added she, " what do you think will become of him, and what do you think will become of the empire ?" All the answer she got was, that Elizabeth, looking at her angrily, said, " Johanna, knowest thou the way to Siberia ?"—However, the generous Johanna escaped with only

only the fright, and took care for the future to make no more remonstrances on that head to her mistress.

But, if some few dared to lift up their voice in favour of Peter, a great many others made themselves heard against him. The principal families had beheld him with jealousy from the instant of his arrival, as a man who would share with them the power they had now long enjoyed, or perhaps entirely deprive them of it. Among those who strove the most to injure him, we may reckon the great chancellor Bestuchef. From the very day of the grand duke's marriage, he had formed the design of excluding that prince from the throne; and though his plan was so bold and dangerous, he was perpetually employed about the means of bringing it to effect. His foresight was too great to allow him to flatter himself with the expectation of seeing Peter completely disinherited, but he hoped at least to banish him to the camps and armies, and to place Catharine at the head of affairs.

No sooner had Bestuchef matured his plan, than he communicated it to several of the courtiers whom he knew to have imbibed the same rancour with himself. Even women were admitted into the confidence, and they were not the least serviceable in promoting the chancellor's plan. This minister conducted his intrigue with the utmost address. He every day wrote the instructions which he gave to the persons of his party, on small scraps of paper, and

and in terms which could be understood by none but themselves; then shutting these papers in a snuff-box with a double bottom, under pretence of offering snuff, he distributed them to the individuals for whom they were designed. By this means his confidants were informed of all they were to say or to do throughout the day. Their principal employment was to blacken the grand duke in the eyes of Elizabeth. They magnified his slightest defects, they aggravated his most venial faults, they imputed to him vices which he had not as yet, and which they wanted to make him contract. They even went so far as to alarm the empress with fears that her nephew might become dangerous to her authority.

The feeble-minded Elizabeth was but too prone to lend an ear to these vile insinuations. Naturally timid and suspicious, she at length abhorred him whom she had no reason to distrust for a single moment.

But to what cause are we to ascribe this conduct in the ambitious Bestuchef? Keen and crafty, this minister had long perceived the grand duke's character to be feeble and unsettled. Doubtless, with equal perspicacity, he had observed that the grand duchess was the very reverse of her husband. Ought he not then reasonably to have expected, that if they mounted the throne, it would be more easy for him to govern the prince than the princess? No; he cherished no such expectation; for he knew that

Peter

Peter entertained a strong resentment against him for over-reaching the duke his father, in relation to his hereditary estates in Holstein.

Passing through Kiel, when on his mission to Hamburg, Bestuchef had had the temerity and address to carry off from the archives of the dukes of Holstein, the last will of the empress Catharine I. and the original records relative to the connections between those dukes and the court of Petersburg, and to the rights of the children of Anna Petrovna to the heritage of the throne of Russia*. Conscious

* It is well known that count Rabutin, ambassador from the emperor Charles VI., Ostermann, and Bassevitch, in concert with Mentshikof, fabricated the pretended testament of the tzaritzza Catharine I. For giving an air of authenticity to this writing, they took care to insert some articles in favour of the princesses Anne and Elizabeth. Those that most concerned the house of Holstein are as follow :

" 1. The duke and the duchess of Holstein shall be members of the privy council, to whom I leave the administration of the empire of the Russias till the majority of the young tzar Peter Alexiévitch, which I fix to be at his seventeenth year.

" 2. I declare that in case the young tzar shall happen to die without heirs, the princess Anne and the duke her husband shall succeed him.

" 3. My will is, that the duke and his heirs shall enjoy in perpetuity the apanages which have been heretofore granted them in Russia.

" 4. I intend and I will also that the emperor Peter Alexiévitch fulfil the promises made by Peter the great to the duke of Holstein, for putting him in possession of the duchy of Schlesvig, and that he protect him in all matters relating to it, by assisting him with all his force."

of

of having committed against him so grievous an injury, Bestuchef imagined that Peter could never forget it, and therefore wanted to render him unable to punish it.

Bestuchef thought besides, that Peter had a just cause of dislike to him for always supporting the house of Austria with his aunt against the king of Prussia, for whom the young prince cherished an admiration little short of idolatry.

The grand chancellor had had the address to bring into his party almost all those for whom Peter seemed to have an inclination, and who only approached him as spies upon his actions in order to injure him. Of this number was Cyril Razumofsky, who had made one of those fortunes which are regarded as prodigies in other countries, but which are very frequent in Russia. Cyril was a young peasant who, immediately on being informed of the favour which the grand-veneur his brother enjoyed with the empress, set out from the Ukraine, his native place, and arrived with his balalaika* at Petersburg. Thence he was first sent to Berlin, and placed for some time to board with the famous Euler, whom he had the merit of bringing afterwards into Russia. Soon after his return from Prussia, Cyril was created count, commander of the ismail of guards, hetman of

* A rude sort of guitar, with only three strings, in common use among the russian boors.

the

the Kozaks of the Ukraine, and even president of the academy of sciences *. Though of an extraction so gross, and without education, Cyril Razumofsky easily insinuated himself into the good graces of the grand duke †; and, though but lately come to court, he betrayed the prince with an effrontery and baseness worthy of an experienced courtier.

To the desire of promoting the aims of the grand chancellor, were soon added, in the heart of Cyril Razumofsky, the motives of personal vengeance. In proportion as his honours increased, he only bore with impatience the humours of the grand duke; who, to say the truth, in the orgies to which Cyril himself would excite him, frequently recalled to his mind, in too coarse a manner and too publicly, his birth, his balalaika, and the servile occupations of his youth.

The grand duke had another favourite, who did not betray him; but who unhappily had neither the foresight nor the address to prevent the rest from betraying him: this was his aide-de-camp General Gudovitch. A native of the Ukraine, Gudovitch wished to become its hetman, and Peter

* He was in the sequel knight of the orders of St. Andrew, of St. Alexander Nefski, of St. Anne, and of the white eagle of Poland.

† The grand duke called him *his brother*, *his friend*, which is not extraordinary, as *drug moi* and *bratitz* are common terms of familiar address and salutation from superiors as well as equals: but Peter would have Cyril Razumofsky to give him the same appellations.

favoured

favoured his pretensions, even in the face of Cyril Razumofsky. Thenceforward Cyril vowed in his heart an implacable hatred to the prince.

He offered the grand chancellor a country-house which he possessed not far from Kamennoinofs, as a place where they might deliberate more at ease on the project of ruining the grand duke; and it was at that very house that afterwards were held all those traitorous councils, at the head whereof were at first Bestuchef, Cyril, and afterwards Shuvalof, the young princefs Dashkof, and Maria Simeonovna Tfhoglokofo, maid of honour to the empress, and one of her most dangerous confidants. The conspirators consulted concerning the persons whom they thought it would be useful to associate with them. They gave an exact account of all the steps they had severally taken, prepared new projects of attack, and concerted the surest measures to deprive of the throne the last sprout from the stem of Peter the great.

They wanted, for example, to persuade the empress that her nephew was addicted to drunkenness, even long before he was in the habit of drinking to any degree of excess; a habit which he contracted at first, without doubt, merely from the want of employment, from the irksomeness of his situation, and from the base suggestions of those that surrounded him. The method they adopted was the following:

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G

Simeonovna

Simeonova Tshoglokof, discoursing one day with Elizabeth, and perceiving that the monarch was discontented with the grand duke, observed to her with an air of deep concern, that it was a great misfortune that this prince, who was still so young, should addict himself to drinking. Elizabeth, who now for the first time heard the grand duke accused of that vice, considered it as mere calumny, and desired Simeonovna to make good her assertion. "Nothing is easier," returned the impudent Simeonovna. "Your majesty may be convinced of it by your own eyes." A few days afterwards, knowing that the grand duke was a little out of order and kept his room, she went to visit him; when, watching her opportunity, she asked him permission to keep him company at dinner. Peter good-naturedly consented, and bid her place herself at table with him. During the repast, Simeonovna putting on a humour uncommonly gay and fond, told the prince that she would cure him with a bottle of champagne. The bottle was called for; the artful Simeonovna seized it, slyly threw into it some narcotic or inebriating ingredient, and, making the grand duke repeatedly drink bumpers of it to the health of his aunt, she completely intoxicated him. The perfidious maid of honour immediately ran to acquaint the empress. Elizabeth came; and, not knowing the particulars of the scene that had just passed, beheld with grief and indignation the sad condition of her unhappy nephew.

pheuw. Already too much disposed to take up prejudices against him, she thenceforward more readily believed all that Simeonovna Tshoglokof and her accomplices were desirous of imputing to the prince; and, emboldened by this success, the conspirators proceeded in their insolence to propagate against him the most scandalous reports.

To all this, it must be added that the state of inactivity and loneliness in which Peter was left to languish, and the unhappy pliancy of his character, tended infallibly to favour the designs of his enemies.

When the empress was persuaded that he delivered himself up to excess, she not only suppressed the gratification of fifty thousand rubles, of which she customarily made him a present on the anniversary of his birth, but gave orders so far to diminish the expences of his table, that the prince and his guests had not always sufficient to eat. Peter on these occasions would suffer some complaints to escape him not entirely free from expressions of petulance and ill-humour; and these complaints were carefully preserved, exaggerated, and delivered to the empress.

Shortly after the marriage of the grand duke, his aunt had made him a present of Oranienbaum; a country-palace that had formerly belonged to the famous Mentchikof; and as soon as the fair weather permitted him to leave Petersburg, where he lived more like a state prisoner than the heir to the throne,

throne, thither Peter used to retire *. There, freed from the presence of his aunt, and throwing off all constraint, he amused himself with dressing his people in a german uniform, and making them perform the prussian exercise. Elizabeth seemed highly to approve of this occupation, thinking it might preserve her nephew from getting a taste for dangerous pleasures, and even from a disposition to political intrigues, which she considered as still far more dangerous. At the same time she gave orders that, from several regiments, a sufficient number of soldiers should be drafted and sent to the garrison at

* The palace of Oranienbaum was built by prince Mentchikof in 1727, as his country residence; on whose fall it reverted to the crown. It stands on the coast of the gulf of Finland in $59^{\circ} 52'$, N. L. 40 versts from St. Petersburg, 8 from Peterhof, and 7 from the island of Cronstadt. The palace is situated, like that of Peterhof, on a rise about 15 fathom above the level of the sea, formed into terraces; by means whereof it has a beautiful prospect of the gulf, of Cronstadt, and the ships, galleots, &c. continually passing in the summer season. The palace is not large, consists of a central building of two stories, crowned with a turret and two wings, each connected with it by a colonnade. To walk on the top of these colonnades for enjoying the pure air and the fine prospect is extremely agreeable. One of the wings is a chapel; and some of the apartments are very richly fitted up; one with all kinds of costly porcelaine, another lacquered in the chinese taste, black and gold, &c. Within these few years the late empress Catharine II. gave it for the use of the noble sea-cadet corps. It has spacious gardens belonging to it. — That corps has since been removed to the Vassiliostrof, and the palace of Oranienbaum has been granted to the grand duke Constantine.

Oranienbaum,

Oranienbaum, in addition to those of the grand duke; but this attention, which wore the semblance of a favour conferred on the prince, was perhaps nothing more than an additional precaution against him. However that might be, he received it with transport, and gave himself up, with renovated ardour, to his military and prussian inclination.

It has long been the custom for numbers of Germans to go and seek their fortunes in Russia. The elevation of a holstein prince to the rank of grand duke drew them thither in still greater multitudes. The soldiers whom Peter kept at Oranienbaum were almost all of that nation. Besides these, he had made a selection of many others who understood music or displayed talents for acting of plays; and of these he formed a company, whom he made to represent the best pieces of the german theatre.

However, neither the theatre nor military exercises could employ the whole time of the prince; and the void was but too often filled up with the habits he had begun to contract in the indolence of the palace of Petersburg.

The party formed against him, knowing his extreme propensity to everything that was prussian, had found means to persuade him that in Prussia every officer had continually his pipe in his mouth, and was as constantly employed in drinking and gaming. The young people who surrounded him added, if not from malice, at least from libertin-

ism, example to precept; and, in conformity to it, he became smoker, drinker, gamester.

Catharine all this time was pursuing a conduct diametrically opposite to that of her husband. Directed by her vigilant mother, she was solely employed in gaining partisans from among the most powerful persons of the court. Her violent disposition to pleasure was mute at the calls of ambition; and if she did not succeed so far as to captivate the friendship of the empress, she at least extorted her esteem.

In the mean time, what will perhaps seem difficult to be believed, the princess of Zerbst was neglectful of that circumspection, with regard to herself, which she inspired into her daughter. Elizabeth considered her as a friend or a sister, and reposed an unlimited confidence in her. Proud of her influence, the princess of Zerbst seemed in haste to abuse it. She mixed in the intrigues of the courtiers, made herself the dispenser of imperial favours, in short, she pryed into the secrets of the most important concerns. Her arrogance disgusted the favourites, her curiosity was vexatious to the ministers. They united together to rouse the jealousy of the empress, and to free her from a yoke under which she had insensibly bowed her neck. Their efforts were not in vain. Elizabeth almost immediately withdrew the confidence she had granted to the mother of Catharine.

The

The princess of Zerbst, distressed at this reverse of fortune, turned on every side for a remedy. She asked advice of the king of Prussia and of the king of Sweden; but she was observed with a watchful eye. It became extremely difficult for her to maintain correspondences. She was fain to have recourse to the refinements of artifice to get a letter conveyed to the king of Sweden. On one occasion she adopted the following method: A ball was given at court; the princess of Zerbst was there with the grand duchess her daughter. Lestocq, who was exiled shortly after, was there also; and, according to his custom, amusing himself in chatting with the women. All at once the grand duchess advanced towards him, and, throwing a glove at him, said she would dance with him. On taking up the glove, Lestocq perceived that it contained a paper. On this the artful courtier, smiling to the grand duchess, said, "I accept the challenge, madam: but, instead of restoring you your glove, I beseech you to give me the other, that I may present them both, from you, to my wife; the favour will then be complete." The country dance being finished, Lestocq stole away, hiding the gloves under his waistcoat, fearing lest the empress might have some intelligence of what had passed, and should cause him to be searched at the door.

All the stratagems put in practice by the princess of Zerbst were not so successful. Every

day brought with it some complaint against her, or discovered some fresh intrigue. The resentment of the empress was now at its height; she ordered the princess to quit the empire.

The princess of Zerbst, at parting from her daughter, experienced the most poignant sorrow. To complete her distress, she found it impossible for her to go and reside with the king of Sweden, her brother, who was afraid that her presence at Stockholm might give umbrage to the empress. Equally discarded by her other relations, she repaired to the court of France, and obtained to her death an asylum in the Luxemburg*.

Catharine herself could not, without great regret, see her mother depart; but the hope of the throne which had fortified her against other misfortunes, supported her under this; and love soon brought its consolations to mingle them with those of pride.

The young men that surrounded the grand duke did not all, like the prince, resign themselves entirely to the pleasure of the table, to play, and to military parade. There was especially one who distinguished himself as much by his taste for the amiable arts, as he was admired for the graces of his person: it was Soltikof, the prince's chamberlain. He made one in all his parties: but he was

* She died there the 30th of May 1760, leaving behind her a number of debts, which Catharine II. always refused to pay.

ashamed

ashamed of his company. He was tolerably well versed in french literature; he knew by heart the finest passages of Racine and Voltaire, and in the recitation of them his voice seemed to heighten their beauties. Though scarcely outgrown the boy, he had already the reputation of having obtained the favours of several belles of the court; and his success made him proud. Soltikof, it is true, was held rather deficient in courage with the men, but he was not the less presumptuous nor less bold with the women. Perhaps he would have trembled at the sight of a naked sword; but for extending the number of his conquests in gallantry, he had often been thought to brave the deserts of Siberia. In short, the husbands of Petersburg regarded him as the most agreeable and the most dangerous man in town.

Soltikof was not long ere he lifted his eyes even to the spouse of his master; and vanity yet more than love led him to conceive the temerarious design of captivating her heart. He began by sedulously studying the inclinations of the princess. He perceived that, notwithstanding the constraint in which she lived, Catharine had always a propensity to pleasure; and that the solitude of Oranienbaum rendered dissipation necessary to her. He accordingly procured her some new amusement with every returning day. He engaged the grand duke to give frequent entertainments, he took upon himself the task of inventing and directing them, secretly

cretly giving the grand duchess to understand that she was the sole object for which they were made, and that it was to him alone she was indebted for them. Catharine was not insensible to such gallant, such continued attentions. The seducing figure of Soltikof, and the vivacity of his wit, had made impression on her mind. His assiduities confirmed him master of her affections; but Soltikof, sensible that the heart of the grand duchess was no ordinary conquest, was afraid of betraying himself by an imprudent explanation. It is even not impossible that at first he meant only to feign a passion which in the sequel grew up into a real attachment. In short, for a considerable time past, their fondness had been mutual, without any declaration on the part of either.

An unfortunate event was the occasion of accelerating this declaration. Soltikof lost his father. His duty obliged him to repair to Mosco. He obtained the grand duke's permission to depart, and at taking leave of Catharine he was not sufficiently master of his feelings to prevent his discovering how much this parting cost him. The princess, who saw his tears, was no less touched herself at the cause whence they flowed; and fixing her eyes, with a look of extreme significance, on Soltikof, she conjured him to shorten his absence as much as he could, and to return and forget his grief in the midst of a brilliant court, where without him there could be no such thing as pleasure.

The

The character of Soltikof renders it easy to judge what effect these words must have produced. He thought he perceived that he was beloved; and his conscious pride redoubled. His journey took him up but a few days. What were domestic concerns when balanced with the felicity he expected? What was Mosco to him in comparison of Petersburg? He abandoned all for the sake of returning to secure his triumph.

However, on approaching again the grand duchess, all the flattering ideas with which he had regaled his delighted imagination began suddenly to dissolve and vanish. His audacity forsook him. He found himself a prey to the most serious and gloomy reflections. He saw at once all the danger of his amour. He could no longer presume to flatter himself that Catharine would so far forget what she owed to her rank, to her spouse, as to accept the assiduities of a simple chamberlain. But if he were so happy as to see her vouchsafe to correspond to his passion, could he imagine that he should deceive the penetrating eyes of the jealous and humiliated courtiers by whom she was surrounded? In a word, how risk a confession which might be repaid by a perpetual imprisonment, or even with the loss of his life! He shuddered, he trembled, he resolved to renounce the fallacious hopes his unbounded arrogance had made him cherish.

In this state of perturbation and despondence, Soltikof no longer displayed that brilliant gaiety for which

which he had hitherto been always distinguished. In vain did he sometimes affect an air of easy elegance which he now no more possessed. A settled melancholy corroded his heart, and was depicted on his face; his health was visibly declining. The grand duchess took the alarm; and one day, on finding herself alone with him, desired him to reveal the cause of so sudden an alteration. Soltikof, unable at that moment to stifle or resist a passion thus preying on his vitals, avowed it in expressions of the tenderest emotion. Catharine heard him without anger; she seemed even to pity him; but, with a collected air, she counselled him to renounce an inclination, of the irregularity and danger whereof he ought to be sensible. Although still very young, Soltikof knew but too well the female heart to be ignorant, that she who allows herself to listen to a lover has already begun to approve him. He took courage. He threw himself at the knees of the grand duchess, and embraced them with boldness. The princess was agitated; she let fall some tears; and retiring precipitately from the transports of Soltikof, to go and shut herself in her cabinet, she addressed to him that verse which Monimia speaks to Xiphars in the tragedy of Mithridates:—

“ Et méritez les pleurs que vous m’allez coûter *.”

From that moment the chamberlain resumed his wonted gaiety with returning hope; and the happy

* And merit those tears you are about to cost me.

altera-

alteration in his behaviour was felt by all around him.

While the grand duke and the grand duchess were passing the summer at Oranienbaum, the empress Elizabeth remained at Peterhof*, though not without sending, from time to time, for the imperial couple to share in the pleasures of her court. On these little expeditions Soltikof never failed to make one of the party. In order to avoid being present at the entertainments and festivities of the palace, where the prying eyes of indiscreet observers would throw too great a restraint on her conduct, Catharine feigned an indisposition. [1753.] The grand duke was so infatuated in regard to his chamberlain, that he even engaged him himself to share in the solitude of his wife, and to exert all the talents of his capacity to amuse and to cheer her. This was exactly what the two lovers desired; and it is not difficult to imagine that they turned the moments to profit. This tide of success seemed now at its height; and the young chamberlain experienced a signal turn of affairs. The grand duchess was not always sufficiently on her guard for concealing the inclination she entertained for him. The courtiers, always artful, always envious, began by remarking the preference that wounded their pride, and were not long in tracing it to its source. The ruin of Soltikof was now pretty certain. The

* A country-palace, situate 25 versts from Petersburg; on the border of the gulf of Finland, built by Peter I.

very

very men who shewed him the most marks of friendship, and who of course had the most means of doing him disservice, secretly found the method of conveying to the empress their suspicions of an amour between the chamberlain and the grand duchess. Of an amorous disposition herself, Elizabeth perhaps was not bound to take great offence at the intrigue: but she was haughty; and in the first bursts of her indignation, she declared that Soltikof should pay for his temerity by an exile into Siberia.

Soltikof, informed of the dangers that menaced him, immediately set about the means of avoiding them. He saw that the best method of preventing the storm from bursting upon him was boldly to brave it. Assuming, therefore, a look of assurance, and putting on the air of affronted innocence, he ran to the grand duke to complain of the calumnies that had been so audaciously spread. He reminded the prince that he had only presented himself to the grand duchess in consequence of express orders received from himself; and that he had never beheld her but with all the respect that was due to her rank. He remarked to him, that these invidious slanders, though outwardly lanced against him, were intended as a clandestine, but certain attack on the heir of the empire, since in these infamous reports the honour of the crown was infinitely more implicated than the reputation of an individual like him. He concluded by adding, that in order, to furnish

no farther pretence to the jealousy of his enemies, and to calm the mind of the empress, he prayed the grand duke for permission to retire to Mosco.

The speech of Soltikof not only imposed on the credulous prince, but persuaded him that for his own honour he should keep the chamberlain about the person of his spouse. He ordered him to remain; then asked for an audience of the empress, in which he complained of the insolent reports that had been industriously sent abroad: he defended Soltikof with so much vehemence, and with such specious arguments, that Elizabeth herself began to believe that the reports which had been raised about him might possibly be no more than the fabrication of envy.

While this scene was transacting in the apartment of Elizabeth, the grand duchess did not remain idle: she was more interested than any one in putting a stop to these injurious reports, and to preserve her lover. Indeed, who was more capable than herself of undertaking her own defence? Informed by madame Narishkin of the pains the grand duke had taken in the justification of Soltikof, and of the success he had just obtained, she immediately presented herself to the empress. Forgetting the air of meekness she had hitherto always put on in the presence of the sovereign, she broke forth into reproaches on the credit that could be given to such odious suspicions. She represented how much the proofs

proofs demanded by the empress of her innocence must be fallacious and uncertain, and how all public inquiry must infallibly be attended with disgrace, as on every occasion of this nature the smallest doubt always left an indelible blot. Grief, vengeance, rage, by turns gave so much force to her eloquence, that Elizabeth was unable to resist it: she appeared moved, melted, persuaded; and the victory of Catharine was still more complete than that of the grand duke.

In the evening, as is the custom at the court of St. Petersburg, there was a circle at the palace, and the empress with eagerness embraced the opportunity for testifying in the eyes of the court, that Soltikof had nothing to apprehend from her. The chamberlain was engaged at play: Elizabeth advancing to the back of his chair, asked him, with that grace which she had the art of throwing into all that she said, whether he was happy? — “By no means, madam,” returned Soltikof. — “I am sorry for it,” she replied; “but perhaps that may be partly by your own fault. It is said that you intend to quit the grand duke? I cannot believe it; and I invite you to remain about him: be assured that if your enemies should attempt again to injure you, I shall be the first to defend you.”

Though it had been true that Soltikof had seriously formed the design of retiring from court, these words would have been enough to have detained him; and even though his enemies might have acquired

acquired the most convincing proofs of his audacity, they would have stopped their mouths for ever.

In the mean time the grand duke cohabited with his spouse; and thenceforward Soltikof thought he had no longer any danger to prevent; he now tasted without disturbance or remorse those pleasures from the consequences of which he had nothing to dread. Catharine herself no longer needed to be so strict in her precautions; her first success had given her additional boldness. Besides, the example of the empress Elizabeth, whose manners were growing more and more corrupt, and who engaged in new follies from day to day, seemed to afford some excuse for her passion. The empress questioned nothing of an intrigue which she might easily have perceived; or if she observed it, she at least no longer evinced either anger or suspicion.

1754. Time, which enfeebles and often extinguishes the most ardent passions, diminished not that of Catharine. That princess expected shortly to become a mother; Soltikof was daily acquiring a greater ascendant over her heart; but his happiness was at its ultimate term; he became himself the artificer of his ruin.

The grand chancellor Bestuchef, with the rest of the courtiers, had been silent on the favour enjoyed by Soltikof; but he was not on that account the less vigilant and attentive. Incessantly occupied with the project of displacing the grand duke from his

succession to the throne, the veteran minister perceived that the surest means for succeeding was to gain over the favourite of the prince, in order to undo him first.

Bestuchef, whom the title of grand chancellor, united with the general administration of affairs, his influence, and his profound policy, rendered one of the most powerful persons of the empire, became the humble sycophant of Soltikof. He lavished on him the marks of deference, praises, caresses, in the greatest profusion. He revealed to him the secrets that were of the utmost importance; he frequently consulted him, or feigned to consult him; he at length so completely gained his confidence, that the chamberlain, blinded by pride, thought he had no firmer a friend than the wily minister: while he, who now saw what authority he had acquired over Soltikof, and who thought of nothing but to free himself from so dangerous a rival, induced him to take the most fatal measures. He told him, that for augmenting the ascendancy he had gained, and to render himself entirely master of the grand duke's mind, it was necessary to put away from the prince all persons of birth, of ambition, or talents, and to let him have none about him but vile and obscure people, or who, being placed by Soltikof himself, would be fervently devoted to his interest. Soltikof perceived not the snare. He was moreover incapable of penetrating into the motive of so perfidious an advice. His favour made all things possible to

him; his ambition increased; he attempted to secure to himself an absolute sway; and he was eager to put in practice what the old chancellor had told him. Thus one moment of imprudence demolished a triumph of several years.

This new tempest raised against the favourite, blackened all at once. The young courtiers seeing themselves removed from the heir of the throne, broke out into murmurs, and joined their efforts to those of the friends of Bestuchef. The chancellor rekindled the audacity of Tschoglokokof, of Razumofsky, and those of their party; who at length all united together to cause their complaints to reach the ears of Elizabeth. Bestuchef perceived that it was time for him to speak to the empress herself. He accordingly had a secret conference with her; in which he recalled to her mind all that she already knew of the weakness of the grand duke, of his extravagancies, and the riot to which he was addicted. He told her that these extravagancies and this riot took their origin from Soltikof; who, that he might the more effectually subject the prince to his will, suffered none to approach him but abject flatterers and wild debauchees. He revived the suspicions, but too well founded, and for so long time spread, on the criminal intercourse carried on by the chamberlain with the grand duchess. He concluded by representing him as a perfidious favourite, whose ambition threatened Russia with an odious reign.

The empress, incensed at what she heard, resolved once more to punish Soltikof; but, directed by the aged chancellor, she took at this time surer measures than before. The secret was kept, and the disgrace of the chamberlain was covered by the pretext of an honourable embassy. Elizabeth commissioned him to repair to Stockholm with the title of envoy extraordinary, to notify to the king of Sweden the birth of Paul Petrovitch, of whom the grand duchess had just been delivered*. The presumptuous Soltikof at first considered this employ as a new mark of the empress's favour. He accepted it with gratitude, repaired hastily to Sweden, and left it with equal speed. But scarcely had he quitted Stockholm to return to St. Petersburg, when he was stopped on the way by a courier, who put into his hands the order for him to go and reside at Hamburg, in quality of minister plenipotentiary from the court of Russia.

Soltikof now opened his eyes. He saw that he had been cruelly deceived. He wrote to the grand duchess, and engaged her to solicit his recall. That princess, not less sensible than he to this separation, wished at first to employ her influence and her eloquence with the empress, to induce her to command his return; but the chancellor, who had foreseen all that happened, went to her with speed, to convince her of the danger of this proposal. He told her

* The 1st of October 1754.

plainly

plainly that the steps she hazarded in favour of Soltikof would corroborate the suspicions that were already excited against her, and would effectually tend to her ruin. She was entirely convinced by his arguments. Ambition imposed silence on love.

Catharine, however, preserved for some time the passion she had conceived for the chamberlain. She wrote to him, and frequently received letters from him. Misfortune seemed even to augment her tenderness; when all at once, the presence of a stranger whom fortune had brought to the court of Russia, caused her to forget the lover whom she no longer saw.

1755. The young count Stanislaus Poniatofsky, whom Catharine first raised to the throne of Poland, and afterwards hurled indignantly from it, was the happy successor of Soltikof. Born a simple nobleman, and destitute of fortune, but endowed with a handsome figure and full of ambition*, Poniatof-

* The father of Poniatofsky was an adventurer; who, from the condition of a domestic in the family of Michielky in Lithuania, went into the service of Charles XII. and obtained the confidence of that prince. He afterwards attached himself to king Stanislaus Lechinsky, whom he betrayed by conveying from him the abdication which Augustus II. had formerly given him in presence of Charles XII. Provided with this important record, Poniatofsky repaired to Warsaw, where Augustus rewarded his perfidy by giving him in marriage the princess Chartorinsky, a descendant of the house of Yagellon. Stanislaus Poniatofsky was the fruit of this marriage.

H 3

sky

sky amused for some time in Germany and France his anxiety and his vague expectations. He met with tolerable success at Paris, where the friendship of the Swedish ambassador procured him distinguished connections: but his mother, who dreaded the influence which the too bewitching pleasures of that city might have upon him, wrote to him her orders to leave it. In this she was right, as Poniatofsky had already brought himself into jail for debt, whence he owed his deliverance to the generosity of madame Geoffrin*. Poniatofsky immediately quit-
ted France and repaired to England, where he found sir Charles Hanbury Williams, whom he had formerly known at the court of Warsaw; and who, being appointed by the cabinet of London to the embassy of Petersburg, engaged him to accompany him thither. Without bearing any title that attached him to the embassy, the young Pole employed himself in the cabinet of the ambassador, and served him in the office of secretary. He even determined at first to confine himself to diplomatic affairs; but the taste for dissipation to which he had long been accustomed, his youth, the seducing opportunities which daily presented themselves, soon brought him back to the pursuit of pleasure. He was by nature of a gay, witty, and spirited disposition, and therefore adapted to succeed at a court

* For an account of this extraordinary woman, see "Varieties of Literature," vol. ii. p. 331.]

where

where amusement seemed to be the most important concern. Accordingly it was not long before he perceived the impression he had made upon the heart of Catharine.

1756. Poniatofsky, bold and even audacious, was yet awed by the high rank of the grand duchess; and the observant eyes of the numerous courtiers obliged him to repress his ardour. For some time the two lovers conversed only by their looks; but to these mute conversations at length others succeeded in which they reciprocally declared their attachment, and consulted on the means of indulging their inclinations without constraint.

Led by the several motives of interest and vanity, some persons of the court, who watched the motions of the grand duchess only to thwart and censure her views, lost no time in informing the empress Elizabeth of the new intrigue of her adoptive niece.

Elizabeth had no esteem for her nephew; she cared but little for the honour of the grand duchess; she was in general not more severe towards the conduct of others, than careful of her own; in short, she was always afraid to punish: but the extreme facility with which she followed the counsels of the persons about her, made her often act with a rigour entirely abhorrent to her general character. She gave orders to Poniatofsky to quit Russia without delay. Poniatofsky obeyed.

H 4

By

By continuing to cabal against the grand duke, and by removing Soltikof from the court, the chancellor Bestuchef had neglected nothing for strengthening his party with that of the grand duchess. His devotion to this princess appeared to increase from day to day. He flattered her inclinations; he even ministered to them; he made her at length forget that he had been the chief cause of the ruin of her first lover. She thought she might make use of him in recovering the second. The old minister promised his return, and hastened his endeavours to fulfil it. Poniatofsky he thought far less to be dreaded than Soltikof. He knew that the heart of Catharine could never remain in a state of inaction: he therefore preferred seeing a foreigner rather than a Russian the object of her choice.

1757. The grand chancellor was intimately connected with the count de Bruhl, prime minister of the king of Poland *. He acquainted him by letter with the passion the grand duchess entertained for Poniatofsky, and the advantage to be derived of sending the young Pole to Russia, invested with a character that would serve as a plausible pretext for his return. The count de Bruhl

* Bruhl had been page to Augustus II. and by his intrigues assisted Augustus III. in obtaining the crown, which procured him the favour of that monarch. Bruhl devoted himself to the courts of Vienna and Petersburg, who both contributed to keep him in his place. Of all the men of his time, says Frederic II. he had the greatest number of clothes, watches, laces, boots, shoes, and slippers,

immediately

immediately perceived the importance of the project; some embarrassment, however, attended its execution: two positive laws in direct opposition to his views on the favourite must be infringed in their behalf.

Every Pole, in possession of a starosty, was prohibited by the former from quitting the republic.

The other enjoined, that a Pole could never be charged at a foreign court with the management of the affairs of Saxony, nor a Saxon with those of Poland.

But Bruhl had often the art of making the laws subservient to his will. The necessity of gaining the ascendant at the court of Russia, and the desire of further conciliating the favour of the Russian minister, whom the Saxon regarded as one of his chief supports, obviated every objection. Poniatofsky was publicly decorated with the order of the White Eagle; and soon after a secret council was held, in which he was named minister plenipotentiary of the republic and king of Poland to the empress Elizabeth. The customary convocation of the *senatus concilium* was even neglected on this occasion.

The indignation of all patriot Poles was excited at this transaction. But they were not aware that the new plenipotentiary was the creature of Charitorinsky, and devoted to the politics of England and Prussia.

Durand,

Durand, a man of perspicacity and courage, charged with the concerns of France in the absence of the count de Broglie, repaired to count Bruhl, to remonstrate with him on the choice he had made, at a moment when it was of so much importance to Poland to keep on good terms with the courts of Vienna and Versailles. The count by a falsehood attempted to impose on the agent of France; he protested that he had exerted no influence in the nomination of Poniatofsky; and in the meanwhile hastened his departure with the greater zeal.

Bruhl, become now the patron of Poniatofsky, omitted nothing on his part to ensure a success that might justify his choice. He well knew the uneasiness that pervaded the russian court, while it affected an exterior of oriental magnificence. He was not ignorant that Elizabeth was lavishing on her minions, and the inventors of sumptuous and fantastical festivities, the sums that should have been applied to the wants of the empire; in short, he knew that the grand duke and grand duchess were languishing in a penury unworthy of their rank. He therefore remitted to Poniatofsky six thousand ducats, that, on pressing emergencies, he might advance them to the prince and his consort, and thereby conciliate their entire concurrence. Poniatofsky dexterously profited by the counsels and benefactions of Bruhl. He was already sure of the grand duchess's heart; he succeeded soon after with

with the spouse. He talked english and german with him; he drank, smoked, spoke ill of France, abused the French, and extolled the king of Prussia with unlimited praise. In addition to so many recommendations, he affected an immoderate pursuit of pleasure. But the Poles, and even the Russians, soon penetrated his ambitious designs, and pretended that he was sacrificing the interests of his master and the Chartorinskys to his own private views. Time has since shewn that they were not deceived.

What indeed might not a man of penetration and address have done in those days at the court of Petersburg? What were the principal personages at that luxurious, intriguing, and profligate court?

The empress Elizabeth had insensibly proceeded from moderate pleasures to the extravagance of sensuality; and her taste for devotion augmented with her voluptuousness. She continued whole hours on her knees before the picture of some saint*, to which she spoke, which she even consulted,

* The worship of the pictures of saints is an universal practice in the orthodox greek church. The decalogue, it seems, forbids only *graven* images. — Notwithstanding the unbounded toleration which prevails in Russia, there is still what is called a predominant religion, and to which, as John James observes, the prince and the executioner always belong. The system of faith adopted by the czar and the native Russians is that denominated by divines the *greek* religion, which in some particulars differs from the latin. Without tiring the reader with a circumstantial

ed, and passed alternately from acts of bigotry to the intemperance of lust, and from scenes of lasciviousness to the opiates of prayer. She would frequently drink to excess; and at such times too sensual, too impatient for the delays of unlacing, her women used to effect the same purpose by means of the scissars. In what manner such nights were passed, it becomes not the historian to undraw her curtains to reveal.

The grand duchess, blinded by her passion, and consequently unmindful of the lessons of prudence which her mother had left her, but which she afterwards took for the guides of her conduct, betrayed a faint imitation of the irregularities of her aunt. She followed no counsels but those of Bestuchef, the english ambassador Williams, and the gallant Poniatofsky: on which occasion, a foreigner* then at Petersburg observed, in allusion to these three personages, that she could not fail of being badly conducted, since she took for her guides men so consummate in knavery, madness,

stantial exposition of these idle distinctions, to say nothing of their several notions about the procession of the holy ghost, and of the quality of the bread in the sacrament, it will be sufficient to observe, that the Greeks deny the supremacy of the roman pontiff in church matters, and condemn the worship of carved images. Accordingly they have no images in their churches, but multitudes of pictures, representing thousands of saints, to which they pay almost the same divine honours as to the deity himself.

* M. de l'Hôpital, ambassador from France.

and

and folly. Poniatofsky was never from her; she devoted to him the whole of her time; and she made so little secret of this intimacy, that public report was very loud to her prejudice. The grand duchess was after some months delivered of the princess Anne*, who lived only fifteen months.

1758. The grand duke was the only man at court that knew nothing of what was passing. Nor ought this to excite our surprise. Peter, though, as we have seen, apparently marked out for particular exploits, by having at once two separate offers of a crown, yet the people among whom he was thrown did not co-operate with the finger of fortune, but seemed rather anxious to frustrate her views. His education had been entirely neglected in Holstein; his naturally good understanding was not enriched with science; his vehement temper was undirected to useful exertion, unsoftened by culture to the tender affections, and by any attachment to the arts that embellish life. In Russia his situation afforded him but little opportunity, awed as he was by the chancellor Bestuchef Riumin, for improving his qualities or extending his knowledge. He was young, and had no honest friend. The image of his illustrious grandfather might present itself to his imagination: but he found no guide to assist him in the emulation of his great example. Kept at a distance from all business of public concern, he confined himself almost solely

* In the month of February 1758.

to

to the company of his Holsteiners, and to the exercises of his german soldiers. His enemies had even robbed him of the affection of his aunt, and strove to sow discord between him and his spouse. Distrust and apprehension must frequently have gotten possession of his soul; and in those moments he had recourse to artificial exhilarations that were unworthy of him.

What wonder then that he was blinded to what so nearly concerned him? Besides, being always a great admirer of the king of Prussia, he now devoted himself entirely to copy, with a servile affectation, the air, the manners, the tone of that monarch. He dressed his little army at Oranienbaum in the prussian uniform, and wore it himself; he fatigued his soldiers in useless manœuvres and painful exercises: from these he sat down to the excesses of the table, and in the delirium of intemperance would declare, that he would one day be the conqueror of the north, and the rival of the prussian hero. But how great the difference between the imitator and the model!

The grand chancellor incessantly occupied in his project of vilifying and calumniating the prince, and of favouring the inclination of Catharine, in the hope that when she should have ascended the throne she would keep him in his place, forgot the interest of the empire in attending to his own. The other ministers, who for the most part were crea-
tures

tures devoted to his views, followed the steps of their master.

The Razumofskys, the Schuvalofs, the Tshoglokovs, the Narishkins, the Vorontzofs, and the whole herd of courtiers, while they saw the depravity of their patrons, meanly suppressed their contempt, or stifled it with flattery.

The people, who could easily see the disorders of the court, seemed afraid to lift their eyes on Elizabeth. They revered in her the blood of Peter the great, without taking umbrage at her vices. Such force has still the impulsion given by the reforming despot of Russia! So far is the Russian addicted to obedience, and hardened to the yoke!

The grand chancellor Bestuchef having succeeded in reconciling the court of Vienna with that of St. Petersburg, the empress Elizabeth and Maria Theresa of Austria had formed, in 1748, an offensive and defensive alliance against the king of Prussia, to which the king of Poland, Augustus III. had acceded as elector of Saxony.

The French and the English, justly considered as the two principal nations of Europe, and formed for a reciprocal esteem of each other, seemed only capable of entertaining a mutual hatred. The possession of some uncultivated tracts of land in America, rekindled the flames of war between them; and the first spark, issuing from the extremities of Canada, occasioned a conflagration which soon spread over the two quarters of the globe. Fre-
deric

deric II., now become the ally of England, and the inveterate enemy of Maria Theresa and of Augustus III. began his hostilities by the invasion of Saxony *, and by the capture of the whole saxon army, intrenched in the camp of Pirna, and composed of seventeen thousand men: while another prussian army, having entered Bohemia, defeated the Austrians in two or three encounters.

The empress Elizabeth ordered fieldmarshal Apraxin to march with forty thousand Russians to avenge the elector of Saxony, and to assist Maria Theresa in driving the Prussians out of Bohemia, and to reconquer Silesia, which Frederic, sixteen years before, had ravished from her. Apraxin first made himself master of Memel, and then advanced to the vicinity of Gross-Yägerdorf, where the Prussians, commanded by marshal Lehwald, came and attacked him. The victory was for a long time obstinately disputed, but at length remained with the Russians, who, after having killed more than two thousand of the Prussians, forced them to abandon the field of battle, leaving twenty-nine pieces of cannon †.

* Frederic II. in his history of the seven years war, says, that he only got the start of his enemies, and that he was apprised of their intentions; as a clerk of the chancery of Dresden, gained over by the prussian minister, conveyed to him every week a copy of the dispatches which the court of Saxony received from Petersburg and from Vienna.

† Frederic II. estimates the loss of the Prussians at only fourteen hundred men, and thirteen pieces of cannon.

If Apraxin had profited by this first advantage, and the terror he had thereby raised, it would have been easy for him to have marched to Berlin. But, to the extreme astonishment of the Russians, and to the offence of their allies, he faced about towards Courland, and made all possible haste to get into winter quarters. The grand duke, lamenting to see these succours dispatched against a monarch whom he admired to idolatry, applied to Bestuchef to induce him to recall the troops. The count entertained no violent affection for Frederic; on the contrary, he was a warm partisan of the court of Vienna. Above all, he had no desire to do anything that would please the grand duke. But Elizabeth was just fallen sick, the grand duke might presently be called to the throne; and Bestuchef, wishing at any price to preserve his authority, sacrificed his hatred, his affections, and the honour of the empire, to his unbridled ambition. He sent orders to general Apraxin to abandon his conquests, and to hasten his return: but for this once he was the dupe of his own cunning.

This retreat, so unaccountable to Elizabeth, gave her ground to suspect that she had been betrayed by her ministers or her generals. Marshal Apraxin was removed from the command, and put under arrest. He justified his conduct by producing the orders from count Bestuchef. Bestuchef was removed from his office, and also put under arrest. Count Vorontzof succeeded

Bestuchef in his employment, and the generals Brown* and Fermer took the command of the army in the place of Apraxin.

The affair was thus: — Though Bestuchef had a great number of partisans, and a still greater number of creatures, he had also many enemies; and these enemies had a glimpse of a means for effecting his ruin, which they eagerly seized †. They

* General Brown was a native of Ireland, and was born in the beginning of the present century. Being a roman catholic, he was compelled to seek his fortune in foreign countries by the exertion of those talents which he would willingly have dedicated to the service of his own. He first entered the austrian, and afterwards the russian service. While acting under count Munich against the Turks, in the campaigns of 1737 and 1738, he distinguished himself at the siege of Otchakof: being sent with a corps of troops into Hungary, he was taken prisoner by the Turks, sold as a slave, and transferred to four different masters. At one time he was bound back to back with another prisoner for eight-and-forty hours, and exposed almost naked at the various places where slaves are brought for sale. He had then borne the rank of colonel in the russian service, but gave out that he was only a captain, in order to lessen the price of his ransom. Having been accidentally met by a gentleman to whom he was personally known, he sent an account of his situation to the french ambassador, who found means to purchase him for three hundred ducats. But his turkish master discovering that he was of higher rank than he had pretended, re-claimed his prisoner, and threatened to use force in order to recover him. The french ambassador, however, applied to the grand vizir, who decided in his favour. Count Brown recovered his liberty, and returned to Russia, where he was gradually promoted, and died governor of Riga in 1789, at the age of 88. — See *Coxe's Travels*, 8vo. vol. ii. p. 417, 418.

† M. de l'Hôpital was one of those who managed this intrigue. perceived

perceived that it would be no difficult matter for them to cause hatred and quarrels to succeed to the coldness which for a long time had been visible between Peter and his spouse, and that they might then bring Bestuchef to punishment, as the primary cause, not only of these disagreements, but even for the estrangement which the empress evinced to her nephew.

This plan once concerted, the first step was to call the prince's attention to the frequent conversations of Poniatofsky with the grand duchess. Their gestures were watched; every little word that escaped them, which might serve as a pretext for some allusion, was carefully laid hold of. One evening in particular, when the grand duchess was at table with a numerous company, and seated facing Poniatofsky, the discourse fell upon the dexterity with which some women managed a horse, and the dangers to which they exposed themselves in that exercise. Catharine, who had her eyes fixed on her lover, answered in her lively manner: "There are few women so bold as I am. I am of "an unbounded courage." These words were immediately reported to the grand duke, accompanied with suggestions that might occasion some sinister application to arise in his mind.

The jealousy of Peter being thus alarmed, they lost no time to foster these surmises of the husband into proofs of the infidelity of the wife, in her love for the Polander, and the criminal correspondence

they mutually entertained. The prince was overwhelmed with grief and consternation. He bewailed his misfortune, and condemned his imprudence. He no longer observed the consideration and respect he had hitherto shewn the grand duchess, and forbid her to be seen with Poniatofsky. He then hastened to the empress, and besought her to avenge the affront he had received; telling her at the same time, that the chancellor had not only favoured the misconduct of the grand duchess, but had repeatedly betrayed the confidence of his imperial aunt. He concluded this address, by shewing her the order sent by that minister to marshal Apraxin, to make him retreat from Silesia.

Elizabeth, moved at the sorrows of her nephew, and incensed at the treachery of Bestuchef, gave orders to arrest him on the spot. The chancellor was at once deprived of his place, tried, pronounced guilty of high treason, and sentenced to death. But the empress contented herself with banishing him to Goretovo an estate one hundred and twenty versts beyond Mosco. Thus passed all at once, from the pinnacle of power into bondage, that man who could make Russia tremble at his word, and controlled the fortunes of a great part of Europe! The consequence was, as said above, that count Mikhaila Vorontzof succeeded Bestuchef in the office of grand chancellor.

Catharine, who thought she had everything to apprehend from the resentment of her husband, now
saw

saw herself abandoned on all sides. The courtiers who had been the most assiduous in their flatteries, were now the first to forsake her. Great minds rebound from error with a force proportionate to that which impelled them to it: the grand duchess was sensible to the extent of her imprudence; but her courage never forsook her. Resolved to employ that eloquence which had formerly succeeded so well with the empress, she demanded an audience; which Elizabeth refused. She then thought it advisable to apply to the ambassador of France*, because, as well from his situation as his personal talents, that minister had considerable influence at court. She entreated him to use his interest on her behalf, and to represent to the empress how extremely she was distressed at the loss of her favour; and that, if it were possible she could displease her, the sincerity of her contrition, with such a heart as Elizabeth's, could not plead in vain for pardon.

The ambassador was not deficient in marks of respect for the princess; he gave her such consolations and advice as his prudence suggested; but he thought it not consistent with propriety to attempt to effect a reconciliation which appeared to him impossible.

Catharine therefore remained for some time in this distressing situation. She had at once to support the aversion of the grand duke, the indig-

* M. de l'Hôpital.

nation of the empress, the insulting disdain of a court which, a few days before, was lavish of its assiduities and smiles; and, what afflicted her much more, the dread of losing for ever her favourite Poniatofsky.

The young Pole was not less a prey to inquietude than herself. He had just received from Warsaw letters of recall; and yet he could not resolve upon quitting Russia. Feigning an indisposition, he confined himself all day to his hotel, and in the obscurity of the winter evenings repaired to Catharine's apartments. But the ever-waking eyes of suspicion and malice were continually upon them. Their places of assignation were discovered; and the empress, whose ears were open to every tale, was soon made acquainted with these transactions*.

The return of summer threw fresh difficulties in the way of these interviews. The grand duchess was obliged to accompany her husband to Oranienbaum; and Poniatofsky was reduced to the necessity of having recourse to all manner of disguises for gaining admission to this palace. One day, having put on a convenient habit, and sauntering in one of the walks of the grounds where Catharine had appointed to meet him, he was

* These nocturnal rendezvous were very frequent. Catharine in disguise got out of the palace by a window, and Dalolio, an Italian comedian, conducted her to the house of M. Yelaguin, where Poniatofsky was waiting for her.

recognized

recognized by one of the domestics, who presently ran to acquaint the grand duke. The prince, willing to humiliate Poniatofsky, ordered one of the most athletic of his Russian officers to be fetched; and after having given him the characteristic description of the Pole, commanded him to go up to him unawares in the grounds, and bring him either voluntarily or by force to the corps-de-garde.

The officer was not long in coming up with the man who answered the description he had received; when he roughly interrogated him, Who he was? and what he would have? Poniatofsky, thus taken by surprise, scarcely knowing what answer to make, stammered out the first thing that occurred: that he was a German tailor, and that he was come to Oranienbaum to take measure of a Holstein officer for a suit of clothes. "I have orders to bring you to the grand duke," replied the Russian. — "I must decline the honour, though my fortune may depend upon it: I have not a moment of time," returned the Pole. — "Oh, as to the matter of time, whether you have time or not, you must follow me," answered the officer. Having said this, on perceiving some signs of reluctance on the part of the other, he made a slip-knot in his handkerchief, which he threw over his neck, and thus led him captive to the feet of the prince.

The grand duke on being certified of the arrestation of Poniatofsky, assembled a council of war, intimating that the Pole should be condemned to be hanged for having entered by stealth within the lines of his fortifications. General Tottleben, whom the empress had placed about him to watch his conduct, pretended to applaud the resolution: but observed that as Poniatofsky was invested with the character of foreign minister, the sentence could not be executed till the consent of the empress should be obtained. A courier was therefore immediately dispatched to Petersburg. Kratschinsky, who was attached to Poniatofsky by the ties of friendship, and by his quality of a gentleman of the embassy, and lover of the countess Romantzof*, employed the influence of this latter with Elizabeth, whose confidence she enjoyed, to have the polish minister set at liberty. In the meantime some of the grand duke's courtiers, at the instigation of Catharine, had been tempting the covetousness of the prince's mistress; and by virtue of a sum of money the girl had engaged her lover to release Poniatofsky.

Poniatofsky was now brought like a malefactor before the grand duke, as if he had been still ignorant who his prisoner was. He even assumed

* She was mother of field-marshal Romantzof, who has since rendered himself famous in the war of the Russians against the Turks.

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an angry air, and in a feigned passion soundly rated the officer for making such a mistake; but afterwards amused himself with the adventure at the expence of the count, and affected chiefly to relate it in the presence of Catharine.

It was a little before this, whether in compliance with an involuntary passion, for passions are involuntary in such characters as Peter, or whether he thought to avenge himself for the infidelities of his wife, the grand duke formed an attachment with one of the three daughters of the senator Vorontzof, brother of the new chancellor. The eldest of these sisters, madame Butturlin, was justly reckoned one of the handsomest ladies of Russia. The youngest, who has since played so active and resolute a part, under the name of the princess Dashkof, was not very handsome, but spirited and endowed with superior talents; as for the third, however, Elizabeth Romanovna Vorontzof, of whom Peter was so passionately enamoured, she was neither witty in conversation, graceful in behaviour, nor beautiful in person*. Her good-humour, so congenial to his own, seduced him, her caprices amused him, and the habit of living with her soon gained her an imperious ascendant over him. The senator

* However, she is generally said to have been very handsome at that time; latterly, it is true, she grew corpulent. As madame Polianski, she was an excellent wife to the admiral of that name, a good mother, and a charitable and worthy woman.

Vorontzof,

Vorontzof, an insipid and ambitious courtier, with abject complaisance, connived at the commerce of the prince with his daughter.

Marshal Apraxin, as we have seen, was deprived of his command, sent prisoner to Narva, and judged by a council of war, who agreed not to find him guilty.

General Fermer, who succeeded Apraxin, took possession of Koenigsberg, raised heavy contributions, went and laid siege to Kustrin, defeated a prussian army* that was on its march to the relief of that place, and entered that city as conqueror. After so glorious a campaign, Fermer, knowing the attachment of the grand duke for the Prussians, and dreading lest that prince should hereafter punish him for his victories, under pretext of the ill state of his health, requested permission to retire.

1759. Soltikof succeeded Fermer, and gained successes not less brilliant. He vanquished the Prussians in two successive engagements, near Crossen and near Frankfort on the Oder, and rendered himself master of both those towns. At Frankfort the Russians were joined by the austrian army, commanded by the generals Haddick and Laudohn. Frederic, who had in vain exerted all his talents and activity to oppose this junction, attacked the Russians at Kunersdorf†; but his ability, his efforts, and the valour of his troops were

* On the 25th and 26th of August.

† The 12th of August.

again

again ineffectual: the victory was against him. The battle of Kunersdorf was one of the most bloody that had been fought during the war, as it cost the lives of thirty-two thousand men. The Russians made seven thousand prisoners, seized twenty-six colours, and took a hundred and sixty pieces of cannon, with a great part of the ammunition and baggage of the prussian army. It seemed as if all the russian generals had an invincible superiority over Frederic. Nevertheless that monarch had the advantage, not only of knowing both their orders and their plans of campaign, which the grand duke communicated to him by means of the secretary of state Voskof, but even of being sometimes favoured by them.

General Soltikof restrained, undoubtedly by the same motives as his two predecessors, appeared to disdain all new successes, and remained in perfect inaction to the end of the campaign*.

1760. The year following, the russian general Tottleben, seconded by the austrian general Laschy, got possession of Berlin, made the garrison prisoners of war, put the inhabitants to ransom, and looked

* He answered marshal Daun, on his pressing him to act with vigour: "I have done enough this year, sir. I have gained two battles which cost Russia twenty-seven thousand men. I wait till you, as an encouragement for me to proceed, have gained a couple victories in your turn. It is not equitable that the troops of my sovereign should act entirely alone." *History of the Seven Years War.*

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on while his foldiers carried off the pictures and mutilated a part of the fine statues of the gallery of Charlottenburg.

1761. The courtiers jealous of Soltikof's renown, the grand duke and the english ambassador Keith mortified at seeing the talents he opposed to Frederic, the ministers of Austria and of France more dissatisfied still at his not doing all that he was capable of doing; all parties, in short, vied with each other in caballing against the general, and caused him to be replaced by marshal Butturlin.

In the mean time the health of Elizabeth began visibly to decline; and the necessity of indulging repose, in addition to her natural indolence, rendered her more negligent than ever of the affairs of government. It was with difficulty the new grand chancellor Vorontzof could prevail on her to set her signature to the official dispatches; she could only summon up the scattered remains of her spirits for her customary dissipations. Festivities, balls, masquerades, and brilliant shows still yielded a faint amusement; and dreading to lie down upon a restless pillow, she went to the opera or the play at eleven, passed the rest of the night at table, and went to bed at five in the morning. Businesses of the gravest import appeared now as trifles to her. Acquainted with the passion of her nephew for the young countess Vorontzof, to whom she scornfully gave the nick-name of *la Pompadour*, she listened with avidity to the idle tales that were brought her
of

of the particulars of their amorous revels; seeming to seek in such anecdotes some palliation for her own infirmities. But she nevertheless continued to meet the looks of the prince with a face of indifference, and often of coldness.

Catharine, who waited with impatience for a favourable opportunity of reconciliation with the empress, now that a sufficient interval of silence had elapsed, thought it her duty to renew her efforts. She threw herself at her feet, and implored her forgiveness; but the irritated monarch would listen to no accommodation, except on the most mortifying conditions. It was afterwards proposed to her, by message, to confess her guilt, and to submit to the clemency of her husband and the empress.

From this moment Catharine summoned up all her pride. She purposely avoided appearing at court, kept close to her apartments, and asked leave of the empress to retire into Germany; a permission which she was very sure of being refused; because, knowing the extreme fondness of Elizabeth for the young Paul Petrovitch, she had no reason to apprehend that that princess would consent to see the departure of the mother of a child which would thereby be exposed to the hazard of being hereafter declared illegitimate. The stratagem succeeded: an accommodation shortly after ensued. At the very moment when she was thought on the brink of irremediable disgrace, to the great astonishment

nishment of the court, she made her appearance at the theatre, by the side of the empress, who carefully drew upon her the notice of the spectators by the particularity of her attentions.

It is true that, in the private conversation which the grand duchess had with the empress, she promised no longer to permit the visits of Poniatofsky; and thenceforward she actually held a greater reserve in her conduct. Poniatofsky almost immediately demanded his audience of leave. But as his attachment to Catharine was founded more on ambition than love, and determined to neglect nothing that might add fresh fuel to a passion which afterwards elevated him to the throne of Poland, he found new pretences for still prolonging his stay in Petersburg.

The cabal formed by the grand chancellor Bestuchef had not been annihilated by the disgrace of that minister; and the enemies of the grand duke continued on all occasions to blacken him in the eyes of his aunt. They gladly took advantage of the sickness and infirmity of that princess, to make her believe that Peter openly rejoiced in her approaching dissolution, and manifested his impatience to enter into his heritage. The mind of the empress, already too incensed against her nephew, was cruelly wounded by these reports. In the first emotions of resentment, she suffered some menaces to escape her of depriving him of the succession. At first it was thought by some that she intended to restore the

inheritance to prince Ivan, dethroned by her twenty years before, and whom she still kept languishing in a dungeon. Others supposed, with greater reason, that she had formed the design of causing the infant Paul Petrovitch to supplant his father. Not many days after*, while the grand duke was at Oranienbaum, she unexpectedly gave orders to have a play got ready; and, contrary to usual custom, she had neither the foreign ministers nor the persons of her court invited. The grand duchess, her son, and the most intimate favourites were her only attendants. No sooner was she seated in the imperial box, when she began to complain of the thinness of the house, and concluded by saying that the soldiers of her guard must be admitted. In an instant the theatre was full. Then, taking in her arms the little Paul Petrovitch, she presented him to the view of those veteran warriors to whom she was indebted for the throne; and, praising his winning smiles, his striking physiognomy, his endearing qualities of heart and mind, she seemed to ask of them the same attachment for him which they had shewn to her. The soldiers replied by reiterated shouts of applause. If Elizabeth had proceeded to explain herself farther, Peter had been excluded from the throne for ever; but, notwithstanding the enthusiastic vociferations of her guards, the empress stopped short in her encomiums,

* In the month of December 1761.

fat down in her seat, and the piece went on. It is probable that she thought it necessary first to sound their dispositions, in order to execute her project with greater solemnity and precaution; it may be likewise, that she meant only to intimidate the grand duke by shewing him how dependent he was on her will.

The news of this scene was presently spread abroad, and gave rise to many reflections. On this occasion the public recollected an old opinion, undoubtedly false, but which, circulated in whispers, had gained some credit, at the time of the birth of Paul Petrovitch. It was pretended, that the empress Elizabeth had gained over by bribes the nurse of the grand duchess's child, and caused a son she had had by Razumofsky to be substituted in its place.

Yet, whatever were the designs of the empress Elizabeth, the execution of them was prevented by the hand of death. A few days after the transaction in favour of the infant prince, she perceived her health to be sensibly declining from day to day. Tormented with violent pains in her bowels, which no medicines were found to assuage, for procuring some respite to suffering nature, she had more frequent recourse to her customary means of stifling sensibility in the stupefactions brought on by the use of strong waters. In vain did her physicians represent to her that she herself was contributing to frustrate their efforts, and accelerating the period
of

of her days. In vain did her attendants, by sacrificing obedience to affection, secretly remove or destroy the intoxicating beverage: she would constantly have a case of it in her chamber, of which the key was always kept within reach. It was now clearly seen that her end was rapidly approaching. The interested and ambitious, who had severally been contending for honours or wealth, now formed into bands in order to strengthen their forces, and presently divided into two very opposite parties.

The former was made up of the remains of the friends of Bestuchef, whose cabals all tended in favour of Catharine, and of which, after the exile of the old chancellor, count Ivan Ivanovitch Schuvalof had been considered as chief. Schuvalof, whose rapacity made the russian merchants tremble, and whose insolent peculations incensed the grand duke; Schuvalof, convinced that his power and his prosperity ran great hazard of becoming extinct with the life of Elizabeth, and seeing no other means of escaping the vengeance of the prince than by cutting him off from all hopes of the crown; steadily adhering to the plan that had been, twenty years before, chalked out by Bestuchef, and resting on the well known intentions of the empress, consented so far that Peter should be elected sovereign of Russia, but was for giving the regency to the grand duchess, under the authority of a council, in which he modestly offered himself to preside.

Though secretly irritated at seeing Ivan Schuvalof appropriating to himself so great a share in this partition, yet the grand duchess seconded with all her efforts the plan of the favourite. To this she was animated by the twofold motive of ambition and fear. But the more she was desirous of obtaining the sovereign power, the more carefully she concealed that desire. Towards those who, from the nature of their employment or station, approached her but seldom, she covered her schemes with an apparent indifference, and she perpetually repeated to her most intimate confidants, that "the title of the mother of the emperor she should always think preferable to that of his spouse." On the other hand, she could not dissemble that, since her infidelities were known to the grand duke, she had everything to dread from the resentment of that prince. He did not conceal the animosity he bore her, of which she had evident proofs at various times.

The other party into which the court was split, and which defended the rights of Peter to succeed to the throne, was headed by the senator Vorontzof, brother of the new grand chancellor. This Vorontzof was more ambitious, and at the same time more fordid than any of his competitors for power. He was not destitute of sagacity and courage; but the former he only employed in seeking means of intrigue, and his courage in braving contempt. His daughter was publicly the mistress of the grand duke;

duke; and the senator, who, as before observed, had himself prepared and formed this connection, now neglected nothing for drawing it closer. The access which he had to the grand duke, furnished him with frequent opportunities of exasperating him more against his wife, and of discoursing on what it would be advisable to do on ascending the throne. He succeeded so well in gaining his confidence, that the prince determined on nothing till he had consulted the count, or previously informed him of his intention through his daughter. In short, according to the instigations of Vorontzof, and some other courtiers at the devotion of that senator, the grand duke resolved to assemble the troops at the instant the empress should close her eyes, to cause himself to be proclaimed emperor, to repudiate the grand duchess, to declare the young Paul Petrovitch illegitimate, and publicly to marry his mistress Elizaveta Romanovna Vorontzof.

All things seemed to concur to the success of this enterprise. The grand duke, it is true, was not agreeable to the courtiers, but he was still respected by the people, who looked up to him as the offspring of Peter the great. Vorontzof had, moreover, far greater address than Schuvalof, and he laid his account that England would furnish him with considerable sums.

In the midst of this train of things, the perpetual intrigues and agitations with which the two parties filled the court of the dying monarch, and whose animosities

animosities were augmenting from day to day, there started up all at once a man who undertook to calm their tempers, compromise their differences, and even reconcile their opinions. This man was Nikita Ivanovitch count Panin, who afterwards for many years filled the place of prime minister to Catharine, and was then just returned from Stockholm, where he had long resided in a diplomatic capacity.

Count Panin was of an obscure family, and set out in life as a soldier in one of the regiments of horse guards*. Under the patronage of prince

Kurakin

* Count Nikita Ivanovitch Panin, minister of the department for foreign affairs, was born the 15th of September 1718. His family was originally from the republic of Lucca, whence they came to Russia some time in the fifteenth century. His father served under Peter the great, and was so fortunate as to obtain the particular favour of his sovereign. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general, and died in 1736 of the consequences of the wounds he had received in several battles, leaving behind him two sons. The elder was entrusted with the most important concerns of the empire, and educated the heir of the crown; the second gave many proofs of courage and military skill in the prussian war, governed as stadtholder the whole of the country conquered from Prussia, afterwards led his army against the Turks, stormed Bender, effectuated the independency of the Krim Tartars; lastly, after he had for some years retired from the service at his own request, quelled the great insurrection under Pugatshof; and, by this important service rendered to his country, obtained the appellation of defender of the nobles, against whom the attacks of the rebels were chiefly directed. Nikita Ivanovitch, by his good conduct, and the interest of his relation prince

Kurakin,

Kurakin he became gentleman of the bed-chamber. The empress soon noticed him from the people of the palace, and thought he might be employed in confidential affairs. Accordingly she sent him in 1748 to Sweden, with the title of minister plenipotentiary at the court of Stockholm. On his return he had been appointed governor to prince Paul Petrovitch. Panin had received but little help from education; in natural talents he did not rise above mediocrity; but, as is often observable in minds of that stamp, he found nothing arduous or difficult, but thought always that cunning was equal to wisdom. Obstinate and inflexible in his opinions, which being neither founded on judgment nor derived from experience, were not always the most just, he seemed to imagine that what he knew and

Kurakin, who had married his sister, procured him access to the court on all occasions. The empress Elizabeth Petrovna, at her accession, made him a gentleman of the bed-chamber; and the particular favour which she shewed him presently made him an object of jealousy and envy, two vices that are said to be no strangers in courts. His enemies engaged in several intrigues in hopes of removing him from the palace; but, as in all his behaviour they could find no handle for calumny, they were reduced to the necessity of employing his merits to further their aim. They represented to the empress his dexterity in political matters, and he was sent in 1747 as minister plenipotentiary to the danish court, whence the following year he was ordered to Stockholm. This year he received the order of St. Anne, in 1751 that of St. Alexander Nefsky, and in 1755 was promoted to be lieutenant-general. He remained twelve years in Sweden.

what he thought was always the best. However, in the latter years of his life, after he had done with all public affairs, he has often confessed to his friends, that during the whole course of his ministry he made it the basis of his conduct in all negotiations, either foreign or domestic, to gain time, and trust chiefly to the chapter of accidents: and he had seldom been mistaken in the event. Indeed the face of human affairs is in such perpetual fluctuation, and is subject to such an endless variety of changes, that the chances attending on what a day may bring forth are frequently, both in private and public life, seen to favour the maxim of this conceited politician. His residence in Sweden had taught him to believe that an aristocratic constitution, with the forms of a senate, was the masterpiece of governments. To these notions he pertinaciously adhered. The rest of his character was made up of indolence, inaccuracy, and a passion for gossiping.

In accepting the post of preceptor to the young prince, he had now to determine his choice between the grand duke and his consort. Panin did not allow himself a moment's hesitation. He devoted himself entirely to Catharine. Being admitted into her confidence, and informed of her design to snatch the sceptre from the hand of her husband, he easily perceived the extent of the danger to which she was exposed. He was sensible that she might fail in the attempt, and be covered with ruin; that she might suddenly be hurled from the throne and
the

the bed of the emperor, and that her son would partake in her fall. It was this that the governor dreaded the most.

The first thought that occurred to him for avoiding this misfortune, was to engage the two opposite parties to abate of their extravagant pretensions; and he could no otherwise hope to gain their consent to this mutual surrender, than by employing those fears they reciprocally entertained of each other. He accordingly resolved to bring about a coalition, thereby to pave the way for Peter to be seated on the throne, and in order that he might be proclaimed emperor, not by the troops, but by the senate, who at the same time would limit his power, and secure the authority to his wife and son.

This project once conceived, Panin set himself seriously about the means of its execution. Ambition all at once gave a momentary turn to his character. His indolence gave place to activity, discretion succeeded to his temerity, and reserve to his usual babble. He distrusted even Catharine herself, and never imparted to her a share in his secret. He went farther: he affected no longer to frequent, and feigned to have abandoned his party. But, no sooner did he think himself safe from all suspicion of his intentions, than he resorted in secret to the house of Ivan Schuvalof.

Ivan Schuvalof had given himself up to the most pungent anxieties. He shuddered, he even shed tears at the thoughts of being the leader of a party,

and at seeing the dangerous honour ascribed to him of a project conceived by Peter Schuvalof, his ambitious cousin *; who, confined at this time to his bed by a sickness that laid him soon after in the grave, could not support the insolence he had for some time inspired into the haughty and puffed-up favourite of Elizabeth.

The circumstance was favourable to Panin. He failed not to turn it to his advantage. He dexterously employed his ingenuity in augmenting the horrors of Ivan Schuvalof, by exaggerating the dangers to which he was exposed. — “How can you venture,” said he, “to contend with unequal forces, against the grand duke, bringing upon yourself an irreparable ruin and a certain death, by endeavouring to set aside from the throne a prince who is called to it by the choice of the sovereign, and who, by his birth, is the only legitimate heir? But even supposing you could succeed in preventing the sceptre from passing into his hand, have you any reason to hope to preserve your influence for any considerable time, during a minority, the weakness whereof

* Count Peter Schuvalof was of a bold and romantic turn; and the opposite in all things of his cousin Ivan, whose only propensity was to sordid intrigue. Peter Schuvalof made himself famous in Russia for his ambition, and in Europe for the invention of the cannons that bear his name. He fancied himself alone able to prevent the grand duke from reigning, and only made use of his cousin Ivan as an ordinary instrument.

“ will

“ will embolden your rivals, and raise up a host of
 “ malcontents, incessantly plotting your disgrace?
 “ If you are victorious over one faction, can you
 “ equally flatter yourself with escaping the other?
 “ If the first blow that is struck at you falls short of
 “ its aim, by the second, more successful, you may
 “ be easily overthrown. If you would follow the
 “ advice of a friend, and the dictates of prudence,
 “ you will sedulously frequent the levées of the grand
 “ duke and conciliate his favour. Time still is
 “ yours. He himself is well informed of the ob-
 “ stacles to be thrown in his way, and he will think
 “ himself happy enough, if, at the expence of some
 “ sacrifices, he deprives them of the power to hurt
 “ him. Let us leave him then the quiet possession
 “ of the throne; but let us oblige him to purchase
 “ it on conditions that will thenceforward dispel
 “ our fears, and for ever disable the prince from
 “ abusing his power. It would be unnecessary at
 “ present for me to specify those conditions: but if
 “ you comply with my advice, I have not the least
 “ doubt but the grand duke will easily be brought
 “ to agreement, and I promise to furnish you with
 “ a plan adapted to reconcile the several parties that
 “ divide the court.”

Count Ivan Schuvalof answered not a single word; but convinced of the wisdom of Panin's advice, he immediately repaired to his cousin Peter, and imparted to him in whispers the counsels he had just received. Disease had abated the courage of

Peter

Peter Schuvalof, and relaxed the springs of his ambition. But, though he easily yielded to the persuasion of the reality of all the formidable apprehensions that terrified Ivan, yet, in relinquishing his project, he was determined to play the principal part.

He sent an humble message to the grand duke, acquainting him, that, having to communicate to him secrets of the utmost importance, and being prevented from quitting his bed by a painful disease, he was his submissive petitioner for the honour of a visit. The prince went directly to his chamber. Being seated by his couch, Peter Schuvalof addressed him with the energy and awful solemnity of a man, who, trembling on the brink of the grave, knows of no artifices for concealing the truth, and has nothing any longer to desire or to fear. — “My prince,” said he, “you are not ignorant of the prepossessions that are abroad against you. The people imagine that you incline more to the Germans than to them; the clergy dread you; the principal nobility hate you. The clouds that are gathering round, seem to threaten you with a tempestuous reign. All circumstances concur to demonstrate that for preventing the alterations you are thought to intend, your enemies will proceed to extremities. I pretend not, my prince, to know what are the designs you really meditate; I cannot foresee whether you will triumph over those who are seeking your ruin, or whether they
“ will

“ will get the better of you. But if you carry into effect what it is supposed you are determined to do; if you repudiate the grand duchess, to elevate to her place a woman so vile and contemptible as the countess Vorontzof, be assured that you will draw upon yourself a series of calamities, to which, sooner or later, you will fall a victim, and that you and your memory will be dishonoured for ever.”

As he listened to this discourse, the grand duke was observed at several times to change colour; and on perceiving that Peter Schuvalof had left off speaking, he assured him, that the charge of any design to dissolve his marriage was a false imputation, and that nothing should ever persuade him to it. But what might lead to a suspicion of the sincerity of these protestations, is, that the prince added these remarkable words: “Romanovna herself may perhaps give credit to reports that flatter her vanity; she is a simpleton, whom I never promised to marry but in case the grand duchess should die; and she is still alive.”

However, as Peter Schuvalof was sincerely desirous of an accommodation with the grand duke, he omitted to give this last avowal all the interpretation of which it was susceptible, and was satisfied with the promise given him by the prince, that he would blot from his memory all the machinations that had been so daringly formed against him.

This

This reconciliation was effected without trouble ; but one other still remained, not less important, and far more difficult to obtain. We have seen what odious suspicions the enemies of the grand duke were continually pouring into the ears of the empress. That princess was alarmed with the apprehension that her nephew might be led to get rid of her by poison, and these fears augmented her weakness, and filled her with aversion for him that had raised them. Ever since her illness had prevented her from appearing in public, she had ordered the grand duke to be denied admittance to her apartment ; and that this order might appear the less extraordinary, she had caused it in like manner to be signified to the grand duchess. The secret of these divisions, of these disturbances in the imperial family, was still confined within the walls of the palace ; but it might easily get vent, and be spread through the town ; and if this should be the case, if the empress should have died without seeing the prince and his spouse, the populace, always implicitly credulous, would have thought the unjust suspicions of Elizabeth to have been founded in truth, and would have eagerly attributed to the nephew the death of the aunt. Something was therefore to be done to induce that princess to call the grand duke to her presence.

Count Ivan Schuvalof was grand chamberlain, and the principal person about the empress. Panin thought

thought him the properest man to solicit the reconciliation he wanted ; but whether it was that Schuvalof was afraid of troubling the empress too much in her present infirm condition ; whether he was willing to keep the grand duke longer in an anxious suspense, and avoid an explanation of the uttermost danger to all those who had endeavoured to injure that prince ; or whether, in a word, he reckoned on the surreptitious testament it was proposed to bring to light * ; however it be, he absolutely refused to make this request.

Panin, on seeing the failure of his first attempt, addressed himself now to the confessor of Elizabeth. He frankly acknowledged to him, that the commission with which he was charged was of a nature extremely delicate ; and that though his sollicitude for the salvation of the sovereign might bring upon him remediless misfortune, yet the glory and comfort that would accrue to him from the success of his aim, should make him scorn disgrace, and expect his recompense in a better world. He assured him likewise of the gratitude of the grand duke and grand duchess : and the monk, not less wishing, it may be supposed, to cherish the favour of the heir to the throne, than zealous for the eternal repose of the empress, promised to deliver

* It is well known, that the chancellor Bestuchef had long since prepared this spurious will by which his party was to wrest the reins of government out of the hands of Peter III.

his

his exhortations to her with all the energy of sacred eloquence.

Every needful precaution was taken. A moment was chosen when Ivan Schuvalof was absent; and then the confessor approaching the bed of Elizabeth, discoursed to her of heavenly things, of the supreme and immortal Sovereign by whom earthly monarchs reign, of his justice, of his clemency, of his tribunal, before which only they who forgive can obtain forgiveness, and of that kingdom of God of which the terrestrial paradise was no more than a faint adumbration, but where only the charitable can obtain admission, but where only the merciful can hope for mercy: which ended, he obtained of her a sign of consent. At this instant the grand duke entered, leading Catharine by the hand, who both fell on their knees by the bedside, and Elizabeth pronounced in an indistinct tone of voice, and as if no more than the animal machine was concerned in the utterance, whatever was dictated to her by the priest. She said to the prince and princess: — “That she had always loved them; and that with her dying breath she wished them all kinds of blessings.”

Those that were witnesses of this scene saw clearly, that the pardon came only from her lips; but appearances sufficed the prince; and his partisans did not fail emphatically to repeat through the city the affectionate words pronounced by the empress, with several additions of their own.

On

On the other hand, Ivan Schuvalof, who had not been able to make a merit of the reconciliation with the grand duke, but resolved not to furnish an occasion for irritating that prince against him, studiously omitted to contradict whatever they pleased to publish on the matter.

Proud of the important service he had been rendering the grand duke, Panin imagined he had thenceforward acquired such a consequence with him as to make him consent entirely to the plan he had marked out. According to which, Peter, as soon as the empress had departed this life, was to repair to the senate, and there receive the crown by a solemn decree.

Panin therefore demanded an audience of the grand duke. This the prince granted without hesitation. He began by telling the prince, that what he had to deliver was worthy of his utmost attention. He then addressed him to the following effect: — “It is on the first step you shall take on ascending the throne, that the prosperity of your reign and the glory you will merit chiefly depend. There are two methods, my prince, of investing yourself with the sovereign power; the former, by causing yourself to be proclaimed emperor by the army; the second, by receiving the crown at the hands of the senate. The former is more prompt; the latter more sure. The eyes of all Europe and a great part of Asia
“ are

“ are fixed upon you. Reflect then on the honour
 “ you will acquire among the numerous nations
 “ in subjection to your sovereignty, and even
 “ foreigners too, when they behold you so generous
 “ as to wish to hold, from the free choice of the
 “ representatives of the russian empire, an autho-
 “ rity which your predecessors owed only to the
 “ force and venality of the troops.

“ You know how frequent revolutions have
 “ been in this empire; you know with what fa-
 “ cility a seduced or mutinous soldiery have
 “ crowned or dethroned their monarchs. The
 “ method that I propose is the only one adapted
 “ to the prevention of dangerous machinations.
 “ The senate, having once elected you, will feel
 “ itself interested in supporting the work of its
 “ hands; and the people, regarding your person
 “ more sacred, will always be ardent in your
 “ defence.”

The grand duke was moved; he was just yield-
 ing to the impression, when suddenly two of his
 courtiers entered. He communicated to them the
 proposal of Panin, and asked their opinion. One
 of them, who presently perceived the insidious
 nature of the measure proposed to the prince,
 advised him to submit his decision to the judgment
 of the old prince Trubetskoi, whose long experience
 and consummate wisdom rendered him a proper
 guide. Prince Trubetskoi had indeed been witness
 of

of several revolutions, and was a perfect master of
 the usages and customs of his country*.

He was sent for. The grand duke repeated to
 him all that he had just been hearing from the
 mouth of Panin, and did not conceal his inclination
 to follow the advice of the count. But Trubetskoi
 expressed himself of a different opinion, and delivered
 it with all the boldness of a veteran foldier, jealous
 of the honour of his sovereigns.

“ My prince,” said he, “ the step you have been
 “ advised to take is not only attended with far
 “ greater danger than that you are instructed to
 “ dread, but in direct opposition to the customs
 “ of the empire. The russian constitution is
 “ purely military; and the senate has never pre-
 “ tended to interfere in the election of the tzars.
 “ And what is that imaginary glory in preferring
 “ to be crowned by a juridical assembly rather
 “ than by a victorious army? Chosen by a diet or
 “ by a senate, will the kings of Poland and of
 “ Sweden ever take precedence of the emperor of
 “ all the Russias? The true, the only glory of a
 “ monarch is to reign worthily. Make it your
 “ endeavour then to merit that glory without dis-
 “ quieting yourself about a vain formality, and
 “ putting yourself under the tutelage of an ambitious
 “ senate, who will soon make you repent the con-

* It was prince Trubetskoi who, in 1730, induced the
 empress Anne to break the conditions imposed on her by the
 senate on calling her to the throne.

“fidence you have reposed in it. But if unhappily
 “your throne should shake, will that senate have
 “the force to establish it? and if you should set
 “out with rendering the army dissatisfied by dis-
 “daining to follow their ancient usage, will you
 “not, sooner or later, have reason to dread their
 “vengeance?”

This speech caused the grand duke to waver in his resolution. He was flattered by the brilliant novelty of the counsels of Panin; but the dread of affronting the army deprived him of courage to follow them. In this perplexity of mind, not knowing what determination he ought to adopt, he dispatched one of his chamberlains to consult the grand duchess.

Catharine, whose ambition was roused by Elizabeth's approaching dissolution, and who felt the necessity of conciliating the popular favour by an exterior of piety, which, by those who best knew her, was supposed not to proceed from her heart; Catharine was punctual in frequenting the churches at the stated times of public devotion; but more particularly at the prayers that were now daily put up for imploring the re-establishment of the health of the empress. Panin had imprudently neglected to inform her of his project. She was still in the dark concerning the advantages to accrue from it to her. Besides, she had been employed several days in framing herself the form of the proclamation acknowledging the emperor, as well as that of

the

the oath to be taken by the troops: and as she plumed herself on writing in a style of peculiar elegance, and imagining that these two pieces would be received with admiration by the people at large, she would not sacrifice a labour, that would be lost if the prince should cause himself to be elected by the senate, as that body would itself, in that case, prescribe the new form of the oath, and dictate the new proclamation. She therefore returned an abrupt answer to the grand duke, “that he ought
 “to conform to established custom.”

1762. Almost at the moment the grand duke received this answer, word was brought him, that his aunt, the empress Elizabeth, “commanded
 “him to live long*,” in other words, that she was dead. The tzaritza expired on Christmas-day 1761 †, after a long illness, and in excruciating pains, in the fifty-second year of her age, and the twenty-second of her reign. This princess was second daughter to Peter the great; and, from being little better than a prisoner, became in a moment a despotic sovereign, holding in her feeble and negligent hands the reins of this gigantic empire, the most

* The usual form of announcing to another the death of some person, in practice among all classes and conditions of people. Procopy Kirillitch prikazal jeet: Procopius the son of Cyril, or perhaps Procopius Fitz-Cyril, “orders you to live,” is the same as to tell you that he is dead: or as often, Afanasi Vassilievitch, Athanasius the son of Basil, prikazal dolgo jeet, orders you to live long.

† Or the 5th of January 1762 N. S.

extensive on the globe of the earth; one part whereof alone, the russian Asia, is (as has already been observed in our preliminaries) far greater than all Europe taken together: nay, of which part only, one province, Siberia, greatly exceeds an empire of the first magnitude, namely China, with all its adjacent territories. For Elizabeth possessed neither the abilities nor the inclination for being an active sovereign: and the illustrious family of this mighty monarch was more than once disturbed by intestine revolutions. In dungeons at various distances from the residence, were languishing, in her reign, a dethroned emperor, exiled princes and dukes, vanquished magnates, banished commanders, statesmen, courtiers, and women.

The reign of Elizabeth may be deservedly termed peaceful and tranquil; yet, without reckoning the grand tumult at her accession to the throne, there were not wanting revolutions of an inferior kind. In the year 1743, not long before the arrival of Catharine, a court conspiracy against the empress was detected: which, though it cost none of the accomplices their lives, yet the minister for the marine, Lapoukin, his very beautiful lady, his son, the countess Bestuchef, sister-in-law to the chancellor of the empire, several gentlemen of the chamber, and officers, received the knout, had the fore-half of their tongues cut out, and were sent to Siberia. In the year 1748, count Lestocq, formerly body-surgeon to the empress, and the principal instru-

ment

ment of her elevation to the throne, was disgraced by the chancellor Bestuchef, whom he himself had promoted to that office, and by general Apraxin: he was first imprisoned in the castle, and afterwards exiled to some obscure and solitary place in the government of Archangel. Ten years afterwards the chancellor's own turn came; being in 1758 accused of high treason, and sent off to one of his estates one hundred and twenty versts beyond Mosco. — Of more consequence to the country was Elizabeth's participation in the formidable league against Frederic of Prussia, at the instigation of Bestuchef, and which the grand duke beheld with extreme discontent. During the ever-memorable war of 1757 — 1762, that monarch was cruelly harassed by the russian arms, though at times such glorious victories were gained over them by his own; but what benefit could accrue from all this to the enormous empire? What was there to compensate the thousands of lives and the prodigious sums of money that it cost to Russia?

The easiness and indolence of Elizabeth's character subjected her to the humours of favourites, who made a bad use of her authority. Her devotion often rendered her impious, and her clemency cruel. At the commencement of her reign she made a vow never to punish a malefactor with death: the judges therefore, who could not decapitate criminals, deprived them of their lives by the barbarous punishment of the knout; and never

were there more tongues cut out, and more wretches sent to Siberia, than under the reign of this princess, so unjustly extolled for her clemency*.

It is supposed that her government cost every year to the empire at least one thousand of her subjects by private imprisonment, which, during the twenty years and upwards that she reigned, makes the number amount to above twenty thousand. Nothing was more easy than to obtain a secret order for this purpose by the flatterers of all ranks that swarmed about her person. It was sufficient for one of the maids of honour to think herself slighted, for getting an order to have a person taken out of bed in the night, carried away

* The panegyrist of Elizabeth (says Mr. Coxe) would certainly have entertained some doubts concerning her boasted clemency, if they had recollected that she did not abolish, but retained, the following horrid process for the purpose of extorting confession from persons charged with treasonable designs. The arms of the suspected person being tied behind by a rope, he was drawn up in that posture to a considerable height in the air; whence being suddenly lowered to within a small distance of the ground, and the motion being there as suddenly checked, the violence of the concussion dislocated his shoulders, and in that deplorable situation he underwent the knout. To this dreadful engine of barbarity and despotism, Elizabeth, amidst all her imputed lenity, gave unlimited scope; and, during her whole reign, it was ordinarily applied even at the discretion of inferior and ignorant magistrates; nor was it abolished until the accession of the present empress (Catharine II.), who has prohibited the use of torture in all criminal cases. *Coxe's Travels*, 8vo. edit. vol. iii. p. 130.

blindfolded

blindfolded and gagged, and immured under ground, there to drag out the remainder of life in a solitary and loathsome dungeon, without ever being charged with any crime, or even knowing in what part of the country he was. On the disappearance of any such person from his family, from his relatives, from the circle of his acquaintance, it was highly dangerous to make any inquiries after him. "He has disappeared," was held a sufficient answer to questions of that nature. Many of these were known to be still miserably wearing out existence under the bastions and towers of Schlusfelburg and other fortresses so lately as the winter of 1780, not to mention the exiles to Siberia. To all this it may be added, that her reign was never marked by a single act that could justify the revolution that placed on her head the crown of Russia. In a word, she was fitter to have vegetated in the sloth of a convent, than to be seated on the throne of one of the largest of the chief empires of the world.

CHAP. II.

Accession of Peter III. — He recalls a great Number of the Exiles, among others Munich and Biren. — Ukase in favour of the Nobility. — Peace with Prussia. — Admiration of Peter III. for Frederic II. — Misunderstanding between Peter III. and Catharine. — Intrigues against that Prince. — The Orlofs, Princess Dashkof, Panin, enter into a Plot for dethroning him. — He makes a Visit to Ivan in the Prison of Schlusfelburg. — His Design to nominate that Prince his Successor. — Preparations against Denmark.

THE part taken by Elizabeth in the seven years' war, though it might in some measure have been dictated by resentment, might at the same time have passed for the result of the soundest policy. No power but that of the king of Prussia was capable of checking hers. He was, not only from his strength and character, but from the situation of his dominions, the only prince in Europe from whom it could be materially her interest to make conquests.

By the capture of Colberg on one hand, and Schweidnitz on the other, the king of Prussia's dominions were entirely at the mercy of his enemies; his forces were worn away, and even his efforts

efforts had gradually declined: a complete victory, though this was an event not at all probable, could not have saved him. The Russians, by wintering in Pomerania, and by the possession of Colberg, which insured them supplies by a safe and expeditious channel, were in a condition to commence their operations much earlier than usual, as well as to sustain them with more spirit and uniformity. No resource of policy could be tried with the least expectation of success. After such a resistance for five years, of which the world never furnished another example, the king of Prussia had nothing left, but such a conduct as might close the scene with glory; since there was so little appearance of his concluding the war with safety.

In the midst of these gloomy appearances, his inveterate and inflexible enemy, the empress of Russia, died; and he was extricated by that event alone from the distresses by which he was actually surrounded, and the greater miseries that seemed to await him.

With regard to her own dominions, Elizabeth, for her personal conveniency, had created a government by favourites; and by her passion for pomp and sensual gratifications, had incurred enormous debts.

No sooner had the empress closed her eyes, than the courtiers pressed in crowds to the grand duke. This prince, laying aside at once his weakness and indecision, accosted them with dignity,

dignity, and received the oaths of the officers of his guard.

In about an hour he got on horseback, and traversed the streets of St. Petersburg, distributing money to the multitude. As he went, the soldiers flocked about him, crying, "If thou take care of us, we will serve thee as faithfully as we served our good empress." The people mixed their shouts of joy with the acclamations of the soldiers; and, though the enemies of the grand duke had long since succeeded in their attempts to bring odium and contempt upon him, yet his accession to the throne was not attended with the least mark of discontent or ill-will.

As for himself, delivered on a sudden from the long and servile constraint in which he had been kept by his aunt, he negligently let his satisfaction appear, but without betraying an indecent joy. He took the name of Peter III.

It was easy for him to efface the memory of his predecessor; yet it was observable that there was little appearance of those cheerful sentiments which usually take possession of the hearts of the subjects on the accession of a young prince to the throne. All tempers seemed out of tune: the emperor neither found nor felt any more affection in the larger circle of the court, that in the smaller one of his family.

The Russians were at that time, generally speaking, indisposed towards foreigners, though
numbers

numbers of them, since the time of Peter the great, had always held places at the court, in the army, in the fleet, and in the civil departments. Elizabeth had flattered this old russian prejudice; and, in order to ingratiate herself with the people, on her coming to the crown, had promised to remove the foreigners: but in the opinion of many of the nobility, and especially of the army, she came very far short of her word. During her reign, in the year 1740, an insurrection broke out on this account; the soldiers in the camp near Vyborg, during the swedish war, began on a sudden to maltreat their foreign officers, and were threatening to proceed to very dangerous extremities, when discipline and order were presently restored by the great presence of mind of the intrepid Keith. Even in Petersburg a similar mutiny, shortly after the former, broke out, which, though at first only an attack on a german officer, yet proceeded to so great a height as to fill the whole city with alarm and consternation. It was chiefly on account of this national humour, that general's Loevendahl, Keith, Manstein, and other deserving foreigners, afterwards took leave of the service.

Indeed the grand duke Peter could not properly be deemed a foreigner; he had rather a just claim on the national love, as the grandson of Peter the great. But he was after all an Holsteiner; he had not long been resident in Russia; and lived there almost like a foreigner. Neither in manners, nor
in

in language, nor in religious profession, did he seem a complete and genuine Russian. His confidence and familiarity were confined to the Germans from his dukedom; all his affections seemed to centre in Holstein alone, while he shewed only coldness or even repugnance to the concerns of his future empire. Nor was this at all surprising, as the situation in which he was held, by keeping him at a distance from the deliberations of the cabinet, naturally diminished his attention to public affairs; and as he justly disapproved of the violent participation with which his aunt and her ministry engaged in the great German war. — Both parties, if they had not yet proceeded to intemperate measures, had, however, already concerted their plans, or rather had begun to put them in play. The grand duke, according to some, ought to be deprived of the succession; and then they could cast their eyes on no person so proper for it as his consort; who, though a foreigner likewise, had yet in her whole behaviour assimilated herself more with the nation, and might reign as the guardian of her son. On the other hand, the grand duke wanted, as was said by others, or perhaps by the same, entirely to new-model the whole system of Russia, to put everything on a German footing, to employ the force of the empire only in the aggrandisement of Holstein; and, in order to enable himself to act with perfect freedom, and to annihilate the opposite party at a stroke, to detach himself from his family, and

and to secure to a paternal relation the expectative of the crown.

Such was the temper of the times when Peter acceded to the imperial dignity. In the manifesto by which he proclaimed this event to the empire, he mentioned neither his consort nor even his son; and interpreters were not wanting, who clearly perceived in this omission the overthrow of the hereditary succession. A circumstance that operated with greater impression was, that he made no preparations for his coronation at Moscow; a solemnity of the utmost importance, as a practice of high antiquity, and as conferring an awful sanction on the authority of the sovereign in the minds of the people. Instead of this he pushed his blind passion for imitating the king of Prussia so far, that he made preparations in this immature state of his government to quit Russia, and go into Germany, for the sake of an interview with that great monarch, whose genius, principles, and fortune he so extravagantly admired.

The impartial historian cannot withhold the tribute of praise from his conduct at the beginning of his reign. To say that he revenged himself on no one, though he very well knew who had taken pains to injure him with the late empress, would be but slight commendation, in comparison of the acts of beneficence and justice with which he signalized his first accession to the supreme command, to the astonishment of those who knew him only by his vices.

vices. The transformation appeared as complete as it was sudden. Gentleness and humanity took the place of violence, and reflection succeeded to passion. The grand duke had been inconsistent, impetuous, and wild: Peter III. now shewed himself equitable, patient, and enlightened. He exercised kindness towards all who had been attached to the late empress his aunt. He continued in their posts almost all the great officers of state. He pardoned his enemies. He raised to the rank of field-marshal Peter Schuvalof, who had been long confined to his bed, and who died shortly after. He left the place of grand-veneur to Alexey Gregorievitch Razumofsky*, the favourite of Elizabeth. He even conferred benefits on Ivan Schuvalof, though he had frequently made an unworthy use of his influence.

Prince Shakofskoï, advocate of the senate, of whom Peter III. had great reason to complain, was the only person he removed from his employment; but he exacted of him nothing more than a simple resignation, leaving him both his liberty and his possessions. At the same time a certain Glebof, who from being but a common attorney, was appointed to transact the affairs of Holstein, and in that admi-

* Alexey Razumofsky had often injured the grand duke with the empress Elizabeth. The grand duke one day sent him an axe upon a red satin cushion, as a hint of the catastrophe that awaited him; but when this prince was seated on the throne, he disdained every idea of revenge.

nistration

nistration had obtained the good-will of the prince, was put into the place of Shakofskoï. Glebof afterwards but ill requited so signal a mark of the confidence of his master*.

The grand duchess, who could not think without dread of the moment when her husband should be invested with the supreme command, and expected nothing short of a very severe animadversion upon herself, received from him the most flattering salutations, and marks of the greatest confidence. He seemed to forget the wrongs he had suffered, in the elegancies of her mind, and the force of her genius. He passed a great part of the day in her apartments: discoursed with her on the most friendly footing, and consulted her on all delicate and important affairs. The courtiers, surprised at this conduct, felicitated Catharine on the happiness of her lot. Catharine was almost the only person who was not deceived. She easily saw that her husband was not capable of governing by himself, and she was too well acquainted with his character, to mistake that for benevolence which was only weakness.

With regard to the government of his country, nothing could be more popular and auspicious than his first measures. The earliest use the new tzar made of his absolute power, was to set the russian

* Glebof had a considerable share of good sense, together with many defects. In the reign of Catharine II. he was long at the head of the war department; but the enormous embezzlements of which he was guilty, caused him to be turned out.

nobility and gentry free, and to put them on the same footing with those of their rank in the other more moderate governments of Europe. He recalled that multitude of state prisoners with whom the suspicious temper of Elizabeth, and the jealousies of her servants, had peopled the deserts of Siberia *. Among these unfortunate wretches was the famous Biren †, who had long been the haughty lover

* It is said that Peter III. recalled to the number of seventeen thousand exiles.

† Ernest John Biren, become so famous by his great advancements and his not less extraordinary reverses of fortune, was born in Courland, of a family of mean extraction. His grandfather had been head groom to James the third, duke of Courland, and obtained from his master the present of a small estate in land. His son accompanied prince Alexander, youngest son of the duke, in a campaign into Hungary against the Turks, in quality of groom of his horse, and with the rank of lieutenant. Prince Alexander being killed before Buda, in 1686, Biren returned into Courland, and was appointed master huntsman to the duke. Ernest John his second son was born in 1687, received the early part of his education in Courland, and was sent to the university of Königsburg, where he continued till some youthful imprudencies compelled him to retire. In 1714, he made his appearance at St. Petersburg, and solicited the place of page to the princess Charlotte, wife of the tzarovitch Alexey; but being contemptuously rejected as a person of mean extraction, retired to Mittau, where he chanced to ingratiate himself with count Bessuchef, master of the household to Anne, widow of Frederic William, duke of Courland, who resided at Mittau. Being of a handsome figure and polite address, he soon gained the good-will of the duchess, and became her secretary and chief favourite. On her being declared sovereign of Russia, Anne called Biren to Peter-

burg,

lover and the cruel minister of the empress Anne. Peter III. restored him only to liberty; but Catharine afterwards gave him back the duchy of Courland; and Biren, instructed in the school of adversity, passed the rest of his life as a practical philosopher, and became the father of a people whom he had formerly oppressed.

Peter III. brought also from Siberia marshal Munich *, at the age of eighty-two, upon which
one

burg, and the secretary soon became duke of Courland, and first minister or rather despot of Russia. All now felt the dreadful effects of his extreme arrogance, his base intrigues, and his horrid barbarity. The cruelties he exercised on the most illustrious persons of the country almost exceed belief: and Maustein conjectures, that during the ten years in which Biren's power continued, above twenty thousand persons were sent to Siberia, of whom scarcely five thousand were ever heard of more. It is affirmed that the empress has often fallen on her knees before him, in hopes of moving him to clemency, but neither the prayers nor the tears of that princess were able to affect him. — On the death of Anne, which happened in 1740, Biren being declared regent, continued daily increasing his vexations and cruelties, till he was arrested on the 18th of December, only twenty days after he had been appointed to the regency, and at the revolution that ensued he was exiled to the frozen shores of the Oby.

* Christopher Burchard, better known under the name of marshal Munich, was son of an officer in the service of Denmark. After having received a good education, he entered at the age of seventeen into the service of the landgraf of Hesse-Darmstadt, and distinguished himself in his first campaign under prince Eugene and the duke of Marlborough. He afterwards went into Poland,

one of his sons who was yet alive, and thirty-two of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, went to accost him on his approach to the suburbs of the imperial residence. The old soldier presented himself before the emperor with his numerous family, and dressed in the same sheepskin pelice which he had worn in the deserts of Pelim; but the prince hastily restored him the badges of the order of St. Andrew, together with his rank of field-marshal, and said to him, in a friendly tone of voice: "I hope that, notwithstanding your advanced age, you may still serve me." — Munich replied: "Since your majesty has brought me from darkness to light, and called me from the depths of a cavern to admit me to the foot of the throne, you will find me ever ready to expose

and thence passed on to Russia, where his bravery and his talents obtained him the rank of field-marshal. His capital defect was being too circumstantial and over-nice in matters of small import: accordingly the slightest instance of forgetfulness, the least inattention of a subaltern, threw him into a rage, though he was presently after ashamed of his violence. When Elizabeth had ascended the throne, she sought to avenge herself of Munich, for having formerly caused one of her lovers to be put into prison. Being brought to an iniquitous trial, he was condemned to be quartered; but his sentence was changed by the empress into perpetual banishment in Siberia. He was followed into exile by his wife and several domestics. He was allowed but twelve copecks per day for the maintenance of them all, but he procured some addition to this allowance by selling milk, and giving lessons in geometry to the young people that came to his solitude from the nearest towns.

" my

" my life in your service. Neither a tedious exile, nor the severity of a Siberian climate, have been able to extinguish, or even to damp the ardour I have formerly shewn for the interests of Russia and the glory of its monarch *." — Thus proving himself superior to the disgusts which might naturally have arisen in his breast at the disgraces he had unjustly received, and at the same time testifying a dignified gratitude to the sovereign who had recalled him.

Lestocq, the same to whom Elizabeth in a great measure owed her elevation to the throne, and whom she afterwards basely sacrificed to the intrigues of his enemies, who only coveted his property, was also recalled by Peter III., and, by living afterwards at Petersburg contented with an humble mediocrity, proved that he had shewn no less docility to the lessons of adversity than Biren and Munich.

Thus every day was seen arriving at Petersburg some of the victims of the foregoing reign; and their return presented an affecting scene to the people, and a subject of benedictions to the czar. The whole empire resounded with the praises of its new sovereign; and it is impossible to describe the admiration, the transports of joy, that it occasioned on his going in state to the senate, and reading a declaration, by which he permitted the nobility

* Munich enjoyed the favour and patronage of Peter III. and Catharine II. and died on the 16th of October 1767, in the eighty-fifth year of his age.

either to bear arms or not, at their own discretion, and to travel abroad, a liberty not allowed them before. He enfranchised them at the same time from the servitude in which they had been held by his predecessors. The nobility, in the excess of their gratitude, would do no less than erect to him a statue of gold: but this enthusiasm lasted not long*.

A benefit more essential which Russia owes to Peter III. was the abolishment of that inquisition, that terrible tribunal, or, as his successor, when she confirmed the emperor's ukase, very justly named it, the secret inquisition chancery, a persecuting court that shunned the light, in which every cruelty of indefinite accusation, and an examination without judicial forms prevailed, and which perpetrated so many horrors under the reign of the suspicious and timid Elizabeth. Alexey Mikhailovitch, the father of Peter the great, was the institutor of this tyrannical tribunal, under the name of the secret committee, which was busied in judging or rather

* See the appendix No. II. at the end of the volume. Catharine, not willing to disoblige the nobility, and being moreover very sure that this ordinance would only be executed as far as she pleased, left it to subsist; in such manner, that if the nobles would travel, they might do so of right, but not of fact, since they must ask permission of the sovereign; and that princess did not always grant it. Of this count Stroganof was a proof. For more than three years he was desirous of making the tour of Europe; but it was in vain that he solicited the consent of the empress; who always gave him for answer, that she could not dispense with him; and he remained at home.

in condemning all such as were accused of high treason, in other words, whoever was displeasing to the prince or his informers. Persons of all ranks and sexes were liable to be arrested upon the slightest suspicions, and tortured in the most dreadful manner. There was a by-word, "Slovo i delo, words and deeds;" which if any one only pronounced against another, was sufficient cause for them both to be immediately apprehended, and sent to the secret committee, where the accuser also underwent the torture if the accused persisted in his denial.

But it ought to be noticed how Peter III. came to utter these two declarations, dictated by the most enlightened notions of justice, and the most generous confidence. It should be explained how it happened, that in the conduct of this prince was to be seen such an extraordinary mixture of foresight and forgetfulness, of dignity and weakness. His defects, his vices, were the unhappy and necessary effect of his education; his worthy actions might charitably be supposed to proceed from the noble ambition of doing good: but this ambition was often in need of being roused.

The tzar had in quality of his general aide-de-camp, an intimate friend, a young Ukrainian, named Gudovitch*, of whom we have before made men-

* The same whom the tzar, while only grand duke, would have made hetman of the Kozaks in the room of Cyril Razumofsky.

tion, and who, of all his courtiers, was the only one that loved him sincerely. It was Gudovitch, who, when Peter was on the point of coming to the throne, induced him to follow the advice of the old prince Trubetskoï, rather than implicitly to rely on that of Panin; it was he likewise who prompted him to all those prudent and dignified measures that signalized the first days of his reign. But the emperor, surrounded by his corrupters, soon fell back into his indolence, and more than ever abandoned himself to his customary habits. Shut up for several days successively with his mistress and some of his convivial companions, he was in a state of almost continual intoxication, when Gudovitch presented himself before him, and, with a countenance of studied severity, said to him: "Peter Feodorovitch, I now plainly perceive that you prefer to us the enemies of your fame. You are irrecoverably subservient to them; you acknowledge them to have had good reason for saying that you were more addicted to low and degrading pleasures, than fit to govern an empire. Is it thus that you emulate your vigilant and laborious grandsire, that Peter the great whom you have so often sworn to take for your model? Is it thus that you persevere in the wise and noble conduct, by which, at your accession to the throne, you merited the love and the admiration of your people? But that love, that admiration, are already forgotten.

" They

" They are succeeded by discontent and murmurs. " Petersburg is anxiously inquiring whether the tzar " has ceased to live within its walls? The whole " empire begins to fear that it has cherished only " vain expectations of receiving laws that shall " revive its vigour and increase its glory. The " malevolent are alone triumphant; and soon will " the intrigues, the cabals, which the first moments " of your reign had reduced to silence, again raise " their heads with redoubled insolence. Shake off " then this disgraceful lethargy, my tzar! hasten " to shew and to prove, by some resplendent act of " virtue, that you are worthy of realising those " hopes that have been formed and cherished of " you."

Peter listened to this discourse with a mixture of consternation and shame; and when Gudovitch had left off speaking, he asked what he would have him to do to compensate the empire for the days he had been spending in riot. Gudovitch instantly presented him the two declarations that had been put into his hands by the grand chancellor Vorontzof — one for restoring the nobility to their rights, and the other for abolishing the secret committee. Peter took these papers without staying to consider of them, and putting them under his arm, went and read them to the senate.

All those who were apprized of the contents of these new declarations made their discontentment give place to joy, and fondly imagined that the

emperor had been solely employed, during his late retreat, in framing these wise and salutary laws.

Peter III. undertook also to correct the numerous abuses that had crept into the administration of justice, and to establish some forms of jurisprudence more prompt in deciding, and less favourable to the arts of chicane; but as an alteration attended with so many difficulties was not the work of a day, it was necessary for him to begin by gaining a thorough knowledge of the courts, and a close investigation of their practice. He repaired to the senate at an instant when he was not expected; and finding it nearly deserted, he sent for the senators, and represented to them with sharpness, but with dignity, how sensible he was of their negligence*.

Commerce, the sciences, the arts, were equally the objects of attention to the new czar. In Russia almost every department of the administration is confided to a certain number of persons, who form a board, to which is given the title of College: thus it is said, the College of Commerce, the College of Justice, the College of War, the College of Foreign Affairs, and the like. Peter III. frequently visited these colleges; he assisted at their deliberations; he even summoned them together; and

* On a similar occasion, Peter I. behaved with somewhat less moderation. He gave each of them a shower of blows with his *douvine* — a staff that he always carried with him, and which in size was not one of the smallest.

though

though he might not enlighten them by his sagacity, he at least animated them by his encouragements.

He seemed to have it at heart to induce the people to put confidence in him. But this was no easy task; for the people, by the suggestion of the popes*, knew that this prince preferred lutheranism to the orthodox greek religion, and the Germans to the Russians. Nevertheless the czar, docile to the advice of his friend, and sedulous to imitate the example of the king of Prussia, gave easy audience to all who came, received their petitions, and took the pains himself to see that justice was done them. His very enemies, therefore, could not forbear to extol a popularity that reminded them, in some respects, of that of Peter the great.

Peter III. on his first accession to the crown, invited the foreign ministers to his audience, and received their congratulations with dignity. This noble and becoming behaviour, in entire opposition to the idea they had almost all formed of this prince, exceedingly surprised them: but what astonished them still more was, that in a splendid repast which he gave them, he was very reserved in his discourse, and drank with moderation†. In short, the Rus-

* All the parish priests in Russia are called popes. The pope of such a church, village, &c.

† His enemies, always faithful to their plan of calumny, studiously propagated, both within and without the empire, the report that this prince was almost perpetually in a state of inebriety.

fians

fians and foreigners vied with each other in admiring a change which they could scarcely credit. Even the court of Vienna for some time securely reposed in the intentions of the new tzar. Maria Theresa flattered herself that the death of Elizabeth would not totally dissolve the alliance that subsisted between the two empires: but she was deceived in her expectations.

It was impossible for Peter III. to dissemble; and of all the sentiments he entertained, that which he was least able to conceal was his enthusiasm for the king of Prussia. He set at liberty all the prussian prisoners that were confined at Petersburg, and admitted them to his table. One of them, whom he treated with the greatest deference, was the count de Hordt, a swedish officer, who had entered into the service of Frederic, and whom Elizabeth had detained three years in exile*. The tzar took him into his confidence, made him his friend, and the king of Prussia was almost always the topic of their conversation.

* Count de Hordt, lieutenant-general of the Prussian troops, was made prisoner by the Russians after the battle of Custrin. Elizabeth sent him into banishment in revenge for the treatment of a russian officer, whom the king of Prussia had caused to be broke alive on the wheel, for forming a plot of revolt, and meditating to massacre the garrison of Custrin, where he was kept prisoner. When Hordt appeared before Peter III. and related to him, that, independently of the ill-treatment he had received in prison, he had been denied the use of books; Catharine, who was present, exclaimed; "That was very barbarous."

He but rarely invited the foreign ministers to his court, excepting the prussian envoy and Mr. Keith, the british ambassador; which rendered his coolness the more disagreeable to the rest. Peter had long kept up a close correspondence with Frederic, whom he addressed in his letters under no other style than his dear brother or his worthy master. He reminded him in one of them, that, previous to his being elected grand duke, he had had the honour of serving in his army; and went so far as to pray him to grant him a higher rank.

The king of Prussia very dexterously took advantage of the friendship of the tzar. He gave him not immediately the rank he solicited, that he might increase his avidity for it: but after some time had elapsed, wrote him word, that he had appointed him major-general, not on account of his quality as a prince, but solely because of the military skill he knew him to possess. This pretended favour filled Peter with joy. His fascination for the king of Prussia now became stronger than ever. He caused the portrait of that monarch to be placed in his chamber*, and celebrated this inauguration, and

* It was a portrait which count Tottleben had made a present of to the empress Elizabeth, who had dismissed it into an obscure corner of the palace; and during the whole of her reign nobody might keep a portrait of the king of Prussia. The grand duke alone had a miniature, which he wore on his finger in a ring, and which he took care to conceal when he was in the presence of his aunt.

the glory he had acquired in being admitted to a rank at Berlin, by a splendid repast, in which he forgot that temperance which he had for some time observed.

If Peter's infatuation for the king of Prussia had not been complete, he might have been corrected of it by some lessons he received from his own subjects. To mention but one: — "Do you know," said he one day to the hetman Razumofsky; "do you know that, before I was grand duke, I was lieutenant in the service of the king of Prussia?" — "Well!" replied the kozak, "your majesty may now make the king of Prussia a field-marshal."

The prussian ascendant was not only displeasing to the generality of the courtiers and to some of the foreign ministers, but the alterations introduced by the tzar did not meet with universal approbation. Some of them even created him a great number of enemies, and evinced that if he had sometimes good intentions, he was deficient in judgment, and especially in that energy of character so necessary for the ruler of a nation. Together with the wisest plans he often adopted such as were useless, and others that were even dangerous. The desire of making improvements made him imprudently hazard premature reformati-
ons.

Peter took the vast possessions of the church, and made them into domains of the crown, putting the clergy on yearly salaries, but forming a very decent income, of five thousand down to a hundred and
fifty

fifty rubles. It was, undoubtedly, just and beneficial to diminish the wealth of the monks, and to attack prejudices injurious to the state; but at the commencement of a reign against which prepossessions had long been formed, in a nation sunk in superstition, and just beginning to emerge from barbarism, was it expedient to irritate a numerous class of men, who by their situation had so much influence over the rest? Was it expedient to take from the churches the figures of the saints, which to the Russians are the objects of profound veneration? Was it expedient to excite the sacred rage of the devotees by banishing the archbishop of Novgorod, who stood forth against this violation? Surely not: and yet this was what Peter did; but he found himself suddenly obliged to recall that prelate: and by this additional instance of weakness he revived the hopes of his enemies, and did not pacify the offended popes. They spread a report from one end of the empire to the other, that the emperor had only feigned to embrace the greek communion to qualify himself for filling the throne, but that he was still a lutheran at heart, of which he was every day giving fresh proofs by shewing a profound contempt for the rites, the ceremonies, and the religion of the Russians.

To corroborate these reports, the people were reminded, that he had caused to be built, in his palace at Oranienbaum, a lutheran chapel, at the solemn consecration whereof he himself had assisted,
distributing

distributing with his own hands hymn-books among his holstein soldiers, though he had not deigned to set his foot in a greek church that was constructed about the same time. It was said that he had again insulted the saints, in naming two of his newly-constructed ships, one from his uncle, the Prince George, and the other the Frederic, after the king of Prussia*. It was industriously propagated, that he never spoke but with disdain of the russian empire, and never mentioned the Germans but with respect. All these reports, circulated with artifice, soon alienated from the prince those hearts which the first days of his reign had won him.

While his adversaries were thus easily rendering him so suspected of the people, he himself was seemingly taking pains to offend the army. He was continually shewing preferences to the german soldiers over the russian troops. He disbanded the noble guards, who had formerly placed Elizabeth on the throne; he deprived the horse guards of the service they performed at court, and substituted his holstein guards in their place. He introduced the prussian exercise, which was undoubtedly better than that to which they had been accustomed, but which displeased because it was still to be learned;

* Catharine, who knew how to flatter the people, changed the names of these two ships. The one was called the St. Nicholas, the other the St. Alexander. Their holy patrons, however, did not save them from the Turks in the war of 1768: they were both taken.

he

he excited discontents in the regiments of Ismailof and Préobajensky, by ordering one part to leave St. Petersburg, and march into Pomerania, to join the army he had destined to act against Denmark. He raised his uncle, prince George of Holstein, an officer of but little experience, to the rank of generalissimo of the russian armies, giving him at the same time the particular command of the horse guards — a command which had hitherto never belonged to any one but the supreme head of the empire. In short, he so far prejudiced his troops against him, that the most beneficial alteration occasioned a general discontent. It was even made a subject of murmur, that he designed to distinguish the regiments by different facings and collars*. — It was said to be a german fashion, not proper for Russia.

But that which displeased all parties at once was, the declared intention of Peter III. to retake by force of arms the duchy of Schlesvig, on which the kings of Denmark had seized to the prejudice of the dukes of Holstein. The moment for undertaking this war was certainly by no means favourable; but, to enable us to judge whether the motives of Peter deserved to be condemned, it will be necessary to recollect on what his pretensions were founded.

* It has been falsely asserted that Peter III. wanted to introduce in Russia the blue colour instead of green in the clothing of the troops: he changed nothing but the trimmings and the facings of the uniform of the infantry.

The

The king of Denmark and Norway, Frederic II. who reigned about the middle of the sixteenth century, possessed, independently of his kingdom, the duchies of Holstein and Schlesvig, and was desirous that at his death his three sons should share these duchies between them. Christian III., who reigned immediately after him, had therefore one part, prince John another, and prince Adolphus, the primitive stock of the house of Holstein-Gottorp, took possession of the rest.

These three princes, united alike by blood and friendship, agreed to govern Holstein and Schlesvig in common; and this convention was not dissolved, even by the death of John, who left no posterity. But the descendants of the two others, to whom the same conditions were prescribed, would not all condescend to submit to them. The kings of Denmark, more powerful than the dukes of Holstein, were perpetually seeking means to oppress them, and at last made themselves masters of Schlesvig. The dukes protested, and in vain had recourse to arms against this usurpation. After successive quarrels that lasted upwards of a century, they were both defeated of their claims upon Schlesvig by a treaty concluded in 1720, under the mediation of England and France.

Duke Charles of Holstein, who married, a few years after, that is, in 1726, one of the daughters of czar Peter I. and who was the father of Peter III. flattered himself at first that Russia would oblige the
Danes

Danes to restore to him that part of his patrimony which they retained; but on the death of Catharine I. all these expectations vanished.

On the 26th of May 1732, the emperor Charles VI. and the king of Denmark entered into a treaty, to which the tzaritzza Anne acceded, sanctioning the spoliation of the duke of Holstein, by charging the king of Denmark to pay him, within the space of two years, a million of crowns; at the same time requiring the duke of Holstein to accept this payment at the term prescribed, otherwise the danish monarch to be enfranchised from all compensation.

The duke of Holstein constantly rejected the treaty and the payment that was offered. In which his example was followed by his son Peter III. and it was in order to do himself justice on this head, that, on his accession to the throne of Russia, he began great preparations against the king of Denmark. But these preparations were not less ill-directed than unseasonably undertaken. Peter III. who was more apt to follow the emotions of his heart than the dictates of reason, and was blindly attached to the hetman Cyril Razumofsky, ignorant as he was of his treachery, offered him the command of his army. The hetman artfully eluded this offer by a witticism, which might have opened the eyes of the czar on the dangers of his enterprise: "Your majesty," said he, "must then give me a
VOL. I. N "second

“ second army to drive forward that which I am to
“ command.”

The king of Prussia, whom Peter III. informed, with scrupulous care, of all that he was doing, frequently gave him advice. His first step was to dissuade him from the plans of hostility he was meditating against Denmark, in order to recover his dukedom of Holstein: but seeing that he could not induce him to alter his resolution, he advised him, previous to his entering on the war, to go and be crowned at Mosco, with all the customary pomp and ceremony, and not to set out on his march for the army without taking with him the foreign ministers, and all the Russians whose fidelity he had reason to suspect. He also recommended him not to begin too soon to touch the possessions of the church, and not to meddle with the dress of the monks, as all these minute particulars are of the utmost consequence in the eyes of a bigoted race. In short, he used every argument to persuade him to keep up that deference and respect which he owed to his spouse, and especially for his own security*.

It

* Peter III. was so remote from all mistrust, that he answered the king of Prussia: — “ In regard to the concern you take in
“ my safety, I beseech you to give yourself no uneasiness. The
“ soldiers call me their father; they say that they had rather be
“ governed by a man than a woman. I take my walks alone
“ about the streets of Petersburg; if any one designed to do me
“ harm, he would have executed his purpose long ago: but I am
“ continually

It is not to be doubted that Frederic, who was well acquainted with the character of Peter and that of Catharine, had long foreseen what happened afterwards. Accordingly, writing to his minister to continue to live in intimacy with the tzar, he gives him orders to pay great attentions to the empress.

However, Peter unhappily thought it not necessary to follow in all things the lessons of the monarch whom he styled his master. He insensibly resumed his vicious habits; frequently passing the whole day in drinking and smoking amidst a company of base courtiers, who, for the most part, were eagerly seeking his ruin, and perfidiously applauding his fantastical humours and his most dangerous innovations.

His behaviour to his spouse was equally inconsistent. At the very moment when he was doing homage to the superiority of her mind, he would let slip some plain intimations of the indignation his wrongs had inspired into his breast. In the most sacred and pompous ceremonies of the Russian church, such, for example, as the benediction of the waters*, he made her appear adorned with all the
marks

“ continually doing good on all occasions that offer, and I trust in
“ the protection of God alone; with that I have nothing to
“ fear.”

* The Greek church has some similarity with the Latin in point of ceremonies, but exceeds it, which is not saying a little, in
superstitious

marks of imperial dignity, while he was content to follow her train as a simple colonel, as if he intended

superstitious rites. Among others, for example, annually on the 6th of January, twelfth-day, as it is called with us, a singular feast is solemnized, denominated by the Russians the blessing of the waters. For this ceremony at St. Petersburg, a sort of wooden chapel or tabernacle, painted green and stuck about with boughs of fir, is constructed on the ice of the Neva, between the Admiralty and the imperial palace. This little building is covered with a dome, resting on eight small columns, on which stands the figure of John the baptist with the cross in his hand, amidst bulrushes; the inside of the edifice being decorated with paintings representing the baptism of Jesus, his transfiguration, and other transactions of his life. From the centre of the dome is suspended by a chain a monstrous large holy-ghost of wood over the aperture in the ice, round which are spread rich carpets. This little temple is entirely surrounded with palisadoes, which are also ornamented with fir-branches: the space within being likewise covered with carpets. A sort of gallery round the building communicates with a window of the palace, from which the imperial family come forth to attend the ceremony. (For several years past the empress and her grandchildren only saw the solemnity from the windows of the palace.) The ceremony begins immediately when the regiments of guards have taken their station on the river. Then the archbishop appears amid the sound of church bells and the firing of the cannon of the fortrefs, and proceeds along the carpets, attended by his train of bishops and other ecclesiastics, into this little church, where, standing at the hole in the ice, he dips his crucifix three times in the water, at the same time repeating prayers, and concludes with a particular one to the great saint Nicholas; which done, the water is accounted blessed. The prelate then sprinkles with it all the surrounding multitude, and the banners of all the regiments which are at that time

tended to shew to his people, that she was born to reign, and he to obey. Even at court he would often leave her to execute the whole of the representation; while he, dressed in the uniform of his regiment, respectfully came and represented to her his officers, whom he called his comrades. Peter the great had formerly done the like with Catharine I. and his minister Mentchikof: but Peter the great knew how, whenever he had occasion to display the emperor, to employ means which Peter III. had not.

However, the apparent favour of the empress was not of long duration. No sooner did the czar think himself well settled on the throne, than he no longer concealed his indifference, and sometimes even made her experience it in a very humiliating manner. At the time of the celebration of the peace that had just been signed with the king of Prussia, Peter, who, during the exhibition of the fireworks, was seated by the side of Catharine, on seeing the countess Vorontzof, his mistress, pass

time in Petersburg. The consecration ended, he retires; and now the people press in crowds to the hole in the ice, where they drink it with pious avidity: mothers, notwithstanding the cold, dip their naked babes in the stream, and men and women pour it on their heads; every one holds it a duty to take home a vessel of the water, in order to purify their houses, and for the cure of certain diseases, for which it is affirmed to be a powerful specific. During which four popes, one at each corner of the aperture, chant a sort of litany for the occasion.

by, called to her, and made her sit down beside him: Catharine immediately retired, without any endeavour to detain her being vouchsafed on the part of her husband.

The same evening, at supper, he drank the health of prince George of Holstein; at which all the company rose up, excepting Catharine, who pretended to have got a hurt in her foot. Peter, irritated that the empress should affect to fail in the respect which she owed to her uncle, launched at her an epithet, which, whether or not she deserved, the emperor ought to have spared his spouse. Catharine was so mortified that she could not refrain from weeping, and spoke for some time, in a low voice, of this affront to her chamberlain Stroganof*, whom she had again the vexation to see almost immediately put under arrest. But her tears interested the spectators, as the harshness of Peter excited their indignation.

It was by scenes of this nature that the empress felt her hopes revive. She saw that she should soon get the better of the tzar, by opposing to his slights and imprudent rudeness, great circumspection and the arts of address. She now made it her sole employment to gain those hearts which he was losing. Instructed from her infancy in the arts of dissimulation, it was not difficult for her to affect, in the sight of the multitude, sentiments the most foreign

* Baron Stroganof passed for one of the favourites of Catharine.

to her mind. The pupil of the philosophers now put on the air of a bigot: she sedulously repaired every day to the churches of Petersburg, praying with all the semblance of a sincere and fervent devotion, punctual in the most superstitious practices of the greek religion, accosting the poor with benignity, and treating the popes with reverence; who failed not afterwards to go proclaiming her praises from house to house.

In the apartments of the palace, the way of life pursued by this married couple was not less different. While Peter III. was shut up with the countess Vorontzof, Mr. Keith, some prussian officers, and others of his favourites; while he was so far forgetful of his rank as to live familiarly with buffoons, and to make them at times sit at table with him*, the empress kept her court with such a mixture of dignity and affability as charmed all those that approached her: she particularly made it her study to attract to her such persons as, by their reputation, their courage, or their intrigues, might become useful to her.

By these acts of imprudence the tzar displeased not only the greater part of the Russians, but almost all the agents from the foreign courts. The minister of Denmark never appeared before him,

* One evening among others, after the play, at the countess Narishkin's, he caused the comedians to sit down promiscuously with the ladies and grandees of the court, and seated beside him a dancer, whom he called his little wife.

but he was sure to meet with some disagreeable behaviour; that of Austria was always accosted with coolness; and even the ambassador of France*, who had enjoyed such high consideration during the late reign, was presently made to perceive that the intentions of Peter III. were not more favourable towards the court of Versailles than to that of Vienna †.

Peter

* It was M. de Breteuil, who succeeded M. de l'Hôpital. When Peter concluded a treaty of peace and amity with Frederic, there was certainly nothing blameable in his enthusiastical attachment to one of the most extraordinary characters of modern history; only in many displays of this attachment and admiration we do not discern the autocratic monarch of a mighty empire. If Peter, on one hand, put a stop to the slaughter and ravages of war, and in their stead restored tranquillity and the blessings of peace; yet, on the other, he only began with more violence, and contrary to the advice of all experienced persons, his long-concerted hostilities against Denmark, which, according to his plan, were to proceed to a real war of extermination, as it was his determination to drive Frederic V. out of all his European territories, and confine him to the dominion of Tranquebar.

† Peter gave proofs of this on every occasion. When the model of the new rubles was shewn him for his approbation, perceiving that the artist had represented him with a large wig of monstrous curls flowing down his shoulders, he exclaimed that he would not have such a head-dress as that; it would make him look like the king of France. Supping one evening with the grand chancellor Vorontzof, where the foreign ministers were invited, the czar kept incessantly talking of the king of Prussia all suppertime. He was acquainted with all his campaigns, even to the minutest particulars. He harangued upon them with delight, always accompanying the encomiums he lavished on his hero with

satirical

Peter III. had already come to the resolution of putting an end to hostilities against Frederic by a separate peace, and an offensive and defensive alliance. To this end, he sent Gudovitch into Germany, on pretence of announcing the event of his accession to the throne to his brother-in-law, the prince of Anhalt Zerbst; giving secret orders at the same time to Gudovitch, on his return, to take Breslau in his

satirical and ironical invectives against his enemies. He rose from table after having drank greatly too much; then the punch that he took, and the tobacco that he smoked, it is said, completed his intoxication. A party at cards was proposed; the emperor accepted it, and was one of the first who lost against the French ambassador. Then, seeing the Spanish minister, M. d'Almodovar, who had taken his place, he went up to the former and said in his ear, alluding to the war against the English: "Spain will lose." — "I think not," returned the Frenchman; "we are on her side, and she has shewn herself formidable even when alone." — The emperor, with a shrug and a sneering smile, only said, "Ah! ah!" — "However, sir," answered the ambassador gravely, "France and Spain are very easy on that score: and if they retain the alliance of your majesty, they will be equally so in regard to the war on the continent and with Germany." — Peter paused for a moment, and then answered in a high tone of voice: "I will have peace." — "We wish for it as much as your majesty," replied the ambassador; "but we would have it safe, honourable, and in concert with our allies." — "Just as you please," exclaimed the czar: "for me, I will have peace: do afterwards as you think proper." This anecdote was related by M. de Breteuil himself; but it does not prove, it should seem, that the czar was quite so drunk as that minister pretended.

way,

way, for communicating his intentions to the king of Prussia. Frederic eagerly accepted the offers of a prince who sacrificed to him all the benefit he might obtain from the war; for the Russians were already masters of royal Prussia, and the courts of Vienna and Versailles had guaranteed the possession of it to the empress Elizabeth. Not satisfied yet with evacuating Prussia, Peter III. presently resolved to enable Frederic to extricate himself out of all his difficulties, and to procure an honourable peace: asking in return for so many advantages, no more than the friendship of the prussian monarch, and an aid of six thousand men against the Danes.

The tzar, being of a character little fitted to wait the slow produce of a joint negotiation, thus gave way to his ardent desires for peace, and to the sentiments of that extravagant admiration which he had conceived for the king of Prussia. A suspension of hostilities was concluded between them on the 16th of March; and it was followed not long after* by a treaty of peace and alliance. Nothing was stipulated by the tzar in favour of his former confederates, whom he entirely abandoned. He even agreed to join his troops to those of the king of Prussia to act against them. In a little time a russian army was seen in conjunction with one of Prussia, to drive out of Silesia those Austrians who had been a few months before brought into that province by the russian arms.

* May the 5th.

This

This was a miraculous turn of affairs. Fortune, who had so long abandoned the king of Prussia to his genius, after having persecuted him for near five years, and overpowered him with the whole weight of her anger, at length made amends by a sudden turn, and did for him, at one stroke, the only thing by which he could possibly be saved.

Sweden, who after she recovered her liberty, lost her political importance, and for a long time acted entirely under the direction of russian councils, followed, on this, as on other occasions, the example of the court of Petersburg, and signed a treaty of peace with the king of Prussia on the 22d of May.

In order to account for whatever was not the result of mere personal character in this extraordinary revolution of politics in Russia, it will be necessary to remind the reader, that the tzar Peter the Third was duke of Holstein; and that the dukes of Holstein had pretensions to the duchy of Schleswig. These pretensions were compromised by a treaty in 1732. But as the cession made by the house of Holstein in this treaty was the effect of necessity, it had been always apprehended that she would make use of the first safe opportunity of reclaiming her ancient rights. The tzar seized eagerly on the great one, which the possession of the whole russian power afforded him, and he resolved to enter into an immediate war for this object, to which his predilection for his native country gave in his eyes
a far

a far greater importance than to all the conquests of his predecessor. As long as this war with the king of Prussia subsisted, it was impossible that his designs against Denmark could be prosecuted with any hope of success. Wholly indifferent therefore to all others, and passionately fond of this object, as soon as he came to the throne, without any dispute or negotiation, he offered the king of Prussia, in his extreme distress, everything he could have hoped from a series of victories; and whilst he joined his arms to those of that monarch in Silesia, he caused an army to march towards Holstein.

The return of Gudoyitch to Petersburg was followed by the arrival of count Schyverin, already known to Peter III.* The king of Prussia had sent him to assist his minister Goltz in concluding the treaty of peace and alliance so generously offered by the czar; and the presence and the counsels of Schyverin contributed not a little to render that treaty advantageous to Frederic. The english minister Keith † was also, on that occasion, extremely

* Count Schyverin, aid-de-camp to the king of Prussia, had been made prisoner by the Russians at the battle of Zorndorf, and brought to Petersburg, where Peter III. at that time grand-duke, had shewn him many instances of good-will.

† Keith, minister from the court of Great Britain, was of a Scots family. He had in Prussia two of his uncles, field-marshal Keith, and the celebrated lord marechal, the friend of John James Rousseau, of d'Alembert, and of all men of letters.

serviceable

serviceable to the king of Prussia, whose interests he had long promoted with Peter III.

The czar had already dispatched his orders to general count Chernichef, who commanded the thirty thousand russian auxiliaries in the austrian army, which had taken up their winter-quarters in Moravia, to march them into Poland through Silesia. A second messenger followed close at the heels of the former, with orders to the same general to act with his troops in concert with those of the king of Prussia, and to conform in all things to the pleasure of that monarch. The czar did not even deign to communicate these measures either to the courts of Vienna and Versailles, nor to the ministers from those courts, who were then resident at Petersburg. The first intimation they had of them was through the gazettes.

Some time afterwards, the russian ambassador at Vienna declared to prince Kaunitz, "that the czar, " finding the method of a congress too tardy, had " preferred a direct negotiation with the king of " Prussia; that he was on the eve of making a " peace with that monarch; that he advised the " court of Vienna to imitate his example; and that " it would be astonishing if it should take in ill " part what he had done, since the war of Germany " was not only foreign to him, and prejudicial to " himself, but burdensome to his people."

This declaration was immediately followed up by the treaty which he concluded May 5, with the plenipotentiaries of the king of Prussia.

Peter

Peter III. caused the peace to be celebrated with the greatest magnificence. The rejoicings lasted several days; he himself was present at them, dressed in a prussian uniform, decorated with the order of the black eagle which had been sent him by Frederic: and as if he had been resolved to seize the opportunity afforded by these festivities for inflicting a greater insult on Austria, he caused the * ambassador from Maria Theresa to be invited; but that minister indignantly rejected the invitation.

During all the time that these entertainments lasted, scarcely a day passed that Peter did not finish by drinking to excess, and his excesses were always followed by some dangerous indiscretion. One evening, according to custom, he turned the conversation on Frederic; then, fixing the eyes of the councillor of state Volkof, he suddenly exclaimed: "You must agree that he is a magician, a forcerer, that king of Prussia! He knew all our plans for the campaign, as soon as we had resolved on them." Volkof reddened with embarrassment. Peter said to him, "Why that embarrassment? you have no longer any need to fear Siberia. Is it not true, that, notwithstanding the dread you had of it, you communicated to me all the plans and projects that were resolved on in the council, and that I sent them off to his majesty the king †?"

* The count de Mercy, who was afterwards ambassador in France.

† It was thus he styled Frederic II. unless when he called him his preceptor, his friend, his brother.

Towards

Towards the termination of the rejoicings that were made for celebrating the peace between Russia and Prussia, the tzar, who guessed how much the ambassador of Vienna must be incensed, and doubtless was inclined more deeply to affront him, sent him word, "that, since the empress-queen alone
" threw obstacles in the way of a general pacifica-
" tion, from a spirit of unbounded ambition, and
" the unjust desire of recovering Silesia and the
" county of Glatz, so solemnly ceded to Prussia, he
" had resolved to send twenty thousand men more
" into Germany, in order to force Maria Theresa
" to relinquish her illegitimate pretensions."

Everything seemed to announce that this would not end in an empty menace. The king of Prussia already began to flatter himself that fresh succours would soon be added to the Russians, who were marching under his banners; and such, in fact, were the intentions of the tzar. But a sudden catastrophe frustrated the expectations of Frederic, and wrought a change in the court of Russia.

In the midst of these warlike preparations, of these reformati^ons undertaken, but seldom effected, and of these useless festivities, Peter III. was not unmindful of the countess Vorontzof; he allowed her, on the contrary, daily to gain over him additional influence. This young woman, not shrewd, but stupidly proud, and directed by an ambitious and crafty father, found means to induce the tzar, one while by flattering, at another by scolding, and sometimes

sometimes by carrying her forwardness so far as to dare to beat him, to renew the promise he had made, while yet only grand duke, that he would marry her, and place her in the room of Catharine on the throne of Russia.

Proud of this hope, she had the imprudence to boast of it, and this imprudence brought on her ruin. While her father and some of the courtiers who were devoted to him, were labouring at paving her way to the throne, the jealousies without number that her present influence and her apparently approaching grandeur had created, the enemies of the tzar and the partisans of the empress, were all striving, as if by consent, to find means for excluding her from it.

Peter III. not a whit less indiscreet than the countess Vorontzof, seemed to authorise by his conduct the reports that she spread, and he even no longer seemed to take any pains to conceal his intention to repudiate Catharine, and to declare the illegitimacy of Paul Petrovitch. However, he had resolved to cover this act of despotism with an appearance of justice; fondly imagining, that, on publishing to the world the proofs of the infidelities of Catharine, his conduct would meet the approbation of all his subjects and the rest of Europe.

The countess Vorontzof, informed by the aged senator her father of the first amours of the empress with Soltikof, had long since taken care that the tzar should have no reason to complain that she kept the

secret from him: she apprized him of it; and this it was that prevailed on the prince to resolve on declaring the illegitimacy and the exheridation of his son. In consequence of this determination, he recalled Soltikof from Hamburgh, where he had constantly resided since Elizabeth had appointed him her minister. He loaded him with caresses and benefits, and put every stratagem in practice to draw from him the authentic avowal of the criminal commerce he had formerly held with Catharine. It was visible to all the court, that Soltikof, incited by the hope of glorious rewards, or intimidated by the dread of serious chastisements, would do whatever the tzar desired, and the tzar himself was not deceived in his expectations that his worthy chamberlain would favour his inclinations. He was now only restrained by the difficulty in the choice of a successor.

Although this prince lived openly with the countess Vorontzof; though he held frequent assignations with a handsome stage-dancer of Petersburg; though he gave reason to think that he had various adventures of gallantry, he was not perhaps therefore the fitter for obtaining an heir. By an operation in a small degree similar to that of the judaical rite, which he had undergone in the first years of his marriage, he was freed from an obstacle without procuring greater means. Nature had inspired him with an ardent passion for women; his desires were impetuous, but all seemed to prove that his efforts

were doomed to be fruitless. Thinking himself well assured of his misfortune, and, wishing notwithstanding to raise some one to the place of Paul Petrovitch, he conceived all at once a very singular project. He determined to adopt prince Ivan, who had been dethroned by Elizabeth, to declare him his successor, and to unite him in marriage with the young princess of Holstein-Beck, who was then at St. Petersburg, and whom he cherished as his daughter.

Peter III. then with a very few attendants, went privately to the fortress of Schlusſelburg, in the design of making a visit to Ivan, without discovering himself to him, in order that he might form a judgment whether he was worthy of the elevated station he intended to give him.

It has already been seen that Ivan III. was still in his cradle when the revolution that placed Elizabeth on the throne, in 1741, occasioned him to be shut up, with the regent Anne his mother and all his family, in the fortress of Schlusſelburg. In the first moments of that revolution, the soldiers who entered the apartment of the young emperor found him asleep, and waited respectfully till he should awake, to carry him to Elizabeth. That princess took him up in her arms and fondly caressed him; when, perceiving him to smile at the shouts of "Hourra Elizaveta!" which resounded from the gates of the palace, she could not restrain her pity, saying: "Unhappy child! thou knowest not, alas!

" that

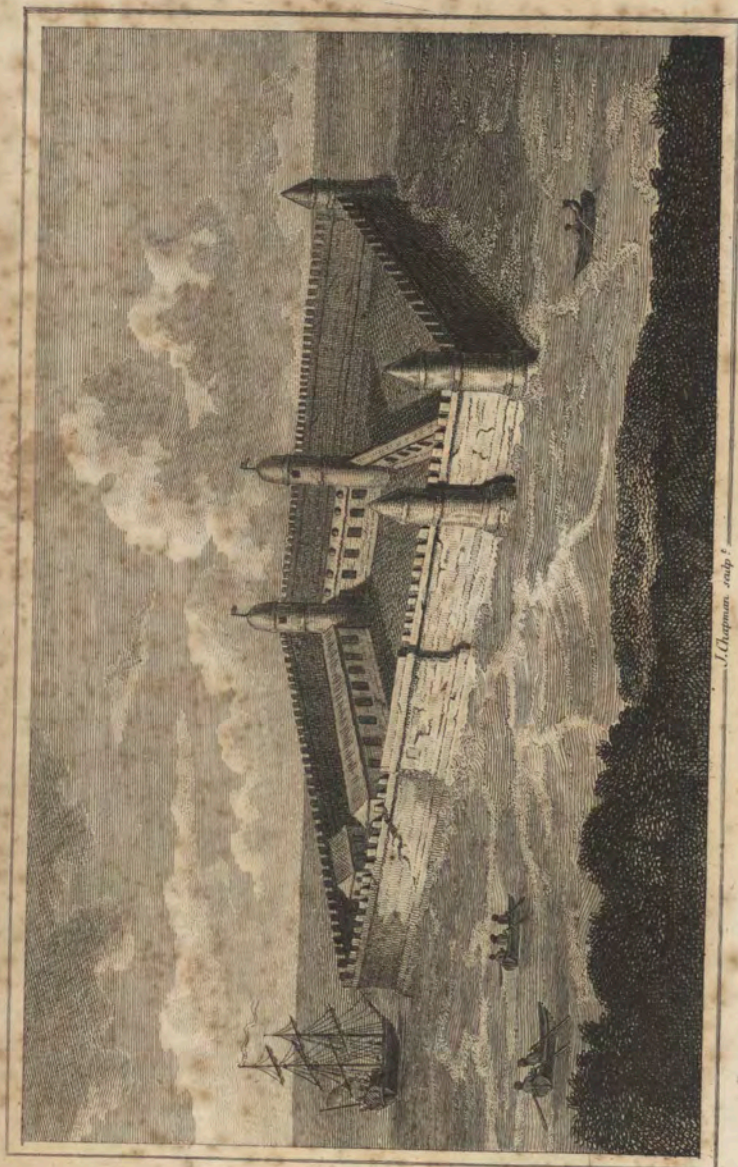
" that they are the cries of joy of those that are
" pushing thee from the throne!"

From Schlusſelburg Ivan was transported, together with his family, to the fortress of Riga, where they remained eighteen months. From Riga they were conveyed to Dunamunde, and afterwards to Oranienburg, a town built by Mentchikof, in the cold province of Voronetch. There Ivan was separated from his family, who were transported to Kolmogor*. A monk who had access to the prison where Ivan was detained, carried him off from Oranienburg, in the design to conduct him to Germany: but he was arrested at Smolensk. Ivan was then shut up in a monastery situate in the Valdaï, not far from the road that leads from St. Petersburg to Mosco. The empress Elizabeth having a desire to see him, in 1756, caused him to be brought back to Schlusſelburg, where he had been put immediately on his dethronement. He was led very secretly to the house of Peter Schuvalof, in St. Petersburg, where Elizabeth had a pretty long conversation with him, but without making herself known to him. Ivan was then about sixteen: he was of a good height, of an interesting figure, with fine hair, and a voice of much sweetness. Elizabeth shed many tears as she talked with him: but that did not save Ivan from being led back to his dismal

* It was at Kolmogor that Anne died in childhood in the month of March 1746.

dungeon, where Peter III. six years after went to see him.

The emperor, on this expedition, was only attended by count Leof Alexandrevitch Narishkin, his grand ecuyer, baron Ungern-Sternberg, one of his general aides-de-camp, baron Korf, master of the police at St. Petersburg, and the counsellor of state Volkof. He was himself furnished with an order signed in his own hand, in which he enjoined the commandant to give the bearers free leave to walk about the whole fortress, without even excepting the place where Ivan was confined, and to leave them to converse alone with that prince. Peter moreover took care to conceal the ensigns of his dignity, and to recommend Leof Narishkin, who was tall and of a portly figure, to act so as that he should be taken for the emperor. But Ivan was not thus deceived. After having contemplated for some time the strangers that entered his cell, he threw himself all at once at the feet of the czar. "Tzar!" said he, "you are the master here. I shall not importune you by a long petition; but mitigate the severity of my lot. I have been languishing for a number of years in this gloomy dungeon. The only favour I entreat you to grant, is, that I may be permitted, from time to time, to breathe a freer air." Peter was extremely affected at these words: "Rise, prince!" said he to Ivan; and, gently slapping his shoulder; "be under no uneasiness for the future. I will employ



Fortress of Schlüsselburg

“ employ all the means in my power to render
 “ your situation more tolerable. — But tell me,
 “ prince, have you any recollection of the mis-
 “ fortunes you have experienced from your earlier
 “ youth?” — “ I have scarcely any idea of those
 “ that befell my infancy,” replied Ivan; “ but,
 “ from the moment that I began to feel my misery,
 “ I have never ceased from mingling my tears with
 “ those of my father and my mother, who were
 “ miserable solely because of me: and my greatest
 “ distress proceeds from the thoughts of the ill
 “ treatment they received, as we were transported
 “ from one fortress to another.” — “ Hah! whence
 “ came that ill treatment?” interrogated the czar.
 “ From the officers who conducted us, and who
 “ were almost always the most inhuman of man-
 “ kind,” returned Ivan. “ Do you recollect the
 “ names of those officers?” said Peter. — “ Alas!”
 replied the young prince, “ we were not very
 “ curious to learn them. We were content to
 “ return thanks to heaven on our bended knees,
 “ when these monsters were relieved by officers of
 “ a less savage disposition.” — “ What!” said the
 emperor, “ you never fell into the hands of such
 “ as had any humanity?” — “ Only one deserved to
 “ be distinguished from that pack of tigers,” an-
 swered Ivan. “ He gained our esteem, and we
 “ lamented the loss of him. His good nature, his
 “ generous attentions will never depart from my
 “ remembrance.” — “ And you know not the
 “ name

“ name of that worthy man ? ” eagerly asked the tzar. — “ Oh, as to him, I remember him very well,” replied Ivan: “ he was called Korf.”

This same baron Korf, as we have already seen, was one of those who accompanied Peter. He melted into tears as he heard these particulars; and the tzar, who was no less affected than him, took him by the arm, and said in a broken voice: “ Baron, you see how a good action is never lost ! ”

That he might have time to recover from his emotion, Peter went out with Korf, Narishkin, and Volkof, leaving baron Ungern-Sternberg alone with Ivan. “ How then did you come hither, prince ? ” said Ungern-Sternberg. “ Who,” returned Ivan, “ can be guarded and secured against razboïniks * ? One day an order from I know not who was brought to the prison where I was with my parents. The razboïniks fell upon my family, and tore me from the only persons I knew in the world, and who alone had gained my affection and my confidence: I mean my father and my mother, and my brothers and my sisters. O how I did cry ! and how they themselves, if they are yet alive, must lament the death of their son and their brother ! ” — “ What do you think will be the lot of our new emperor ? ” asked the baron. “ If I may judge from my idea of the

* Robbers.

“ Russians,

“ Russians, it will not be more happy than mine. My father and my mother have often repeated to me that foreign princes will always be hated and dethroned by the treacherous and haughty Russians.”

The tzar now re-entered, with Narishkin, Korf, Volkof, and accompanied this time by the commandant, to whom he said, in the presence of Ivan: “ I order you to give the prince from this moment all the succours he shall ask, and to allow him at all times to walk and divert himself within the precincts of the fortress. I will send you written orders containing more particulars, by which you are henceforward to regulate your conduct in regard to his sacred person.”

On coming out of Ivan's chamber the emperor went over the inside of the fortress *; and, after having examined a spot that seemed to him proper for the construction of an edifice for conveniently lodging the prisoner, he gave orders to the commandant to set the proper workmen about it, and added: “ Let it run in a straight line from one wall to the other of this angle of the fort, so as

* The fortress of Schlusfelburg, while in the possession of the Swedes called Nøteborg, occupies a small island, situate just where the Neva flows out of the lake Ladoga, in 59° 50' N. L. It is in the antique form, with high walls and vaulted ramparts, and being used for the confinement of state-prisoners, is only inhabited by the garrison. Schlusfel in german signifies a key. Its present name was given it by Peter I. as being the key to his new city.

“ to form nine rooms in front, and the rest of the
 “ space, to the extremity of the angle, may be
 “ made into a little garden, with which he may
 “ amuse himself in the air, and find some alleviation
 “ of the severity of his confinement. When the
 “ building shall be finished, I will come myself and
 “ put the prince in possession.”

Probably the czar only spoke in this manner to the commandant of Schlusfelburg as a blind, to prevent him from surmising his real intentions; for otherwise what need had he to give orders for the construction of a new prison for him to whom he meant to give the throne? Besides, it has been reported that this prison had a quite different object. It was supposed that Catharine was the person for whom it was designed by her husband*.

Before he quitted Schlusfelburg, Peter went once more into the prince's dungeon; after this, he returned to St. Petersburg; where no one entertained a suspicion of the extraordinary interview he had

* Though it is currently taken for granted, that it was the emperor's plan to cause his wife to be arrested, and to be shut up in Schlusfelburg, yet it is very far from being satisfactorily made out, even by the evidence arising from this new house erected in the fortress, designed, it is said, for the empress. It is thought by numbers of people, that it was really intended for prince Ivan, instead of the dismal and inconvenient hole in which he was lodged. Peter, by having him removed to Kexholm, brought him more within his reach, in order perhaps to produce him whenever occasion might offer. This may easily be supposed an after-thought.

just

just had, and much less of what he was meditating in favour of Ivan.

When prince George of Holstein, the emperor's uncle, was informed of the visit this monarch had made to Ivan, he advised him to send that unfortunate prince into Germany, together with duke Anthony of Brunswic, his father, and the rest of the family. Peter, to avoid raising any suspicion of his plan in the mind of his uncle, pretended to approve his advice, but for the present he rested satisfied with causing Ivan to be conveyed to the fortress of Kexholm, built on a little isle in the Ladoga lake, and much nearer to the residence than Schlusfelburg. It is impossible on this occasion to forbear remarking that a sort of adverse fate seemed every where to pursue the unfortunate Ivan; for, as he was rowed from Schlusfelburg, to get on board the galleot that was to convey him to Kexholm, the skiff in which he was, narrowly escaped being lost, by one of the tempests that suddenly rise in summer, and dangerously agitate that stormy, and, in many places, unfathomable lake*.

In

* To secure the barks coming with goods from the Volka across the Ladoga, from the dangerous storms and whirlpools of this boisterous lake, was the view of Peter I. in digging the Ladoga canal; and this design is fully attained. This canal, which Peter began in 1719, and which the empress Anne finished by count Munich in 1730, follows, through a morass, the southern shore of the Ladoga, and, ten fathom broad, and from seven to ten feet deep, extends its course of a hundred and four versts, to Schlusfelburg,

In the mean time the indiscretions of the tzar revived from day to day the hopes of Catharine; and the designs he had formed against her, a part whereof were but too well known, emboldened her to run all hazards in order to prevent them. Dismissed to Peterhof, and lodged in one of the apartments the most retired, and least apparent of the palace, she passed her days in meditating the project for precipitating her husband from the throne, and her evenings in the company of a peculiar intimate, whom she had made the most intrepid of the conspirators.

The power of the tzars, though absolute and uncontrollable in its exercise, is extremely weak in its foundation. There is not perhaps in Europe a government which depends so much on the goodwill and affection of those that are governed, and which requires a greater degree of vigilance and a steadier hand. The regular succession which has been so often broken, and the great change of manners, which in less than a century has been introduced, have left in Russia a weakness amidst all the appearance of strength, and a great facility to sudden and dangerous revolutions.

Schlusselfburg, where it enters the left bank of the Neva. The Ladoga receives the waters of the rivers Ræbona, Lava, Schaldica, Nafia, and Lipka, to which the only outlet is the Neva.

Peter

Peter III. paid little attention to those difficulties, which to him were the greater, as he was a foreigner born. They were augmented by the superior and invidious regard he seemed to pay to foreign interests, and foreign persons.

Since the removal of count Poniatofsky, though the empress had the address to appear, in the eyes of the most attentive of the courtiers, faithful to her attachment to him, yet in the intimacy of this friend she found the means of compensating his absence. Thus, to encourage the mistake of her prying observers, she had the twofold motive of interesting them in behalf of a disappointed passion, and of averting their looks from her obscurer indulgences. Her very friends were deceived. M. de Breteuil, who imagined himself a person of great discernment, and that he was in the entire confidence of Catharine, thought her so constant to Poniatofsky, that he degraded his quality of ambassador so far as to deliver into her hand all the letters from the count, and to forward her answers. Princess Dashkof herself was ignorant that she had any other love than that of study and of Poniatofsky; and she had long been plotting in concert with Orlof, without once suspecting that Orlof was even known to the empress. In short, the only person that was in the secret, and was the manager of the piece, was one of her women, named Catharine Ivanovna, the most ingenious of confidantes, and the least scrupulous of duennas. She behaved with so much address, that

that those whom she presented to Catharine enjoyed almost always the favours of that princess, without knowing who she was*.

Gregory Orlof possessed neither the advantages of birth nor those of education; but he had received from nature what are often found more useful, courage and beauty. He had a post in the artillery, while his two brothers were only common soldiers in the regiments of guards†. Count Peter Schuvalof, grand master of the artillery, a vain and pompous man, was desirous of having the handsomest of his officers for aide-de-camp, and he selected Gregory Orlof. He had also for his mistress one of the most illustrious and the handsomest women of the court, the princess Kurakin, who was not long in giving the aide-de-camp to understand that she preferred him to his general. But unfor-

* M. de Rulhiere tells us it was by chance that "Orlof desecrated, in the pomp of a public ceremony, the mistress whom he "adored." But it is very difficult to believe that the aide-de-camp of count Peter Schuvalof should not know the grand duchess, as Peter Schuvalof went frequently to court, and as in Russia an aide-de-camp always attends his general.

† Alexius and Vladimir. The Orlofs were five brothers: Gregory, the favourite; Alexius, since become admiral, who, in the war against the Turks in 1768, commanded the Russian fleet in the Archipelago, was latterly at Moscow, led thither on account of some affairs of trade, having large tanneries on his estate, but was driven out of that capital by an order from Paul Petrovitch; Vladimir, made senator after the revolution; Feodor, chamberlain; and Ivan, a colonel and likewise chamberlain, but who came very rarely to court.

tunately

tunately the general, who surprised them together, forbade Orlof any more to appear in his presence, and threatened to exert all his interest to get him banished to Siberia. This adventure made a noise: it was a for time the subject of conversation both in town and country; and the story found its way even into the retreat in which Catharine was forced to do penance. Curiosity, pity perhaps, led her to wish for an acquaintance with the young officer whose disaster was the topic of public discourse. Ivanovna, with the customary precautions, procured her a sight of him; and Orlof, at first unable to guess who the fair-one might be that took such concern in his lot, found her to possess more charms and a fonder affection than the princess Kurakin. This first and mysterious conversation was succeeded by several interviews, in which Catharine was only obliging; but when she thought herself well assured of the boldness and the discretion of her new acquaintance, she unveiled to him her ambitious designs. Orlof now entered into a conspiracy with her, in which he shortly after engaged his brothers, his companion Bibikof*, lieutenant Passik, with other officers; by means of whom he won over some companies of guards, but without imparting to them his real design.

Catharine was as yet but grand duchess when her connection with Orlof began; and her correspondence with him was not the only one that she

* Bibikof, afterwards promoted to the rank of general in chief, was killed on his march against Pugatshief.

carried

carried on with no less art than success. Several other officers, and even some of the courtiers participated in her favours; but as she did not expect to find in them the devotedness and the genius that was necessary to her, she was satisfied with making them her friends, and never disclosed her secret to them. Lieutenant-general Villebois* was one of those whom that princess had distinguished; and when he obtained the command of the artillery, on the death of the general that had displaced Orlov, she induced him to give the latter the place of captain-treasurer of his corps. Villebois did as he was requested by Catharine, without entertaining the smallest suspicion that he was serving a rival preferred to himself.

Being seated on the throne, Catharine continued not less the invisible and powerful instigatrix of the faction of the great, the remainder of those conspirators at the head of whom Bestuchef and the Schuvalofs had successively appeared, and whereof the hetman Kurilli Razumofsky, the prince Volkonsky, nephew of the exiled Bestuchef, and major-general of the guards, together with count Panin, were the most powerful supports.

In a word, she had been able to form a third conspiracy, contrived by the young princess Dashkof†, who always appeared, if not the most formidable, at

* An officer of considerable merit, son of a french refugee.

† Princess Dashkof was born in the year 1744; consequently this extraordinary woman was no more than eighteen at the time of the revolution.

least the most active and impetuous. The accomplices in these three factions acted, moreover, without the knowledge of each other; and Catharine, who was the animating spirit of them all, seemed to have no share whatever in the plot.

Princess Dashkof, lately returned from Mosco, where her husband had kept her in a kind of exile, was prevented from concurring with the aims of her relations, who were desirous of seeing her supplant her sister in the favour of the tzar. That sister was more suitable to the military taste of Peter; and madame Dashkof would never be satisfied with a lover addicted only to drinking and the fumes of tobacco. She then formed an intimate connection with Catharine. They passed whole days together in the pursuits of literature and intrigue; and when the empress was dismissed to Peterhof, princess Dashkof remained at Petersburg, in order to serve her the better. She kept up a correspondence with the empress, in which she gave her a faithful account of all that was passing at the court or in the city, and advised her on the means which she ought to employ for preventing the designs of the tzar.

The attachment which princess Dashkof had vowed to Catharine was not the sole motive for exciting her zeal. She was principally jealous of the glorious elevation that awaited her sister; and neither the menaces of that sister and of her father, nor the authority of the chancellor her uncle, in whose house she had been brought up, were able to detach

detach her from a party of which she fondly made it her pride to be the prime mover. She had studied the languages, and read many of the works of foreign authors, during her sojourn at Mosco; which augmented her natural vanity, and taught her to despise the ignorance of the nation to which she belonged. In the hopes of arriving at the slippery honour of directing a conspiracy, she openly braved the resentment of her family; she would have braved every danger, and even boldly looked death in the face.

Princess Dashkof had for some time kept about her a Piedmontese named Odart, whom penury and the hopes of making his fortune had brought to St. Petersburg, and who had confirmed the taste of that lady for french literature, by making her acquainted with the best writers of that nation. Odart was become the more valuable to the princess, as like her, with an aptitude at witty conceits, he possessed a turn for intrigue. She was ever extolling a man to whom she thought herself indebted for her superiority; and she spoke of him to the empress in so advantageous a manner, as to induce that princess to desire his attachment, and to give him the title of her private secretary.

It was not long ere this artful and insinuating secretary became one of the confidants, not in the delicate connections of Catharine, but in her ambitious designs. A witness to the grievances of this princess, and foreboding the humiliation that

awaited her, he easily perceived that there was no other way of escape, both for the present and the future, than by the fall of the emperor. But how to accomplish this fall? How dare to attempt it? Odart saw all the difficulties, all the dangers with which it was attended; but he also knew, that if punishment and death were on one side, honours and riches presented themselves on the other. Riches were the only deities of Odart: he was not long in determining his choice. He directly addressed himself to princess Dashkof; who, anticipating his bold and aspiring ideas, was elated to excess at finding in a man whom she esteemed for his talents, an accomplice in achievements worthy of herself. What flattering hopes now intoxicated the minds of these vain and conceited conspirators! What did they not promise themselves, if they could but overthrow the sovereign of one of the greatest empires of the world? Odart expected that an immense fortune would be the reward of his services: the princess imagined that the whole universe would be incessantly talking of her, and that her glory would ascend far superior to hers on whose head she should place the crown.

But the execution of so great a project demanded more efficacious instruments than vain imaginations and barren desires. More was wanting than a woman of eighteen, and an adventurer whom nobody knew. Accordingly, when Odart and madame Dashkof had sufficiently entertained themselves with

the magnificent recompences they hoped to obtain, they began to think of procuring soldiers, and money, which always propagates soldiers, and in Russia more than elsewhere; and a chief, whose name and authority might command respect; and especially a man who, accustomed to direct courtiers, to manage intrigues, was neither to be embarrassed by obstacles, not dismayed by disappointments. They then turned their eyes on the hetman Cyril Razumoffky and count Nikita Ivanovitch Panin.

The great influence the hetman* had enjoyed during the reign of the empress Elizabeth, and the familiarity of Peter III. which he had had the art of preserving, still gave him considerable interest at court, and his immense riches†, which enabled him to exercise continual liberalities towards a multitude of necessitous officers and soldiers, secured him a great number of friends among the troops. He filled one of the first posts in the empire. He had no esteem for Catharine, of whose talents he did not think much, and whose mistakes he had seen; he knew the danger of attempting to dethrone the

* It has been imagined by some, that though the devout Elizabeth had married the grand-veneur Alexey Razumoffky, brother of the hetman, the latter was nevertheless a lover of that empress.

† The empress Elizabeth had granted the hetman Razumoffky a number of domains, having upon them upwards of forty thousand peasants.

tzar, but was true in his adherence to his former party. When princess Dashkof communicated her designs to the hetman, he applauded the scheme; and, without seeming to take a direct part in the business, assured her that, in case of need, she might rely upon his concurrence. Therefore when Orlof came to him a few days after, in order to sound his disposition, he encouraged him to oppose the designs which the emperor was meditating against his consort, telling him, at the same time, that they who should defend that princess might depend upon his joining them. The hetman kept Orlof's secret as he had kept madame Dashkof's; and happy in the contemplation of two new rising factions, he resolved in his mind to support them with all the power of his own.

Razumoffky went yet farther. He assembled his friends on the spot; and without disclosing to them precisely the twofold plan with which he had been entrusted, informed them that he knew with certainty, that among the troops a plot was hatching to dethrone the czar; and if they neglected for a moment to declare themselves its leaders, no other alternative would be left them than to submit to become the forced instruments of the soldiers, or probably their victims. They then asked him what he thought it necessary for them to do. "Join me" at the instant the conspiracy breaks out," answered the hetman; "and I will take care to assign to each of you the rank to which his birth, his fortune,

“fortune, and his talents, give him a right to aspire. The blind intrepidity of some obscure conspirators is now meditating to make the first blow. Let us diligently watch the moment. If they succeed, it is for our dexterity to reap the fruits of their success. Do you feel yourselves heartily resolved to follow my example?” All swore they were; and the meeting broke up in expectation of the terrible event that flattered either their hatred or their ambition.

Thus certified of the assent of Razumoffsky, princess Dashkof and Odart now made it their business to bring over count Panin to their party; and Catharine earnestly recommended it to them to let nothing escape them that might conduce to that end. She very well knew that if the name and the presence of the hetman would be of great weight in the first openings of the revolt, the experience and the ability of Panin were still more necessary for leading it to success. It was he alone who, by the arts of soft insinuation, could moderate the impetuous vanity of the princess Dashkof, excite, inflame the hatred and revenge of Razumoffsky, direct the covetous and servile ambition of Odart, and justify in appearance the conspiracy by annexing to it the name of the young Paul Petrovitch, his pupil. Princess Dashkof then commissioned Odart to propose to Panin his uniting with them; and Panin, prompted by a motive more dear than that of serving the empress and the grand duke, promised all that the princess desired.

All this did not yet suffice madame Dashkof. She made direct application to prince Volkonsky, major-general of the guards. Volkonsky, well taught in the arts of intrigue by his kinsman Bestuchef, and the inheritor of his hatred against Peter III.; Volkonsky, whose ambition was waiting for a change in the government, and who flattered himself with having shortly to act the principal part in the new faction, was not more difficult than Panin and Razumoffsky.

The archbishop of Novgorod was in like manner brought over. They had made themselves sure of this prelate even before they disclosed their design. The emperor had just recalled him from exile, to which he had some months before been condemned; but the prelate, more irritated at the severity of the prince than affected by his clemency, waited only for an opportunity for signaling his sacred fury. Inventive superstition furnished him with numerous means. He knew the blind zeal of the Russians for whatever belongs to the orthodox greek religion; and the swarms of monks whom he had at command continued, under pretence of defending that religion, to disseminate in all hearts their hatred towards the prince who imprudently seemed to have declared himself its enemy.

The princess wanted also to secure a part of the troops. She knew several of the officers; these she went to see under pretence of a mere visit of politeness, and repaired to the barracks. There she

she was met by Orlof. The explanation was not difficult to either. They immediately agreed; and, still ignorant that Orlof was known to Catharine, the princess Dashkof found in him more than an accomplice.

Having apparently gained over only Gregory Orlof, the princess Dashkof flattered herself that she had also won, by his means, the two brothers of that conspirator, in person not less handsome, in temper not less bold than he, and of a bodily strength and a brutality that rendered them formidable even to their friends. She added at the same time to her party many other officers or soldiers, whom Orlof had long been preparing for the rebellion; and when Odart thought to make the empress acquainted with all this success, that dissembling princess, whose lover brought her accounts of all in their nocturnal interviews, was careful neither to undeceive the secretary, nor affront the vanity of madame Dashkof.

One alone of all the factious stood in no need of artful prepossession: it was that very Glebof whom the czar had raised from the lowest forms of chicane to the important place of procureur-general to the senate*. The traitor, judging that his master would prove unable to resist the united attacks of such a host of foes as were plotting his destruction, and adding cruelty to ingratitude, resolved to con-

* When, on his accession to the throne, this prince demanded the resignation of prince Schakofskof.

tribute

tribute what he could to his ruin, in order to profit by the change it would produce. He accordingly looked about for a band of conspirators with whom he might join; and having discovered that of Odart and princess Dashkof, he went to them with the offer of his services.

The aim of all those who severally conspired against Peter III. was to dethrone him; but they were not disposed to set about it in the same manner. Panin, Razumofsky, Orlof, thought it best to begin by seizing on his person at Peterhof*, at the conclusion of one of those orgies which could

* The imperial palace of Peterhof, situate on the shore of the Cronstadt gulf, is twenty-five versts from St. Petersburg, eight versts below Strelina, and eight versts above Oranienbaum. Peter the great employed the architect Le Blond to build it, and to direct the laying out of the gardens; and its decorations have been increased by all the succeeding monarchs. Here annually a grand festival is given in honour of the patron saints of the imperial house, Peter and Paul. It consists in masquerades, to which from three thousand to four thousand persons of both sexes repair from Petersburg, so that there is scarcely a horse left in the town. At night the palace, with all the gardens, walks, terraces, canals, cascades, and fountains, as well as the yachts that lie off the shore, are all grandly illuminated; which, especially the vast cascade, rolling its sheets of water over the lamps, have a surprisingly brilliant effect. In some of the apartments are refreshments of every kind, accessible to all. About ten in the evening long tables are set out with a variety of choice dishes in great abundance, at which as many as can find room promiscuously take their places, and are sumptuously entertained; as each is satisfied, he retires, and others succeed; for which purpose the tables are constantly replenished by an uninterrupted succession of dishes.

not fail to take place on his coming thither to celebrate the anniversary of St. Peter and St. Paul. Count Panin, with some others of the conspirators, had even been to gain an accurate knowledge of his apartment, in order the more easily to seize him on the fittest occasion. Lieutenant Passick, the most ferocious, the most barbarous of his countrymen, insisted on assassinating him with a poniard in the midst of his court: and in spite of all that Panin could do, by intreating and forbidding, he went, with one of his comrades, named Bafchakof, to lie in ambush two days successively, waiting for this prince on one side of the small wooden house inhabited by Peter while he was laying the foundations of Petersburg: these two days Peter III. did not appear. But if the conspirators differed about the means of dethroning the tzar, they were still less agreed on the manner of supplying his place. Catharine aspired to the sole possession of the supreme authority. Orlof and princefs Dashkof supported this pretension. Panin, on the other hand, proposed, that she should govern only under the name of regent; and that the title of emperor should devolve on the young grand duke Paul Petrovitch. The hetman Razumoffky, for particular reasons, was of the same opinion *.

At

* When the plot was thoroughly adjusted, Catharine made no scruple of appearing in the meetings of the chief conspirators. She sent for them several times to Knutson's house, in the street called

At a long conference held by the principal conspirators, in which these several proposals were discussed, Panin had the courage to say to Catharine:—
 “ I know, madam, what you would have, and
 “ what you are able to do; but I know also where
 “ your ambition should stop. You have repeated
 “ it a hundred times, while as yet grand duchess,
 “ that you were only desirous of the title of mother
 “ of the emperor. Does that title at present seem
 “ too diminutive to you? You would now re-
 “ move your son from the throne of Russia; but
 “ what right have you to seat yourself upon it
 “ alone? Are you of the blood of the tzars?
 “ Are you even a native of the empire? Think
 “ you that this ancient and warlike nation will ac-
 “ knowledge for their sovereign a countess of An-
 “ halt? Think you that they will not be incessantly plotting in favour of the descendants of
 “ Peter the great, while one of them lies languish-
 “ ing at the foot of the throne, and others continue
 “ to groan in dark and loathsome dungeons? Do,
 “ madam, give up your pretensions to what you
 “ can never obtain. Think it your greatest happiness to be able to escape the extreme danger that
 “ presses upon you; and that the only means of

called Morfkaia, or to another house on the bank of the Moika, where, for a long while past, she had had private interviews with Gregory Orlof. — The Moika is a little river running through Petersburg.

“ justifying

“justifying our violent undertaking, is to convince
 “the world that your son is, more than yourself,
 “the object of your concern.”

The conspirators, struck with the firmness and propriety of this discourse, for a time remained mute. Orlof shuddered. Catharine herself kept a momentary silence. At length, turning to Panin:—
 “Count,” said she, “your arguments are full of
 “force; but they are not sufficient to produce any
 “alteration in my sentiments. I know the Rus-
 “sians; and you yourself are so well acquainted
 “with them as to know, that, provided they are
 “governed, they care but little about the origin of
 “them by whom the government is administered.
 “This nation knows of nothing but obedience,
 “even when the hand that rules it leans heavily
 “on it. Mentchikof, Biren, Munich, may serve as
 “proofs of this truth. But it is not thus that I
 “design to reign: far from it; I shall act with
 “lenity, with justice, and in such manner as not
 “to give the slightest pretext to discontent. But
 “you, who tell me of murmurs and rebellions, do
 “you forget that it is mostly under regencies that
 “rebellions break out? Nay, should we ever have
 “had a thought of that we have now been con-
 “triving, if Peter III. were capable of guiding
 “with firmness the reins of government? You
 “are alarmed for my son; but had you rather
 “abandon him to the fantastic humours of a father,
 “by whom he is already disowned, than trust his

“fortune to a mother who loves him? and, if I
 “aspire to the supreme command, is it not for the
 “welfare of that child? is it not that I may be the
 “better able to recompense those who, like you,
 “assist me to defend him? Doubtless, they may
 “all rely on my everlasting gratitude; but in order
 “to prove it to my heart’s content, I must have
 “the power; and that power is what I expect
 “from you.”

Panin was not in the least shaken; opinions were divided, and the conspirators came to no fixed determination.

It was easy to perceive that Panin only wished to set his pupil on the throne, in the hope of occupying himself the second place in the empire, and to govern in his name. Catharine had too much discernment not to have discovered this motive long before; accordingly she had given private assurances to Panin that she would appoint him prime minister; taking care, however, not to confirm this promise in presence of the other conspirators, for fear of offending the ambition of any of the party.

Princess Dashkof, Orlof, Odart, those who wanted to bestow the supreme power on Catharine, vied with each other in seeking some means for inducing count Panin to alter his mind; but it was long to no purpose, and they would certainly not have been able to succeed, if a passion less terrible, but more powerful, had not come into conflict with ambition. Love had already enlisted in the service of Catharine

rine the boldest and most intrepid of her conspirators: love granted another lady the boon of subduing him, whose stubborn mind was not to be moved by majesty itself.

The necessity into which the plot had led Panin of conversing frequently with the princess Dashkof; the wit, the vivacity, the petulance of this young woman; her whole character, in short, inspired him with a lively tenderness for her. He was not long in making her an open declaration of his passion: she received it with coldness, and afforded him no hope of success. It was not however virtue in madame Dashkof, that impelled her to reject the professions of Panin. Many other known suitors had already experienced that it was not invincible. But the age, the heavy air of Panin, the intimacy in which he had lived with the mother of princess Dashkof*; and, above all, the deep and lively sentiment she had vowed to another, prevented her from yielding to the persuasions of the preceptor, who, dumb from that moment on the subject of his passion, seemed to take pleasure in contradicting the author of its disappointment.

The subtle and vigilant Odart alone discovered the secret motive of Panin's resistance, and immediately promised to overcome it. He hastened to the princess; and, after having heard her confirm what he had only suspected, conversed with her in

* She believed, with the public, that she owed her birth to that intimacy.

all the familiarity of a zealous confidant and an accomplice, who was daily in concert with her, braving exile and death. Exempt from all prejudices, or rather incapable of an esteem for virtue, Odart had the effrontery to ridicule that which seemed to be a check on princess Dashkof. Then, putting on a graver look, he represented to her that if she thought it a fault to yield to the solicitations of Panin, that fault would be ennobled by the motive that impelled her to commit it. He reminded her of the union of sentiment that attached her to the empress; and, friendship being the principal virtue, no sacrifice should seem too dear, when we were called to the service of a friend: and concluded with representing to her, that it would be the triumph of heroism to brave the disgrace of making her charms subservient to her ambition. The princess Dashkof, whose romantic imagination was easily elevated, gave implicit credit to all that was told her by Odart, consented to whatever Panin proposed, and Catharine had no more obstacles to apprehend on the part of the count*.

* It is but justice to observe in this place, that many persons who attended successively the courts of Elizabeth, Peter III. and the late empress, have uniformly affirmed, that, of all the imputations thrown out on princess Dashkof concerning certain peculiarities in her disposition and temper, they never once heard the slightest suspicion cast on her chastity: and to her friends it has always been her boast, that, though a widow at the age of eighteen, the most malignant of her enemies had nothing to accuse her of in this respect.

The conspirators therefore being brought to agreement, thought no longer of anything but of putting their plan in execution. Of chiefs there was no want; but soldiers were to be obtained. The first thing to be done was to gain over those of the guards, as well for depriving the emperor of their defence, as for a support to the cause. The Orlofs, Bibikof, and Paslick had already seduced three companies of the regiment of Ismaïlof; but this number was not sufficient, and it was only by money that they could hope to corrupt others. The empress had it not in her power to furnish any, as she had scarcely wherewith to defray the daily expences of her household. She therefore, in concert with princess Dashkof, commissioned Odart to make application to M. de Breteuil for a supply. That minister, long the confidant and the dupe of the empress, was preparing to quit Petersburg. He was not ignorant that a conspiracy was on foot, but he knew neither the springs that were to set it in motion, nor the means by which it was to be conducted: he was doubtful of its success; and, when Odart informed him that Catharine was desirous that the king of France would lend her sixty thousand rubles, he hesitated to advance that trifling sum. Fearing however to mortify the self-love of the empress by a formal refusal, as well as to give too much credit to the assertions of Odart, whom he regarded in no other light than as a presumptuous adventurer, he told him that he might assure her majesty

majesty that the king his master would esteem it a pleasure to afford her, on that occasion, a proof of his attachment, and that he would without delay communicate to him what she desired. At the same time he drew up the form of a note which he put into the hands of Odart, that she might write it in her own hand, and return it to him. The note was conceived in these terms: "J'ai chargé le porteur du présent billet de vous faire mes adieux, et de vous prier de me faire quelque petite commission, que je vous prie de m'envoyer le plutôt possible."

The Piedmontese, thinking that the empress would not have any scruple to write this note, promised it to M. de Breteuil. But that princess, sensibly hurt at the distrust shewn by the french minister, the delays he put in practice, and the state of dependence in which he wanted to place her on a court she detested, vouchsafed not even to give him an answer; and M. de Breteuil, having waited some days without any appearance of Odart, set out from Russia and proceeded to Vienna, where he received, by Versailles, the news of the success

* What a specimen of M. de Breteuil's style! — "I have commissioned the bearer of the present note to bid you farewell in my name, and to request you to give me some small commission, which I beg you to send me as soon as possible."

of

of the conspiracy, and the order to return to St. Petersburg *.

On the pressure of the emergency, Catharine had consented to borrow of M. de Breteuil; but afterwards, willing to shew him that she could dispense with his assistance, she seized the instant of his departure to send him a note, which Odart privately delivered to Berenger, the chargé d'affaires, and contained the following words: "L'emplette que nous devons faire se fera sûrement bientôt, mais à beaucoup-meilleur marché: ainsi nous n'avons pas besoin d'autres fonds †."

However, Catharine was at this moment in the most tremendous situation. The dread of seeing her schemes betrayed, the greater apprehension of being arrested, dethroned, shut up for ever, all circumstances considered, filled her with the most piercing disquietude.

Peter all this while seemed only intent upon pleasure; yet in reality he was not inattentive to the condition of the unhappy Ivan, and to his military preparations.

* This is exactly the manner in which M. de Breteuil was of service to the conspiracy: and yet it is well known how fond he was of boasting in France how greatly he had forwarded it.

† "The purchase we intended to make will certainly be made soon, but at a much cheaper rate: therefore we have no need of other supplies."

After

After having lodged this prince at Kexholm, he caused him to be secretly conducted to Petersburg, where he was put in a house of no conspicuous figure; in which he visited him during the night, accompanied by Gudovitch and Volkof.

The fleet he had destined to act against Denmark being completely equipped, one division remained yet at Cronstadt, while the other lay waiting for it at Reval. The regiments that were to follow in this expedition were already in Pomerania, and others were on their march to join them. In a word, he was ready to put himself at the head of his army for the invasion of Holstein. What seemed to flatter him most in this conquest was the being capacitated thereby to pay his respects to him whom he styled his friend, his brother, and his model, the king of Prussia. In the expectation of this happiness, he treated the envoy of that monarch with such distinctions and even adulations as Frederic himself would never have endured: but this envoy * was young, and perhaps vaunted too much of the marks of deference shewn him by the emperor. Peter had at length fixed his departure

* It was baron Goltz, who was afterwards minister in France from Prussia, and died at Bâle in 1794. It has been said, that while Goltz has been shut up for hours together with young women of the court, the czar, with a firelock on his shoulder, stood sentry at the door, as a common foldier. But who does not see that this must be a story invented by the calumniators of that unfortunate prince?

for the day following the festival of Peter and Paul *, which he was, as usual, to celebrate at Peterhof, and at the end of which he purposed to cause the empress to be arrested. But the empress was taking measures effectually to prevent his design. Her party was waiting only for the moment of action †. That moment was accelerated by chance.

* To make it believed that the tzar was completely stupid, the report has been studiously propagated, that when he was heated by wine and punch, he never failed to talk of schemes of conquest, and to give himself up to the transports of an extravagant ambition. Two days before the revolution that hurled him from the throne, he held, it is said, the following discourse: "Of what use are all those petty sovereigns of Europe? What are they? I am resolved that, in future, there shall be but three powers in this part of the world: Russia, Prussia, and France. I will have all the North, the king of Prussia shall have all Germany, and the king of France the rest."—"But," observed one of his courtiers, "what does your majesty think of putting France into your division?"—"Oh! yes," replied the tzar; "France is likewise a great power!" It is much to be doubted that, however intoxicated Peter might be, he ever intended to make such a partition of Europe.

† Catharine's party consisted of the hetman Razumoffsky, the preceptor of the grand duke count Panin, the master of artillery Villebois, general Volkonskoi, the brothers Orlof, the princefs Dashkof (to whom the empress was as strongly attached, as the emperor was to her sister Elizabeth Vorontzof), &c. With Peter was count Munich, who would alone perhaps have outweighed all the others, if the emperor had but resolved to follow the counsels of this experienced veteran.

CHAP. III.

The Conspirators are employed in putting in Execution the Plot of dethroning the Tzar. — The Arrest of Passick hastens that Execution. — Catharine II. is acknowledged Empress by the Regiments of Guards, and is crowned in the principal Church of Petersburg. — The Troops gained over by the Conspirators march against Peter III. — Irresolution and extreme Weakness of that Prince — He submits to Catharine. — He is imprisoned and strangled. — Consequences of his Death.

THEY who plan a conspiracy have always more zeal, more vigilance and activity, than he against whom it is directed. Accordingly the friends of Catharine were carefully informed of all that passed about the tzar, while he was ignorant of all their proceedings. Expecting, in indolent security, the festivities of Peterhof, his majesty was gone to pass some days at his country palace of Oranienbaum, whither he had taken with him some of the handsomest women of the court. On this occasion a report was spread, that he wanted to demand divorces for these women, that he might marry them to some of his courtiers. It was even added, that beds had been ordered for these pretended nuptials; and

shame,

shame, contempt, and jealousy created him new enemies, and procured as many partisans to Catharine.

Without knowing precisely the secret of the conspiracy, some persons, who perceived that a plot was hatching against the tzar, advertised him of it, but could not prevail on him to determine on seizing the traitors. We have already seen, that the king of Prussia had warned him without effect to be cautious about his personal safety. Baron Goltz and count Schwerin reiterated to him the same remonstrances in the name of that monarch, and had no better success than their master. The only answer they obtained from the too confident Peter was: "Mind what I say: if you are my friends, "never speak to me again on that odious subject *."

Some time prior to the explosion of the plot, a french architect, named Valois, waited for the tzar at the house of the british minister, where that prince was to dine, and put into his hand a written paper in which he divulged to him the seditious declarations of Teplof †, formerly preceptor to the hetman

* See the history of the war of seven years by Frederic II.

† Teplof was the natural son of Theophilus archbishop of Novgorod and the wife of a stopnik, or heater of stoves. Teplof was brought up by the prelate, who was not without learning. Teplof, being yet very young, was engaged by Alexius Razumofsky to begin the education of his brother Cyril, just then arrived at Petersburg. Being now introduced at court, he was guilty of some act which brought on him a sentence of banishment,

hetman Cyril Razumofsky, and a creature of Beshuchef. The tzar, obliged to yield to the representations of his friends, caused Teplof to be taken into custody, but neglected to have him interrogated for drawing from him such confessions as might have tended to unveil the designs of the conspirators.

Those who at first had agreed to seize and carry off the tzar on his appearance again at St. Petersburg, thought, in consequence of a new deliberation, that it would be too dangerous to wait so long, and that it would be better to execute their design on his coming to Peterhof.

The plan was well concerted: each of the conspirators was reckoning on his own courage and the fidelity of his friends, when all at once their plot was discovered. This discovery, however, was only the effect of chance; and, by a strange caprice of fortune, the very accident which, by its natural effect, ought to have disconcerted the traitors, emboldened them; and their precipitancy secured their success.

By an excess of dissidence or precaution, princess Dashkof and Odart had set a trusty person to watch

ment, but the protection of the Razumofskies procured him a pardon. It was to the same protection that he afterwards owed his fortune. Cyril, on becoming hetman of the kozaks, got him the appointment of counsellor of state, and entrusted to him the government of the Ukraine, where Teplof committed numberless acts of collusion and injustice.

the steps of each of the chiefs of the conspiracy, who regularly brought them an exact account of whatever these chiefs might be likely to do; in such manner, that if there had been the least tendency towards treachery among them, they would have detected it instantaneously, and have taken measures for their security or their vengeance.

Paslick had gained the soldiers of the company of the guards in which he was lieutenant. One of these soldiers, imagining that Paslick did nothing but in concurrence with his captain, asked the captain on what day they were to take up arms against the emperor. The captain, surprised, had recourse to dissimulation; and answering the questions of the soldier in vague and indistinct terms, drew out of him the secret of the conspiracy, and went, without delay, to make report of it to the chancery of the regiment.

It was nine o'clock at night. Paslick was put under arrest: but at first he was shoved into a room, where he had time to write with a pencil on a scrap of paper, "Proceed to execution this instant, or we are undone." The man who watched his motions presented himself at the door. Paslick, not knowing him, but seeing that everything was to be risked, gave him the billet, telling him that, if he ran with it in all speed to the hetman Razumofsky, he would be handsomely rewarded. The spy hurried to the princess Dashkof, and put the billet into her hand. Panin happened that moment

to

to come in. She proposed to hasten the execution of their project, observing that the only means of saving themselves from the vengeance of the czar was to prevent it; and that, however weak he might be, if time were allowed him to put himself on his defence, it would be impossible to get the better of him. But whether or not Panin thought really that the enterprise could not succeed, whether his capacity was not sufficiently seconded by courage for beginning to act, he refused to submit to the reasons of princess Dashkof; and after having told her that it would be better to wait till the next day, to know what was fittest to be done, he withdrew.

In the mean time the emissaries of princess Dashkof had already taken care to give intelligence to the other conspirators. On Panin's departure, she put on man's apparel, and went to join Orlof and his friends on the green bridge, where she was in the habit of seeing them, that she might avoid raising suspicion by getting to her too many subaltern officers and soldiers*.

These conspirators were neither less uneasy than princess Dashkof, nor less impatient for hastening

* Besides the noble and beautiful river Neva, with its three bridges of boats ingeniously removed and replaced twice every year, and besides the canals with their elegant quays and magnificent stone bridges, there is yet another river, passing through the city, the Moïka, the numerous drawbridges over which are still of wood, and these are denominated according to the colour with which they are painted, the red bridge, the blue bridge, the green bridge, &c.

the execution of their plot. The delay till the morrow appeared to them to be big with consequences the most to be dreaded; and it certainly would have been fatal. The time of acting was the silence of the night, without allowing the tzar time to form an inclination to prevent them, nor the troops and the people time to arm for the defence of the tzar. The resolution was unanimous. While Gregory Orlof, one of his brothers, and his friend Bibikof, repaired to the barracks for the purpose of preparing the soldiers of their party to act on the first signal, another brother of Orlof, Alexius, took upon him the perilous commission of going to find out the empress at Peterhof.

Under pretext of leaving the apartments free for the festival that was to be celebrated at the palace, and for enabling herself, in reality, to be more in readiness to escape, Catharine was lodged in a remote summer-house called *Monplaisir* *, situated at the extremity of the garden on the shore of the

* It is a small house constructed in the dutch style, built by Peter I. who frequently passed some days there, and in which his bed is still preserved. — The evening, before the revolution, Catharine II. walking in the solitary allées of this garden, happened to cast her eyes on a very small shoot of oak, was struck at the sight of a tree so rare in these parts, and surrounded it with little flicks, to preserve it from injury. She afterwards had it inclosed by a trellis. It became a fine tree; and Catharine was fond of regarding it as an emblem of her reign. The person who communicated this note, had these facts from the mouth of that princess herself.

gulf

gulf of Finland. Here she had caused to be fastened, as if without design, a small boat, that it might occasionally be of service in the secret visits of her favourites, and to facilitate her own escape into Sweden, if the conspiracy should be discovered. Gregory Orlof having given his brother a key to this summer-house, instructed him in the methods he must employ for getting thither; and princess Dashkof trusted him with a short note, to engage the empress to come to them without loss of time.

It was now two o'clock in the morning. The empress, not expecting anybody, had retired to rest, and lay in a profound sleep, when she perceived herself suddenly roused, and saw standing at the side of her bed a soldier whom she knew nothing of. Without delivering her the note from princess Dashkof, the soldier said to Catharine: — “Your majesty has not a moment to lose; get ready to follow me:” and immediately disappeared.

Catharine, astonished, terrified, called Ivanovna. They dressed themselves in haste, and disguised themselves in such manner that they could not be known by the sentinels about the palace. Scarcely were they ready, when the soldier returned, and told the empress that a carriage was waiting for them at the garden-gate. It was a coach which, under pretext of having change of horses for an excursion into the country, princess Dashkof had kept for several days in readiness at a house inhabited by one of her peasants a few miles from

Peterhof,

Peterhof, and which Alexèy Orlof had sent one of his comrades to fetch.

The empress reached the carriage without difficulty. She got into it. Alexèy Orlof took the reins, and set off at full speed. Suddenly the horses, being over-driven, stopped short, and fell down. They were obliged to get out. Alexèy Orlof and his companion employed every effort to cheer the horses, but in vain. The distance from Petersburg was still considerable; it was in the midst of the night*; they were in the greatest confusion, and the danger was every moment becoming more imminent: they resolved to proceed the rest of the way on foot. They had not gone far, when by good luck they met a light country cart. Alexèy Orlof seized hold of the horses, the empress got in, and they set off again as before. They presently heard the sound of another carriage coming after them with unusual rapidity. It was Gregory Orlof, who, calculating the moments, was alarmed at not yet seeing the empress. Immediately knowing her, he cried out, that they only waited for her; and without staying for her answer, drove on before to receive her at Petersburg. At length Catharine, worn out with fatigue and anxiety, but sufficiently mistress of herself to assume a sedate and tranquil air, arrived in the city at seven in the morning †.

* At this season of the year in Russia the nights are so clear, that Catharine reckoned it a thing certain, that notwithstanding her disguise, she should be known by some traveller.

† The 9th of July N. S. 1762.

She

She proceeded directly to the quarter of the Ismailofsky guards, of which three companies had been already won over; but the conspirators would not permit them to leave the barracks till Catharine appeared, for fear of failing in their aim by too great precipitancy. At the report of the arrival of her majesty, about thirty of the soldiers, half dressed, ran out to receive her with clamorous shouts of joy. Surprised and alarmed at seeing so small a number of soldiers she kept silence for a moment, and then told them, in a tremulous voice, "that her danger had driven her to the necessity of coming to ask their assistance; that the tzar had intended to put her to death that very night, together with her son; that she had no other means than by flight of escaping death; and that she had so much confidence in their dispositions as to put herself entirely in their hands."

All who heard her shuddered with indignation, and swore to die in her defence. Their example, and the hetman Razumofsky their colonel, who was not long ere he appeared, soon collected other soldiers, led by curiosity, in great numbers about the empress, who, with one consent, declared her sovereign. The chaplain of the regiment of Ismailof was immediately called, who, fetching a crucifix from the altar, received on it the oath of the troops. Some voices were heard in this tumultuous concourse, proclaiming Catharine regent; but these sounds were presently stifled by the threats of Orlof

and the more numerous cries of "Long live the empress!"

The Simeonofsky and the Préobaginsky * guards had already imitated those of Ismaïlof. The officers, with the utmost docility, put themselves at the head of their companies, as though they had been engaged in the plot. Two alone, of the regiment of Préobaginsky, had the boldness to counteract their foldiers; but they were suddenly arrested: and among those who had been gained over, there were only wanting the major Tschapelof and the lieutenant Puschkin, whom the empress had sent orders to have put under arrest, observing with coldness that she had no further occasion for them.

While the hetman Razumofsky, prince Volkonsky, counts Bruce and Stroganof, several other general officers, and princess Dashkof, remained about Catharine, and she was completely securing the three regiments of guards, Gregory Orlof ran to the regiment of artillery, to draw it into the revolt, and march it to the empress. But though he was treasurer of that corps, and well enough beloved of the foldiers, they unanimously refused to follow him, and insisted on seeing the orders of their general Villebois. That officer for some time seemed to be favourably regarded by Catharine,

* Of the Ascension. It was the regiment of Préobaginsky that placed Elizabeth on the throne. Elizabeth, as a grateful return, conferred nobility on all the grenadiers of that corps.

and

and thought that he was so still; but as she discerned in him a probity too austere to allow her to hope that he would take part in the conspiracy, she had never ventured to disclose it to him; and when one of the friends of Orlof appeared, and told him that her majesty commanded him to come and join her at the barracks of the guards at the head of his regiment, he asked whether the emperor was dead. The friend of Orlof, without answering his question, repeated the order; and Villebois, in utter astonishment, went alone to the empress.

Villebois, seeing Catharine surrounded by an immense crowd of people, found no difficulty in divining what it was she expected of him; but, still withheld by the fidelity he had sworn to the emperor, or by the danger to which he thought her majesty was exposing herself, he presumed to speak to her of the obstacles which yet remained for her to surmount; and added, that she ought to have foreseen them. She haughtily interrupted him; and replied, "that she had not sent for him to ask him what she ought to have foreseen, but to know how he intended to act."

"To obey your majesty," returned Villebois in confusion; and went to put himself at the head of his regiment, and to deliver the arsenals to the friends of Catharine.

So many advantages cost the empress no more than two hours. She saw herself already surrounded by two thousand warriors, and a great part of

the

the inhabitants of Petersburg, who mechanically followed the motions of the soldiers, and were eager to applaud them.

The hetman Razumofsky advised her then to repair to the church of Kazan, where everything was prepared for her reception. She accordingly set out, attended by her numerous suite. The windows and doors of all the houses were filled with spectators, who mingled their acclamations with the shouts of the soldiers. The archbishop of Novgorod, who, appareled in his sacerdotal robes, and accompanied by a great number of priests, whose long beards and hoary heads gave them a venerable appearance, stood at the altar to receive her, set the imperial crown on her head, proclaimed her in a loud voice sovereign of all the Russias, by the name of Catharine the Second; and declared, at the same time, the young grand duke Paul Petrovitch her successor. A *Te Deum* was then chanted, accompanied with the shouts* of the multitude.

This ceremony being over, the empress repaired to the palace that had been occupied by Elizabeth. The gates were thrown open indiscriminately to all comers. During several hours the crowd flocked thither, falling on their knees before her, and taking the oath of allegiance.

* The Russian cry on joyful occasions is, hurra! This word is written in some languages huzza; it is an acclamation common to almost all the people of the north.

In

In the mean time the conspirators were unwearied in their visits to the several quarters of the town, to put them in a state of defence; everywhere stationing a guard, and placing cannons with match lighted, without meeting any impediment or interruption. Prince George of Holstein, uncle to the emperor, dared to venture out, followed by a few faithful soldiers; but he was surrounded, forced to surrender, loaded with insults, roughly handled, and dragged to prison, whence the empress delivered him after some hours, in order to put him under arrest in his own house.

Not only no resistance was opposed to the partisans of Catharine, but none of the friends of the czar once thought of informing him of what was passing at Petersburg. One man alone, a foreigner, named Bressian*, who owed his fortune to that prince, had the resolution to instance his gratitude and fidelity. He caused a domestic to put on the habit of a countryman, and gave him a written paper, with orders to deliver it only into the hands of the emperor. The servant happened to pass just as the conspirators were placing a guard on the Kalinka bridge over the Fontanka, which must be crossed for going out of the city on that side, and made the best of his way to Oranienbaum; but, on his reaching the palace, he found that the czar was

* He came into the country as a barber and peruke-maker, being born in the state of Monaco, and was a naturalized Frenchman.

not

not there, and was obliged to go in quest of him to Peterhof.

All circumstances seemed to concur to favour the plot. On the Peterhof road, and at some distance from Petersburg, a regiment of sixteen hundred men was encamped, among whom no sort of tampering had been practised; and it was much to be apprehended that, on the very first tidings of the revolt, the tzar would order them to break up the camp, and join his holstein troops. No sooner were measures set on foot to prevent this catastrophe, than colonel Olsufief, who commanded that regiment, and had heard some confused reports of what was going forward in town, made his appearance for gaining further information. The conspirators got about him, talked to him with enthusiasm, persuaded him by arguments adapted to the purpose; and Olsufief presently returned to surrender his regiment to Catharine. At the very moment that he was haranguing his men, an order from Peter arrived for the regiment to march immediately to him. The soldiers, perplexed and confounded, unanimously cried out, that they did not acknowledge him for emperor, and directly began their march to go and augment the forces of the conspiracy.

Before the end of the day Catharine had already fifteen thousand men of picked troops. The city was in a formidable state of defence. Strict order prevailed there; and by the greatest good fortune, not one drop of blood was shed.

What

What principally tended to the service of that princess, was the interest and concern that her partisans inspired into all men for her, by propagating on every side, that the tzar had destined that very day to put her to death with her son. The atrocious falsehood was believed without examination; and success was the reward of the calumny.

When the empress was at the palace, she sent without delay for her son Paul Petrovitch. A detachment, at the head of which marched a trusty officer, was dispatched to fetch him; and that young prince, who had been often told of the designs of the tzar against him, on his waking in the midst of the soldiers, was seized with an alarming fright. Panin took him in his arms, and brought him to his mother. Catharine then led him into the balcony of the palace, holding him up to shew him to the people, whose acclamations redoubled at the sight of the child, thinking that in him they beheld the new emperor.

A report all at once got up, that Peter III. was no more, and that the procession with his corpse was now going by. A profound silence then took place of the cries of the multitude. Several soldiers in long black cloaks, with torches in their hands, walked on each side of a large coffin covered with a pall, and preceded by a number of priests, chanting their litanies as the procession moved along; while the crowd respectfully fell back on both sides, to make room for it to pass. But afterwards it was

not doubted that this was an additional stratagem invented by the conspirators for deceiving the people, and for intimidating the partisans of the tzar.

The principal nobles, who, for the most part, had taken no share in this conspiracy, and who first learned the success of it at their rising in the morning, resorted immediately to the palace; where, forced to disguise their astonishment and vexation, they united their homages and their oaths of fidelity to those which the multitude had just been taking to Catharine.

The heads of the conspiracy, collected round that princess, now held a council, resolved to profit by the dispositions of the army, and to march in all haste directly to the emperor: but, in the mean time, for putting the empress in security from all attack by sea, or rather in order to quiet the soldiers, who imagined that she was liable every moment to be surprised and assassinated *, they conducted her from the palace of Elizabeth, into an old palace built of timber, facing a large open place, and which they surrounded by troops.

Towards noon her majesty, entirely sure of St. Petersburg, caused a manifesto, which Odart had

* This apprehension was absurd and ridiculous, since, in order to attack the winter palace, where she was, it would be necessary to go up the Neva in boats, and pass the thundering batteries of the admiralty standing by the side of it.

secretly

secretly caused to be printed a few days before, to be distributed throughout the city *.

This publication being made, the empress caused a notification to be delivered to the foreign ministers on the day when they were to be admitted to pay their court, and present their compliments of congratulation on the event.

While these things were transacting, the empress, decorated with the insignia of the order of St. Andrew, and habited in the uniform of the guards, which she had borrowed for the occasion of a very young officer, named Taliezin, mounted on horseback, and rode through the ranks with princess Dashkof, who was also in uniform. It was then that Potemkin †, ensign of the regiment of horseguards, perceiving that Catharine had no plume in her hat, rode up to offer her his. The horse on which Potemkin was mounted, being accustomed to form into the squadron, was some time before he could be brought to quit the side of that of her majesty, thereby affording her an opportunity of remarking for the first time the grace and agility of him who, in the sequel, gained such an ascendant over her.

* See the appendix, No. IV. at the end of the volume.

† Potemkin was born in 1736, and was now twenty-six years of age. Catharine had before seen him with Orlov; but being only one of the subordinate conspirators, she did not appear to take much notice of him.

The troops, being incessantly supplied with beer and brandy, incessantly likewise expressed their satisfaction by reiterated vociferations of *bourra!* and by tossing up their hats and caps; but a regiment of cavalry, of which Peter III. had been colonel while yet only grand duke, and which he had incorporated with the guards on his accession to the throne, took no participation in this tumultuous joy. The officers, having all refused obedience to Catharine, were under arrest, and replaced by the officers of other regiments; and the soldiers, by the fullen silence they observed, formed a striking contrast with the furious noise and gesticulations of the rest.

But the party was too strong to have anything to fear from this regiment; and they began now to march the troops from the city, to proceed against the tzar. Her majesty sat down to dinner near an open window, in full view of the soldiers and the multitudes whom curiosity had assembled in the ample place before the palace.

Peter III. had yet no suspicion of what was passing. His security was even so great, that he had that morning caused a faithful officer to be arrested, who the evening before, having had some intimations of the conspiracy, had hastened in the night to Oranienbaum, thinking it his duty to inform him of it. Peter afterwards set out in a calash, with his mistress, his favourites, and the women of his court, for Peterhof, to be present at the grand festivities

festivities of the following day, in honour of St. Peter and St. Paul. The tzar's carriage was attended by several others; and this numerous train proceeded in a swift pace, the several companies within gaily entertaining themselves with the pleasures they expected, when Gudovitch, the general aide-de-camp, who had galloped on before, was perceived returning at full speed. Gudovitch had met on the road one of the chamberlains of the empress*, coming on foot to his master to inform him of Catharine's escape, and the uneasiness and perplexity that, in consequence of it, filled the whole palace of Peterhof. At this unexpected news, Gudovitch turned back, and, as he approached the tzar's carriage, called out to the driver to stop. Peter, surprised, and even rather angry, not knowing what could cause his aide-de-camp to ride back with so much speed, asked him if he was mad. Gudovitch came close to the carriage, and whispered some words in his ear. Peter now turned pale, and, strongly agitated, got out of the carriage, and went aside with Gudovitch in order to interrogate him more at his ease. Then returning to the carriage, and having desired the ladies to come out, he shewed them a gate of the park, through which he bade them join him at the front of the palace, regained the carriage with some of his courtiers, and departed with the greatest expedition.

* His name was Ismailof.

On coming to Peterhof, the emperor ran to the pavilion that had been occupied by Catharine; and in his confusion, in his extreme concern, he looked about for her as if she might have been concealed under the bed, or in one of the cupboards. He overwhelmed all he met with questions; but nobody could give him any satisfaction. Those of greater penetration than the rest already foresaw the whole extent of his misfortune, but were silent, that they might not increase his affright. Countess Vorontzof his mistress, and the other women, who were now coming up the walks of the garden, were still entirely ignorant of what it could be that had forced the czar to quit them in the midst of the road. As soon as Peter perceived the countess, he called to her: "Romanovna, will you believe me now? Catharine has made her escape. I told you that she was capable of anything!"

In the mean time some boors, who were returning from St. Petersburg, related to a group of valets whom they saw standing about the palace, what they knew of the insurrection that had happened, and these valets talked of it among themselves in whispers, but neither spoke of it to their master nor to any of the courtiers. A gloomy suspicion already prevailed around the unhappy emperor. It seemed as if a fatal presentiment had taken possession of every heart, as the forerunner of his fall, and filled his own with confusion and dismay. He presently became afraid to put any
more

more questions, and nobody dared to give him any information.

At length a countryman suddenly came up in the midst of this affrighted concourse, and with the usual salutation of a profound inclination of body, without pronouncing a single word, drew from the bosom of his caftan a sealed note, which he presented to the emperor. This countryman was Bressan's domestic. The emperor took the note, ran his eyes hastily over it, and then reading it aloud, informed those who were standing round him, that a rebellion had broke out that morning at Peterburg; that the troops had taken arms in favour of Catharine; that she was going to be crowned in the church of Kazan; and that the whole populace seemed to take part in the insurrection.

The czar seemed greatly dejected at these tidings. The courtiers did their utmost to communicate to him a courage which they did not themselves possess. The chancellor Vorontzof observed, that it was highly possible that Catharine might have used her endeavours to make the soldiery and the people rise, but that this slight fermentation could not be attended with any dangerous consequences; and if the czar would give his consent, he would haste immediately to Peterburg, and be bound to bring the empress back.

The czar, without hesitation, accepted the chancellor's proposal; and that minister departed for town. On entering the palace, he found the em-

press surrounded by a multitude of people in the act of doing homage. He nevertheless had the boldness to represent to her with a becoming confidence the danger to which she was exposing herself. "You may," said he, "madam, have some success; but it will not be of long duration. Is it therefore acting wisely to trust to the blind zeal of your imprudent friends? Is it worth while, for the sake of sharing with them in a momentary reign, to make an irreconcilable enemy of your husband? Why take up arms against him, when it is so easy for you to obtain whatever you can desire by the gentleness of your persuasion and the superiority of your mind? Consider, that the regiments of the guards do not compose the whole army of the tzar, and that the inhabitants of St. Petersburg are but a very weak part of the russian nation." Catharine calmly replied, "You see how it is: it is not I that am doing anything; I only yield to the ardent sensibility of the nation."

The chancellor, who actually saw the crowd every moment increasing, and read in the angry looks of some of the conspirators that these remonstrances might be attended with the worst of consequences to him, forgot his duty, took the oath with the rest, and added, "I will serve you in the council, madam; but I am useless in the field. My presence might even be displeasing to those who have been hearing my address to you; and that

"I may avoid exciting their jealousies, I beseech your majesty to let me remain in my house, under the guard of some trusty officer." To this reasonable request the empress consented. She sent him home, with orders not to quit his house. By this prudent precaution, the chancellor was at once safe from the vindictive spirit of the partisans of Catharine, and from the suspicions of the tzar.

At six in the evening, Catharine a second time mounted her horse; and, with a drawn sword in her hand, and an oaken wreath about her temples, she hastened to put herself at the head of her troops that were already on their march. Princess Dashkof and the hetman Razumofsky rode one on each side of her. A crowd of courtiers followed; all of them vying with each other who should display the greatest ardour in sharing her dangers, and partaking in her triumph. Her army was augmented by a new accession of three thousand kozaks well mounted, whom the emperor had ordered to file off towards Pomerania, but who were stopped on the way by a messenger from the hetman, with directions to join him.

After the departure of the chancellor Vorontzof, the tzar had continued a prey to the most distressing anxieties. He was every instant receiving some news of the progress of the revolution. It was impossible for him any longer to make it a matter of doubt. Surrounded by women in tears, and young courtiers incapable of giving advice, he

strolled with great strides about the walks of the gardens, forming twenty different plans, and adhering to none: one while indulging in violent imprecations against Catharine; then dictating useless manifestoes. When the hour of dinner was come, he commanded it to be served up on the margin of the sea, and seemed for some time to have a respite from his sorrowful reflections.

But this respite was of short duration. His affrighted imagination soon held up again the danger that menaced him, and he dispatched an order to the three thousand Holsteiners whom he had left at Oranienbaum, to come immediately with their artillery. It was just at this point of time that the venerable marshal Munich made his appearance.

Munich, whom the emperor respected on account of his great military reputation, and whom he had almost affronted by requesting him to adopt the new prussian exercise; Munich was the only man who was able to give him salutary advice, and he gave it him. "Your majesty's troops are arriving," said the veteran commander. "Let us put ourselves at their head, and march straight to Petersburg. You have still many friends there: immediately on your appearance they will arm in your defence. The principal part of the guards are only under a momentary alienation, into which they have been misled, and will soon range themselves under your standard. Besides, if we are

" forced to come to action, be assured that the rebels will not long dispute with you the palm of victory."

This resolution seemed feasible to the tzar, but it was far from pleasing his timid courtiers; and while they were preparing to begin their march, news arrived of the empress's approach, whose army was said to consist of twenty thousand men. The women cried out, that it would be better to go back to Oranienbaum. Peter himself seemed determined not to expose his person. "Well!" returned Munich, "if you wish to decline a battle with the rebels, it is not advisable for you, at any rate, to stay to be attacked by them here, where you have no means of defending yourself to advantage. Neither Oranienbaum nor Peterhof are in a capacity to hold out a siege. But Cronstadt offers you a safe retreat, Cronstadt is still under your command. You have there a formidable fleet, and a numerous garrison. It is, in short, from Cronstadt that you will find it an easy matter to bring Petersburg back to its duty."

This advice was unanimously applauded. General Liewers was immediately sent off in a boat to take the command of Cronstadt*; and scarcely were

two

* The island of Cronstadt lies opposite to Oranienbaum, at the distance of seven versts. When in possession of the Swedes it was called Retusari, and by the Russians Kotloj-ostrot, kettle-island. In 1723 Peter the great named it Cronstadt, or crown town,

two yachts prepared for the departure of the tzar, than an officer came to assure him that he might rely

town, as being the crown to his new city: it is situate in the eastern extremity of the gulf of Finland, is thirty-nine versts W. N. W. distant from St. Petersburg, and from Sestrabek twelve. The island is eight versts in length from E. to W. and about one verst in breadth; it is flat, about eight fathom higher than the level of the sea, with some woody parts of birch and firs. Its strata, under the turf, as was seen in digging the canals, are clay and limestone. Two smaller islands on its southern side are strongly fortified, one of which has the name of Cronslot. The town and fort of Cronstadt were built by Peter I. in 1710. It has two fine, secure, and spacious harbours, one for the imperial navy, and the other for merchant-ships, of which it is full during the summer and autumn months. The town occupies the eastern part of the island, is large, has many good houses, several churches, a custom-house, and other public buildings. Here is also an english church with a minister, for the benefit of the masters and sailors of the ships that resort hither in the service of the russia trade. The harbour for the ships of war is extremely remarkable, and frequently visited by foreigners to their great satisfaction. It is protected by piers and batteries, and belonging to it is the famous Peter's canal and the docks. The canal was begun by Peter I. and completed under Elizabeth, by general Lubras. It is faced with masonry, one thousand and fifty fathoms in length, at bottom sixty, and at top one hundred fathoms broad, twenty-four fathoms deep, and in this state extends three hundred and fifty-eight fathoms into the sea. Adjacent to the canal are the docks, in which ten and more ships may be repaired at a time. They are provided with proper sluices, for admitting and for letting out the ships. The evacuation of the basin, after letting in a vessel, is performed by a steam-engine. The other canals made

rely on the fidelity of that place. Peter, who thought he already saw Catharine at the gates of Peterhof, precipitately got on board, followed by his affrighted court and the intrepid Munich.

It seemed as if some dreadful fatality hung over the head of the unfortunate monarch to frustrate all the wisest measures he adopted. Everything in Cronstadt had assumed a new face within the space of a few hours. The fleet and the regiments, which had just received general Lievers with cries of joy, and swearing to continue their fealty to the tzar, had already broke out into open revolt: Lievers was deprived of the command and put into prison; and this rapid change was the effect of a stratagem.

During the first hours of the insurrection, and in the measures that were primarily taken for ensuring its success, not one of the conspirators had bestowed a thought upon the fort of Cronstadt. It was not even till afternoon that somebody, reflecting on the importance of that place, remarked the mistake they had committed in neglecting it so long. Admiral Taliezin made the offer to go and take possession of it. It was accepted. He embarked in his long-boat, expressly forbid his rowers to mention whence they came, and arrived at Cronstadt. Ge-

made by order of the late empress, the large mole surrounded by a pier of granite, constructed under the direction of admiral Greig, with many other particulars, render Cronstadt richly worthy the observation of all travellers into those parts.

neral

neral Lievers, who kept on the look-out, as he expected every moment the emperor, ran forward to meet Taliezin, and artfully endeavoured to discover whether he was of Catharine's party; but Taliezin, more artful than he, pretended ignorance of the effects of the revolt; saying, that being at his country-house, and hearing a confused account of some disturbance that had happened at Petersburg, he was hurrying to get on board the fleet, whither his duty called him. Lievers believed the story, and went his way. Taliezin immediately repaired to the quarter of the sailors, harangued them, told them of the success of the empress, that they could not do better than to declare for her, distributed among them brandy and money, and engaged them to follow him to arrest the commandant. Some soldiers joined themselves to the sailors. Lievers was instantly thrown into prison, and Taliezin remained master, in the name of the empress, of a place, the possession whereof might have been the salvation of the tzar, or at least have furnished him with the means of making a stout resistance.

Precisely while this scene was transacting, Peter presented himself before the mouth of the harbour. Taliezin had already made the dispositions for preventing his coming on shore. A part of the garri-son, under arms, lined the coast. The cannons were levelled, the matches lighted, and at the moment when the foremast yacht cast anchor, the centinel called out, "Who comes there?" — "The emperor,"

"emperor," it was answered from the yacht. "There is no emperor," replied the centinel. Peter started forward; and, throwing back his cloak, to shew the badges of his order, exclaimed, "What! do you not know me?" — "No," ejaculated a thousand voices at once, "we know of no emperor. Long live the empress Catharine!" Then Taliezin threatened to sink the yacht if it did not put off in an instant. Peter retired in great consternation: but Gudovitch took him by the arm; and, laying hold on one of the timbers at the entrance of the mole; "Put your hands by the side of mine," said he, "and let us leap on shore. None will dare to fire upon you, and Cronstadt will still belong to your majesty *."

Munich seconded the advice of Gudovitch; but in vain. In his dismay, Peter III. would consent to nothing but flight, and ran to hide himself in the cabin of the yacht, among the terrified women. They did not even give themselves time to raise the anchor; but cut the cable, and went off by the use of their oars.

When the yachts were at a considerable distance from the port, the rowers stopped. It was a fine night; and Munich and Gudovitch, sitting upon deck, contemplated in silent sorrow the starry sky and the calm surface of the sea. The steersman came down into the cabin, to ask the tzar whither

* Countess Bruce and madam Zagréisky, who were both present, have frequently related this transaction.

he would please to be taken in the vessel. Peter ordered Munich to be called, and said to him, "Field-marshal, I perceive that I was too late in following your advice; but you see to what extremities I am reduced. You, who have escaped from so many dangers, tell me, I beseech you, what I ought to do." — "Proceed immediately to join the squadron at Reval," returned Munich; "there take a ship, go on to Pomerania, put yourself at the head of your army, return to Russia, and I promise you, that in six weeks Petersburg and all the rest of the empire will be in subjection to you."

The women and the courtiers, as if they had come to an agreement to ruin the unfortunate Peter, began directly to cry out, that the rowers would never have strength enough to reach Reval*. "Well then," replied Munich, "we will all row with them." But such generous counsel could not be agreeable to this timid or treacherous court. They shuddered at it. They seemed to try which should be most eager in assuring the emperor that his danger was not so great as he imagined; that Catharine only wanted to come to an accommodation with him, and that it was far better to negotiate than to fight. The imbecil prince, whose greatest misfortune it ever had been not to be able

* The ancient town of Reval, with its harbour and fort, is situate on the gulf of Finland, 59° 26' 22" N. L. and 42° 27' 30" long. distant three hundred and forty versts from St. Petersburg.

to resolve on the courageous side, yielded to these representations, and gave orders to the pilot to make for Oranienbaum.

It was four in the morning when they reached that place. Some of the emperor's domestics, in great alarm, came to receive him. He commanded them not to divulge the news of his return, shut himself up in his apartment, strictly forbidding any person to be admitted, and secretly wrote to the empress.

At ten o'clock he came out with a countenance tolerably calm and serene. Those of his holstein guards who were come back to Oranienbaum, ran and surrounded him, shedding tears of affection and joy. They kissed his hands, they embraced his knees, they pressed him to march them against the army of the empress, and solemnly swore that they were all to a man ready to sacrifice their lives in defence of his. Old Munich once more tried what influence he might have upon Peter, and seized this occasion for exhorting him to make a courageous stand in his own defence. "Come," said he, "march against the rebels. I will go before you, and their swords shall not reach you till they have pierced my body." But the persuasion of Munich had no more effect on the czar than the noble devotedness of his holstein troops.

While all this was transacting, the empress, at the head of her army, had come to a halt at Krasnoë-kabac, a small public-house by the road-

side *, exactly eight versts from Petersburg, and had turned into the first room, where she reposed for some hours, on the cloaks which the officers of her suite had made for her into a bed. At break of day, Gregory Orlof, with a few determined volunteers, had been to reconnoitre the environs of Peterhof, and finding there only some peasants armed with scythes, who had been collected the preceding evening, he dispersed them by blows with the flat of his sabre, and made them join him in the cries of "Long live the empress!" At five in the morning, Catharine got again on horseback, and rode to the monastery of St. Sergius †, near Strelna, where she made a second halt.

The empress was still there when she received the letter from the tzar, in which he told her that he acknowledged his misconduct, and proposed to share

* *Krasnoë-kabac* is rather a better sort of public-house, frequented chiefly for little Sunday-excursions, by the tradesmen of the town, particularly the Germans. A billiard-room is on one hand of the door, and on the other an ordinary parlour; into the latter the empress with princess Dashkof entered: and here (the old landlady, who died about a dozen years ago, has often related) they ordered a small fire to be lighted, and employed themselves a considerable time in burning a great store of letters and papers. *Krasnoë* signifies *red*, and *kabac*, a public-house: the house is painted all over red.

† *Svetotroitskaia Sergiyevskaia pustinë*, the holy-trinity hermitage of St. Sergius, is a small monastery, substantially built of brick, surrounded by a quadrangular cloister, inclosing a church and three chapels; it is sixteen versts from St. Petersburg, and has now but few monks.

the sovereign authority with her. But Catharine returned him no answer, detained the messenger, and presently after set out again.

Peter now learning that the empress was approaching, ordered one of his horses to be saddled, in the design of escaping, alone and disguised, towards the frontiers of Poland. But, always pusillanimous, always irresolute, he shortly after gave orders to dismantle his little fortress at Oranienbaum, in order to convince Catharine that he intended to make no resistance; and wrote to her a second letter, imploring her mercy and asking her pardon in the most humiliating expressions. He assured her at the same time that he would resign to her the crown of Russia, and petitioned her only to grant him a pension, with liberty to retire into Holstein.

Catharine deigned no more to reply to this letter than she had done to the former; but after having conversed some time with the chamberlain Ismailof, who had brought it, and whom she easily persuaded to betray his master, she sent him back to the tzar to determine him to submit unconditionally to her will.

Ismailof returned to Oranienbaum, attended by a single servant *. The tzar had then with him

* Ismailof entered the park of Oranienbaum with only one servant; but Gregory Orlof, Potemkin, and a great number of soldiers were waiting for him without the gate, and composed the retinue of the carriage that conveyed Peter III. to Peterhof.

his holstein guard, consisting of six hundred men. These he ordered to keep at a distance, and shut himself up with the chamberlain, who exhorted him to abandon his troops and to repair to the empress, assuring him that he would be well received, and would obtain of her all that he wished. Peter hesitated for some time: but Ismailof telling him that he must make no delay, for that his life was in danger, he followed the advice of this traitor. Ismailof then helped him into a carriage with Romanovna Vorontzof and Gudovitch, and they took the road of Peterhof.

The unfortunate tzar thought that so much resignation might move the heart of Catharine. He was presently undeceived. When the carriage in which he rode passed through the army, the kozaks whom the emperor first met, and who had never seen him, kept a mournful silence; he himself felt a lively emotion: then the reiterated vociferations of "Long live Catharine!" completed his despondency.

On stepping out of the carriage, his mistress was carried off by the soldiers, who tore off her riband*, with which princess Dashkof, her sister, was almost instantly decorated. His general aide-de-camp Gudovitch was likewise insulted; but he preserved the utmost tranquillity of mind, and in a dignified manner reproached the rebels with their insolence and treason.

* It has been pretended by some persons, that it was princess Dashkof herself that pulled it off.

The

The tzar was led up the grand staircase. There the attendants stripped him of the marks of his order; they took off his clothes; and, on ransacking the pockets, found several diamonds and pieces of jewellery. After having remained there some time in his shirt, and barefoot, a butt to the outrages of an insolent soldiery, they threw over him an old morning-gown, and shut him up alone in a room, with a guard at the door.

Count Panin, being sent by the empress, was admitted to the tzar, and had a long conference with him. He told him that her majesty would not long keep him in confinement, but send him into Holstein according to his own request. To this promise he added several others, probably without the design of keeping any. He concluded his visit by making him write and sign the following declaration:

"During the short space of my absolute reign over the empire of Russia, I became sensible that I was not able to support so great a burden, and that my abilities were not equal to the task of governing so great an empire, either as a sovereign, or in any other capacity whatever. I also foresaw the great troubles which must thence have arisen, and have been followed with the total ruin of the empire, and my own eternal disgrace. After having therefore seriously reflected thereon, I declare, without constraint, and in the most solemn manner, to the russian empire, and to the whole universe, that I for ever renounce the government of the said empire, never desiring hereafter to reign therein, either as an absolute sovereign, or under any other form of government; never wishing to aspire thereto, to use any means, of any sort, for that purpose

“As a pledge of which, I swear sincerely, before God and all the world, to this present renunciation, written and signed this 29th of June O. S. 1762.”

Thus, not satisfied with depriving him of his crown, it was thought fit to make him the murderer of his own reputation; and this unfortunate prince, moved with the vain hope of life, signed this paper declaring his conviction of his inability to govern the empire, either as a sovereign, or in any other capacity, and his sense of the distress in which his continuing at the head of affairs would inevitably involve it.

Having obtained this fatal act, count Panin left him; and Peter seemed to enjoy a greater composure of mind. In the evening, however, an officer, with a strong escort, came and conveyed him a prisoner to Ropscha, a small imperial palace at the distance of about twenty versts from Peterhof.

Thus was a revolution of such immense importance effected in one day, and without shedding a single drop of blood. The unfortunate emperor enjoyed the power, of which he had made so imprudent and impolitic an use, no longer than six months. His wife, without any hereditary title, was sovereign mistress of the Russian empire; and the most absolute power on earth was now held by an elective monarch.

Immediately on this revolution a number of manifestoes appeared, in which the conduct of the late czar was severely condemned, the weakness of his personal

personal character exposed, and designs of the blackest kind, even that of murdering his consort, attributed to him. Those manifestoes at the same time were filled with the strongest declarations of affection from the empress to the subjects of Russia, of regard to their interests, and of attachment to their religion; and they are all filled with such unaffected and fervent strains of piety, as must needs prove extremely edifying to those who are acquainted with the sentiments of pure religion, by which great princes are generally animated on occasions of this nature.

In the mean time Petersburg had been, since the preceding day, in a state of uncertainty and expectation. Nobody had yet come with intelligence of Catharine's successes. Peter III. had still some friends in that city; and if he had had force enough to attack and repulse the rebels, its inhabitants would have received him with eagerness, as the means of appeasing his resentment. The foreign merchants, who live there in great numbers, dreaded above all things the fury of the Russian soldiers, who perhaps, by plundering their houses and abusing their persons, would have thought they acted meritoriously in the opinion of the emperor. Accordingly many of them hastily conveyed their most valuable effects on board the vessels belonging to their nation, and at the same time kept in readiness to embark themselves. Towards evening the noise of cannon that was heard from a distance, spread a

sudden alarm throughout the city; but it was soon remarked, that these firings, being heard at regular intervals, and the tzar sending no one to secure Petersburg, this noise could only announce the victory of the empress. Tranquillity was thenceforward restored, and hope took place of fear.

Catharine slept that night at Peterhof, no longer as a captive, but as absolute sovereign. The day following, she received at her levée the homages of the principal nobility, who had joined her the foregoing evening, and those of the courtiers and young women who came from Oranienbaum. Among these were the father, the brother, and several other relations of princefs Dashkof, who, on beholding them prostrate before the empress, said, "Madam, pardon my family. You know that I have sacrificed it to you." Catharine commanded them to rise, and gave them her hand to kiss.

Marshal Munich also presented himself before her, to whom, as soon as her majesty perceived him, she called aloud:—"Field-marshal, it was you then who wanted to fight me?"—"Yes, madam," answered Munich, in a firm and manly tone; "could I do less for the prince who delivered me from captivity? But it is henceforward my duty to fight for you; and you will find in me a fidelity equal to that with which I had devoted my services to him."

In the afternoon, Catharine returned to Petersburg. Her entry was truly triumphant. She was
on

on horseback, preceded or followed by the chiefs of the conspiracy. The whole army was crowned with wreaths of oak; the shouts of joy and the applauses of the populace mingled with those of the soldiers. The crowd formed into lines for the empress, and she condescendingly gave them her hand to kiss, as she passed along. A great number of priests were assembled on the occasion about the avenues of the palace: as she rode through their ranks, she stooped down to salute the cheeks of the principal clergy, while they were kissing her hand; a custom prevalent in that country, and is significant of the highest respect.

For some days after her return to the imperial residence, her majesty continued to shew herself to the multitude with great condescension. She knew how easy it is to gain the applauses of the public: she went to the senate, and heard several causes tried before her. She then held her court with a graceful and easy dignity, that effaced the remembrance of the sudden revolution that had just placed her on the throne. The foreign ministers had audiences of congratulation; and she received them with a particular address to each in the most flattering terms.

Her first care was to have prince Ivan conveyed from the house where he was concealed, and to send him back to Schlusselfburg. She next proceeded to bestow magnificent rewards on the principal actors in the revolt. Nikita Ivanovitch Panin was made
prime

prime minister; the Orlofs received the title of count; and the favourite Gregory Orlof was appointed lieutenant-general of the russian armies, and chevalier of St. Alexander Nefsky, the second order of the empire. Several officers of the guards were promoted. Four-and-twenty of them obtained considerable estates, with some thousands of boors. The finances were insufficient to give anything to the soldiers but brandy and beer: they were distributed among them; and Catharine behaved to them with the greatest affability. At times she even put herself under constraint in order not to disoblige them.

Three days subsequent to the revolution a drunken soldier dreamed that the empress was carried off. He rose up, ran about the barracks, everywhere spreading alarm, crying out, that the Holsteiners and the Prussians had got possession of the empress. The regiment immediately took up arms, ran to the palace, and loudly insisted on seeing her majesty. The hetman Razumofsky, having learned the cause of this tumult, appeared at a window, assured them that the empress was not carried off, and that after the disturbances and fatigues she had undergone for some days, she was now reposing in peace and security. But the soldiers refused to believe him, and began to renew their clamours with redoubled violence. The hetman now went to the chamber of the sovereign, caused her to be awaked; and praying her not to be frightened; "You know that I am frightened at
" nothing,"

"nothing," answered she boldly: "but what is the matter?" — "The soldiers imagine that you are not here: they insist upon seeing you," returned Razumofsky. "Well, they must be satisfied," replied she; and immediately rose up, dressed herself, called for her carriage, with orders to drive to the kafanskoi church. On her way the soldiers surrounded her carriage, interrogating each other: "Is that indeed the empress? Is that indeed our mother?" Being come to the church, Catharine shewed herself to them, harangued them, thanked them for their solicitude, and dismissed them highly satisfied.

She made a point of shewing clemency towards the officers and the friends of the emperor; and if any of them were forbid the court, not one was deprived of his property or his life. Only Gudovitch, the aide-de-camp general, Volkof, and Melgunof*, were imprisoned. Countess Vorontzof, who at first had been treated rudely by the soldiers, was sent to the house of the senator her father; and the empress expressly forbid a repetition of the like affronts. She was afterwards exiled for some time to a village a thousand versts beyond Mosco.

All the courtiers now eagerly pressed about the sovereign. They endeavoured to discover on whom her favour would alight: every one flattering himself

* Melgunof was a great simpleton, and as great a drunkard. On his being recalled, Catharine II. gave him the government of the province of Yaroslaf, where he died in 1789.

that he should obtain the greater share of it, while none suspected that the heart of that princess had long been fixed on an officer of humble birth. The first marks of distinction shewn to Gregory Orlof appeared only as the reward of his services, and not the pledges of love. It was princess Dashkof who discovered it the first. Jealousy is more watchful than ambition; it is especially less discreet; and madame Dashkof, not satisfied with reproaching Catharine with a choice that degraded her, spread the rumour of it among her friends, and thus brought on her own disgrace. The chiefs of the revolt now learned, with displeasure, that they had been working for a man whom they had always regarded as the instrument of their projects; while the courtiers perceived that, in the art of intrigue, this man was more expert than themselves.

The most zealous partisans of Catharine were not, however, without uneasiness. Some regiments murmured, and began to repent the part they had acted against their lawful sovereign. The people, who easily pass from rage to compassion, now pitied the fate of this unfortunate prince. They forgot his defects, his caprices, his infirmities, in the recollection of his amiable qualities, and his sad reverse of fortune*. The sailors reproached the guards

* The ingenious and judicious traveller Mr. Coxe very justly observes, in speaking of this revolution, "that Peter, notwithstanding his violence and incapacity, possessed several qualifications of a popular nature, and was greatly beloved by those who had access to his person." See *Coxe's Travels*, vol. iii. p. 43. 8vo edit.

guards to their face, that they had sold their master for brandy and beer. After the first tumult of the revolution was over, they now waked as it were out of a profound intoxication: they contemplated what had happened in solemn silence, and began to consider whether all was right. Without speaking of the peaceable burghers, who, during the doubtful explosion, had kept close in their houses, even a very great number of them who had been exceedingly active in the business, and loudest in their execrations of Peter, were now seized with a deep and painful remorse, and lamented the sufferings they had brought upon their monarch. But among the guards the same sentiments displayed themselves in a still more violent manner: numbers of the soldiers, repenting of their abominable treason, for in that light they now beheld their late behaviour, expressed their resentment against their accomplices in the most intemperate language, and the most abusive terms that resentment could dictate to vulgar minds: imputing to their seductions the crimes into which they had been led, and loading them with reproaches for the compunction they now suffered in consequence of their guilt. From words they proceeded to blows, and even to murder. Though throughout the revolution no blood had hitherto been shed,

"cations of a popular nature, and was greatly beloved by those who had access to his person." See *Coxe's Travels*, vol. iii. p. 43. 8vo edit.

now several were killed in these furious squabbles. The officers repeatedly interposed, at the hazard of their personal safety, to pacify the men, and make them hearken to reason: but in vain. Such are the populace in all ages and nations: rash to perpetrate what their fury suggests; repentant at the sight of the mischief they have done; then prompt in their accusations against others, instead of confessing their own misconduct. Nothing was wanting but some resolute leader, to have now replaced Peter III. on the throne, as suddenly as but three days ago he had been precipitated from it: the attachment of the common people to him was clearly evinced in the rebellion of Pugatshof, eleven years after. In short, apprehensions were entertained of a new insurrection.

While the public mind was agitated by these fears, the news that was brought from Mosco, served only to increase the panic. The governor of that capital, being informed of the revolution by the emissaries of Catharine, ordered the five regiments that composed the garrison to take to their arms; and after having drawn them up in the great place of the palace of the antient tzars, he there convoked the people, who flocked together in crowds. That officer then read aloud the ukase by which the empress announced her accession, and the abdication of her spouse*: at the conclusion of which

* See the appendix No. V. at the end of the volume.

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he exclaimed, "Long live the empress Catharine the Second!" But the people and the soldiers remained in silence. He repeated the same cry; the same silence ensued. No sound but that of sullen murmurs was heard. The troops complained that the regiments of the guards had insolently dared to dispose of the throne. The governor, startled at these unexpected expressions of discontent, called upon the other officers to join him. They cried out together, "Long live the empress!" This done, the multitude was dismissed, and the soldiers sent back to their barracks.

No one was more uneasy at this time than Catharine herself. Whether her situation be considered in a moral or a political light, it must have occasioned her emotions of no common force, especially as she had been so suddenly and unexpectedly brought into it! She certainly never thought, on coming to Russia, nor, during the first years that ensued, ever busied herself in forming designs of ascending the throne as absolute sovereign. Generous and amiable by nature, she was true to these qualities from her infancy to the day of her death. Neither a selfish contempt for all limitations, nor an inordinate thirst of power, formed any part of her natural character. But this generosity and amiableness of temper gave the young princess undoubted pretensions to happiness and joy, which, as the consort of Peter, she saw were not answered, and of which she thought herself likely to be deprived

prived for the whole of her life. Now, after this first step, her prospect, whichever way she turned, could certainly not be cheerful. If she looked backwards, no pleasing recollections enlivened the view; if forwards, the scene was all darkened with impending clouds. It is well known that, haunted by the spectres of the imagination, during this period, even in sleep she found no repose; and that several times in a night she has quitted her bed, and even her palace.

And what must have been the feelings of Peter in his lonesome captivity! It was easy to foresee that his imprisonment, either mediately or immediately, would bring on his death, and so it actually happened.

Undoubtedly no great efforts were necessary to determine the conspirators to free themselves from an object of disquietude. They who have taken one step in the road of guilt, make no hesitation at taking a second; and the death of the unhappy emperor was now decreed.

On his removal from Peterhof, the tzar was still blind to the fate that awaited him. Thinking he should be detained but a short time in prison, previous to his being sent into Germany, he sent a message to Catharine, asking her to permit him to have the negro who was of service to him by his attachment, and amused him with his singularities, together with a dog he was fond of, his violin, a bible, and a few romances; at the same time telling

her, that, disgusted at the wickedness of mankind, he was resolved henceforward to devote himself to a philosophical life. However reasonable these requests, not one of them was granted, and his plans of wisdom were turned into ridicule.

The unfortunate emperor had now been at Ropscha six days without the knowledge of any other persons than the chiefs of the conspirators and the soldiers by whom he was guarded; when Alexius Orlof, accompanied by Teplof, came to him with the news of his speedy deliverance, and asked permission to dine with him. According to the custom of the northern countries, wine-glasses and brandy were brought previous to dinner; and while the officer amused the tzar with some trifling discourse, his chief filled the glasses, and poured a poisonous mixture into that he intended for the prince. The tzar, without any distrust, swallowed the potion: on which, he presently experienced the most cruel pains; and on his being offered a second glass, on pretence of its giving him relief, he refused it, with reproaches on him that offered it.

He called aloud for milk; but the two monsters offered him poison again, and pressed him to take it. A french valet-de-chambre, greatly attached to him, now ran in. Peter threw himself into his arms, saying, in a faint tone of voice, "It was not enough then to prevent me from reigning in

"Sweden, and to deprive me of the crown of
"Russia! I must also be put to death!"

The valet-de-chambre presumed to intercede for his master; but the two miscreants forced this dangerous witness out of the room, and continued their ill-treatment of the tzar. In the midst of this tumult came in the younger of the princes Baratinisky, who commanded the guard *. Orlof, who had already thrown down the emperor, was pressing upon his breast with both his knees, and firmly griping his throat with his hand. The unhappy monarch, now struggling with that strength which arises from despair, the two other assassins threw a napkin with a running knot round his neck, and put an end to his life by suffocation †.

* Her majesty, from the very first, thought it necessary to commit so important a charge as that of the dethroned emperor, to the custody of persons in whom she could place the most entire confidence, and who were not liable to corruption, rather than to mercenaries, who are never proof against bribery. The three persons whom she deemed worthy of her confidence on so delicate an occasion, were count Alexius Orlof, brother of prince Gregory, and the two brothers Baratinisky, of whom one was marshal of the court, and the other was since envoy from Russia to the court of France. All the three were living in the year 1797.

† On the 17th of July, just one week after the revolution. These particulars are confirmed by the account of a gentleman who was in the confidence of prince Potemkin. It has been falsely pretended that Potemkin was with them. Persons of great credibility, who were at that time in Russia, assert the contrary; and Potemkin always denied the fact with indignation.

Whatever were the failings and errors of Peter III. it is not here intended to extenuate or defend them; though certainly they were too cruelly punished. Neither ought the good he did to be passed over in silence. His two ukases for abolishing the secret inquisition, and for giving liberty to the nobles, must for ever secure to this prince the grateful acknowledgment of Russia. The * *clement* Elizabeth had left in subsistence a tribunal, before which the first persons of the empire, on the bare deposition of a villain on the way to execution, were delivered and put to the torture, for extorting the confession of imaginary crimes. Peter III. was dethroned; his name was never honoured with so flattering an epithet; and yet it was he who suppressed that tribunal. That this prince was kind, humane, and beloved of all who composed his more intimate circle, is asserted on the affirmation of

* To what has been above related of that sovereign, the following may be here subjoined: She one day received at her toilet a lady of the court, who with great difficulty continued standing. Elizabeth at last perceived her uneasiness, and asked what was the matter with her. "My legs are very much swelled." — "Well, well, lean against that bureau! I will make as if I did not see you." This was truly characteristic. The same princess would not permit any lady to wear, not only the same stuffs that she had chosen, but the same patterns: a lady still living in 1792, and very well known, ventured to infringe this prohibition. Her boldness had like to have cost her dear; and so much the more as she had already incurred the indignation of the *clement* monarch by receiving the french fashions before her.

many Russians who were attached to his person*. He recalled all the exiles that were lingering out their lives in Siberia (excepting Bestuchef); and it must have been a spectacle curious enough to see Biren and Munich together; the former embarrassed, confounded, not daring to lift up his eyes, dreading to meet those of the son or the brother of some unfortunate wretch who had been assassinated or banished by his command; Munich, on the other hand, forming the most perfect contrast with him. Four score years of his life elapsed, twenty of them passed in exile in the frightful wastes of Siberia, had not depressed that firm and generous soul: — at the head of armies, — condemned to death, — in frozen deserts, — recalled to court, and reinstated in all his employments, Munich was everywhere the

* In the just tribute of praise we have more than once taken occasion to pay to the memory of the unfortunate Peter, we are pleased with having the concurrence of the author of a late publication, who, after expressing his indignation at some writers so contemptible as to traduce the memory of this unfortunate sovereign, adds, "that he was a victim to the undesigning openness and integrity of his heart; a prince, whose answer to the precautions which were recommended to him by the king of Prussia was, *I do good to all the world, and with that what have I to fear?*" a prince, who was the benefactor of his country, and whose laws (those very laws which were brought in accusation against him as crimes) have been religiously observed as models of wisdom and humanity, and without which the reign of the empress would have been less glorious, and her people less happy." — Survey of the Turkish Empire, p. 445.

same;

same; he ever preserved that unalterable serenity, that energy of character, which fall to the lot of so very few*.

Had the emperor, during the six months of his reign, done no more than issue those two decrees just mentioned, he would have been entitled to rank with those sovereigns who have a just claim on the gratitude of their subjects. The freedom of the nobility is undoubtedly the first step to civilization. That indispensable preliminary had escaped the attention of Peter the great: it was by this that he ought to have begun his work, and it is to be regretted that the Russian legislator failed of perceiving the absolute necessity of it. The seizure of the possessions of the church was one of the causes of the public discontent; but what shews that the act was far from being bad in itself, is, that the empress never thought it expedient to restore them: the odium did not fall upon her; the fault being committed, she had the address to profit by it.

Alexey Orlof immediately mounted his horse, and rode full speed to inform the empress that Peter III. had breathed his last. It was at the instant when her majesty was going to make her appearance at court. She appeared with a tranquil air; and afterwards shut herself up with Orlof, Panin, Razu-

* Field-marshal Munich obtained the government of Esthonia and Livonia, and died three years afterwards at Riga, at the age of eighty five.

mosky, Glebof, and some other confidential persons, to deliberate whether the senate and people should be immediately made acquainted with the death of the emperor, or whether it might not be more adviseable to wait for that purpose till the ensuing day. The latter was determined. Catharine dined in public as usual, and in the evening held a court.

The next day the news of the emperor's death was communicated to the public at large, while her majesty was at table. At that instant she rose from her seat with her eyes full of tears. She dismissed the courtiers and the foreign ministers, ran and shut herself in her apartment, and for several days together shewed marks of the profoundest grief. During this time the following declaration was published on the part of the empress:

" By the grace of God, Catharine II. empress and autocratrix of
 " all the Russias, to all our loving subjects, &c. greeting:
 " The seventh day after our accession to the throne of all the
 " Russias, we received information that the late emperor Peter
 " III. by the means of a bloody accident in his hinder parts,
 " commonly called piles, to which he had been formerly subject,
 " was attacked with a most violent griping colic. That there-
 " fore we might not be wanting in Christian duty, nor disobe-
 " dient to the divine command, by which we are enjoined to
 " preserve the life of our neighbour, we immediately ordered
 " that the said Peter should be furnished with everything that
 " might be judged necessary to prevent the dangerous conse-
 " quences of that accident, and to restore his health by the aids
 " of medicine. But, to our great regret and affliction, we were
 " yesterday evening apprised, that, by the permission of the
 " Almighty,

" Almighty, the late emperor departed this life. We have there-
 " fore ordered his body to be conveyed to the monastery of
 " Nefsky, in order to its interment in that place. At the
 " same time, with our imperial and maternal voice, we exhort
 " our faithful subjects to forgive and forget what is past, to pay
 " the last duties to his body, and to pray to God sincerely for the
 " repose of his soul; willing them however to consider this unex-
 " pected and sudden death as an especial effect of the providence
 " of God, whose impenetrable decrees are working for us, for our
 " throne, and for our country, things known only to his holy
 " will.

" Done at St. Petersburg, July 1st, 1762."

The body of the unfortunate Peter III. was brought to Petersburg, and exposed for three days in the church of the monastery of St. Alexander Nefsky. The body lay in an open coffin, dressed in his holstein uniform, and persons of all ranks and conditions were admitted, as usual in that country, to kiss the hand or the mouth of the deceased*; and he was buried on the 21st, exactly the very day which he had fixed for his departure on the expe-

* His face was turned quite black; extravasated blood was seen to ooze through the epidermis which penetrated even the gloves which had been put on his hands; and the poison which the tzar had been forced to swallow must have been exceedingly violent, as all those who had the lamentable courage to lay their mouth to his, returned with swelled lips. The counsellors of Catharine knew well enough that such dreadful intimations might lead to a discovery of the means that had been employed for shortening the days of the unfortunate monarch, but they thought themselves less interested in saving appearances than in preventing the agitations which would have infallibly taken place if the people had imagined that the tzar was still alive.

dition against Denmark. His remains were deposited in a grave in the space before the rails of the altar, adjacent to that of the deposed regent Anne, the mother of the dethroned infant Ivan; and the place of his sepulture was distinguished with neither tomb nor inscription. Peter had never been crowned, he had resigned the reins of empire. No court beside that of Sweden went into mourning for him.

The day of his interment was a day of trouble and desolation for Petersburg. The populace that thronged to the funeral were very abusive to the foldiers of the guards, reproaching them with having basely shed the last drop of the blood of Peter the great.

The holstein soldiers, who had hitherto remained at Oranienbaum, at liberty, but disarmed, resorted to these sorrowful obsequies; and, weeping, surrounded the corpse of their master. The Russians, no longer beholding them as preferred rivals, but as faithful servants, took part in their grief.

The following day orders were sent down to embark these Holsteiners for their own country. They were put on board a vessel, which unhappily foundered soon after quitting the port of Cronstadt; numbers of them were seen clinging about the rocks above the water's level, where they were suffered to perish, while admiral Taliezin had dispatched a messenger to Petersburg to know whether

whether he might be permitted to afford them relief.

Prince George, whom Peter III. had constituted duke of Courland, in the room of prince Charles of Saxony, with whom he was displeased *, was obliged to renounce that title: but the empress compensated this loss by committing to him the administration of Holstein, whither he went with the rest of his family; and where he ever after served Catharine with fidelity and zeal.

The chancellor Bestuchef, who had been the most inveterate enemy of Peter, was recalled from his exile †. Prince Volkonsky and lieutenant Kalishkin were sent off to him, who brought him to Petersburg. Catharine restored to him his rank of field-marshal, and his place in the council, besides settling upon him an annual pension of twenty thousand rubles, and dispensing him from employment on account of his great age. Several other exiles and prisoners were on this occasion set free, but neither Ivan nor any of his family. It was now a kind of resurrection at Petersburg, when so many

* The empress Elizabeth had caused prince Charles of Saxony to be elected duke of Courland in 1758. — Peter III. on giving that duchy to prince George of Holstein, required Biren to give it up, bestowing on him in lieu thereof the lordships of Wurtemberg and Nitch, which he intended to erect into a principality.

† The declaration published by the empress shortly after the recall of Bestuchef is too remarkable to be forgotten. Some portions of it are therefore inserted in the appendix at the end of the volume, No. VI.

persons who had so long been separated from their acquaintance, forgotten by the world, and buried in the deserts of Siberia, again appeared about the town; and these apparitions had a farther similitude with the future life, as persons who had reciprocally crushed such as stood in their way, and then, by a singular retaliation of fortune, had afterwards suffered the like treatment from others, now met here together in reconciliation and peace. Count Munich, in 1740, had occasioned duke Biren to be imprisoned and banished; nay, even sketched out the plan of the house for his confinement at Pelim: one year after this, the count came himself as an exile to the same place, and was shut up in that house, which he certainly never thought he was building for his own habitation, and from which the duke was removed to a more comfortable abode. Their first meeting afterwards was in the presence of Peter III. who recalled them both; Munich being then seventy-nine, and Biren seventy-two years of age. Catharine completed the boon to the latter, by reinstating him in his dukedom of Courland, as has been before observed*. Bestuchef had overthrown Lestocq, his

* It may farther be remarked, that the independent sovereignty of Wurtemberg in Silesia, which Biren possessed, on his banishment reverted to Munich. They now compromised the affair, under the mediation of Catharine, in such manner, that the latter, for a considerable sum of money, fully made over the sovereignty to the former; to whose son, the duke having been again deposed by Catharine, it belonged at the time of her death.

patron

patron and promoter, and was afterwards himself sent to share the same fate: these likewise now found themselves here together, and likewise with passions much abated of their violence. Lestocq was seventy when Peter recalled him; but Catharine first gave him a yearly allowance: Bestuchef, the former chancellor of the empire, she now presented with his freedom and dignities in his sixty-ninth year, and raised him to the post of general field-marshal. In that capacity he stood on the right hand of her throne at her coronation, during the public dinner, where the empress sat alone at table*.

Biren, who, more exasperated that Peter III. had not reinstated him in his duchy, than grateful for the liberty to which he had just restored him, had joined himself to the triumphant party, and had occasionally enlightened it by his experience; Biren took the road to Courland, where he was without difficulty reinvested with his former authority, and where he favoured, to the utmost of his

* Bestuchef, some months after his return, published a book of devotion, which, during his exile, he had compiled of various passages, from the Psalms and other parts of the Bible. He afterwards caused a medal to be struck, on one side representing his bust, with the legend: *Alexius comes à Bestuchef Rumin, imp. Russ. olim cancellar. nunc senior, &c.* On the other is a coffin, with his escutcheon, orange trees, palm trees, fortitude, constancy. Over the coffin: *Tertio triumphat; and in the exergue: Post duos in vita de inimicis triumphos, de morte triumphat.* He died at St. Petersburg, April 21, 1766.

power,

power, the views which Catharine had already formed on Poland.

To complete the picture of this man, who, after having devoted himself to the commission of the most horrible cruelties, assumed a lenity which he carried even to weakness, and who united in his conduct the extremes of servility and a ridiculous vanity, it will be necessary to mention the manner in which he took leave of Catharine. Falling on his knees before her, in presence of the whole court, he addressed her in these terms:

“ Most illustrious and most puissant empress:
 “ most gracious sovereign and great lady! — Is it
 “ possible to conceive of a magnanimity and clemency equal to those which your imperial majesty
 “ has displayed towards me and my family? A
 “ prince without liberty, without domains, without
 “ assistance, without support, is all at once surrounded with these several advantages of which
 “ he had been deprived by a succession of misfortunes for a long series of years. I am indebted
 “ for these advantages to that love of justice which
 “ fills the throne in the person of your imperial
 “ majesty, and which has just broke the plot which
 “ iniquity and violence have been so artfully labouring to complete.

“ What can I do for properly acknowledging
 “ this grace and these bounties? All my faculties in
 “ conjunction with those of my family are insufficient
 “ to that end; and I should be inconsolable if I
 “ were

“ were not persuaded that your benevolence acquits
 “ those who have nothing to offer but gratitude and
 “ submission. These are the two sentiments which
 “ I shall carry with me to the grave, and which I
 “ shall incessantly inculcate on all that belong to
 “ me. — With the most humble prostrations then,
 “ at the feet of your imperial majesty, I promise
 “ you a gratitude and submission without limitation, and I presume to intreat you graciously to shew to me and to mine your powerful
 “ protection*.”

The news of the revolution was soon universally spread; and this great change in the government of Russia, it was universally feared, would be followed by a total change of system with regard to foreign affairs. The peace and alliance with the king of Prussia were very unpopular measures in that empire. It was not probable that the close and intimate connection which had subsisted between the king of Prussia and the late czar, could greatly recommend him to the successor. And as it was imagined that this revolution must have been in a great degree owing to the machinations of those courts, whom the czar had irritated by withdrawing from their alliance, there was the greater reason to

* Although Biren well knew that he was the son of a courtesan peasant, named Bühren, he took the name and the arms of the Birons of France, being desirous of passing for a descendant of that house.

apprehend that the power, which was now set up, would be exerted in their favour.

There were also great advantages on the side of Russia, if the empress should not hold the peace concluded by her late husband to be binding on her, as none of the conquests were at this time evacuated. Everything seemed to conspire towards plunging the king of Prussia into the abyss of his former distresses, after he had emerged from them, only for such a time, and in such a manner, as to make them more bitter and insupportable.

Fortunately, however, for this wonderful man the empress, who had come to the Russian throne in the extraordinary manner that we have seen, could not look upon herself as sufficiently secure to undertake again a war of so much importance as that which had been just concluded. It was necessary, for some time at least, that she should confine her attention solely to her own safety. Therefore it was expedient to collect, within itself, all the force of the empire, in order to oppose it to the designs of the many malecontents, with which that empire always abounds, and who, though not attached to the interest of the late tzar, and little inclined to revenge his fate, would find now both inducement and opportunity for raising troubles and attempting new changes. Very plausible pretences for such attempts existed from the time of Peter the great; who, whilst he improved and strengthened his kingdom,

dom, left in it, at the same time, the seeds of civil wars and revolutions.

These considerations, whatever her desires might be, induced the tzaritzza to continue so much of the system of her predecessor, as coincided with her situation. She therefore declared to the king of Prussia's ministers, "that she was resolved to observe inviolably in all points the perpetual peace concluded under the preceding reign; that nevertheless she had thought proper to bring back to Russia, by the nearest roads, all her troops in Silesia, Prussia, and Pomerania."

It was not the critical situation alone of the tzaritzza which produced this moderation; the prudent behaviour of his prussian majesty, during the time of his connection with the late tzar, had a considerable share in reconciling the mind of this empress to him, and of perpetuating something like the same friendship, with interests so very different.

On the 21st of July, the orders arrived at the allied camp from Petersburg for the Russians to separate themselves from his army, and return without delay to their own country.

None of the sovereigns of Europe were ignorant of the steps by which Catharine had mounted the throne; but they made no hesitation in acknowledging her title. Some of them even testified their joy on the occasion: which, however, was not of long duration.

Maria

Maria Theresa at first thought that the Russians, abandoning the prussian standards, would unite their arms with hers, to enable her once more to give laws to Frederic. Maria Theresa was deceived; and shortly after saw, with equal astonishment and displeasure, Catharine not only ordering her troops to evacuate Prussia, but confirming the peace concluded by the tzar.

Lewis XV. also flattered himself that the careffes with which Catharine had distinguished his ambassador, while she was no more than grand duchess, were pledges of her attachment to France. But no sooner was she seated on the throne, than, while indulging her taste for french literature*, she manifested her contempt and aversion for the court of Versailles†. Her unfortunate husband seemed in this respect also to have served her for a model.

* She was a great admirer of the french writers, and especially the tragic poets. Catharine also manifested a high esteem for the philosophers. She wrote to d'Alembert, offering him a salary of fifty thousand rubles, if he would come to Petersburg to finish the *Encyclopédie*, and take upon him the charge of the education of the grand duke Paul Petrovitch. D'Alembert declined the offer. See the appendix, No. VII. at the end of the volume.

† Catharine could never forgive the duc de Choiseul for patronizing the work of the abbé Chappe d'Auteroche, and she even complained of it not a long time before her death; against which work, in conjunction with Peter Ivanovitch Schuvalof, she wrote "The Antidote," which was miserably translated into english by a lady.

The

The monarch who formed the best judgment of her character was the king of Prussia*. That prince, having long foreseen the bold attempt by which she obtained the crown, repeatedly wrote to his minister

* The king of Prussia wrote thus to count Finkenstein, one of his favourites: — "The emperor of Russia has been dethroned by his consort: it was to be expected. That princess has much good sense and the same inclinations as the defunct. She has no religion, but acts the devotee. It is the second volume of Zeno, the greek emperor, of his wife Adriana, and of Mary de Medicis. The late chancellor Bestuchef was her greatest favourite; and as he has a strong propensity to guineas, I flatter myself that the attachments of the present period will be the same. The poor emperor wanted to imitate Peter I. but he had not the capacity for it." This letter was certainly not intended to see the light: and it is curious enough to put it in parallel with what its author, that grand comedian Frederic, wrote for the public in his "History of the Seven-years War." — "The king," says he, "had cultivated the friendship of the grand duke, at the time when he was only duke of Holstein; and from a sensibility rarely found among mankind, more rarely still among kings, that prince, in return, preserved a grateful heart: he even gave marks of it in that war; for it was he who most contributed to the retreat of general Apraxin in 1757; when, after having beaten general Lewald, he fell back into Poland. During all these troubles, that prince even abstained from going to council, where he had a seat, in order not to participate in the measures which the empress was taking against Prussia, and which he disapproved. The king acted with the emperor not as one sovereign with another, but with that cordiality which friendship demands, and which is the greatest blessing of it. The virtues of Peter III. formed an exception to the rules of policy; it was but right to act the same by him." — *Histoire de la Guerre de sept Ans*, edit. de Berlin, tom. ii.

Goltz, that since Peter III. was resolutely bent on his own destruction, it was advisable for him to turn to the side of Catharine. Accordingly baron Goltz, the assiduous companion and flatterer of the pleasures of the tzar, was one of the first to abandon him the moment his affairs were seen to take a disastrous turn, and received from Catharine the most gracious reception.

The empress likewise received with distinction the envoy of Copenhagen*, and gave the king of Denmark assurances that he might make himself easy on the subject of Holstein, it being her intention always to keep up a good understanding with him.

Mr. Keith, ambassador from England, had not exactly the same freedom of access to this princess as his predecessor Williams had formerly had; she treated him however as the minister of a friendly power, and took the first opportunity to renew the treaty which had long procured the English almost the whole commerce of Russia.

While she was securing peace with the kings of Europe, Catharine neglected nothing for the maintenance of it within the empire. She had more to fear from her own subjects than from foreign potentates; she therefore employed herself in these affairs alternately with art and severity. The court presently assumed a new face. Everything there was

* Count Ranzau Aschberg, a friend of Gregory Orlof.

submissive

submissive to the secret will of Gregory Orlof, whose influence and haughtiness were increasing from day to day, humiliating and irritating the great, and making them ardently desire his fall. Several of them ventured to speak out, and a resolution to remove them was the immediate consequence. But Catharine thought it best to dissemble a while longer, before she openly avenged her favourite, and put the last seal to the patent of his power.

The second accounts that arrived from Mosco were of a more favourable complexion than the former. Brandy and money, distributed judiciously by the governor, had worked a great change in the minds of the garrison. The soldiers could not refuse to acknowledge the sovereign who ordered them daily such marks of her bounty. Sure of success in this quarter, Catharine hastened her journey to Mosco, for the purpose of celebrating her coronation in that ancient capital of the empire. But previous to her departure from St. Petersburg, she assembled the regiments of the guards who had seated her on the throne, and gave them further assurances of her approbation. She left them under the command of the hetman Razumofsky and prince Volkonsky, bestowed the government of the city on count Bruce, on whose fidelity she could rely, and charged Alexey Orlof to watch over all with his usual activity.

The empress chose for her attendants on the journey Gregory Orlof, the old chancellor Bes-
tuchef,

tuchef, count Stroganof; in short, the greater part of the nobles who had shewn themselves the most devoted to her, as well as those whose absence she had reason to dread. Above all, she neglected not to take with her the young grand duke Paul Petrovitch and the principal ladies of the court.

This numerous cavalcade made its entrance with pomp into Mosco. But notwithstanding the money that had been previously distributed, it was received without any tokens of public welcome, without acclamation. Catharine too easily perceived, by this solitude and silence, that her presence was disagreeable to the people. She nevertheless repaired to the chapel of the tzars, where she lavished her flatteries on the archbishop and the popes; and she was crowned in the presence of the soldiery and the people of the court. The crowd, which retired at the approach of the empress, ran everywhere to meet the grand duke, and mingled with the emotions of tenderness they felt for the child a visible concern for the misfortunes of his father. Catharine, dissatisfied with Mosco, industriously concealed her chagrin; and attending only to the necessary delays, retook the road to Petersburg.

The number of promotions, presents, &c. that were made on occasion of the coronation, and which mostly fell to the share of her adherents in the late revolution, need not here be particularized. During her stay at Mosco she honoured that antient

capital by issuing several proclamations from it; and to flatter the military, which had been neglected by Peter, she published a manifesto, on the day of her coronation, in praise of the troops that had fought against Prussia, and caused a half-year's pay to be given to the subalterns and common soldiers who had been present at the victorious battles of Paltzig, or Kai or Zullichau, and at Frankfort or Kunerisdorf. Of each of the four regiments of life guards, the Préobajenskoy, Simeonofsky, Ismailofsky, and the horse-guards, the empress appointed herself colonel. General-adjutant Gregory Orlof was made lieutenant-colonel of the last regiment; of the first, his brother Alexèy; of the third, Feodor, captain of the Simeonofsky; and of the fourth, Vladimir, lieutenant of the Ismailofsky guards.

Catharine now put off all constraint. The monks, who had long favoured her projects, and to whom she had often promised a restoration of the possessions they had been despoiled of by her husband, vainly recalled to her mind their services and her promises. She perceived that it would not be prudent to let them resume an ascendant which might prove as dangerous as it had been serviceable to her; and instead of revoking the edict of Peter III. she referred it to the examination of a synod, composed of persons implicitly subservient to her will. The principal members of the clergy were secretly brought over; the rest were sacrificed;

and, animated with sacred fury, vowed revenge against their former patron.

The rage of the priests could not fail of having some effect. They fanned the embers of sedition among the populace. They communicated the sparks of it to some soldiers. They called to mind their prince Ivan. They discovered that he was in St. Petersburg on the very day of the revolution; to which city Peter III. had mysteriously caused him to be brought, in the design of declaring him his successor; and whence Catharine had since *, not less mysteriously, had him conveyed; and they openly said, that it was to that unhappy prince that the throne belonged. They did more. They detected and published a manifesto, all the copies whereof the care of the friends of Catharine had not been able to suppress. Peter III. had caused it to be drawn up by the state-counsellor Volkof, and had signed it with his hand. In a melancholy mood he had here put together all the weaknesses and faults of Catharine; and accusing her of adultery, declared that he would not acknowledge the young grand duke for his son, since he was the fruit of the scandalous commerce of his wife with Soltikof. This manifesto †, composed with great force and eloquence, was artfully dispersed among the people,

* It was probably on this occasion that Catharine saw prince Ivan, as she says in the ukase she published after his assassination, and which is printed in the appendix to this volume, No. X.

† Perhaps a forgery of the exasperated clergy.

and

and soon found its way among the soldiers, who, for the most part unable to conceive in what fit of distraction they had been drawn into the rebellion, already, as we have observed, repented their wickedness, or deplored the sad lot of a prince, mistaken but not malevolent, weak but not stupid; who had been barbarously put to death. He whom they lamented soon found them his avengers. Every thing seemed to portend a new revolution: but Glebof, Passick, Teplof, and their emissaries, were not blind to all these proceedings. Suddenly an imperial proclamation came forth, forbidding the soldiers of the guards from assembling without orders received from their officers. Some of the most violent were imprisoned, and suffered the punishment of the knout; others were banished into Siberia: terror for some time kept the rest in silence.

By thus chastising the regiments of the guards, the empress thought she should also shut the mouths of the priests. She refused even to temporize with the courtiers who displeased her, and thought they had just claims to her gratitude. Ivan Schuvalof had not openly taken part in the conspiracy; but he had promoted it beforehand by calumniating Peter III. and as soon as it broke out, he became its approver and support. By flattering the propensities of Catharine, he hoped to find that easy access with her which the empress Elizabeth had offered him. Schuvalof was mistaken. He

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awakened the jealousy of Orlof; Catharine sent him word that his presence was not necessary at court*; then, adding derision to harshness, she made him a present, as the reward of his services, of an old negro, who played the part of a buffoon about the palace†.

The general of artillery Villebois, who had yielded to a sentiment of tenderness for her rather than follow the line of his duty, now paid the forfeit of his mistake. Orlof was afraid of his talents, and wanted his employments. Villebois was dismissed, and the favourite appointed grand master of the artillery.

The pretensions of princess Dashkof became odious to the empress. At the commencement of the revolution, princess Dashkof had, like Catharine, put on the uniform of the guards, and marched at their head. She had sacrificed her father, her sister, her whole family, to the elevation of her friend‡;

* Peter III. on his accession to the throne, acted with greater lenity towards Ivan Schuvalof, of whom he had so great a right to complain under the reign of Elizabeth. He not only did not forbid him the court, but he made him a present of ten thousand imperials in gold, which the chamberlain had just received of the dying sovereign, and which, infligated by fear, he sent to the new emperor.

† It was said to be the same negro whom the czar was desirous of having with him in prison.

‡ This was the appellation mutually bestowed on each other by Catharine and princess Dashkof.

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in some instances she had sacrificed herself. All the recompence she asked was the title of colonel of the regiment of Préobajensky. But Catharine answered her, with an ironical smile, that the academy would suit her better than a military corps. Princess Dashkof, cruelly mortified at this reply, gave scope to her natural impetuosity, murmured among her friends of the ingratitude of Catharine, and sought opportunities for shewing her resentment. The perfidious Odart, who observed this alteration in the behaviour of the princess, was the first to carry an account of it to the empress. Princess Dashkof immediately received orders to retire to Mosco*.

At the same time Catharine commissioned the piedmontese Odart to engage the ambassador of France to write to Voltaire, cautioning him to be on his guard against the vanity of princess Dashkof, and to tell him, that if he should transmit to posterity the event that had just happened in Russia, he need only make mention of this young woman

* Here she was delivered of a daughter, afterwards married to M. de Tscherbini; a lady of remarkable accomplishments and the most agreeable manners. It is no wonder then if her society was frequented by all men of talents and literature from every court in Europe. After passing three or four years in travelling through various parts of Germany and the states of Italy, madame Tscherbini afterwards took up her residence at Warsaw; but since the commencement of the reign of Paul I. she is gone to reside with her mother at her retirement in the vicinity of Mosco.

as

as having acted a very secondary part in a revolution, the success whereof was owing solely to the wisdom and courage of the empress*. The same commission was given to her ambassadors at London and at Paris†.

The archbishop of Novgorod, one of the principal instruments in the revolution, and who had the most assisted in diminishing the privileges of the monks, having been gained over by money and promises, found all at once that his towering hopes were frustrated. When Catharine had no longer any need of his services, she presently dismissed him; and he was obliged to take back with him his rage and disgrace to a clergy who hated him, and a people who despised his ambition.

In the mean time Poniatofsky had learned, with inexpressible joy, the triumph of Catharine. Since his departure from St. Petersburg, he had kept up a regular correspondence with her, through the means of some obliging friends; and he placed the more dependance upon her, as, while she had a

* M. de Breteuil wrote in his letter: "C'est pousser bien loin la jalousie & la hardiesse de l'ingratitude."

† Upwards of five-and-twenty years after that event, Catharine held the same language to a minister from a foreign power. It was her earnest desire that the history of her life and reign should have been undertaken by the historian of Charles V. Various suggestions were at several times given to that effect, and transmitted to Scotland; and for which all the necessary papers and documents were to have been furnished by herself.

secret partiality for others, she openly affected a romantic constancy in her attachment to him. Perhaps Poniatofsky might flatter himself that he should soon be honoured with her hand, whose heart he imagined had long been his. He advanced to the frontiers of Poland, and sent to ask permission of her majesty to pay a visit to her court. But she returned him for answer, that his presence was not necessary at Petersburg; and that she had different views in his behalf. Unwilling that he should be farther informed of her new connections, she continued to write to him in an affectionate style, and sometimes shed tears before the confidants* of the Pole, in speaking of her passion for him. She complained that an inclination for Orlof was attributed to her, and attempted to ridicule him in their eyes.

But the period of fears was past. Orlof had done with mystery. Haughty and coarse in his manners, that favourite but awkwardly submitted to dissimulation; and he now made it appear that he had no longer occasion for an inconvenient precaution. Accustomed to live in the barracks and cabaks†, Orlof at times would drink pretty freely. One evening, being at supper with the empress, the hetman Razumofsky, and some others of the court, and being flushed with wine, he talked of the as-

* M. de Mercy and M. de Breteuil.

† Tippling houses frequented by the lower orders of people.

endant he had over the guards; he boasted of having solely brought about the revolution; and added, that his power was so great, that if he chose to abuse it, he could destroy in one month his own work, and dethrone the empress. "You might do so in one month," returned the hetman, smiling at his insolence; "but, my friend, within a fortnight after we would have hanged you!" The other courtiers seemed offended; but the favour of Orlof was not diminished.

The attachment of Catharine to her favourite arose more from policy than affection. She knew his activity, his vehemence, his boldness; and she could neither arm herself against him by an empty pride, nor prefer to him courtiers doubtless more polite, but almost all without talents, and destitute of courage. Less gracious towards the other conspirators, who were only subaltern officers, and whom she had already sufficiently rewarded, she removed them by degrees from the court, leaving them to return to their soldier-like course of life, and their obscure libertinism. It may be that she would have done better to have kept on the mask a little longer*.

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* Some persons made a handle of this behaviour to charge her with ingratitude and selfishness. The state counsellor Brocktorf, private secretary to the czar, and who had often prevented that prince from shewing his resentment against Catharine, spoke of it in these terms: "The empress thinks it a sufficient happiness to be permitted to serve her, and that it is recompence enough

The chastisement of the soldiers who were the first in the mutiny had not entirely quelled the spirit of revolt. The removal of the archbishop of Novgorod and princefs Dashkof, the unsettled health of the young grand duke*, the pity shewn by all ranks of people for prince Ivan; all furnished a handle to discontents, which the popes dexterously employed for inciting and irritating the people. There was a general fermentation in the barracks. The danger became even so imminent, that her majesty was thought, during a whole day†, to be in extreme hazard of experiencing the fate of her husband. But her courage never forsook her. Without calling her council, she took private measures for calming the revolt; and when the hetman Razumofsky, Bestuchef, Panin, Glebof, with several other members of the senate, presented themselves to her, to testify their uneasiness, she said to them, with that dignity which was peculiar to her: "Why are you alarmed? Think ye that I am afraid to face the danger? or rather, are you afraid that I know not how to overcome it? Recollect that

"enough to have the honour which she supposes it should be reckoned; and when she has made what use she wanted of any one, or of which she thought him capable, she does with him as we do with an orange, after sucking out the juice we throw the peel out at window."

* He was attacked with a sort of scorbutic complaint.

† It was some time after her return from Mosco.

"you

“ you have seen me, in moments more terrible than
 “ these, in full possession of the whole vigour of my
 “ mind ; and that I can support the most cruel
 “ reverses of Fortune with as much serenity as I
 “ have supported her favours. A few factious
 “ spirits, a few mutinous foldiers, are to deprive
 “ me of a crown that I accepted with * reluctance,
 “ and only as the means of delivering the ruffian
 “ nation from the miseries with which it was threat-
 “ ened ! I know not with what pretence they colour
 “ their insolence ; I know not on what means they
 “ rely : but, I say it again, they cause me no alarm.
 “ That Providence which has called me to reign,
 “ will preserve me for the glory and the happi-
 “ ness of the empire ; and that almighty arm which
 “ has hitherto been my defence, will now confound
 “ my foes.”

The Orlofs and their friends at that very time were neglecting nothing that could pacify the guards ; and presents softened those whom speeches and promises could not appease. When their fidelity was again secured, four-and-twenty of their officers were arrested and tried. The four principal ringleaders † were declared guilty of high treason, and

* It is certain that Catharine expressed herself in these very terms, and that even in the presence of some of her accomplices.

† These were the three brothers Gurief, officers in the ismail-offsky regiment of guards, and Kruschef, an officer of the regiment

and condemned to be quartered. But Catharine, thinking that less benefit was likely to accrue from leaving them to their sentence, commuted their punishment into a banishment to Siberia ; and wishing, at the same time, to attempt at inspiring the Russians with some dread of infamy, a dread which had so much influence in other nations, she caused the four officers to be degraded and scourged by the hand of the common executioner.

While Catharine was thus managing her subjects, she displayed to foreign courts all the greatness of her character. The ambassador of France solicited her in vain for obtaining a reversal similar to those granted by Elizabeth and Peter III. at their accession to the throne, the purport of which was to prove that the title of empress changed absolutely nothing in the ceremonial between the two courts ; and persisted in the refusal, notwithstanding the difficulties it might occasion *. In a word, she declared

ment of Ingria or Ingerimlandskoi, and a man of great talents. A brother of the latter, serjeant in the same regiment, was also in the plot, but was not adjudged to the same punishment.

* These difficulties were not the only ones M. de Breteuil had with Catharine : and it may not be useless to mention the grave minutiae in which ambassadors are sometimes employed. The custom is, that women as well as men kiss the hand of the empress. M. de Breteuil had the vanity to insist that his lady, rather than conform to that custom, should abstain from appearing at court. He made several remonstrances on this subject.

Catharine

clared that the ceremonial should not be changed ; but that there should never more be any reversal at the commencement of a new reign *. Nevertheless she gave secret instructions to several of her ambassadors to take precedence of that from France, whenever occasion should offer †.

The empress, always combining policy with firmness, found means to sooth the most dangerous of the priests, and to put a stop to the cabals of the monks. She recalled to court princess Dashkof, whose influence and enterprises at Mosco might disturb the tranquillity of the empire. She sent away the piedmontese Odart, whose continual informations had rendered him odious to all the court. Her praise was resounded, by the trumpet of fame, from one end of Europe to the other, and reverberated to Petersburg. The health of the young grand duke was re-established. The promising expectations that were justly raised by the good conduct of that prince, drew off all eyes from the prison of

Catharine held out ; and that madame de Breteuil might not die of vexation in her hôtel, the ambassador was obliged to submit. However, by a grand stroke of policy, he recommended to his lady not to kiss her majesty's hand, but only to pretend to do so.

* See the declaration in the appendix, No. VIII. at the end of the volume.

† The dispute that happened between the duc de Châtelet and count Ivan Chernichef, ambassador from Russia to the court of St. James's, is well known.

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the unfortunate Ivan ; and the Russians accommodated themselves to a yoke which they had attempted in vain to shake off.

Ambition did not extinguish the love of pleasure in the breast of Catharine. It was even by the latter that she gained more and more the attachment of her courtiers ; but she could quit her pleasures to engage in the most serious affairs, and apply to the most arduous concerns of government. She assisted at all the deliberations of the council, read the dispatches from her ambassadors, either dictated or minuted with her own hand the answers that were to be sent to them, and afterwards attended to all the particulars of their execution. Jealous of solid renown, she set before her the example of those illustrious monarchs who effaced their weaknesses by the grandeur of their exploits ; and, with the infirmities of men, merited and obtained the grateful acknowledgments of all succeeding times, as the friends and benefactors of the human race. She followed those maxims which she frequently quoted :
 “ We should be constant in our plans,” said she.
 “ It is better to do amiss, than to alter our purpose.
 “ None but fools are irresolute.”

CHAP. IV.

Catharine is occupied in Schemes of Aggrandisement. — She supports Biren in Courland. — Panin is desirous of changing the Form of the Russian Government. — Bestuchef dissuades the Empress from it, and wishes to induce her to marry Gregory Orlof. — A Plot concerted at Mosco against the Life of Orlof. — A Conspiracy against the Empress. — Answer of Princess Dashkof. — Poniatofsky desirous of coming to Russia, &c. — Occurrences of 1762 and 1763.

THE bloody war carried on against Frederic, continued to rage in the rest of Europe. Russia had just separated from that formidable league, and Sweden was following her example. Peter had not merely put an end to hostilities, and restored to the king the territory of East-Prussia, which had been conquered by the russian arms; but he had even ordered his troops to join the army of that prince, to fight under him as allies, against the remaining confederated powers. The latter relation thus immediately ceased, and it was of the utmost importance to know what resolutions would now be adopted by Catharine. For, though the
russian

russian army under Elizabeth had performed so little in comparison of what might have been reasonably expected from their numbers and force yet Russia was a very formidable enemy, to whom Frederic, in spite of all the resources of his fertile genius, must at length have submitted, especially if the bravery of the soldiers should have been properly enforced by a better command.

Frederic had been Peter's friend, was acquainted with all his sentiments and plans, had imparted to him counsel, and maintained a confidential correspondence with him. Could it be expected that his successor should have much inclination and confidence for the friend of him whom she had ejected from the throne? Was it not probable that he was informed, perhaps even approved of the measures that the emperor had taken in regard to Catharine, and for the preventing of which she had undertaken that very step? Frederic had indeed been Peter's friend; but a worthy and paternal friend, an experienced and faithful monitor. He had the highest reason to be devoted to the emperor with the sincerest attachment; but Frederic was too generous to bestow his calm approbation on what he did not hold to be right. With tender concern he beheld Peter giving the rein to his passions, and exerted all the influence of his friendship to reduce him to a better conduct. His letters abounded with admonitions to the restoration of domestic concord, and the re-establishment of peace in the imperial
family.

family. Catharine read them, and was convinced of the persevering good-will of the great prince, to whom she was indebted for the first possibility of obtaining the russian crown*. Frederic had even left nothing untried to dissuade the tzar from his violent resolution of declaring war against Denmark: at length, however, a congress was appointed at Berlin, in order to bring all differences to an accommodation.

The negotiation went on with success, and ended happily. Catharine therefore ratified the peace with Prussia and with Denmark.

Russia then enjoyed a peace with foreign powers, which had been begun by the unfortunate Peter III. and which Catharine had now confirmed: but the interior of the empire, in various parts, exhibited signs of fermentation. Neither the severe sentence pronounced against the four principal leaders of the tumult of the guards, nor the assumed clemency of the empress, were able to stifle those sentiments of hatred and vengeance which the view of a great act of injustice never fails to inspire.

* On perusing these letters the empress burst into tears of gratitude, and made in consequence the strongest declarations in favour of this prince. They were not without effect. Orders had been given with relation to Prussia, which threatened a renewal of hostilities. They were soon suspended. The army of the Russians was indeed separated from that of Prussia; but all the important places which the Russians had, with so much bloodshed and through so many difficulties, acquired, and which gave them the command of everything else that remained to the king, were faithfully restored.

Though

Though Catharine perhaps had no great reason to suspect that her subjects were not perfectly satisfied with the methods by which the late revolution had been effected, yet she thought it expedient to call off their attention from a recent event of such magnitude and importance, by brilliant novelties and successful enterprises. But she also knew that too many obstacles were opposed to these enterprises, and that the penury of her finances as well as the dictates of policy impelled her to peace.

With regard to any offensive intentions against Russia, they have long since ceased to compose a part in the politics of any power whatever. Notwithstanding her permanent strength, and an occasional exertion of it, that are very menacing, it does not appear that there has, even once, been a plan seriously thought on for the reduction of the greatness of Russia, ever since the time of Charles XII. which was the period of her entering into the circle of our political system: and this was rather an attempt to crush her in her infancy, than a plan to obstruct her further growth, when once become formidable.

From that time she has been growing (not so much, perhaps, as might be expected in learning and the arts, but, certainly) to a very high degree in substantial power, and in all the resources that support it; a strong military force, an increasing commerce, prudent, because for the most part a lucrative system of negotiation; and an unbounded

influence over those nations with whom she has the nearest connection.

Her friendship has been much sought, and generally paid for. Her armies have been kept up at very considerable numbers; and if her troops have not improved, the last war evidently demonstrated that they had not at all declined from that discipline to which they were formed by Peter the great. That commerce, too, of which he was the founder, had been far from languishing since his death: and the balance of trade was probably in her favour against some of the nations with whom she has intercourse. The emulation which, for this century past, has subsisted amongst all the maritime countries in augmenting their marine, has, without the exertion of any deep policy on her side, operated powerfully in her favour; as nature has made her the great magazine of naval stores to Europe.

Nothing shews more clearly that Russia has the strongest political stamina, than that her condition is such as we have described it, whilst her government has undergone very frequent shocks and sudden revolutions, whilst the throne was seldom established with great security to the possessor, and never provided with any sound and invariable rule of succession.

At present it could not be said that Russia was much improved in these particulars. On the contrary, nothing could be more critical than the situation of that government.

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The empress immediately applied with extreme assiduity and care to the administration of her vast estates, the advancement of commerce, the augmentation of the marine, and especially to the means of recovering the finances, without being reduced to the necessity of observing a parsimonious oeconomy. Her grand ideas of the sovereignty of Russia permitted her not to renounce that oriental magnificence, for which, from the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth, the court of St. Petersburg had been famous throughout the world. This luxury might likewise seem the more necessary as an object of attraction to the notice of the public both at home and abroad, till she could excite its astonishment by the splendour of conquests.

After engaging in business with her ministers, her majesty would frequently converse and always in private, one while with Bestuchef and at another with Munich. With one she studied politics and the resources of the several courts of Europe; the other communicated to her the plan he had been meditating in his exile in Siberia, for driving the Turks from Constantinople, a plan singularly gratifying to the aspiring mind of Catharine, and which, thirty years after, seemed to have been on the point of being carried into effect.

Her first cares were directed to domestic regulations. The style in all her ordinances has something uncommonly confidential and open: the subjects heard the voice of a careful mother, without

feeling themselves treated like helpless children; on the contrary they all have a tendency to bring them to liberty. She frequently mentioned the duties of sovereigns, and particularly what the empress esteemed to be her own. For instance, in her first manifesto, dated July 6th, 1762, immediately on her accession to the throne: "It is thus," said the empress, "without spilling one drop of blood, that we have ascended the russian throne, by the assistance of God, and the approving suffrages of our beloved country. — Humbly adoring the decrees of Divine Providence, we assure our faithful subjects, that we will not fail, by night and by day, to invoke the Most High to bless our sceptre, and enable us to wield it for the maintenance of our orthodox religion, the security and defence of our dear country, and the equal administration of justice; as well as to put an end to all miseries, iniquities, and violences, by strengthening and fortifying our heart for the public good. And as we ardently wish to prove effectually how far we merit the reciprocal love of our people, for whose happiness we acknowledge our throne to be established, we solemnly promise on our imperial word, to make such arrangements in the empire as that the government may be endued with an intrinsic force to support itself within limited and proper bounds; and each department of the state provided with wholesome laws and regulations, sufficient

"sufficient to the preservation of good order, at all times, and in all circumstances.

"By which means we hope henceforward to establish the empire and our sovereign power, (however they may have been heretofore weakened), in such a manner as to comfort the discouraged hearts of all true patriots. Not entertaining the least doubt, that all our loving subjects will, as well for the salvation of their own souls, as for the honour of religion, inviolably observe the oath they have sworn in the presence of Almighty God; we thereupon assure them of our imperial favour."

Again in the ukase of the 29th of July in the same year: "Not only all that we have or may have, but also our life itself, we have devoted to our dear country. We value nothing on our own account; we serve not ourself; but we labour with all pains, with all diligence and care, for the glory and happiness of our people."

In a manifesto of the 17th of July, the empress publicly and solemnly promised to employ her principal care to the maintenance of justice. Under date of the 29th she informed the people of her having received account that a certain registrar of the government-chancery of Novgorod, named Jacob Rember, had taken money for administering the oath of allegiance; for which she had banished him for life to Siberia: and on that occasion issued a severe decree against bribery and extortion. The

picture

picture she here drew of the state of things was truly alarming: "If any one be desirous of an office, he must pay for it; if any one wish to defend himself from slander, he must do it with money; if any one would slander another, he corroborates his malice by bribes. In this manner do many judges convert the sacred place where they are appointed to pronounce justice in our name, into a market. . . . These examples of persons who, in the principal courts, have crept into office only for the purpose of screening themselves from punishment, are imitated, particularly in remote parts of the empire, even by judges and officers of the lowest orders, to the vexation and oppression of poor people; practising the arts of chicane, not only in cases of little importance, but under the form of law, which they wrongly interpret, and bringing ruin on the persons and families of even those who are rather deserving of our sovereign complacency and favour."

By an ukase, dated Mosco, Oct. 13, the empress confirmed the abolition of the secret-inquisition-chancery: "to the erection whereof the circumstances of the then times, and the yet uncivilized manners of the nation, had furnished occasion to the magnanimous and gracious monarch Peter the great; but the necessity whereof had ever since been gradually diminishing:" an honourable and genuine testimony to the high value

value she set upon the intellectual improvement of her people. For, if the great reformer of the russian government had to contend against numerous insurrections and conspiracies; if even after his death, exclusively of inferior or abortive plots, within forty years not yet complete six revolutions beset the persons on and next the throne: surely no man will ascribe these convulsions to the high degree of mental cultivation in the country. Improving the nation upwards from the lower orders, and gentle treatment of it downwards from above, produced even here at length, by a natural consequence, internal peace and security. Catharine was sensible that she could obtain the love and attachment of the people by better means than by the encouragement of spies and informers; no sooner was she placed on the throne, but, superior to degrading fear, she completely put an end to the political inquisition.

"Peter I. instituted (as we learn by the ukase) certain chanceries for secret criminal causes under various names." By these measures he hoped to gain information of many schemes of mischief before their execution: but, what a field was thus opened to the most dangerous accusations! How formidable to every family must the registries of this secret court of judicature have been, where the most innocent names might be inscribed with a false accusation annexed, and all refutation often rendered impossible by the profoundest concealment!

ment! Catharine now generously and nobly decreed, that "The secret-inquisition chancery is henceforth and for ever abolished. The acts of it shall be brought into the senate, and there sealed up in the archives consigned to everlasting oblivion." — The capital crimes which were the matter of secret examination, were, high-treason, attempts against religion, treason against the state. But its jurisdiction gradually increased; criminal cases, properly lying within the province of the ordinary courts, being frequently brought thither, which the officious industry of the inquisitors very much encouraged; particularly as it depended on the accuser to mix something in his accusation that might make it touch upon some one or other of the points above specified. Now, at the abolition of this inquisition, Catharine settled the practice to be pursued in future in the ordinary tribunals in charges of real state-crimes, and so plainly and distinctly determined the particular cases of delinquency against the person of the sovereign, and against the welfare of the state, that there was no longer any room for malicious or sinister interpretation. What went under the name of religious crimes were entirely suppressed. — The irregularity and harshness of the proceedings had been truly shocking. The regular modes of evidence were held to be inadequate to the nature of a secret denunciation and a mysterious tribunal: imprisonment, nay even execution, was often the beginning of the process. The manner

ner of process was usually this: when the accuser failed in every kind of proof, he must undergo the dreadful punishment of the knout three several times; after which his declaration was admitted as legal. The accused might deliver his objections in the same manner, unless he rather chose to be declared guilty. We cannot relate it without horror that this mode of proceeding was in use, without regard to station, age, or sex, and even more than once repeated when the judge wavered in his opinion between the opposite assertions thus proved by both parties. But now, if the accuser had some plausible ground in his behalf, then the accused had a more cruel coercion to undergo. Catharine therefore ordained that the truth should be investigated entirely without torture; and, with Frederic of Prussia, was likewise in this respect a model for the rest of Europe. Her criminal laws throughout breathe a mild and gentle spirit: she had not, like Elizabeth, made a vow to punish no one with death; for why should a philosophical character have recourse to so mechanical a compulsion to perseverance in its principles? But during her long reign a sentence of death was extremely rare.

The secret inquisition was a desirable instrument for ill-disposed persons to employ in the gratification of the sordid passions of envy and revenge against their betters. But, to the honour of the nation be it said, that in the latter years of Elizabeth's reign, such informations were becoming less frequent from

day to day: only among the lower classes, among servants, vassals, nay, to the destruction of all subordination, even among sailors and soldiers, while suffering some (frequently well deserved) chastisement, or with persons who had cherished some grudge against their superiors, the custom still subsisted to make themselves formidable by the mischief it enabled them to commit; on which account Peter III. in February published his ukase. The practice of the populace on such occasions, was, to *cry out the word*; which signified, I have a secret of importance to discover of somebody, and now mean to point out who it is. The most horrible, and among them the most ridiculous stories are related of the application of this custom. A patient in the hospital employed it to prevent an operation the surgeon was about to perform. The sound was so awful and tremendous, that if, in the midst of a great crowd, any one called out, "The word," all present turned pale, and immediately separated, running and crossing themselves as fast as they could. Persons of consequence, a master who had punished his servant, must instantly stop short in the street, and go with him to the next guard-house, demanding of the officers to be both sent to prison together. — Catharine thus provided against this grievance: "The odious expression, *to cry the word* (слово i delo), shall henceforth have no signification; every one is forbidden to use it. If any person, notwithstanding this prohibition, shall, in drunk-

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" enness,

" enness, in quarrel, or to avoid lawful correction, presume to employ it, such person shall be so punished on the spot as the police usually punishes vagabonds and disturbers of the public peace.

" If, nevertheless, lazy, wicked, and worthless persons, soldiers, sailors, vassals, boors, workmen in manufactories and shops, should yet be found who shall contravene this declaration of our will, such informer shall be taken into custody [by a civil or military officer], and first interrogated whether he understands the two points above-mentioned [crimes against the sovereign and the state] in their true import. If it be found that he understands them in their true import, and insists that what he has to deliver really relates to these two points; he shall be directly asked in what the matter itself consists. If he declare it, but can neither bring proofs nor produce evidence, nor point out any circumstances to render his declaration credible, he shall be earnestly admonished, &c. If after all these cautions and admonitions, he will not desist from his assertion, then he shall be confined for two whole days without having anything to eat or to drink, but left all that time alone, to collect himself, and to consider; and after the expiration of that term he shall expressly be asked, whether, &c. Does he now confirm anew what he had before asserted; in such case the informer shall be sent, under close custody,

“ custody, according to the distance of the place,
 “ either to the senate in St. Petersburg, or to
 “ Mosco, or to the nearest government-chancery.”

The wisdom apparent in the whole (too long for our purpose) of this mild and provident ordinance, and especially as founded on the nature of the human mind and the condition of the country, demands the highest admiration. To shut up the informer of the lower class of people two days long without the smallest nourishment, is a precept always strictly observed, and has very often been attended with this consequence, that the rash informer, having slept off his intoxication, or stifled his passion, or upon maturer consideration in solitude and silence, has retracted his accusation.

Catharine declared, by a manifesto, that colonists shall find welcome and support in her country: several foreigners, therefore, presently began to migrate thither. Whereupon, in August 1763, she made more specific regulations in relation to them, particularly by instituting the tutelary chancery (a chancery for the guardianship or protection of foreigners). The next step she took in this behalf was to point out by name such districts as were proper for agriculture and hitherto unoccupied, with particular notices of what was forest, arable land, meadow land, &c. what allotments bordered upon rivers, and what the fisheries might yield. Thus, in the government of Tobolsk, on the Bara-
 binskoï

binskoï steppe, several hundred thousand * desätines of fertile soil, and another large tract of land with several rivers running through it, were appropriated to cultivation: in the government of Astrakhan, from Saratof on the Volga upwards, above thirty-four thousand desätines; on the Volga from Saratof downwards, above thirty-six thousand: in the government of Orenburg, portions of land for some thousand families: in the territory of Bielgorod, free lands for some hundred farms.—But not merely to the cultivation of such districts were foreigners encouraged, but to settle for general purposes in the russian empire, in whatever town they would, as merchants, artificers, or however else. The proclamation sets forth, that “ any one who is destitute
 “ shall receive money for the expences of the journey, and shall be forwarded at the charge of the crown. On his arrival he shall receive a competent assistance; and, if he want it, even an advance of a capital, free of interest for ten years.
 “ All that he brings for his own use is duty free; even for sale, a family may introduce to the value of three hundred rubles. The stranger is exempt from all service either military or civil; even from all taxes and imposts for a certain time: in Mosco, Petersburg, and the livonian towns, he enjoys five free years; in the inland towns, ten; on the hitherto uncultivated districts,

* See before, p. 47.

“ thirty. In these new tracts of land, the colonists
 “ live according to their own goodwill, under their
 “ own jurisdiction, without any participation or
 “ cognizance of the imperial officers. All religions
 “ are tolerated.” The empress at once granted to
 the tutelary chancery an annual revenue of two
 hundred thousand rubles. Moreover, for colonists
 in the government of Astrakhan, a clergyman of
 every christian sect, a parish-clerk, a physician, a
 surgeon, an apothecary, &c. were appointed to be
 paid by the crown.

Scarcely had this inviting voice resounded over
 Germany through the organs of the several minis-
 ters, than hundreds and thousands flocked to take
 possession of the promised land on the shores of the
 Volga and the Samara. For it must be confessed
 that in Germany great numbers of people are very
 reasonably dissatisfied with their condition, fighting
 under the pressure of religion, of justice, or of
 finance, or of all the three at once; and there are
 certainly many fertile, beautiful, and highly im-
 proveable tracts of country in the before-mentioned
 districts. Individuals, and whole families, nume-
 rous in women and children, people of tolerable
 circumstances, beggars, projectors, vagabonds, lite-
 rati, artificers, mechanics, old and young, set out in
 haste to be stowed on board of ship at Lubeck and
 other maritime towns on the Baltic. Several of the
 petty princes of Germany at first issued prohibitions
 against these emigrations, and their example was

afterwards followed by others; and it is not to be
 denied, that many of the persons employed in the
 colonial plan made use of some indirect means for
 enticing inconsiderate persons from their businesses.
 But it received the most effectual check from the
 reports that soon ran about concerning the new set-
 tlers themselves. Letters came full of complainings
 that their expectations were deceived. The incon-
 veniencies of the journey, the ignorance of the lan-
 guage, the want of their customary accommoda-
 tions, the harshness of many persons in office, might
 very well bring many of the colonists to repent
 of the rash step they had taken: others, who wanted
 only to live in idleness, wondered that they were to
 begin again to work, as it was exactly on that very
 account that they had left their home. — This whole
 method of settling colonies, however, is very far
 from being the best. A government most surely
 improves the country by regulations and institutions
 of a humane and gentle nature, without ostentation
 and noise; wisdom and justice give spirit to the in-
 habitants, and increase the population; thither the
 foreigner will go, that he may live and thrive under
 its fostering protection; and only he who comes
 on this inducement proves a useful and estimable
 citizen.

Catharine understood and practised this better
 method of increasing the inhabitants of her country.
 But Europe expects to see, especially at the opening
 of a reign, splendid institutions announced in bril-

liant descriptions. Besides, in respect to those of which we are now speaking, very spacious districts entirely void of people make a great difference: in this case a mere proclamation may doubtless produce some beneficial effect; for the emigrants must come in large troops, that some may settle and multiply. — So it happened in Russia. Besides the Germans, settlers came from France, Poland, and Sweden. In the district of Saratof alone, these colonists amounted to upwards of ten thousand families. Indeed, in the year 1774, there were only about 6194, making 25,781 heads; but in the first ten years the loss is evidently the most considerable: those who remained, with such as have joined them since, give the most promising hopes of future progress. In the year 1760 the government had sent as settlers in the territory of Nertschinsk, adjacent to the borders of China, a stony and very cold province, but rich in gold and silver mines, persons ordered for exile and other punishments, with disorderly and lazy boors of the nobility, unserviceable recruits, &c. But as agriculture would not flourish there, Catharine assigned these people their abode in the government of Tobolsk*; where there were, from 1769 to 1772, in general settled 10,799 full-grown males, 9716 women and children; consequently all together, 20,515 persons. It is true

* This government in Siberia deals chiefly in furs and tallow; and there is still a great want of people.

they

they came originally from other parts of the empire: but in the places they came from they were useless and idle, whereas in their new residence they were obliged to work: then in provinces longer and better peopled the chasm they left was soon filled up; and all that was wanted was to bring a primitive race into desert regions. To this likewise contributed the event that happened in 1775, when the whole horde of zaporogian kozaks, on the cataracts of the Dniepr, was entirely broke up and dispersed; and more recently, from the newly-conquered countries, Lithuania and Poland, a part of the inhabitants were conducted into the interior of the empire. A number of old greek families had formerly wandered from Russia into Podolia, and other polish provinces: Catharine called them back, and allotted them habitations in Siberia on the banks of the Irtysh and the Selenga. Individuals and whole tribes were likewise voluntarily coming from the rest of Europe and from middle Asia, particularly such as were dissatisfied with the governments under which they had lived; as was especially the case with many Greeks and Armenians.

In order to increase the population, or more properly to eradicate a physical and moral cause of depopulation, the empress also, at the proposal of lieutenant-general Betskoy, laid the foundation of the foundling and lying-in hospital at Mosco, and afterwards of another at St. Petersburg.

Her majesty also now raised the means of providing for the health of the subjects into a national concern: she founded in November the medicinal college of the empire at St. Petersburg; which, in pursuance of a subsequent regulation, was placed immediately under the empress.

Catharine had sedulously applied to the most excellent and useful of all sciences, the study of mankind: and, as the true basis of it, had acquired the knowledge of herself. She understood so well her peculiar talents, her courage, and the whole extent of the benefits she might derive from her influence, that, talking confidentially with a foreign * minister, fitter to applaud her mistakes than to appreciate her genius, she asked him whether he thought that the peace just concluded at Hubertsburg† would be of long duration? The minister answered, that the exhaustion of the nations, and the wisdom of the sovereigns by whom they were governed, seemed to promise a tranquillity of several years. But he added, that she was better able to judge than he; since by her sagacity she could appreciate the political system of the courts of Europe, and by her forces direct them at her will. Catharine then putting on an air of humility, said: "You think
" then that Europe has at present its eyes fixed on
" me, and that I have some weight in the principal
" courts?" The answer could not fail of being in

* M. de Breteuil.

† Between Austria and Prussia.

the

the affirmative. Catharine hearkened with condescension; then assuming the full display of imperial dignity: "I believe indeed," replied she, "that Russia merits attention. I have the finest
" army in the world. I am rather short of money,
" it is true; but I shall be abundantly provided with
" it in a few years. If I gave the reins to my in-
" clination, I should have a greater taste for war
" than for peace; but I am restrained by humanity,
" justice, and reason. However, I shall not be like
" the empress Elizabeth. I shall not allow myself
" to be pressed to make war: I shall enter upon it
" when it will prove advantageous to me; but
" never from complaisance to others." Her majesty added, that the world could not properly begin to form a judgment of her till after five years; that it required at least so much time to reduce her empire to order, and to gather the fruit of her cares; but that in the mean time she should behave with all the princes of Europe like a finished coquette.

These words were strictly true. The minister imagined they were dictated by vanity. Nevertheless he did not venture otherwise to reply than by a flattering compliment.

The first trial that Catharine made of her influence, was in favour of Biren, who experienced some difficulties on the part of the senate at Mittau. On recalling the troops that were in Pomerania, her majesty sent orders to them to pass into Cour-

land to support the pretensions of the duke, whom she patronized. She then caused another army to march into Poland, under the command of count Romantzof, an army that was soon reinforced by twenty thousand auxiliaries whom general Chernenchef headed under prussian colours.

During the long exile of Biren, the estates of Courland, considering him as lapsed from his title of duke, had elected in his place prince Charles of Saxony, son of Augustus III. king of Poland. This prince, supported by the authority of his father and by the wishes of the courish nation, seemed as if he should necessarily carry it against a competitor, whose character for cruelty rendered him odious. But the presence of the russian armies easily put to silence the good-will that was entertained for duke Charles. Simolin *, the envoy of Catharine, was soon able to dictate to the senate of Mittau laws for its sovereign; and a declaration promulgated at † Mosco in favour of Biren, by menacing the king of Poland with war, forced him to give the investiture of Courland to the despoiler of his son.

Satisfied with so great docility, Catharine employed her mediation with Maria Theresa and Frederic, to induce them to withdraw their troops from the hereditary dominions of the king of Poland: but she could not succeed. The empress-

* The same who afterwards filled the character of ambassador at London and at Paris.

† The 31st of December.

queen

queen laid the blame on the king of Prussia, who did not fail to throw it back upon her. Peace happily put an end to these acts of injustice.

Frederic, who had long contemplated the friendship of Catharine as an object that might eventually be of the utmost importance to him, and who therefore was desirous to gain it, was among the foremost to try to procure her attachment by a profusion of complaisance. He offered her the order of the black eagle, which she graciously accepted, and wore while she remained at Mosco. It was not possible that the empress could so soon have forgotten that the wearing of a prussian order had been imputed as a crime to her husband: but she was desirous of shewing to her subjects that she was not without consideration in foreign courts; and what had been a fault in him became in her a mark of ability.

Some new differences now rose between the court of Petersburg and that of Copenhagen touching the administration of Holstein. By a treaty secretly concluded twelve years before * between the king of Denmark and the king of Sweden, the latter had ceded to the former his rights to the regency of Holstein during the minority of the young grand duke; for the court of Denmark had for a long time coveted a principality so commodiously situated, and which she has since acquired. She beheld with

* In 1750.

concern

concern the return of prince George, who had just taken the command of it in behalf of Russia. She even at first refused to acknowledge his authority. But Catharine threatened: the Danes were afraid of shortly seeing again the Russian troops on their march to Holstein. The Danish commissaries quitted Kiel, and an envoy extraordinary* from Copenhagen came to Mosco to apologise for the king his master.

The court of Petersburg and that of Stockholm were at that time living in perfect harmony. United by the ties of blood they were alike in want of peace, and Russia as yet gave no symptoms of that enormous aggrandisement of power with which, some years after, she struck terror into Sweden and the rest of its neighbours.

Sedately relying on the intentions of the princes of Europe, Catharine could not be so tranquil in regard to her subjects. She neglected however nothing that ought to have attached them to her. Generous by nature, she was now still more so from policy. The desire of augmenting the number of her dependents rendered her even prodigal of her bounty, and her fears misguided her choice.

She shewed lenity to the friends of the deceased tzar. She not only granted liberty to Gudovitch, to Volkof, and to Melganof, but gave the latter a body of troops to command, and to the second the

* M. Hachthausen.

lieutenancy

lieutenancy of the government of Orenburg. Gudovitch would accept of nothing.

In the first months that followed the sanguinary death of Peter III. the empress had but little time to bestow a thought upon the horror it must have excited in the public mind: but reflection on the circumstance of owing her elevation to so flagrant a crime must occasionally have harassed her own; and this, with the incessant repetitions of petty conspiracies, kept her in continued disquiet. They were detected, they were defeated, but it was impossible to annihilate their origin; and her majesty was so much the more uneasy as she affected to dissemble her vexation.

Another secret source of affliction to her was, that since Gregory Orlof had been acknowledged as her favourite, men the most distinguished by their birth, jealous at the fortune of this minion, or disgusted by his arrogance, kept aloof from the court. Catharine frequently saw none about her but rough soldiers, who strangely abused the rights they imagined they had to her gratitude. It was not their past services she was recompensing. Perhaps she would have willingly dispensed with them: but she was paying in advance for those they might still afford her; and her bounties, and the honours she devolved upon them only augmented their insolence, and sharpened their greediness. She sometimes, however, blushed at the deferences she thought herself obliged to shew them; and in order to excuse their

their defects, she ascribed to them qualities which they did not possess. "The life I lead is far from agreeable to me," she one day observed. "I know that I am surrounded by people of no education; but I am indebted to them for being what I am. They are men of courage and probity; and I am sure that they will never betray me." One part of this confession could not be sincere. The accomplices of Catharine were not wanting in courage; but their probity was not very conspicuous.

Among these proud and brutal courtiers, Panin was almost the only one who distinguished himself by polished manners and a tolerably cultivated mind. Yet he enjoyed but a secondary influence. His thoughts were always turned on the aristocratic senate he had wanted Peter III. to establish; and he seized every opportunity for displaying this pretended advantage before those with whom he conversed. Observing, on some occasion, that Catharine seemed to be under an extraordinary alarm, he thought it a favourable moment for unfolding to her the whole of his project, and for inducing her to adopt it. After exaggerating to her the dangers to which he feared she was exposed, and the difficulty of avoiding the troubles inseparable from a usurpation, he added, that there was one way still of escaping them, and of immoveably fixing her throne; but that he was much afraid lest a false delicacy might prevent her from recurring to it.

Catharine

Catharine bid him explain. He immediately delivered to her the principles of a system of government, which a long experience of its inconveniences did not prevent him from admiring. "The sovereigns of this empire," proceeded he, "have hitherto uniformly enjoyed an unlimited power; but it is the very extent of that power which renders it dangerous to him in whom it is lodged, since it may at any time be usurped by some bold pretender, and the usurper is thenceforth above the laws. Trust me, madam, make the sacrifice of an absolute authority. Create a fixed and permanent council which will secure to you the crown. Solemnly declare that you renounce, for yourself and for your successors, the power of depriving at pleasure the members of that august body. Declare, that if they commit any crime or high misdemeanor, their peers alone shall have the right to judge and to condemn them, on accurate and severe informations. From the moment you shall adopt this prudent measure, it will be forgotten that you obtained the crown by violence, in the sentiment that you intend to preserve it only by justice."

Catharine, who was delighted with whatever was new or extraordinary, thought there was something sublime in the proposal, conceiving, that by renouncing the prerogative of absolute power, she should at once acquire immortal glory, and for ever conciliate the love of her subjects. She would

doubtless

doubtless have been in the right, if she had resolved to render them progressively and equally free, and have given them a senate, the members whereof should be taken indifferently from all the several classes, and elected by the majority of suffrages. But to leave a whole people in the most degrading, the most cruel slavery, and to choose by favour a senate from a privileged order, what was this but to set up twenty or thirty tyrants in the place of one sovereign? And is not the despotism of bodies always more terrible and more immoveable than that of individuals?

However, Catharine charged Panin to commit his plan to paper and present it to her, expressing herself in such a manner as to lead him to imagine that she meant to put it in execution. Panin lost no time in obeying her commands; and, in order more effectually to secure its success, he placed the name of Gregory Orlof at the head of those whom he destined to compose the new senate. The favourite seemed flattered with this distinction, but requested time to consider upon it; and before he gave answer to Panin, he consulted Bestuchef, who, that he might continue to play his part, consented to enlighten by his experience him whom his sovereign should vouchsafe to honour. Bestuchef was too sensible to the value of a power which he had a long time directed, not to be shocked at the idea of seeing it drop from the hands of Catharine. He presented himself immediately to her majesty, expatiated

patiated with energy on the perils that accompanied the measure to which Panin was endeavouring to persuade her, and conjured her not to expose herself to a long repentance, by dividing an authority which she had acquired with so much trouble, and which she would never recover if she suffered it to be ravished from her but for a single instant.

The empress easily perceived the wisdom of the old chancellor's advice, and promised to follow it. On appearing a second time before her, Panin found her already dissuaded. She did justice to his zeal, praised his sagacity, but owned to him that it was impossible for her to benefit by it. The minister was deeply mortified at so sudden a change. Forced to dissemble before Catharine, he gave vent to his ill-humour among his friends, and could not refrain from saying to one of them *, on trusting him with these particulars: "If the empress is determined to rule alone, you will see what a sad reign we shall make of it." These words prove that Panin hearkened more to his resentment than to reason, or that he was very little capable of judging of Catharine.

1763. Panin, however, was not long in discovering that it was owing to Bestuchef alone that his enterprise had failed of success; and he found an opportunity to retaliate upon him, by defeating in his turn a scheme that the ambitious old man had

* M. de Breteuil.

formed to render himself more necessary. As every thing concurred to evince the great influence of Orlof, and Catharine seemed no longer desirous to conceal it, the artful courtier insinuated to the favourite how glad he should be to see him emperor. He at once roused his ambition and exalted his pride. "Gregory Gregorevitch," said he, "it is to no purpose that Catharine has given you her heart, unless she presents you with her hand. She knows with how much zeal and intrepidity you have acted in her service. She knows from what dangers you freed her to invest her with the sovereign power. She cannot then worthily reward you but by giving you a share in that throne which she owes to your prowess. Indeed why should she refuse it? Who is better able than you to support that throne against all attempts of conspirators to overturn it? Who would be more agreeable to the sovereign in the twofold capacity of her admirer and her defender? Yes, I know her well enough to be convinced that she would consent to whatever you should dare to propose. You should therefore lose no time in taking advantage of the instant favour of Fortune. To-morrow, perhaps, the opportunity may be past. Universal experience proves, that attachments are not eternal. Even death may remove her from your hopes; and if you should not inherit her power, such a misfortune would expose you to punish-

ment for what you have undertaken in her behalf.

"I am sensible, however, that it might not be proper for you to make the proposal. Obstacles might probably be thrown in your way, with which your delicacy would forbid you to contend. A refusal might occasion you a mutual perplexity. Trust yourself to my long experience and my friendship. I shall contrive to determine the empress herself to offer you her crown. I promise you that I shall hazard no proposal that I am not very certain of seeing accepted: but promise me, on your part, to leave me to pursue my own method, and that you will even feign an ignorance of my proceedings."

Orlof listened to the aged chancellor with the most profound attention. Presumptuous and volatile, he fancied himself for a moment on the throne of the tzars; and, embracing Bestuchef, promised a compliance with all he desired.

Bestuchef the same day, having an opportunity of discoursing with the empress, artfully sounded her on the subject. But Catharine, after much hesitation, concluded by telling the chancellor, that, however she might be inclined to favour his proposal, she could never resolve upon taking a step that might meet with so many difficulties; and confessed that, on considering it maturely, she saw no way of making the attempt without giving umbrage to the empire.

The chancellor engaged to find out the means. He ingeniously composed, in the name of the Russian nation, a petition; in which, after making a just though pompous eulogium on all that the empress had done for the glory and the happiness of her people, he called to mind the weak constitution of the young Paul Petrovitch, and the disquietudes caused by the frequent alterations in his health; and conjured Catharine to give the empire an additional testimony of her love, by sacrificing her own liberty to its welfare in taking a spouse.

In order to conceal his real intentions from those whom he designed should promote them, Bestuchef began by proposing prince Ivan, very sure that all those who should sign the petition would reject that unfortunate captive. At the same time Catharine, who sometimes gave the old courtier room to believe she was under his guidance, putting on the air of approving this proposal, afraid too that Ivan might suddenly be taken from prison and crowned, caused him to be conveyed from the castle of Schlusselfburg, and lodged in a monastery at Kolmogor, not far from Archangel; where, as though it had been intended to make him more sensible to the misfortune that awaited him, he was treated at first with the honours that were due to his rank, but was soon carried back very secretly to Schlusselfburg-castle.

What

What the old chancellor had foreseen failed not to happen. On his presenting the petition to the clergy, twelve bishops, previously gained over, eagerly put their signatures to it, specifying that Catharine ought not to marry prince Ivan, because he might punish her for her benefactions, and pretend to stand indebted for the crown to his proper right alone. They at the same time requested that her majesty would condescend to choose, from among her subjects, him whom she should think the most worthy to participate in her throne.

A great number of general officers adhered to the sentiment of the bishops. But for the dexterity of Panin and the courage of the hetman Razumofsky, and the chancellor Vorontzof, the stratagem of Bestuchef would have succeeded, and Gregory Orlof had been emperor of all the Russias*.

Count Panin engaged Razumofsky and Vorontzof to represent to Catharine how humiliating the projected union would be, and how dangerous to her. The hetman spoke to her with the roughness of his character and the authority that his fortune and his services gave him. Vorontzof, casting himself at her feet, intreated her not to engage in a marriage which would be attended with the greatest

* Catharine, desirous of dignifying Orlof, that her marriage with him might appear less disproportionate, solicited the empress-queen to grant him a diploma of prince of the empire. This being done, it was her intention to decorate him with the title of duke of Ingria, and of Carelia.

misfortunes. His remonstrances were very bold, and shewed him to possess a firmness of which he was not thought capable. But Catharine, who was never embarrassed, affected extreme surprise; and, after having thanked Razumofsky for his friendship, and praised the noble courage of Vorontzof, she protested that the idea of the marriage they so much dreaded had never once entered her mind; that it was positively without her knowledge that such an odious intrigue had been carried on; and that, as Bestuchef was the author of it, she would resent it on him. Nevertheless her majesty took care not to be severe with the old man, who, in perfect harmony with her, only sought to sooth her inclinations, and whom she thought it still necessary to indulge in his humours.

Bestuchef thus saw his project fail without apparently receiving any shock to his influence. He was, on the contrary, every day better received by the empress and the favourite, while Vorontzof experienced from them nothing but coldness. Thoroughly now convinced that too much zeal for the glory of Catharine was not always the means of pleasing her, and that his disgrace was already determined, Vorontzof was eager to prevent a forced retreat by a voluntary exile. He gave out that his health was impaired by the labours of the cabinet; and under pretext of recovering it, he asked permission to travel for two years in foreign countries. The empress, who found his presence rather irksome,

some, granted him leave with secret satisfaction; notwithstanding that she feigned a regret at his departure. In public she shewed him great respect and good-will, and audibly intreated him to hasten his return to resume the functions of an administration which he filled, as she said, so successfully for the happiness of the empire.

In the mean time the apprehension of seeing Catharine bestow herself on the daring adventurer who had lent a hand to precipitate from the throne her unfortunate husband, occasioned violent murmurs. Several ineffectual plots were set on foot against her and her favourite. One of them for a moment was on the point of succeeding. A guard stood at Orlof's door, as at that of the empress. One of the centinels, by means of a bribe, had promised to deliver him asleep to three of the conspirators. But the hour was wrongly marked; and when the conspirators appeared, the centinel who was to have seconded them, had already been relieved by another. This latter, astonished at seeing three men applying for admission into Orlof's apartment, made so much noise as to bring together others of the guards. The conspirators had but just time to escape under favour of the uniform they wore.

This movement spread alarm over the palace. Catharine was roused. Imagining that her life was not in safety at Mosco, she hastened to quit that city, and return to St. Petersburg. The day of her

departure was signalized by demonstrations of insolent joy approaching to rage. Her cypher had been placed on a triumphal arch in the great place of Mosco: the populace tore it down*, and broke it to pieces after having dragged it through the mire.

Catharine arrived at St. Petersburg the day of the anniversary of her accession to the throne. Well knowing that for overawing the minds of the vulgar, it is necessary often to dazzle their eyes, she omitted nothing for rendering her entry magnificent and solemn. Her carriage was preceded by all the regiments of guards, and followed by those of the foreign ministers, and the numerous train of courtiers whom ambition and vanity had drawn to her suite. This pompous spectacle, however, had not the effect that Catharine had expected from it. It raised more astonishment than joy, and tended only to increase the irritation of the public mind. The number of malcontents augmented. Conspiracies were multiplied, and became more dangerous by the names of consequence that were associated to them. The public report counted among the enemies of Catharine the most powerful personages of the empire, and even those who had served her with the utmost assiduity and zeal. The hetman Razumofsky, count Panin, and his brother†, were

* Another was afterwards put up, which was remaining there at the time of Catharine's decease.

† General Panin, brother of the minister, gained considerable reputation in the first turkish war.

of

of this number; and it seemed certain that if these different conspirators could have turned their eyes on a prince worthy of being the central object of their wishes, Catharine would have lost the crown. But some wanted to raise Paul Petrovitch to the throne, while others were desirous of recalling the unhappy Ivan; and all embarrassed, all irresolute, they alike formed the plan of dethroning the empress, without agreeing on the successor to be given her.

Catharine, secretly advertised of the design of Panin and of Razumofsky, was for a moment ready to have them arrested: but having only such evidence as was but little to be relied on, and suspicions in which she might be deceived, she felt, after all, that by an ill-timed severity against men of such high consideration, she ran the risk of occasioning a general insurrection. She thought it might be expedient to employ a little artifice: a means which had frequently been of use to her.

Although, shortly after the revolution which had placed her on the throne, she had repaid with seeming ingratitude the devotedness and fortitude of princess Dashkof, and even since she had been forced to recal her to court, she behaved to her with sufficient coolness, she now feigned all at once to wish to restore her to her confidence. She made no doubt that princess Dashkof had a share in the plots that were hatching by her old friends. She knew her to possess a resolute soul; but she also

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knew

knew that she was precipitate and imprudent. She was therefore in hopes of being able to draw out of her some confessions that might clear up her doubts. She wrote her a very long letter, wherein, after lavishing upon her the most tender epithets, the most advantageous promises, and the most seductive flatteries, she conjured her, in the name of their long-standing friendship, to reveal to her what she knew of the recent conspiracies; assuring her, at the same time, that she would grant a full pardon to all that were concerned. Princess Dashkof, nettled that Catharine should think to make of her an instrument of her vengeance, as she had made her that of her elevation, replied, in no more than four lines to the four pages she had received from the empress. This was her answer: "Madam, I have heard nothing: but if I had heard any thing, I should take good care how I spoke of it. What is it you require of me? That I should expire on a scaffold? I am ready to mount it."

Astonished at so much haughtiness, and not hoping to conquer it, Catharine attempted to attach to her those whom she dared not to punish. Some of the subaltern conspirators, who had been arrested, and yet kept an obstinate silence on their accomplices, were banished to Siberia: but Panin and Razumofsky received several additional marks of favour.

However, as plots were incessantly renewing, and as the clemency exhibited towards the guilty seemed

seemed to harden them in guilt, Catharine declared that, for the future, she would not conform to the edict by which the empress Elizabeth had promised never to suffer a criminal to be sentenced to death. She thought it unhappily impossible to keep the Russians in order by any other means than by the dread of punishment. She afterwards saw that this dread was not a sufficient check to their excesses. In fact, the only means of diminishing the number of criminals is to disseminate instruction, solemnly to establish the principles of sound morality, and to honour those who put them in practice. While legislators have been for ever multiplying laws against vice, they have always been too negligent of making institutions in favour of virtue.

Catharine was invariably sensible of the benefits arising from such institutions, and neglected nothing of all that seemed likely to promise a tendency to the prosperity of her empire. At the very time when she had the strongest reasons to apprehend for the safety of her person, she was busied in all the particulars of government with as much assiduity and calmness as if her reign was to be everlasting. She founded colleges and hospitals in every part of her empire. She encouraged commerce and industry; she ordered new ships of war to be put upon the stocks.

In regard to commerce, Peter III. on the 7th of April 1762, had issued an important and express decree: Catharine took it into consideration on the

11th of August, on the proposal of the senate, where she was present, found much of it to confirm, but likewise many things to omit and to improve; and executed on the same day, with her own hand, the imperial edict: in which it is said: — “ On the
 “ whole surface of the earth there is no country
 “ better adapted for commerce than our empire.
 “ Russia has spacious harbours in Europe; and
 “ over land the way is open through Poland to
 “ every region. Siberia extends, on one side, over
 “ all Asia; and India is not very remote from Oren-
 “ burg; but on the other side it seems to touch
 “ upon America. Across the Euxine is a passage,
 “ though as yet unexplored, to Ægypt and Africa:
 “ and bountiful Providence has blessed the exten-
 “ sive provinces of our empire with such gifts of
 “ nature, as can as rarely be found as they are
 “ wanted in all the four quarters of the world.”

During Catharine's reign these splendid advantages have been improved to an eminent degree. Courland on the Baltic, with its havens, was subjected by her to the russian sceptre; and on the opposite side of Europe the Euxine laves her extensive conquests: Otchakof, Kherfon, the Krim, and the Kuban, bear witness to the force of her arms. The sails of her ships of commerce and of war are spread in the Mediterranean. On the greek islands the russian banners are displayed. Her troops opened a road into Ægypt, and there in 1772 fought in support of Ali-bey against the
 Turks.

Turks. The free inhabitants of the extreme north-eastern point of Asia, the Tschuktsches, were at length obliged to submit; and a channel of no great width (the streights of Behring) there only divides the empire from America. A multitude of russian islands, of various dimensions, in the northern part of the southern ocean, the Kurilli and several additional acquisitions, connect it with other islands, and even with the continent of the fourth quarter of the world: nay, even upon that the Russians have got firm footing. The increase of navigation by these acquisitions, and the extremely lucrative commerce in the furs here procured, the costly skins of the sea-otter and other animals, is of the utmost consequence. The differences that arose with China in 1778 are at length compromised; and if no more caravans go from Mosco to Peking, yet the merchants of these two great empires prosecute their trade together, and perhaps better, in the frontier town of Kiachta and Maimatshin. Orenburg in asiatic Russia is excellently situated for commercial intercourse with the East Indies: the caravans require only three months for the whole journey: accordingly, at the half-way thither, at Balk, a town in Bactriana or Khorasan, russian and east-indian caravans already meet together.

Well-founded as all this evidently is, yet we have seen that it is possible for unfavourable occurrences completely to annihilate the advantages of this whole situation at least on a very important
 side.

side. When, in the year 1788, Sweden, Poland, Prussia, the Turks, and an english fleet, had closely combined in a war against Russia, this great empire was in a manner cut off from all trade and commerce with the rest of Europe. So true it is, that the bare "gifts of nature, wherewith Providence" has blessed the extensive provinces of Russia," are not able to procure her the balance; so greatly do the articles of finer manufacture and of luxury outweigh in commerce the indispensable necessities of life. This Catharine knew very well towards the latter end of her reign; and therefore by a policy, the soundness of which is not so apparent, she prohibited, with unexampled severity, the importation of almost all wrought goods from abroad, which serve only to conveniency and pleasure.

Commercial regulations are naturally subject to alteration. Accordingly nothing more circumstantial can here be adduced on the subject. It will suffice to give a farther sketch, to shew the spirit of the laws. The corn trade is, in consideration of a moderate duty, entirely free; only all exportation immediately ceases, when the market price in the country exceeds such a sum, which for the various provinces is differently settled:—a regulation which, whether beneficial or not, it is well known, is the same in England. This limitation of the exportation does not attach to corn of the growth of Poland, which may at all times be shipped for the foreigner, in order not to oppress this branch
of

of commerce. Siberia may never send corn out of the country. The condition of a stated market price in the country does not affect the exportation of linseed; but of horned cattle it does. The port of Archangel was favoured equally with that of St. Petersburg. The export of fine and coarse linens, against the usual prohibition, was permitted; that of linen yarn remained prohibited. Several monopolies belonging to private individuals and whole trading companies were abolished; indeed by an arbitrary step, but certainly with beneficial effect to the country: neither did the government exempt itself. The trade in rhubarb, in pot-ashes and wood-ashes, belonging exclusively to the crown, was now declared open to every one. An end was thenceforth put to the caravan trade of the crown to China: and also the contracting for the sea-dog fishery, other fisheries, and the tobacco trade; the monopoly of sugar-works, and of chintz manufactories; the exclusive right of one man to import foreign silk: the trading companies to Persia, China, and the Bukharèy; the company to the Euxine and the Mediterranean, from Temernikof, a town on the Don. Every person may freely trade in all these commodities and to all these countries. Only a limitation took place in the asiatic commerce, but to the security and the greater profit of the russian merchants themselves. To them only two ports were assigned on the Caspian, Baku and Sinfili, there to keep market, and wait the arrival of the persian merchants. It is farther regulated, that
they

they must there tax the several commodities intended for Persia, the Bukharèy, &c. in the presence of the resident imperial consul: the like must be done by the merchants of Astrakhan and Orenburg, and enter into a bond with one another not to sell anything below the fixed price, under penalty of confiscation; that the foreigners may not profit by the spoiling of the market by the russians themselves.

The tobacco trade was next declared free; proper measures were also taken in February 1763, conducive to the better culture of it in the * Ukraine, where it may be made to flourish so well from the excellent quality of the soil.

The coinage was afterwards frequently altered. In December 1763 Catharine decreed, that the proportion of the gold to the silver coin should be as one to fifteen. An error almost general throughout Europe is, in the having of a twofold standard, as if they imagined it possible to fix by legislation a proportion that, from commerce and its own nature, is always fluctuating. The gold shall be of a fineness of 88 solotniks; the silver of 72. Out of a pound of such gold shall be struck 31 imperials and 2 rubles $88\frac{2}{3}$ kopeeks; out of a pound of silver so alloyed 17 rubles $6\frac{2}{3}$ kopeeks. Siberia

* The slavonian parent-word is *Krai*, *the border*; and *u*, *on or near*. The primary import, therefore, of *Ukrainer* is *borderer*, from *ukraine*, *on the borders*. Hence the *Ukern* (in the mark Brandenburg), the *Krainer* and the *Ukrainer*.

had

had had a coinage (with the arms of that kingdom, two wolves, which was not to be current beyond the confines of the government) assigned it, of the copper peculiar to the mines of Kolyvan, which is impregnated with gold and silver, obtained by the smelting away of the silver ore, the transport whereof would be too difficult, and its farther separation from the noble metals too expensive. The pood of this copper contains $1\frac{2}{3}$ solotniks of fine gold, and $31\frac{2}{3}$ solotniks of silver*.

About this time Poniatofsky renewed his solicitations for permission to visit Petersburg. The empress would not listen to them, but assured him of her constant friendship, of which she promised to give him convincing proofs on all occasions. Nor was it long before she realized her promise.

Towards the end of this year Catharine gave a proper form to the supreme college of the empire, the directing senate, which had been instituted by Peter I. In order to give an easier, plainer, and more rapid course to the business of it, she divided the senate into six departments, whereof the four former should have their seat in St. Petersburg, and the two latter in Mosco. In some particulars she removed incumbrances, in others she made new regulations, and diffused through the whole a spirit of simplicity and order.

* For the relative proportions of these weights, monies, &c. see before, p. 48.

Undoubtedly many of these new institutions were rather preparatory than finished works; undoubtedly several plans were sketched out by her, and even put in execution under her eyes, of which, in the far distant parts of her vast empire, no trace is any longer to be seen; undoubtedly some things had more of show and a shining outside than of an exactly calculated utility. But only as preparatives, even only as reform in the more proximate sphere of action, even only as the display of a truly imperial magnificence, they could not be unattended by important consequences. All men saw that the comprehensive mind of Catharine embraced all objects; they were convinced of her activity and of her benevolence, (and what higher qualities can the ruler of a people possess?) of her treasures and her magnanimity. They were the capital towns, they were the colleges of the empire that gained another form, and which must naturally, though slowly, operate upon the provinces. A new vital spirit was infused into the nation, a more elevated impetus into all minds. To this greatly contributed even the personal reverence paid to the beautiful, the spirited woman, the glow of enthusiasm for the monarch whom foreigners praised, whom the universe admired. The court was brilliant and agreeable; in the expenditure of large sums, magnificence, taste, and lasting enjoyment were studied. Foundations for the cultivation of arts and literature, superb embellishments of the residence and other towns,

towns, regulations for use and convenience were manifest to every beholder. Milder and more amicable dispositions began to appear; industry and diligence were quickened, and by their means the comforts of life were more widely diffused; the nation was no longer dependent on the foreigner; and russian ships were seen riding at anchor in the ports of Cadiz and Leghorn.

CHAP. V.

State of Poland from the Time of the Kings of the first Race to the Death of Augustus III. — Election of Prince Poniatofsky. — Fresh Conspiracy at St. Petersburg. — Journey of the Empress into Livonia. — Assassination of Prince Ivan in the Castle of Schlusfelburg. — Punishment of Mirovitch, and other Events of 1763, 1764, &c.

POLAND, which had sometimes acted so conspicuous a part in the politics of Europe, and which, from the extent of its territory, the fertility of its soil, the high spirit and courage of its inhabitants, seemed formed for acquiring a still greater preponderance, has lost, by the defects of its government, a part of the advantages it had received from nature.

This kingdom had long been under the influence of Russia; and that influence had become the more powerful under Catharine, as, independently of the army of Romantzof, encamped on the banks of the Vistula, fifty thousand men had taken up their quarters in Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland. Augustus III, declining in his health, as well from the irregularities of his life as from the vexation occasioned him by the invasion of Saxony, was now verging fast to the grave. All such as had formed pretensions to the succession, accordingly began to examine their strength; and the court of Petersburg was the centre of their intrigues. The aspiring mind of Catharine was flattered at seeing herself the arbiter of these ambitious rivals. But, while she thought proper to foment their divisions and to encourage their hopes, she was secretly decided in her choice. She was in want of a king, whose weakness and servility she knew: she made choice of Poniatofsky.

It will not be useless here to cast an eye upon the state of that rich and unhappy country, which we shall see more than once exciting the ambition of Catharine, and which she long continued to harass, the better to prepare it for being usurped.

The history of Poland, like that of almost all the other countries of Europe, reaches back to an æra extremely remote, and filled with uncertainty. All that we know with tolerable precision is, that Po-

land at first was governed by a race of kings*, whose power was nearly absolute. To this race succeeded the Piasfs, (for so they usually call their native sovereigns,) who are thought to have been elective, but who, for several generations, preserved the crown in their family. The kingdom was frequently disturbed by the pretensions of the magnats, who combined against the monarch, and opposed to him a power which balanced that of the crown.

One of the last kings of the race of the † Piasfs, Casimir III. surnamed the great, or the father of the peasantry, repressed the dangerous and always turbulent authority of the grandees, by conferring a variety of privileges on the inferior noblesse, and by that means alarming them with a dangerous rivalry. But that prince, however, generally guided by the dictates of justice, and how great soever his concern in behalf of the unhappy peasants, was never able to mitigate the barbarous lot to which they are doomed in Poland.

Lewis of Hungary, nephew and successor of Casimir, was not in a capacity to benefit by the advantages that monarch had acquired, because on bestowing on him the crown, the nobility obliged him to

* The race of Lesko.

† It is generally thought that this denomination comes from a peasant of Krufvies, named Piasfe, on whom the Poles bestowed the crown on the death of Popiel in 830, and who rendered his people prosperous and happy. The throne of Poland remained in his family more than four hundred years.

subscribe to burdensome conditions. On the death of Lewis, without leaving a male heir, that turbulent nobility made an offer of the throne to Ladislaus Yagellon, duke of Lithuania, and imposed on him the same conditions as had been accepted by Lewis. One of these conditions was, not to raise subsidies without the consent of the diets. His successors were, equally with him, forced to be continually making new sacrifices for obtaining the imposts that were necessary to their government; and Sigismund Augustus was at length induced to consent *, that at his death the crown should become absolutely elective. This prince, who had no son, was without difficulty brought to agree to make a declaration, by which he purchased his repose. In a short time afterwards a charter † was framed, which became the basis and guarantee of that privilege. The four principal articles of the charter were :

1. That the crown should be elective; and that the king should never appoint a successor during his lifetime.
2. That general diets should be assembled every two years.
3. That every nobleman of Poland should have the right of voting at the election of a king.
4. That if the king shall presume to infringe the laws, and to disavow the privileges of the

* In the year 1550.

† Known under the name of *Pacta conventa*.

nation,

nation *, the subjects shall be absolved from their oath of allegiance.

The privileges secured by this charter were still farther extended; and all the successors of Sigismund Augustus down to Stanislaus Poniatofsky inclusively, were only elected upon their swearing to maintain them. Could less then be expected from princes who received the crown as a matter of favour, and who, if they had not accepted it on these conditions, would have been obliged to forego it in favour of a less scrupulous competitor? The nobles, the more they increased their power, abused it the more. Not contented with freely granting their suffrages, they sold them. Henry de † Valois was the first who purchased, by means of promises and gold, the throne of the Yagellons; means which have since only yielded to the terror of arms.

On every accession to the throne the nobility usurped some additional privilege. During the reign of John Casimir, the *liberum veto* was created. This was a right given to each nobleman singly to put a stop to the deliberation of a whole diet, and to dissolve it by the sole act of his will; a right which has been one of the principal sources of the troubles, the anarchy, and the total destruction of Poland.

* That is to say, of the nobles; for the rest are counted for nothing.

† The bigoted and debauched Henry III. of France.

But by such an extent of power as every nobleman had, we may form a judgment of that enjoyed by the palatines*, the great officers, and, in general, all the wealthy Poles. Sometimes they raised regiments independent on the authority of the king; at other times they formed confederacies, which, under pretence of defending the laws, sowed sedition and revolt, and in the sacred name of liberty exercised the absurdest tyranny.

It is the blind ambition of the polish nobles that has been for three hundred years gradually consummating the ruin of their country. That nation, naturally brave, which has often conquered the Ottomans, and which has given law to Prussia and to Russia, has not been able, since these dissensions, to resist any of the armies by which it has been attacked. The forces of the kings of Sweden,

* In Poland are thirty-two palatines, who are properly governors of provinces, three castellans, and one starost. Though the quality of the two latter be inferior to that of a palatine, yet there are four of them who possess the first ranks amongst the temporal nobles, the castellan of Cracow being the first of all. The office of a palatine is to lead the troops of his palatinate to the army; to preside in the assemblies of the nobility in his province; to set a price upon merchandizes and commodities; to take care that the weights and measures be not altered; and to judge and defend the jews. He has a vice-palatine under him, who must take an oath to him, and who ought to have an estate in land, which they call *possessionatus*. To these follow the order of nobility, who are alone capable of possessing all the offices and lands in the duchy and kingdom.

Charles

Charles Gustavus and Charles XII. alternately found it an easy prey; and from the moment that the Russians were able to oppose disciplined troops to its brilliant and licentious *pospolite**, they have found themselves in a capacity to dictate laws to the nation.

Under such circumstances the Poles called themselves free. But what sort of a freedom was that they enjoyed, even while they were exercising the boasted right of electing their kings? The age in which we live has produced examples to the contrary; and one† of the men who best understood their history, has desired them to shew but two instances of a free election.

There is scarcely a great potentate in Europe that has not had more or less influence in these elections: but for upwards of fifty years Russia has been the only power by which they have been actually directed.

* The military force of the Poles consists chiefly in the *pospolite*, that is, the whole body of the gentry, which, upon extraordinary occasions, the king and the national general can order into the field to serve for a limited time. The inconvenience and inutility of this military institution, in the present state of the art of war, need not be insisted on. They have also a standing army which ought to amount to about forty thousand men, but, from being undisciplined, irregular, and incomplete, it is a body altogether contemptible, especially the foot, as they consist almost wholly of their wretched peasants.

† Chernesky.

AAA

Such

Such was the situation of Poland when the death of Augustus III. * revived the cabals of the pretenders to the throne, and furnished Catharine the means of displaying her political talents with the utmost effect. That sovereign, whom the courts of Vienna and Versailles were in hopes of detaching from Prussia, began her operations by artfully obtaining from those courts an assurance that they would not interfere in the affairs of Poland. In 1764, the marquis de Paulmy, ambassador from France at Warsaw, declared † at the diet, that Lewis XV. would have nothing to do in the election of the new king; and shortly after the count de Mercy held the same language on the part of Maria Theresa.

The promise of these two courts, however, was not sufficient for Catharine. She was desirous of some assurance that she should not be thwarted by that of Berlin: in this she succeeded. Frederic had long been soliciting her to sign a treaty of defensive alliance; and she coveted it the more as she had employed so much art in inducing him to desire it. Imagining that the delays which she made to the conclusion of this business arose only from the repugnance she had to a minister ‡ who had been the friend of her husband, the prussian monarch made choice of a plenipotentiary who should necessarily

* The 5th of October.

† The 16th of March.

‡ The baron de Goltz.

be more agreeable to that princefs: he sent to St. Petersburg the count of Solms, who had married a princefs of Anhalt-Bernburg, cousin-german to Catharine. The count de Solms was extremely well received by the empress, with whom he shortly after, in the name of the king of Prussia, concluded a treaty, subjoined to which was the secret article as follows:

“ It being for the interest of his majesty the king of Prussia
 “ and of her majesty the empress of all the Russias, to exert their
 “ utmost care and all their efforts for maintaining the republic of
 “ Poland in its state of free election, and that it should not be
 “ permitted to any one to render the said kingdom hereditary in
 “ his family, or to make himself absolute therein; his majesty
 “ the king of Prussia and her imperial majesty have promised
 “ and mutually engage themselves, in the most solemn manner, by
 “ this secret article, not only not to permit any one, whoever
 “ he be, to attempt to divest the republic of its right of free
 “ election, to render the kingdom hereditary, or to make himself
 “ absolute therein, in all cases whenever such attempt should be
 “ made; but also to prevent and to frustrate, by all possible means,
 “ and in common consent, the views and designs that have a
 “ tendency to that end, as soon as they shall be discovered, and
 “ even, in case of necessity, to recur to the force of arms, to
 “ defend the republic from the overthrow of its constitution and
 “ its fundamental laws.

“ The present secret article shall have the same force and vigour
 “ as if it had been inserted word for word in the principal treaty
 “ of defensive alliance signed this day, and shall be ratified at the
 “ same time.

“ In virtue whereof two similar copies of it have been made,
 “ which we, the ministers plenipotentiary of his majesty the
 “ king of Prussia, and of her majesty the empress of all the
 “ Russias,

"Ruffias, authorized to that purpose, have signed and sealed with
"the seal of our arms.

"Done at St. Petersburg, the 11th of April (the 31st
"of March O. S.) 1764.

"C. DE SOLMS. PANIN. GALLITZIN."

The new sovereign of Saxony, who flattered himself with the prospect of inheriting the throne of Augustus III. as he had inherited his electorate, addressed himself to the empress, to prevail upon her to approve his pretensions: but she made no hesitation to deprive him of all hope. She wrote to him, "That she advised him, as a true friend, not to expose his interests in an affair which in the issue could not answer his expectations."

Conscious of her power in Poland, Catharine dismissed, one after another, the candidates who were not agreeable to her, without however, giving any intimation as yet concerning the person whom she intended to favour. The greater number of the Poles were for electing a Piast, a descendant of their ancient kings; Catharine also for some time appeared to be of the same sentiment. But all at once it was heard with amazement at Warsaw, that it was count Poniatofsky whom that monarch had destined to the throne. This choice excited an almost universal discontent and violent murmurs. The polish magnats, incensed at the prospect of being governed by a young man* of a birth not

* He was at that time thirty-two years of age.

very

very illustrious, and whose elevation was neither justified by shining actions nor extraordinary virtues, reciprocally interrogated one another, what services count Poniatofsky had rendered the republic, to entitle him to so glorious a reward?

Count Poniatofsky was endowed with those qualities which are more adapted to conciliate the friendship of particular persons, than to fit him for swaying a sceptre. Tall, well-made, of a figure at once commanding and agreeable, he spoke and wrote with fluency the seven principal languages of Europe, and in a graceful diction: but he possessed only a slight knowledge of affairs. His eloquence was vague and desultory, his presumption too apparent. Rather weak than gentle, rather prodigal than generous, he might easily mislead women, and dazzle a thoughtless multitude, but not persuade men of cultivated minds. He was doubtless fitter to submit to be governed than to govern himself. Nevertheless supported by the influence and arms of Russia, and having no obstacle to fear on the part of other powers, his triumph was not long in suspense. The consequence of Catharine was involved in this triumph. That princess set so great a value on seeing the crown of the Sarmates on the brow of her former favourite, that she wrote without delay to count Kayserling, her ambassador at Warsaw, to employ every means in behalf of Poniatofsky. One of her letters was intercepted, and contained the following words: — "Mon cher

"comte,

“ comte, souvenez-vous de mon candidat. Je vous
 “ écris ceci deux heures après minuit : jugez si la
 “ chose m’est indifférente * !”

Count Kayserling was careful not to disobey. Neither he nor the russian generals neglected anything for securing the choice which their sovereign desired. The dyetines were already convoked. That of Warsaw elected Poniatofsky by an unanimous suffrage ; but whatever pains had been taken for bringing those of the provinces to the same favourable disposition, his success was not the same. His competitors obtained a majority of voices in some, and at least an equal number with his in the others.

At the assembling of the diet of convocation, the russian troops entered Warsaw, under pretence of preserving liberty and order.

Crowds of foreigners at the same time poured into that city, all ready to unite at the very first signal. Count Branitchky †, grand general of the crown, and prince Radzivil, took arms in order to prevent the Russians from extorting the suffrages : but what could they do against foreign armies who were masters of the country ; and against

* “ My dear count, remember my candidate. I write this to
 “ you at two o’clock in the morning ; judge whether I am in-
 “ different about the affair !”

† Father of him who afterwards married mademoiselle Engelhardt, niece of prince Potemkin.

a part of their countrymen disposed to join those armies ?

It is a difficult matter to form an adequate idea of the tumult that began to prevail in the diet of Warsaw. Count Malakofsky, venerable for his great age and his virtues, had been appointed its marshal. He endeavoured in vain to reduce it to order, and to clear it of strangers. He was answered by furious vociferations, and sabres were drawn. The eloquent Mokranofsky, nuncio of Cracow, ran the risk of his life under the swords of the russian officers, who endeavoured to pierce him from the galleries of the speakers. He at first thought of standing on his defence ; but, presently returning his sabre into the sheath, and exposing his breast : — “ If you must needs have a
 “ victim,” said he to the Russians, “ I stand here
 “ before you. But at least I shall die free, as I
 “ have hitherto lived.” — It is not improbable that he would have fallen a prey to their fury, had not prince Adam Chartorinsky had the generous courage to throw himself in the way, and to shield him with his body. Thus, in the first sittings of the diet nothing passed but injurious speeches and tumultuous quarrels.

Some one at Petersburg, who knew what displeasure the election of Poniatofsky would occasion to the Poles, and wanting to vilify him in the eyes of Catharine, had the boldness to tell that monarch, that he whose interest she espoused seemed the less

proper to fill the throne of Poland, as his grandfather had been intendant of a little estate belonging to the princeſs Lubomirſky. — “ Though he had “ been ſo himſelf,” returned ſhe, ſomewhat nettled, “ I will have him to be king, and king he ſhall be.”

In holding this language, Catharine was under no apprehenſions of being deceived. Independently of the troops which ſhe had already in Poland, ſhe cauſed a body of twelve thouſand men to enter Lithuania, and freſh reinforcements were advancing towards Kieſ. Her ambaffador ruled at Warſaw, and her armies, if the expreſſion may be allowed, compreſſed the republic.

Several of the provinces now heavily accuſed their nuncios of having badly correſponded with their deſires in ſubmitting to the influence of the court of Petersburgh. They did not confine themſelves to murmurs. They had recourſe to arms; they formed into different confederacies; but theſe movements were attended by no conſequences. The Ruſſians threatened: the malcontents were preſently ſilenced.

At length the diet of election was opened; held, according to cuſtom, in the plain of Vola, at the diſtance of about three miles from Warſaw. This diet began by a ſolemn maſs, and a * ſermon. Count Kayſerling, ambaffador from Ruſſia, being at

* The preacher took his text from theſe words: “ Eligit ex “ vobis meliorem, qui vobis placuerit, et poſuite eum ſuper ſolium.” 2 Kings, x. 3.

that

that time indiſpoſed, could not repair to Vola, but ſent to the diet a letter, addreſſed to him by the empreſs, recommending count Poniatofsky in the moſt preſſing terms.

The other party, however, had not been idle, either during the election of the nuncios or representatives, who, in the name of the body of the nobility, were to chooſe a king, nor at the firſt aſſembling of the ſtates *. In the former caſe great tumults were raiſed, but they ſubſiſted not long. In the latter twenty-two ſenators entered a proteſt againſt the proceedings of the diet, the principal reaſons of which were grounded on the preſence and interference of the foreign troops. Forty-five nuncios ſigned an act of adheſion to this proteſt.

Count Branitchky, who was at the head of theſe proteſters, retired from the diet. But that aſſembly, ſoon after its opening, took its revenge. An order was made for diveſting him of the poſt of crown general. Branitchky denied their power; drew together into one body a great part of that army of which they had attempted to deprive him, but which ſtill faithfully adhered to him; augmented it by levies; and prepared to maintain himſelf by force; poſſeſſed, as it ſhould ſeem, by a ſpirit of deſpair and fury, having no power in the leaſt adequate to the height of his attempt. Prince Radzivil, on his part, was alſo up in arms, and with the

* May 7, 1764.

ſame

same obstinacy, and no greater strength, struggled against the election.

The ambassadors of France, Spain, and the empire, finding their political intrigues of no more avail towards obstructing the election, than the hostile attempts of prince Radzivil and count Branitchky were likely to be, retired from the diet and left Poland, declaring that they had not been sent to a party, but to the entire republic *.

An action at length happened † between prince Radzivil and the russian troops, wherein the Poles, having fought a long time with their usual irregular bravery, were as usual defeated by the Russians.

The spirit of Poland appeared strongly in all the circumstances of this action. The princefs Radzivil, but newly married, and a sister of that prince, both of them young and beautiful, fought on horseback with sabres, and encouraged the soldiery both by their words and their example.

Branitchky was also defeated by a body of Russians; and these two nobles, the only very considerable persons who opposed the russian nomination, were obliged to fly out of their country, and to take shelter in the turkish dominions, where they particularly value themselves on protecting the unfortunate; and these noble fugitives found refuge where Charles XII. had not fought in vain.

During all this time Poniatofsky, accompanied by a great number of his friends, was visiting each

* June the 7th, 1764.

† On the 3d of July.

nuncio

nuncio in particular, and endeavouring to gain them by testimonies of benevolence and flattering promises. The palatines being all assembled and ranged in order round the *shopa* *, a large building open on all sides, occupied by the senate and the equestrian order, the primate asked with a loud voice, at three distinct periods, whom they would have for king? All answered unanimously: — “Count Poniatofsky!” — The next day †, he was proclaimed king of Poland, and grand duke of Lithuania, under the name of Stanislaus Augustus. Thus the diet and the kingdom being freed, in the manner we have seen, from all those who were the declared opposers of Poniatofsky, the election was soon concluded in favour of that prince with an unanimity unknown in the annals of Poland.

The new monarch, on his return to Warsaw, passed along the streets of that capital amidst the

* The general diet for the election of a king is always held in the open field, about two miles from Warsaw, near the village of Vola, where a sort of booth is erected, covered with boards, at the public charge, which in the polish language is called *shopa*, or a shelter from bad weather. This place is built and prepared by the treasurer of the crown: it is surrounded with a ditch, and has three doors. The day appointed for the diet being come, the senate and the nobility proceed to St. John's church at Warsaw to hear the mass of the holy ghost, to implore its influence in the election of a new king, who may have all the qualities necessary to defend the interests of the church and of the republic: after which they go to the *shopa* and begin the election.

† The 7th of September.

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B B

acclamations

acclamations of all the people, and from that very day took possession of the palace of the republic. Some nuncios had abstained from appearing at the diet; the greater part of the prime nobility took umbrage at the appointment of Poniatofsky: but no sooner was he on the throne than they came almost all to do him homage; and he began to reign in as much tranquillity as if his election had not been effected by violence*.

Some

* Stanislaus Poniatofsky behaved at first with great judgment and circumspection. He received with kindness those who had acted seemingly in the most direct opposition to his interest. The son of count Bruhl exerted himself to his prejudice, and yet that prince left him in possession of the post of grand master of the artillery which he had promised to count Branitchky, palatin of Helsh, and of which indeed the latter had the generosity not to wish to deprive him. — Soon after his election he received letters of congratulation from many of the courts of Europe. The most remarkable is that from the king of Prussia, written with his majesty's own hand. From the matter and the occasion, as well as the character of the writer, it is extremely worthy of being inserted at length. Nothing can be more glorious than a communication of such sentiments in the intercourse between sovereigns. "Your majesty must reflect, that, as you enjoy a crown by election and not by descent, the world will be more observant of your majesty's actions than of any other potentate in Europe: and it is but reasonable. The latter being the mere effect of consanguinity, no more is looked for (though much more is to be wished) from him, than what men are endowed with in common: but, from a man exalted by the voice of his equals, from a subject to a king, from a man voluntarily elected to reign over those by whom he was chosen,

" every-

Some time previous to this election, Catharine had declared her intention of visiting the scene of her successes, and to make the tour of Livonia. But whilst this monarch was employed abroad in disposing of crowns, at home her throne seemed to be tottering under her; and that vast power, which extended to the remotest part of Asia, which awed all Europe, and absolutely governed so many of its neighbours, was not secure of its own duration for a moment. Every breath of a conspiracy seemed to shake it: and such was the critical state of that empire, that the designs of the obscurest person in it were not unattended by danger.

In the course of this summer an event of that nature happened in Russia which is highly deserving of a place in history, from the extraordinary circumstances by which it was accompanied, though so extremely mysterious and unaccountable in many

[" everything is expected that can possibly deserve and adorn a
 " crown. Gratitude to his people is the first great duty of such
 " a monarch: for to them alone (under Providence) he is in-
 " debted that he is one. A king who is so by birth, if he act
 " in a manner derogatory to his station, is a satire only on
 " himself; but an elected one, who behaves inconsistently with
 " his dignity, reflects dishonour also on his subjects. Your
 " majesty, I am sure, will pardon this warmth. It is the effusion
 " of the sincerest regard. The amiable part of the picture is
 " not so much a lesson of what you ought to be, as a prophecy
 " of what your majesty will be."

BB 2

particulars,

particulars, that we despair of affording any clear satisfaction to the reader concerning them.

The empress, in pursuance of her intentions already mentioned, set out on her journey through Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland. On her way, she passed over from Oranienbaum to Cronstadt; and thinking to give the foreign ministers an advantageous idea of her marine, she invited them to follow her to that port. They did so: but the opinion they formed of her naval forces fell far short of that which she entertained of them herself. There was but a small number of ships, which they judged but little adapted to keep the sea; and the english ambassador, with that frankness peculiar to his nation, did not dissemble that her navy was far from appearing to him to be very formidable. She afterwards proved that it was possible for it to become so.

On quitting Cronstadt her majesty, having left the government of Petersburg to count Panin, took the road of Livonia, accompanied by count Gregory Orlof and a small retinue of nobility of both sexes. During her absence on this expedition, in the prison of the dethroned Ivan an insurrection broke out under the conduct of a certain Mirovitch, which cost that unfortunate prince his life.

Ivan Antonovitch, styled Ivan the third in the manifestos that were published in his name while emperor, was born in 1740; great grandson of tzar Ivan Alexèyevitch, the elder half-brother of

Peter the great *. On running over the series of russian monarchs from Alexèy Mikhailovitch downwards, our feelings are at every moment hurt by the intestine disturbances that have happened from different pretenders, of which so many within so short space of time, and in general attended with such shocks, as no princely house in Europe has experienced, especially in modern times. But a cruel fatality seems, in a particular manner, to have propagated the seeds of discord between the families of the two imperial brothers.

* See the genealogical tables in the former part of this volume, tab. iii.

Ivan III. if we reckon by the line of the tzars, or VI. if from the first sovereign of Russia, was proclaimed emperor on the death of empress Anne, and Biren regent; but this high elevation was soon to be followed by a dreadful fall. The father and the mother of the young emperor were discontented at seeing themselves excluded from the regency; and the insolence with which they were treated by Biren increased their displeasure. Munich, on his part, not having obtained from the regent what he thought due to his services, joined himself to those princes, and, in the night between the 20th and 21st of November, Manstein, aid-de-camp to Munich, arrested the regent. The princess Anne caused herself to be proclaimed regent during the minority of her son. The whole nation rejoiced at being freed from an abominable tyrant: he was conducted to Schlusselfburg, tried, and condemned to death: but his punishment was mitigated to an exile for life in Siberia. This exile was again moderated, by transferring him to Yaroslaf, where he remained till 1762, when Peter III. as we have already seen, recalled him to court; and he was shortly after restored to his dukedom by Catharine.

We have seen him seized and confined with his parents and relations; at first conveyed to the citadel of Riga, then in the fortrefs of Dunamund; thence removed to Oranienburg, at the south-eastern extremity of european Russia. At all these places the being together alleviated the miseries of imprisonment, and especially the humane behaviour of captain Korf, which first awakened the gratitude of the infant emperor, and was all his life after recollected with emotion; solely on account of this lenity, the suspicion of the court fell upon * Korf, and he was removed from his office. About the latter end of 1745, or the beginning of the year 1746, the family was separated; all the rest being brought more northward to Kolmogory, Ivan was left behind in Oranienburg. To his great misfortune it came into the mind of a monk to carry him off; in their flight they had reached Smolensk, where the affair was discovered, and they were detained. From this place the wretched captive, lately the envied emperor of a quarter of the globe, was now brought, for greater security, to Schlusselfburg, and there lodged in a casematt of the fortrefs, the very loop-hole of which was immediately bricked up. He was never brought out into the open air, and no ray of heaven ever visited his eyes. In this subterranean vault it was necessary to keep a lamp always burning; and as no clock was either to be

* Afterwards promoted to the rank of general by Peter III.

seen

seen or heard, Ivan knew no difference between day and night. His interior guard, a captain and a lieutenant, were shut up with him; and there was a time when they did not dare to speak to him, not so much as to answer him the simplest question. What wonder if his ignorance should at length border on stupidity? This dreadful abode was however afterwards changed for that presently to be described, in the corridor under the covered way, in the castle. Elizabeth caused him once to be brought in a covered cart to Petersburg, and saw and conversed with him. Peter III. also visited him incognito; and what passed on this occasion has been already related. Catharine too had a conversation with him soon after the commencement of her reign, as she relates in her manifesto of the 28th of August 1764*, in order, as is there said, to form a judgment of his understanding and talents. To her great surprise she found him to the last degree deficient in both. She observed in him a total privation of sense and reason, with a defect in his utterance, that even had he anything rational to utter, would have rendered him entirely unintelligible.

All persons, however, were not so thoroughly convinced of the incapacity of this prince. He was now arrived at the age of twenty-four years, and he might evidently be made an instrument, or at

* See the appendix No. X. at the end of the volume.

B B 4

least

least a pretence, for exciting dangerous commotions. His just title to the crown, of which he had been formerly in possession, his long sufferings, without any other guilt than that possession and that title, his youth, and even the obscurity which attended his life, and which therefore gave latitude for conjecture and invention, formed very proper materials for working on the minds of the populace.

At the moment when Catharine was taking her departure from the residence, she had intelligence of fresh conspiracies among the guards. Several of them were taken up: but experience having shewn that the detection of one conspiracy always encouraged the hatching of some other; and, willing to avoid irritating the multitude by the frequency of punishments, the conspirators were proceeded against in private, and many of them were suffered to pine out their lives in prison.

From the depth of this dungeon prince Ivan afforded hopes to those who held in abhorrence the present usurpation. It was for restoring the throne to this unfortunate captive that almost all these plots were formed. It was for his sake that men, who had never seen him, and whose very existence was utterly unknown to him, were continually braving the scaffold. Faithful to the system of calumny that had been of such service to the destruction of Peter III. the court of Russia incessantly employed it against Ivan. One while it was given out that he was stupid, and incapable of uttering articulate sounds;

sounds; at another, that he was a drunkard, and as ferocious as a savage. Sometimes it was even pretended, that he was subject to fits of madness, and believed himself a prophet. But many there were to whom these reports seemed no better than tales invented by the blackest malignity, and afterwards innocently propagated by persons who did not reflect on the numberless interests that might concur in their invention. Doubtless, Ivan, to whom all kinds of instruction were refused*, and who was kept shut up in a loathsome prison, denied the converse of any human being from whom he could derive information, must necessarily have been of a very confined understanding; but there is still a great distance between ignorance and imbecility or madness. What evidently proves that Ivan was neither mad nor stupid is, in the first place, the conversation he had† at count Schuvalof's with the empress Elizabeth. Not only the graces of his figure and the accents of his voice, but the moving complaints he uttered, awakened the sensibility of all that were present, and even drew from the empress abundance of tears. If that young prince had committed some act of lunacy, would it

* He was turned of eight years old when he was separated from his father and mother, who probably had begun to instruct him. It has moreover been affirmed, that a german officer who for some time had the custody of him, clandestinely taught him to read.

† In 1756.

have failed of publication? Again, afterwards we find a fresh proof of his good sense and his sensibility in the discourse which he held to Peter III. when he saw him for the first time at Schlusfelburg. Baron Korf and Leo Narishkin communicated it to several persons, as we have related it in a former part of this volume*. Peter III. talked with him several times afterwards, and persisted in his intention of declaring him his heir. Now it may well be imagined, that Volkof, Gudovitch, and his other confidants, would have dissuaded him from it, if they could have brought themselves to imagine Ivan likely to be forever unfit to wear the crown. But, to conclude, whatever might be the character of that prince, the daring attempts that were repeatedly made in his favour did not render him less formidable to Catharine and to the tranquillity of the empire.

Chance soon furnished an instrument to put him out of the way of being any disturbance to either. The regiment of Smolensk was in garrison in the town of Schlusfelburg; and a company of about one hundred men guarded the fortress in which prince Ivan was confined. In this regiment, as second lieutenant, was an officer named Vassily Mirovitch, whose grandfather had been implicated in the rebel-

* See p. 196, & sqq. Busching cites it from Korf, in the 6th volume of his historical magazine; but the manner in which he speaks shews clearly that he does it with reservation.

lion

lion of the kozak Mazeppa, and had fought under Charles XII. against Peter the great. The estates of the family of Mirovitch had accordingly been forfeited to the crown. This young man, who had a good share of ambition, preferred with warmth his pretensions to have them restored; and this it was that made him known at court. The family-estates were not given back; but he was continually flattered with the hopes of their recovery, if he would shew himself active in securing the tranquillity of the empire.

The inner guard placed over the imperial prisoner consisted of two officers, captain Vlassief and lieutenant Tschekin, who slept with him in his cell. These had a discretionary order signed by the empress, by which they were enjoined to put the unhappy prince to death, on any insurrection that might be made in his favour, on the presumption that it could not otherwise be quelled.

The door of Ivan's prison opened under a sort of low arcades*, which, together with it, form the

* It was found impracticable to give an exact view of this place in our plate of Schlusfelburg castle. The reader will therefore supply this defect by supposing a row of small store-rooms opening under an arched way, with a separate door to each, and a small window of four panes of glass by the side of it. The writer of this note visited the castle in 1784, and meeting with many civilities from the governor, asked him after that in which prince Ivan had been confined. On being shewn it, he easily took out the piece of wood with which one of the panes of the little window had been repaired; and, looking in, perceived the cell to contain only an old deal table and a chair of the same material.

thickness

thickness of the castle-wall within the ramparts; in this arcade or corridor eight soldiers usually kept guard, as well on his account, as because the several vaults on a line with his contain stores of various kinds for the use of the fortrefs. The other soldiers were in the guard-house, at the gate of the castle, and at their proper stations. The detachment had for its commander an officer, who himself was under the orders of the governor.

It has been affirmed, that some time before the execution of his project, Mirovitch had opened himself to a lieutenant of the regiment of Veliki Luki, named Ufchakof; and that this Ufchakof bound himself by an oath, which he took at the altar of the church of St. Mary of Kazan * in St. Petersburg, to aid him in the enterprize to the best of his power. But as this latter was drowned, a few days after this is said to have happened, as he was assisting in the launch of a vessel; it is impossible to ascertain the fact.

It is more apparent that he talked in vague terms of the conspiracy with one of the valets of the court, and that he mentioned it afterwards to Simeon Tſchevaridef, lieutenant of artillery, and spoke of the advantages that would accrue from the rescue of Ivan, and the delivering of him to the regiments of the guards. While he thought to raise his consequence by putting on the air of a conspirator

* Vulgarly called the Kazanſkoi church,

without

without accomplices, he however said nothing to Tſchevaridef positively either of the time or the manner of executing his plot.

He had already performed his week's duty in the fortrefs, without venturing an attempt. But, tormented by the anxieties arising from suspense, and condemning his own irresolution, he asked permission to be continued on guard for one week longer. This extraordinary step seems not to have excited any suspicions in a governor who was entrusted with so very important and critical a charge; and the request of Mirovitch was granted him without hesitation.

After having admitted into his confidence a man of the name of Jacob Piſhkof, he began at about ten o'clock on a fine summer's night *, to fall into conversation with three corporals and two common soldiers; and after tampering with them some time, and obviating such difficulties as were suggested by their fears, they were soon gained over to his plan, and they promised to follow his orders. Nevertheless, whether from timidity or from precaution, they resolved with one consent to wait till the night was farther advanced. Between the hours of one and two in the morning, they came together again. Mirovitch and the corporals then procured about fifty † of the soldiers who were on guard to put

* The 1st of July.

† It is probable that thirty-eight was the exact number.

themselves

themselves under arms, and thus marched towards the prison of Ivan. On the way they met Berednikof, the governor of the fortress, whom they thought fast locked in the arms of sleep; but who, roused by some noise, whether made by them, or accidentally occasioned, had come out to see what was the matter. The governor authoritatively demanded of Mirovitch the reason of his appearance in arms at the head of the soldiers? Without returning any answer, Mirovitch knocked him down with the butt end of his firelock, and, ordering some of his people to secure him, continued his march.

Having wounded and secured the governor, Mirovitch lost no time to improve his advantage. Being arrived at the corridor into which the door of Ivan's chamber opened, he advanced furiously at the head of his troop, and attacked the handful of soldiers who guarded prince Ivan. He was received with spirit by the guard, who quickly repulsed him. He immediately ordered his men to fire upon them, which they did. The centinels returned their fire; when these conspirators, at the same time the most desperate and the most timid of mankind, were obliged to retire, though neither on one side nor the other was there a single man killed, or even wounded in the slightest degree.

The soldiers of Mirovitch, surprised at the resistance they met, shewed signs of an inclination to retreat. Their chief withheld them; but they insisted on his shewing them the order which he said
he

he had received from Petersburg. He directly drew from his pocket and read to them a forged decree of the senate, recalling prince Ivan to the throne, and excluding Catharine from it, because she was gone into Livonia to marry count Poniatofsky. The ignorant and credulous soldiers implicitly gave credit to the decree, and again put themselves in order to obey him. A piece of artillery was now brought from the ramparts to Mirovitch, who himself pointed it at the door of the dungeon, and was preparing to batter the place; but at that instant the door opened, and he entered, unmolested, with all his suite.

The officers Vlassief and Tschekin, commanders of the guard which was set on the prince, were shut up with him, and had called out to the centinels to fire. But, on seeing this formidable preparative, and hearing Mirovitch give orders to beat in the door, they thought it expedient to take counsel together. And, first, they held it impossible to resist such a superior force as that which they had lately beaten off. Then they took into consideration the dreadful consequences which must inevitably ensue, to the public peace and the safety of the empire, if their prisoner should be enlarged; and, lastly, they set before their eyes the punishment that would be inflicted on them by the government in case their charge should be taken from them, though against their will, and after all possible resistance.

On

On this consultation, they came to the dreadful resolution of assassinating the unfortunate captive, over whose life they were to watch, unterrified with the dangers which manifestly waited this horrid act, directly hanging over them from a desperate force, which (to give any colour to their proceeding) they must have concluded irresistible.

At the noise of the firing Ivan had awoke; and, hearing the cries and the threats of his guards, he conjured them to spare his miserable life. But, on seeing these barbarians had no regard to his prayers, he found new force in his despair; and, though naked, defended himself for a considerable time. Having his right hand pierced through and his body covered with wounds, he seized the sword from one of the monsters, and broke it; but while he was struggling to get the piece out of his hand, the other stabbed him from behind, and threw him down. He who had his sword broke now plunged his bayonet into his body, and several times repeating his blow, under these strokes the unhappy prince expired.

They then opened the door, and shewed Mirovitch at once the bleeding body of the murdered prince, and the order by which they were authorised to put him to death, if any attempt should be made to convey him away.

Mirovitch, struck with horror, at first started back some paces; then threw himself on the body of Ivan, and cried out: — “I have missed my aim;
“ I have

“I have now nothing to do but to die.” — But he presently rose up. So far from attempting to flee from the punishment which he must now foresee, or to take his revenge on the two assassins by shooting them on the spot, he returned to the place where he had left the governor in the hands of his soldiers; and, surrendering to him his sword, coldly said: — “It is I that am now your
“prisoner.”

The next day the body of the poor unfortunate Ivan was exposed before the church * in the castle of Schlüsselburg, clothed in the habit of a sailor. As soon as it was known, immense crowds of people flocked thither from the neighbouring towns and from St. Petersburg; and it is impossible to describe the grief and indignation that were excited at the view of an unfortunate being, who, after having been cruelly precipitated from the throne while yet in his cradle, passed his days in a dark and doleful dungeon, where he was inhumanly put to death by assassins. Ivan was full six feet high,

* An old lutheran church built of timber for the use of the garrison while Nöteborg was in possession of the Swedes, long before it was taken from them by Peter the great. The church is in a very decayed state, full of rubbish, and not employed in any religious purposes. The painted altar is removed from its proper place at the east end, and stands against the north side wall, and in its place, filling the enclosure where the altar rails have been, is a large pile of deal planks, in a state of rottenness: under this stack of wood the body of Ivan was thrown, where it lay for some time.

with a fine blond head of hair, a red beard, regular features, and of a complexion extremely fair: accordingly, the beauty of his person and his youth* heightened the sensibility that was universally discovered at the unhappiness of his lot, and the cruelty of his murderers. His body was wrapt up in a sheep-skin, put into a coffin, and inhumed without ceremony.

The concourse and the murmurs increased to such a degree that a tumult was now apprehended. To avoid any fatal consequences to themselves the two assassins Vlassief and Tschekin, as soon as they had perpetrated their crime, put themselves on board of a vessel which they found on the point of sailing for Denmark, where, on their arrival, the russian minister took them under his protection †.

The governor of Schlusfelburg dispatched to Petersburg a full relation of the horrid outrage of Mirovitch, and of the tragical end of Ivan. He accompanied this account with a manifesto that had been found in the pocket of Mirovitch, and which, it was said, had been long fabricated in concert with lieutenant Oschakof. This manifesto, which contained many scurrilous invectives and imprecations against Catharine, and represented prince Ivan as the sole legitimate emperor, it was observed, was to have been published at the moment the prince

* He had not yet completed his 24th year.

† They shortly after returned to Russia, and were advanced in the service.

was set at liberty and was making his entry into St. Petersburg. Panin immediately sent off a courier to the empress with an exact account of these particulars.

Her majesty was then at Riga; and, under a visible impatience of mind, was frequently inquiring after news from the residence: a circumstance by no means unaccountable, if we consider the frequent causes of alarm from plots and cabals with which she had been incessantly harassed since the beginning of her reign. Her inquietude increased from day to day, and she would often rise in the night to ask whether no courier was arrived*. Some persons afterwards recollected these circumstances to her disadvantage, as if she was anxiously counting the days since the period when Mirovitch was stationed on guard †. At length, after three days had elapsed, the dispatches of Panin were brought to hand.

The trial of the conspirators was remitted to the senate; they condemned Mirovitch to death; and he was publicly executed ‡ in pursuance of his sen-

* These facts have often been confirmed by general Brown; who, being a good roman catholic, honestly attributed these perturbations of Catharine to supernatural presentiments.

† The circumstance that Mirovitch had suffered his week's duty on guard to expire before he could summon up courage enough to attempt the execution of his project, was not, on this occasion, forgotten.

‡ September the 26th.

tence. The inferior actors in this design did not suffer death, but were subjected to other punishments perhaps not less severe. The officers, who put the prince to death, were, in consideration of their good intentions to the quiet of the state, amply rewarded for their fidelity. A manifesto appeared by authority*, giving an account of the whole procedure. It was filled with expressions of humanity and piety, which sort of language seemed now to be the office style of the court of Petersburg.

The public was much divided in opinion concerning the whole of this transaction. It was thought inconceivable that an insignificant private individual should hazard an enterprise, which, if even at first all things should go well, yet could never be prosecuted to final success by him; that in the attack no one should be hurt; that upon Ivan's death all should be immediately as quiet as if nothing had happened; that no inquiry was set on foot about any accomplices in Petersburg, of which there had been some talk at first; seemed to give room to surmise that simply this death was the object in view, and to this sole end the whole machinery was directed. None of the court party could have done this service to the absent empress, without her knowledge and consent. But, on the other hand, the slanderous manifesto found upon

* See the appendix at the end of the volume.

Mirovitch

Mirovitch was produced, which he intended to have published immediately upon his having Ivan in his possession, and which count Panin, it was said, had actually read and sent to the sovereign; but particularly the execution of the rebel: if indeed it were he, and not some unknown malefactor, who underwent that punishment, was urged in support of their sentiments by those who espoused the opposite side of the question. — Let it suffice, the public emotions of pity and displeasure at the sad catastrophe of the imperial progeny, and himself once emperor, were plainly manifested by every kind of expression. The multitudes of people who, notwithstanding all that could be done to check their impetuosity, still flocked to the castle, insisting on seeing the body, were so great, that the government was obliged to give orders to remove it from the castle-church, and convey it in the silence of the night with the utmost secrecy, to the monastery of Tichfina, two hundred versts from Petersburg. Among the regiments of guards in that city, who thought they had the exclusive right to depose and to murder emperors, violent commotions arose; that especially in the night of the 24th of July, caused the greatest alarm: it was only by the prudent measure of prince Gallitzin, who caused powder and ball to be publicly distributed among the marching regiments that were encamped in the vicinity of Petersburg, that tranquillity was restored. When the two officers by whom the prince was

c c 3

assassinated

assassinated appeared at court, every one beheld them with looks of undissembled contempt and abhorrence.

Catharine's throne was now firmly established. Even the angry spirit that persecuted the family of Ivan seemed at length appeased. As her majesty afterwards set at liberty the other members of it, it may be necessary to make some brief mention of them here. The parents and relations of the unfortunate young emperor had been brought to Kolmogory, a village-like town in the government of Archangel, on an island of the Dvina. Here they dwelt poor and melancholy, in close confinement. The mother, Anna Carlovna, died in child-bed, while Elizabeth was yet reigning in March 1746, and was taken hence, and buried in the same monastery where afterwards Peter III. at last found rest. The father, Anthony Ulric, died in 1776. He left behind him two princes, Peter and Alexey, two princesses, Catharine and Elizabeth, and several natural children: all, except the elder of the princesses, born in prison. For a series of seventeen years they were very severely treated by Golovtzin, the last viceroy of Archangel. After his death, which happened in 1779, Catharine appointed in his place a man of more generous sentiments, the general-governor Melgunef, who visited the unfortunate captives, administered to them every consolation in his power, took with him a letter from the princess Elizabeth to the empress; and, on delivering it,

described

described their situation in such affecting terms, that her majesty immediately resolved to open a negotiation with the court of Denmark. The dowager-queen of that kingdom, Juliana Maria, was a sister of duke Anthony Ulric. In the following year, 1780, the business was brought to a conclusion: the accommodation was easy, as Catharine acted with her wonted magnanimity. If, as is probable, a deed of renunciation of all pretensions to the Russian throne was required of the state prisoners in behalf of themselves and their posterity, it could not be a matter to occasion any difficulty. The empress directly sent them two hundred thousand rubles, to provide the family with clothes, plate, porcelaine, &c. befitting their rank. This she accompanied with a present of rich furs and jewels from the imperial cabinet; and appointed persons of quality to attend the princes and princesses on their voyage. At Archangel Melgunef first discovered to them their liberation, and the intended voyage to Denmark. They heard the news with sorrow, and earnestly intreated to be sent back to their old prison; till the persuasions of the generous Melgunef raised their spirits, and inspired them with courage*. In July a frigate brought the whole family

* The dowager-queen of Denmark, in the letter of thanks which she wrote to the empress in terms of the tenderest sensibility, highly extolled, as she had reason to do, the behaviour of this worthy man in the whole of his conduct. This testimony

family to Bergen in Norway, where the princes and princesses were taken on board a danish ship, leaving the illegitimate children to return with the imperial frigate. The parting with these half-relatives excited the most painful emotions in the breasts of the family. The most sensible of them, Elizabeth, survived not long her grief and the shock her frame had received at this sudden change of fortune. The four brothers and sisters of Ivan were, at the time when they obtained their liberty, between thirty and forty years of age. The danish court assigned them the city of Horsens in Yutland, as the place of their residence. Towards their establishment there Catharine presented them with twenty thousand rubles, and paid annually to the maintenance of their dignity thirty thousand rubles. In October 1782, the princess Elizabeth died at Horsens; and her death was followed by that of her brother Alexey in October 1787. The natural children of the duke of Brunswic received in Russia an annual pension: one of them, a daughter named Amelia, after her return, married lieutenant Karikin, who, for twelve years, had the guard of the family at Kol-

saved him, on occasion of an unmerited accusation that was brought against him concerning his behaviour in this business, and which threatened him with imminent danger: and, on his having justified himself, to the satisfaction of all impartial judges, Catharine rewarded him with the order of St. Andrew, and made him many presents besides.

mogory, and with whom she had long been intimately acquainted.

To return to our history. Catharine soon after the shocking event that had happened at Schlusselfburg, arrived from off her journey through the conquered provinces. On her entry into Petersburg, she was surrounded by an immense concourse of people, who endeavoured to find out by her countenance what was passing in her heart; but, always mistress of herself, the face of that princess was ever covered with smiles. Her step was as firm, her front as serene, as those who feel no inward reproaches usually are.

Lieutenant-general Veymar had already been charged to repair to Schlusselfburg. After having privately examined Mirovitch and his accomplices, they were brought to Petersburg, where their trial was opened before a commission composed of five prelates, of an equal number of senators, and several general officers. Mirovitch appeared before the judges with all that tranquillity which only the hope of pardon can communicate to a criminal like him. He replied with a frivolous and often insolent air to the interrogatories that were put to him. It is true that the judges themselves seemed not to make it a matter of great importance, and rather appeared as if they dreaded to fathom this execrable mystery. One alone * had so much sense of propriety as to

* He was a senator.

declare against such an extraordinary mode of procedure. But he was blamed for his indiscreet zeal, and advised to keep silence, if he would not lose his office, and be degraded from his rank of noblesse. In fine, after some days spent in the trial, Mirovitch was condemned to lose his head *, not as guilty of high treason, but only as a disturber of the public peace. Unmoved at this sentence, he walked to the scaffold like a man who had nothing to fear, and who thought himself sure of obtaining a pardon, as indeed, according to a report, it had been promised him. But if he really reckoned on a pardon, he was cruelly deceived. The time for his execution was accelerated, and the unhappy wretch, if he had before been the instrument, was now the victim of a barbarous policy. Those who considered him in the former point of view were astonished that the empress should suffer him to fall under the axe. But how could she have screened him from punishment without manifestly drawing upon herself the charge of having prompted his crime? and if she were really concerned in it, can it be thought that she would hesitate a moment in getting rid of a witness who would have exposed her to everlasting vexation?

Mirovitch was the only person condemned to death. The soldiers whom he had engaged to join him in the intended rescue were punished with various degrees of severity. Pishkof, who was con-

* On the 26th of September.

sidered

sidered as the most guilty, was sentenced to run the gantlet twelve times through a line of a thousand men. The three corporals and the two fuzileers, seduced after Pishkof, were flogged ten times along the same line; after which they were put to the public works, with a log chained to their leg. The other soldiers who acted under the orders of Mirovitch were likewise whipped through the ranks; and after being incorporated in other regiments, were sent into distant garrisons. Tschavaridef was degraded from his rank of officer, for having heard without revealing the vague confidential communications of Mirovitch. Fifty-eight persons were punished. A great appearance of severity was exercised against them; and this, among other circumstances, was calculated to obviate any suspicions that might arise concerning any more eminent instigators of their crime.

CHAP. VI.

Discontents at Petersburg. — Misunderstanding between the Counts Gregory Orlov and Panin. — Vissensky becomes Favourite of the Empress. — Resignation of the Chancellor Vorontzof. — Prince Radzivil at the Head of the Confederates. — The Bishop of Cracow carried off. — The Duke de Choiseul incites the Turks to declare war against Russia. — Treaty entered into by the Empress with England. — Tournament at Petersburg. — Reform of the Courts of Justice. — Convocation of Deputies from all the Provinces of the Empire. — Wise reply of the Samoyèdes. Wicked Attempt of Tschoglokof. — Travels of several learned Men in the Interior of Russia. — Academical Institutions. — Inoculation of the Empress and the Grand Duke; with other Events from 1764 to 1768.

THE beneficial effects of Catharine's regulations and establishments for the internal administration of government were every day becoming more apparent in all parts of Russia. That vast empire, rendered more compact, better regulated, more simply organised, animated with a new spirit, must naturally have a powerful influence on the commerce, on the finances, the politics, nay even on the existence of the other nations of the earth: and
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it certainly had. The time was past when foreign cabinets, with a sort of assurance of effect, could direct affairs, give birth to resolutions, and put a stop to proceedings at Petersburg; the government displayed that spirit of independence which became so great a monarchy: on the contrary, the question was now, how Catharine was acting, and what she was purposing in regard to all that the princes and republics, from the Memel to the Tagus, were meditating and transacting. A sagacious historian, who is certainly no flatterer of despots, says of the late empress of Russia, to which every one will readily subscribe: "The volumes of modern history
" can produce no reign like this: for no monarch
" has ever yet succeeded in the attainment of such
" a dictature in the grand republic of Europe as
" Catharine II. now holds; and none of all the
" kings who have heretofore given cause to dread
" the erection of an universal monarchy, seem to
" have had any knowledge of her art; to present
" herself with the pride of a conqueror in the most
" perilous situation, and with an unusual, a totally
" new dignity in the most common transactions.
" And it is manifestly not alone the supreme authority which here gives law, but the judgment
" which knows when to shew that authority, and
" when to employ it*."

* M. Spittler, in his "Sketch of the History of the Governments of Europe," part ii. p. 420.

Theoretical politicians, indeed, and statistical calculators, have pretended to affirm, that this complaisance of the rest of Europe has been shewn without reason; and that the assumption that the power of Russia is so formidable is one of those that are only admitted upon trust. But the consequence seems here demonstrable, if anywhere in a case like this: whoever undertakes many things, and performs all that he undertakes, is probably still able to undertake and to perform more. Whoever, just at the time when the politician has calculated that he is reduced to his last soldier and his last ruble, appears with a formidable army, and disposes of millions with magnanimous prodigality, cannot be yet at the extremity of his forces or his wealth. And (what is completely decisive) whoever, in the grand european republic, at the time when a Frederic and a Joseph, when the intriguing French and the enterprising Britons compose the senate of that republic, can hold the dictatorship, is surely born to be dictator, is endowed with all the qualities requisite to that end: the power, the art, and the judgment. This will apply to Catharine. In her were united what the world has seldom seen together. From merely physical power many things may afford security; but the superiority of mind, the refinement of policy, is capable of reaching lengths, of which the former will fall short. — Whoever was favoured with her esteem and friendship, never advanced farther to intimacy, but remained in a respectful,

respectful, almost dependent situation. Whoever incurred her wrath, was so placed by her before all Europe, that the effects of it were no longer beheld as a hostile contention between two equal potentates, but as the chastisement of a felon. — When she issued her commands, it was in the sweet accents of righteousness and peace. However her passions were excited, she yet remained tranquil, till the proper maturity ensured the event; and thus her actions acquired the distinctive marks of irresistible majesty. But never yet has a monarch understood, like her, how to be bountiful exactly at the fittest time, and to make presents with such significance as to fix the gratitude of the receiver, and to acquire the veneration that is due to a beneficent deity*.

While Catharine was giving law to Poland, amusing Austria, conciliating the friendship of Prussia, and treating with England, she was also

* We will take the liberty of making here one other extract from Spittler's work, concerning the interference of Russia in the affairs of Poland: — "It was an ingenious contrivance, formed in a truly roman style, and completed accordingly. Not only a numerous and free nation was to be deprived of its liberty and national subsistence, but all Europe was to be lulled asleep. The annexations of Lewis XIV. were a trifling business in comparison of what Catharine II. performed in Poland and against that country. But what loud and violent cries were raised against the former; and in what soft murmurs did the voice of truth repeat the ancient law of nations, when there seemed to be no longer any law between Russia and Poland?" &c. See Spittler's work on the governments of Europe, p. 423.

tampering with the other courts of Europe, and labouring efficaciously towards very soon making herself dreaded by them. She exerted herself to the utmost in giving new spirit to the commerce of her country, in augmenting her navy, and above all in softening the manners of her people, as yet not far advanced in civilization. But, badly seconded by the great personages of the empire, and even by such as were about her, the progress of her institutions was at first but slow. The spirit of division continued to reign in Petersburg. The outrages that were to be prevented or punished, always made it necessary for Catharine to keep well with the conspirators to whom she was indebted for the throne: but the favours she was incessantly heaping on that greedy and insolent crew, were so many additional sources of hatred and discontent. Some new plot or conspiracy was forming every day; and every day the good fortune of the empress, or rather her prudence, delivered her from danger. Punishments were secret and terrible. The authors of one plot could but rarely undertake a second.

What most afflicted the empress was the misunderstanding that prevailed between her favourite and her chief minister, because the devotedness and audacity of the one were not less useful to her than the name and abilities of the other. Panin had certainly considerable imperfections; but he was the only one who had a true notion of business. His cold imagination, his melancholy, his pride, his obstinacy,

obstinacy, and above all his indolence, were highly displeasing to Catharine: but she did ample justice to his talents, and continued to give him her confidence. Besides, though the empress was not satisfied with him, he had the art of revising his opinions, when he found them disagreeable to her.

The influence of Orlov was founded on a different basis: but he used it without discretion, and was continually lessening its stability. No longer employing those assiduities which were the only means in his power of securing the favour he enjoyed, and even negligent of his usual attendance at court, absenting himself for several weeks together in pursuing the chase of the bear, and indifferent to the amusements of the palace, if ever any warmth of attachment subsisted, it must naturally now subside, and decline into perfect indifference.

Panin, remarking this conduct, thought he might improve it to bring on the dismissal of the arrogant favourite. Perceiving that the empress frequently beheld with complacency a young officer, named Vissensky, he thenceforward put in practice every art he could devise to encourage the inclination. Vissensky was soon admitted into favour; and, directed by the artful minister, behaved in such a manner as to give reason to believe that Orlov would soon be discarded. But the latter, not willing to lose his consequence, made a sudden alteration in his conduct, and by that means preserved his station.

The new favourite was dismissed with magnificent presents, and an employment that fixed him in one of the remoter provinces*.

Though Panin enjoyed great interest and consequence, with the advantages accruing from his post of governor to the grand duke and his title of minister, the return of the chancellor Vorontzof, whose functions he performed *ad interim*, gave him uneasiness. Jealous to preserve his authority entire, and the splendor of a representation which was of great value to him, he humbled himself so far as to flatter the favourite, whose downfall he had been endeavouring to procure. Orlov was not of an implacable temper. Always recollecting with bitterness the steps which the chancellor had taken to prevent him from sharing in the throne, he requested the empress to keep him away from the management of affairs; and he became the apologist for an enemy less bold, but more artful. Catharine accosted the chancellor with extreme coldness. Instead of replacing him in the functions of minister, as at his departure she had given him reason to hope, she caused it to be suggested to him that it would not be taken amiss if he were to resign a place which he could no longer fill to the satisfaction of his sovereign. The chancellor hesitated for some time: but at length the advice of his

* He was promoted to the rank of major-general, and afterwards married a distant relation of Potemkin.

friends

friends prevailed. He seemed voluntarily to resign what was actually taken from him. His resignation was accepted with expressions of regret, which were not more sincere than his wishes for retirement; and, in order to convince him of the secret joy his compliance gave, he was presented with a gratuity of fifty thousand rubles and a pension of seven thousand.

Among the numberless means employed by Catharine for detecting the authors of the plots that were perpetually disturbing her repose, she did not neglect the interception of the correspondence of the foreign ministers. That of the agent* of France was sold to her. She even succeeded in procuring a duplicate of his cypher; and she thought she perceived in his letters, if not the adherence to the machinations of the conspirators, at least the knowledge of all the mysterious affairs that were carrying on among the people about her. Her pride was hurt at this discovery; her resentment against the court of Versailles increased; and the cold reception she gave to the agent of that court reduced him to the necessity of making his retreat†.

Lewis

* Berenger, who had the title of chargé d'affaires.

† That prince, surmising afterwards that Voltaire might have learnt some of the facts contained in the correspondence of the agents of his nation, wrote to that celebrated genius in such a manner as to dissuade him from giving credit to them, if he

Lewis XV. then sent to Petersburg the marquis de Beausset *, a man of great vanity and but small capacity, to whom the ministers of Catharine complained heavily of the chargé d'affaires his predecessor. But, as Beausset was unacquainted with the true cause of these complaints, he paid them but little attention, and took no precautions to prevent their being renewed against him. He even thought they were only to be ascribed to the blind jealousy which the glory of the french nation excited in the empress; so far from it, that her ambition was striving to usurp the esteem and draw upon her the praises of that nation. She corresponded with Voltaire and d'Alembert. She made an offer to the latter of the place of governor

were acquainted with the business, and to inform him of nothing if he were not. "All your countrymen," she writes to him, "do not entertain the same sentiments of me as you do. I know some who wish to persuade themselves that it is impossible for me to do anything that is good; who put their invention to the rack to persuade others to think so likewise; and woe to their emissaries if they dare to think otherwise than as they are taught. I have candour enough to believe it an advantage which they give me over them, because whoever only knows facts from the mouth of his flatterers, knows them but badly, sees them in a false light, and acts in consequence. Since, however, my fame does not depend on them, but entirely on my principles, on my actions, I comfort myself, as well as I can, in not obtaining their approbation. As a good christian, I forgive them; and I pity those who envy me."

* He was presented to the empress the 1st of May.

to

to the grand duke, with a salary of twenty-four thousand livres, and all conveniencies for finishing the Encyclopédie at Petersburg; advantages which the philosopher thought proper to refuse *. Being informed that Diderot was not in good circumstances, and was desirous of selling his library to enable him to portion out his daughter; she bought that library, left it in his own possession, and settled on him a handsome appointment as the librarian of it. Some time previous to this, she had sent to Morand, the famous surgeon, a collection of gold and silver medals that had been struck in Russia, as a testimony of her satisfaction with the anatomical subjects and chirurgical instruments which he had procured for her. Almost all the men of letters and the most distinguished artists of Paris received some proofs of her munificence, and admiring her bounties, forgetting or unacquainted with her frailties,

They swelled with lies the hundred trumps of Fame.

In the meantime the secret design proposed by that princefs in crowning count Ciolek Poniatofsky began to unfold. Thinking herself secure of the entire submission of that monarch, she put off all constraint, and openly avowed the designs which even policy had made it a crime in the Poles to have imputed to her. Her pretensions were, doubtless, extravagant: but, as she was desirous that they

* See the appendix No. VII. at the end of the volume.

should not be useless, she only declared them when on the point of marching the troops that were destined to support them, and proposed nothing but in an imperious tone. After having traced out on the map the lines of demarcation, by which Russia purloined a great part of the territory of Poland, Catharine insisted on the recognition of the validity of these lines, and that the limits of the two countries should thus be fixed. She exacted, farther, that the king and the republic should contract with her a treaty of alliance offensive and defensive, and that they should allow the dissidents to enjoy all the same rights with the catholics, not excepting that of a capacity for being members of the senate. The last of these demands, the only one that was equitable, raised the indignation of an intolerant and despotic nobility. Murmurs were now heard on all sides: mention was made of having recourse to arms. Whether he was really ashamed of the sacrifices that were prescribed to his recognition, or rather afraid of putting the nation in a ferment, the king himself declared that he could not consent to these sacrifices. But in order to be the better able to form a judgment of the pretexts with which Catharine covered her ambition, it will be necessary to understand what the polish dissidents were.

Poland was originally circumscribed within very narrow bounds. The inhabitants, between the ninth and tenth centuries, adopted the christian religion

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as it was then professed by the church of Rome. About the same time many of the neighbouring provinces, which were then independent states, at different periods embraced that worship according to the ritual of the Greeks. In process of time, many of these neighbouring states, either by conquest, by right of succession, by marriage, or by compact, became united to the kingdom of Poland; upon all which accessions the new provinces were upon an exact equality with the old in every respect, and each observed their own peculiar modes of worship.

Of all these accessions, that which fell to it by the marriage of Yagellon, grand duke of Lithuania, with the daughter and heiress of Lewis king of Poland, in 1386, was the largest and most considerable. By this event the grand duchy of Lithuania, together with the provinces of White-Russia, Podlakhia, Volhinia, Podolia, and shortly afterwards Red-Russia, became annexed to the kingdom of Poland; with this distinction, that the union between the kingdom and the grand duchy depended only on the continuance of the line of the Yagellons, that family being the natural sovereigns of Lithuania. The inhabitants of all these provinces were of the greek religion, as well as those of Moldavia, Valakhia, and the Ukraine, which were added to the kingdom by the successors of Yagellon: so that by these great accessions, the members of the greek church became at that time far superior, both in numbers and power, to those of the roman

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catholic

catholic persuasion. It was thought a happiness peculiar to Poland, that, while other countries have at different times been a prey to intestine feuds and rancour on the score of the religion of Christ, the great variety of opinions on that subject never produced any strife or animosity among the people of this nation.

The reformation made very early progress in Poland, and the majority of the senators and nobility became members either of the lutheran or calvinistic communions. To prevent therefore any mischiefs that might arise from these differences of religion, Sigismund Augustus passed a law at the diet of Vilna, on the 16th of June 1563, declaring that all those of the equestrian and noble orders, whether of lithuanian or russian extraction, should enjoy equal rights, provided they profess the christian religion. This he afterwards confirmed at the diet of Grodno in 1568, adding, to prevent all misconstructions in favour of any party, that it was to be understood of every such person, of whatever christian communion or confession he be.

It would not be easy to produce instances of equal moderation, in matters of religion, amongst a people who differed so widely in their opinions on that head, as these we have shewn; especially if it be considered that these constitutions were passed by a fierce and warlike nobility, each of whom was not only a member of the general sovereignty, which they had just taken into their own hands; but also

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looked

looked upon himself, in his own particular right, as in some degree a sovereign, as far as his estate and power extended. We shall pay the greater regard to the memory of those illustrious Poles, if we reflect that the age they lived in was far from being a temperate one, and that moderation was but little cultivated in the most civilized and best regulated governments in Europe: at the same time it cannot be sufficiently lamented, that their posterity should so fatally lose sight of the politic, humane, and noble precedent, that was set them by their fathers.

Under favour of this toleration protestantism made rapid advances in Poland. By this wise act of Sigismund Augustus, all sects, whether protestant, greek, or arian, enjoyed the full liberty of exercising their worship, and the right of voting in the diets, and of holding the same offices as the catholics. None were at the time offended by this act of justice: on the contrary, all were glad to see that the difference of religion produced none in the political and civil rights of the several members of the community. As a distinction among themselves, the followers of the different modes of worship were called dissidents: but that name, which has since been made a signal for proscription, had nothing then injurious in it; and the successors of Sigismund Augustus, when they swore to observe the *pacta conventa*, swore also to preserve peace
among

among the dissidents *. When Henry de Valois was elected king of Poland, he wanted to dispense himself from an oath that wounded his intolerant superstition: but his attempts were in vain. He must relinquish the crown or swear to protect the dissidents: he took the oath.

Those who have not considered that perverse disposition, by which almost every denomination of

* It appears, from the very beginning of the republic, that the term *dissidents* equally comprehended the greeks, catholics, reformed and lutherans. The words of that famous constitution which was passed by the diet, which formed the republic in the year 1573, are, *Nos qui sumus dissidentes in religione*, i. e. We who differ in religious matters. In the same constitution it is declared, that they will acknowledge no man for king or sovereign, "who shall not confirm by oath all the rights, privileges, and liberties, which they now enjoy, and which are to be laid before him after the election. Particularly, he shall be bound to swear, that he will maintain the peace among the dissidents in points of religion." In the constitutions of the same diet are the following remarkable stipulations: "We will engage in our own names, and in the names of our successors for ever, by the obligations of our oath, of our faith, of our honour, and of our consciences, to preserve peace among us who are dissidents in religion; to shed no blood, nor to inflict on any one the penalties of confiscation of goods, defamation, imprisonment or exile, on account of the difference of our faith, and rites in our churches. More than that, if any one should undertake, for the above reason, to shed the blood of his fellow-citizens, we should be all obliged to oppose him, even though he should shelter himself under the pretext of a decree, or any other judicial act."

mankind would endeavour to plunder, enslave, and persecute every other part of their own species; and who have not observed that words can always be found, when attended with power, to explain away the most explicit sense, and the most indubitable rights; may well be surprised how a law, so solemnly passed, and so useful to the whole community, could be rendered fruitless: a law sanctified by the most solemn acts, which the framers bound themselves and their posterity, by the most sacred oaths, to preserve inviolate to all futurity, which formed a principal part of the constitution of the state, and which every king at his accession was sworn to observe. Yet this law, without any material change, much less a subversion of the constitution of the country, has been manifestly broken through, while three of the religions, which formed the original compact, have been spoiled of their rights, liberties, and immunities, by the fourth; and all this outrage and wrong committed under colour and sanction of the very laws they were tearing to pieces at the instant.

However, when the roman catholics, after the death of Sigmund III. had gained an evident superiority, they gave full scope to that fiery zeal by which they are made to believe that their religion is the only one that is good, and will not permit them to endure any other. They began by persecuting the arians, whose opinions had already made great progress; they proceeded to divest them of all their

their rights, and even to drive them out of Poland. The greek and protestant christians, who had assisted in persecuting the arians, were very soon punished for their imprudence. The catholics attacked them in their turn, and succeeded in 1733, in entirely excluding them from the diets *.

The

* Upon the death of Sigismund Augustus in 1574, the polish constitution was entirely changed, and the nation assumed the form of a republic. His grandfather Casimir III. was the first who convened the nobility, in order to oblige them to accept the new impositions. Sigismund and his father used the same method; but after his death the whole legislative authority fell into the hands of the nobility. At this period, we are told by their historians, the roman catholics in the kingdom did not bear a proportion in number to the Greeks and reformed, of more than one to seven. The grand marshal Firley, who convened the first diet of the republic, that diet which formed its present model, and made the crown elective, was a protestant. A perpetual peace betwixt the Greeks, the roman catholics, and the protestants, was therein established as a fundamental law of the republic. The wars in Germany under Charles V. and in France under Catharine de Medicis, made them sensible of the necessity they were under of tolerating each other. They therefore entered into an engagement of mutual defence and affection, and that a difference of religion should never prove the cause of civil dissension, unanimously resolving to make an example of that person who, under such a pretext, should excite disturbance. As this law has been repeated in all the public acts, constitutions, and pacta conventa, from that time to the present, it cannot but be allowed to be a fundamental law: nor can any other law be produced, whose sanction has been more solemnly, more constantly, and more frequently repeated. However, when the roman catholics, after the death of Sigismund III. had acquired a manifest superiority,

The humiliation they felt on being deprived of the right of suffrage, converted many of the Poles to catholicism. But if the dissidents diminished in numbers, those who remained were only so much the more attached to their sects. Against these proceedings they urged the treaty of Oliva, concluded in 1660, by which their privileges were secured, and of which so many potentates were the guarantees. The catholics, who ruled alone in the diets, and consequently might give ample range to their intolerance, without molestation or obstacle, procured a decree attaching the guilt of high treason to such dissidents as should have recourse to foreign powers for obtaining the execution of the treaty thus atrociously infringed, and the re-establishment of the laws so despotically repealed. This decree was the finishing stroke to the patience of the dissidents. Russia observed their indignation, and fanned it in secret. The greek dissidents then addressed themselves to the court of Petersburg. The protestants implored the intercession of those of London, Copenhagen, and Berlin. These courts

superiority, though they did not think proper openly to controvert it, yet they shewed a disposition, when opportunity was favourable, to infringe it, by placing under their signatures, *salvis juribus ecclesie romane catholice*, with a saving to the rights of the roman catholic church. Whereupon the dissidents, by way of reprisal, wrote under their signatures, *salva pace inter dissidentes*, with a saving to the peace amongst the dissidents.

promised

promised to support them; and this was the most specious pretext for the military interference of Russia. This was the state of affairs at the close of the year 1765.

On the assembling of the diet on the 1st of September 1766, the ministers of the protecting courts presented their memorials in behalf of the dissidents, which excited a violent murmur. Soltyk, bishop of Cracow, a haughty and fanatical prelate, maintained that the dissidents had no right of appeal to privileges that were abolished, and that they had violated the constitution of the republic, in having recourse to the intervention of foreign powers. Not satisfied with the iniquitous laws that had been passed against the dissidents, he moved for the enacting of new ones still more severe. His opinion was adopted by Maffalsky, bishop of Milna, and a great majority of the nobles, who blindly confounded religious prejudices with political rights; and the opposition of some persons, more enlightened or more equitable, occasioned violent debates. The disorder rose to its height. The king attempted to deliver himself in favour of more moderate sentiments: he was abruptly reproached with being an abettor of the enemies of the state. He took the resolution to retire*. Several other sittings followed, not

* The bishop of Kief had already taken the liberty to say in an assembly, "that if they would take his advice, they would have the king hanged; as there were still surely some men to
" be

not less scandalous than the former; and the terrible laws enacted against the dissidents were imprudently confirmed. The Russian troops now advanced to the gates of Warsaw. Prince Repnin demanded, in the name of the empress, not only a toleration secured by law in behalf of the dissidents, but a complete political equality with the Catholic party. This was rejected with a furious triumph. Nothing was now left for the dissidents, but, what the constitution allowed, to confederate: this course they immediately adopted under the Russian protection. Fear seemed for a moment to open the eyes of the diet. It thought to satisfy the empress by granting the dissidents somewhat more liberty in the exercise of their religion. But this palliative was not sufficient for Catharine. The dissidents, continuing to insist on an entire equality of rights, formed into divers confederations, which were presently joined by numbers of Catholics, won over by Russia.

This was a lamentable time for Poland; parties and counter-parties, uniting and splitting again into others in the most unexampled manner. From grievances in religion political feuds arose; several

" he found among the Poles charitable enough to do the state
" that service." The same prelate afterwards proceeded from insolence to fury, so far as to tell the king to his face, in presence of all the court: — " I formerly used to pray to God for your
" prosperity; my prayer to him at present is, that he would send
" you to the devil."

of

of the discontented went over to the dissidents, without otherwise agreeing with them in opinion. A civil war raged now with all its horrors, and russian troops were every day entering the territories of the republic in greater numbers. A general confederation sprung up, composed of the most heterogeneous parts, united neither by a common understanding nor by the cement of affection: prince Charles Radzivil, who had been absent from the country, was their marshal. This prince had been one of the foremost of the opponents to the election of Poniatofsky; for which he had been obliged to quit the country, and suffer the confiscation of his property. He even affected more contempt than hatred towards him. He no sooner saw him abandoned by the Russians, than he united his confederation with those of the dissidents, and convened the principal leaders of them in his palace in Warsaw, under the very eyes of the monarch.

1767. In this extremity Stanislaus Augustus, who felt the necessity of regaining the protection of Russia, assembled a diet extraordinary. This diet, however, but ill corresponded with his views. Notwithstanding the presence of the russian army, and the haughty behaviour of prince Nicholas Repnin *, who lorded it in Warsaw far more than

* The same whom Paul I. lately sent as ambassador extraordinary to Vienna and Berlin.

the

the king himself, the bishop of Cracow and his adherents, as rash and fanatical as ever, had the presumption to make speeches against the dissidents, which common prudence, if not sound reason, should have advised them against. It was not long before they suffered for their folly. The russian troops, who had for some months nearly surrounded as well as intersected the kingdom of Poland, had now closely invested the city of Warsaw, and were in possession, and kept strict guard upon all the avenues leading to it. That very evening *, while the bishop was at table at count Minisheck's, the russian colonel Igeltrom, followed by a detachment of soldiers, entered the room, in the name of the empress, and seized on the prelate without meeting the smallest resistance from any that were present. Prince Repnin dictated to the diet the act of confirmation of the rights of the dissidents; and, to the utter astonishment of the Poles, who always boasted of their freedom, caused the furious opposers of that act in the diet, the bishop of Kief, the bishop of Cracow, count Rjeurky, voivode of Dolina, his eldest son †, and some other nobles, to be separately arrested in Warsaw, and, together with the bishop of Cracow, carried off to Siberia.

* The 13th of October.

† The second son of count Rjeurky requested permission to accompany his father in bondage. He was answered, that they had no orders to arrest him.

The day following this outrage, prince Repnin addressed to the confederates a note, in which he pretended that he had only violated the liberty of the Poles for the benefit of Poland *.

The members of the diet sent up an address to the king, requesting him to demand the prisoners. The king immediately prayed prince Repnin to release

* The declaration of prince Repnin delivered to the confederated estates was as follows: "The troops of her imperial majesty, my sovereign, friends and allies of the confederated republic, have arrested the bishop of Cracow, the bishop of Kief, the voivode of Dolina, &c. for having failed, by their conduct, in the respect that is due to the dignity of her imperial majesty, by attacking the purity of her salutary, disinterested, and amicable intentions in favour of the republic. The illustrious general confederation of the republic, of the crown, and of Lithuania, being under the protection of her imperial majesty, the undersigned notifies this to it, with positive and solemn assurances of the continuation of that high protection and of the assistance and support of her imperial majesty to the general confederation united for the preservation of the polish laws and liberties, with redress of all the abuses that have crept into the government contrary to the fundamental laws of the country. Her majesty is only desirous of the welfare of the republic, and will not discontinue to grant it her assistance to the attainment of that end, without any interest or pecuniary consideration; wishing for no other than the safety, the happiness, and the liberty of the polish nation, as that has been already clearly expressed in the declarations of her imperial majesty, which guarantee to the republic its actual possessions, as well as its laws, its form of government, and the prerogatives of each individual. Done at Warsaw, the 14th of October 1767.

(Signed) "NICHOLAS Prince REPNIN."
them:

them: but Repnin rejected it with disdain; and they did not return from the deserts of Siberia till after an exile of six years *.

In the meantime the deliberations of the diet were carried on under the impulses of fear; and after several useless sittings, a committee was nominated for settling the rights of the dissidents, in concert with the ministers of the patronising courts. They regularly applied for orders to prince Repnin, whose anti-chamber was the resort of the plenipotentiaries from Prussia, England, Denmark, and Sweden; and when the committee had received these orders, it made a report of them to the diet, who were careful not to contradict them. The dissidents therefore obtained whatever the russian ambassador was pleased to demand in their behalf. The ancient laws to which they appealed were once more put in force; and others were enacted which were still more favourable to them. It was, however, no more than an act of justice, which had nothing against it but the manner in which it was performed. They had been arbitrarily abolished: it was therefore but right to restore them. The sole cause of affliction to the true friends of the liberty of Poland was a heap of regulations admitted by the orders of Catharine, tending to prolong the troubles and anarchy of that unhappy country, and to leave it for ever without defence against the usurpations which she had in contemplation.

* In the beginning of the year 1773.

A servile obedience had suddenly succeeded in Warsaw to the excesses of a proud independence. But this forced situation could not long continue. Murmurs were on all lips, and vengeance was in every heart. No sooner had the diet broke up, but the catholic nobles were clamorous in their complaints on account of the laws promulgated in favour of the dissidents, and formed new confederations for the defence of the romish religion. The confederates had standards, on which were painted the virgin Mary and the infant Jesus: they, like the crusaders of the fifteenth century, wore crosses embroidered on their clothes; and, what was more ridiculous still, they put themselves under the protection of the Turks; and the disciples of Mohammed were preparing to fight in the cause that bore the name of Christ.

Stanislaus Augustus, unable either to inspire confidence into his subjects, or to recover the friendship of the Russians, was the subject of accusation to all parties, and lived in his capital more like a prisoner than a king. Catharine might perhaps have pardoned him some moments of defection, but the influence of Orlof opposed it. Prince Repnin commanded like a despot in Warsaw; and, to flatter the favourite of his sovereign, he let no opportunity escape of humiliating a feeble and unfortunate king. We shall just cite one single fact to prove what little respect the russian ambassador had for the polish monarch. One evening that the king was at the theatre,

theatre, the ambassador made it late before he came. As he did not appear, the curtain drew up, and the piece began. The performers were in the second act, when a sort of bustle being made in the ambassador's box, the king sent a page to know what was the matter. Answer was brought that prince Repnin was come, and was surpris'd to find that they had not waited for his arrival before the curtain was drawn up. The king ordered the curtain to be dropped, and the piece to begin again.

All Europe beheld with astonishment the conduct of the court of Russia. It was thought scarcely conceivable that Catharine should become, all at once, the enemy of a king whom she herself had put upon the throne. But what could the faint remembrance of an extinguished attachment avail in the heart of a princess, who was aiming, by imposing shackles on Poland, to domineer over the powers of the north, and to make herself formidable to those of the south?

She was sure that the king of Prussia desired nothing better than to share the polish provinces with her. She managed at her pleasure both Sweden and Denmark, the one by her intrigues, and the other by the hope she held out to it of the cession of Holstein. She flattered England by a treaty of alliance and commerce. All seemed to concur to favour her ambition.

The duke de Choiseul, who, under the appearance of levity, concealed a deep and penetrating genius,

and who perhaps was deficient in nothing, for being a great minister, but more constancy in his designs, and less propensity to dissipate the treasures of France, was the first who discovered the secret views of Catharine. He saw that the augmentation of power which she was about to acquire must have a natural tendency to diminish the consideration and influence of the court of Versailles. He resolved to attack the evil in its source, and, in order to defeat the projects of Russia by dissipating its means, he fell upon the design of involving it in a war with the ottoman porte.

That minister then made application to count de Vergennes, ambassador from France to Constantinople; and, after having stated to him the particulars of his apprehensions, exhorted him to second his projects. The duke de Choiseul was not ignorant either of the weakness and decline of the ottoman empire; or of the vices of a government which were the sole cause of that weakness: but he still thought it capable of giving Russia employment for a good while to come; and whatever might be the success of the war, he wished them to undertake it*.

Vergennes

* The duke de Choiseul wrote thus to M. de Vergennes: "I am sorry to see that the north of Europe is humbling itself to the empress of Russia, and that England and its subsidies should be the lure which the empress Catharine holds out to confirm her despotism in those parts. Denmark, afraid of Russia, and entertaining an illusive hope of acquiring that part
" of

Vergennes administered with no less ability than zeal to the views of his court. A long residence in Turkey had supplied him with an intimate knowledge of the principal members of the divan, and the means of succeeding with it. He employed those means. He represented to the ottoman ministers how unjust and dangerous it was that Russia should dare to violate the rights of the Poles, and invade their territory. He convinced them that the demarcation of the limits exacted by the court of Petersburg would be attended with consequences fatal to the security of the Euxine; and he advised them resolutely to oppose that demarcation*.

The

" of Holstein which belongs to the grand duke, basely submits to
" the will of the tzaritza. Sweden, from circumstances unheard-
" of before, neither deliberates nor acts but as she is ordered by
" the Moscovites. The king of Prussia is amused and supports
" the operations of the court of Petersburg. — I am sorry to see
" that a league is forming in the north which will prove very
" formidable to France. — The most effectual means of defeating
" this project, and perhaps of overturning the empress Catharine
" from her usurped throne, will be to plunge her in a war. —
" None but the Turks are in a condition to render us that
" service," &c. — The hope of gaining Holstein was not so
illusory as Choiseul imagined.

* The duke de Choiseul had authorised M. de Vergennes to employ the most efficacious measures for inducing the Turks to declare war against Russia. "If you have any expectation of success, if you think it possible," he writes to him, "every
" necessary

The porte, whom the polish confederates had already petitioned for succour, immediately complied with the advice of Vergennes. The turkish minister sent a note to the king of Poland, requesting that the regulation of the limits might be suspended till some explanations should be given the sultan of a nature to remove his alarms concerning the danger with which the cession of the polish territory threatened the ottoman empire. But Stanislaus Augustus, who was for ever afraid of giving umbrage to Catharine, and who was desirous, whatever it might cost him, of regaining her friendship, answered the grand signor, that there was not the least proposal of altering the limits between Russia and Poland; and having received this assurance, the divan returned for some time into its accustomed apathy. Notwithstanding which, however, the great empires of Russia and Turkey, the most powerful in Asia as well as in Europe, were soon to be engaged in a bloody conflict. Religion had entered into the quarrel, and added to its bitterness. The miserable country of Poland was the theatre of a contention, not more destructive in its consequences, than singular in its causes and pretexts. The despotic power of Russia becomes the guardian of polish freedom; and the catholic

"necessary supply of money shall be transmitted to you." M. de Vergennes had the merit of wishing to employ no other means than those of persuasion. They were sufficient with him.

religion

religion flies for protection to the standard of Mohammed.

The court of Petersburg then* concluded a treaty of alliance and commerce with that of London; a treaty which extended the privileges of the English, lowered the duties of importation on their merchandize, and granted them great advantages. Her natural goodwill towards England, as well as her desire of securing additional succours in the war which she was meditating against the Turks, determined Catharine to seek the alliance of the court of London.

Just at this time, when Catharine was displaying her partiality in the most signal manner to the british nation, an affair of gallantry between the minister of the latter and one of the maids of honour became so public, that the empress could no longer pretend to be ignorant of it; she therefore dismissed the guilty lady from her post, and forbid, for some time, the minister to appear at court.

The severity shewn on this occasion by Catharine formed doubtless a striking contrast with some parts of her own behaviour. It seems impossible that she could so strangely deceive herself as to imagine that the world was not aware of the indulgencies she permitted herself; but it is nevertheless certain, that she sometimes put on, in the presence of those who knew her best, as great an appearance of austerity of

* In the month of December.

manners

manners as of attachment to religion. Two * ladies of her court, one of whom had formerly been her confidante, being at a masquerade, were talking pretty loud concerning one of their admirers: the empress went up to them, and, with a stern countenance, ordered them to leave the ball-room, since they knew no better than to pay so little regard to decorum.

The distance Catharine often found it necessary to assume could neither be supposed to gain her the affection of her courtiers, nor to contribute to restore tranquillity to the empire. Princess Dashkof had been, for the second time, banished to Mosco. That young lady, who seemed to find her greatest pleasure in braving dangers, revenged herself for the ingratitude she thought she experienced, by revealing the crimes of the conspiracy in which she had acted a principal part, and in fomenting the discontents against the empress. Without esteeming princess Dashkof †, many persons partook in her resentments;

* Madame Narishkin and Madame Golofkin. The latter being wife of the *grand-veneur*, the courtiers surnamed her *la grande-vénérienne*.

† Princess Dashkof had rendered herself ridiculous by her manners and odious by her pride and avarice. She was fond of wearing a masculine dress, and affected a martial air. While on her travels in Europe, she was remarkable for her extravagant pretensions, her soldier-like air, and her niggardliness. At Rome, under pretence of recommending the artists to the empress, she extorted from several of them a great number of pictures and drawings.

and

and the poison of sedition, artfully mingled by her, was making new progress from day to day.

Being informed of the murmurs at Mosco, Catharine feigned to despise them, and resolved to suppress them by her presence. But as the severity of the winter would scarcely permit her to take a long journey, she endeavoured, in the meantime, to divert the disaffected by the tumult of the pleasures she contrived for the court. The inhabitants at St. Petersburg now saw two or three tournaments, at which the Russian courtiers, arrayed in the habits and the armour of the ancient knights in the days of chivalry, displayed more magnificence than gallantry, and greater strength than dexterity. These shows, which were continued for several days, were beheld with general disapprobation, as frivolous and expensive.

Nothing, however, was neglected for making them interesting by pomp and pageantry. In the amphitheatre erected on purpose for the occasion were two superb boxes, for the empress and the grand duke. In the centre of the arena was raised a throne, whereon sat the grand judge of the exercises, surrounded by forty officers, four heralds at arms, and two trumpets for the purpose of giving signals. Besides these, at the four different sides of the circus, were kettle-drums and trumpets, making warlike music during the whole time of the carouzel. In short, everything was selected that could contribute to the magnificence and effect of the exhibition.

The

The dames and knights of the tournaments were divided into four quadrilles or troops of horse, representing combatants of four different nations: Slavonians, Turks, Indians, and Romans; all perfectly observing the customs of those nations, in their dress and ornaments, in their chariots, in their music, and attendants; and were all, ladies and knights, adorned with such a profusion of gold and silver, pearls and precious stones, on their gorgeous dresses of velvet, silks, feathers, and ermine, that they might truly be said * to

“ Shine with the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
 “ Or what the gorgeous east, with richest hand,
 “ Showers on her kings, barbaric pearl and gold.”

But that of the Romans, led on by count Gregory Orlof, was brilliant beyond description. The dress of his brother count Alexey Orlof, chief of the turkish cohort, was likewise particularly splendid.

The four quadrilles rode in great pomp through the principal streets of the city, previous to their assembling in the circus.

The ladies of the court jousted at these tournaments as well as the chevaliers. Tilting at the ring, cutting off the heads of ferocious animals and Saracens, artificially represented, then tossing up the head and catching it on the point of the sabre, letting off a pistol at a shield, with a variety of

* With a slight alteration from Milton.

achieve-

achievements of a similar nature, all performed at full gallop, and exactly in time with the music, formed the other parts of this magnificent entertainment.

When the carouzel, which had been repeated with considerable variations for several days, was ended, and the company were drawn up in their respective troops, the famous marshal count Munich, who had been appointed grand judge of the field, previous to decreeing the prizes, delivered the following speech, which shews that the veteran soldier was not unacquainted with the art of flattery.

“ Illustrious ladies and chevaliers,

“ None of you is ignorant that not a single day
 “ passes, not a single moment, in which we do
 “ not behold the attention of our most gracious
 “ sovereign, towards augmenting the splendour
 “ of her empire, towards enlarging the sphere of
 “ the happiness of her subjects in general, and
 “ towards adding in particular to the lustre of her
 “ nobility.

“ That incomparable sovereign has made choice
 “ of this grand day, for giving the prime nobility
 “ of her empire an opportunity for signalizing
 “ their address and agility in the martial exercises
 “ of a brilliant carouzel, and such as has never yet
 “ been seen in Russia. Who does not share with
 “ me the sentiments of admiration and gratitude so
 “ justly due to her majesty for this act of goodness
 “ and maternal care?

“ Illustrious

" Illustrious ladies and chevaliers, you have acquitted yourselves, in these noble exercises, in a manner worthy of your birth, and adapted to give you the assurance of having merited the gracious regard of her majesty, the favour of monseigneur the grand duke, and universal applause."

Then turning towards countess Butturlin*, who had gained the principal prize, and which was valued at five thousand rubles, he said,

" It is to you, madam, to whom her imperial majesty authorises me to present the principal prize, the acquisition of an uncommon dexterity and grace which have won the suffrages of all beholders. Permit me, madam, to be the first to congratulate you on that honourable distinction, which confers on you the right of distributing with your victorious hands, the rest of the prizes to the ladies and the chevaliers."

" As for me, become hoary under arms during a space of sixty-five years of service†; I, the oldest in rank as well as in years of any of the generals in Europe; after having had the glory of leading the russian armies more than once to victory; I regard, as the recompence and the crown of all my toils, the honour to have been

* Countess Butturlin was sister to prince's Dashkof and countess Elizabeth Romanovna Vorontzof, the favourite of Peter III.

† He was at that time eighty-four years of age.

" this

" this day, not only the witness, but the first umpire of your resplendent exploits."

After this the company, to the amount of some hundred persons, sat down to a splendid supper, the dessert at the conclusion of which admirably represented the circus wherein the carouzel had been performed. The imperial summer-gardens were illuminated throughout, the walks lighted with numerous arches of lamps burning with naphtha, temples of one general radiance, illuminated fountains, and magnificent fireworks; the whole festival terminating with a masquerade in these gardens, which continued till day-light the following morning.

But Catharine knew also how to employ more worthy means for establishing her authority. She still busied herself in making reforms and in the erection of useful institutions. She corrected the tribunals, she founded schools, she built hospitals, and planted colonies. She endeavoured to infuse into her people a love for the laws, and to soften their manners by instruction. Jealous of a power that knew no bounds, greedy of every species of glory, she was determined to be at once both conqueror and legislatrix. Amidst conspiracies formed for overturning her throne, occupied with preparations for war, which seemed sufficient to arrest her whole attention, and yet finding time for attachments of gallantry, she was unmindful of nothing

nothing that could attract the reverence of mankind, and captivate their admiration.

There was at that time no country where the jurisprudence was more perplexed and uncertain than in Russia. The intricate code of Alexèy Mikhailovitch *, compiled that it might serve as the basis of legislation, was, if not abrogated, at least contradicted by the numerous edicts of his successors, which were always dictated by the interest or the caprice of the moment. The laws of this vast empire were voluminous to a degree of the greatest absurdity, were perplexed, insufficient, in many cases contradictory, and so loaded with precedents, reports, cases, and opinions, that they afforded an eternal scene of altercation, and were scarcely to be reconciled or understood by the very professors of them. This Augean stable the empress was determined to cleanse; and though the success of her patriotic attempt has not as yet been complete, yet, in consequence of it, a great simplification has taken place in the laws, and a milder and more impartial administration of justice. The particular laws of the different provinces were also continually interfering and clashing, and caused such confusion, that the whole presented an endless chaos, and effaced almost every trace of original system or design. The

* There is a more ancient code drawn up by tzar Ivan IV. called the Sudebnik. The code of Alexèy Mikhailovitch bears the title of Uloshenie.

senate, the colleges, all the tribunals of the empire, embarrassed by so many authorities and such opposite laws, protracted causes without end, or terminated them without justice. To these evils a greater yet was added, the venality of the judges, and their unlimited power *.

Catharine resolved to apply a remedy to all these disorders. She prosecuted what she had begun in the senate and in the colleges, by forming them into separate departments, which, having each but one line of business, could necessarily proceed in a more regular course, execute their business with much greater dispatch, and give fewer openings to artifice and chicane. In order then to deprive the judges of all pretext or excuse for either negligence or prevarication, she augmented the emoluments of their offices, a means unhappily insufficient, but which proves that Catharine was well acquainted with the spirit of the nation which she governed. Indeed, if the magistrates had been possessed of any virtue, would it not be rather from the sentiment of reputation, than by pecuniary recompences, that they would have been stimulated to justice? The empress therefore put in motion that spring which she thought would act with the greatest force upon them. She tells them, in the ukase she published

* The lowest judge, who frequently had never learnt to read, used arbitrarily to put culprits to the torture to extort confession, and condemn a man to the knout, or to be banished into Siberia.

on the occasion: — “ Indigence may perhaps hitherto have given you a propensity to self-interest; but now the country itself rewards your labours; and therefore what might heretofore have been pardonable, will henceforward be criminal.”

Catharine did more than augment the salaries of the judges; she secured to them an appointment of half-pay for that season of life when age and infirmities should oblige them to retire.

These primary matters being arranged, the empress set herself to work on a new code.

All the provinces of Russia, not excepting the barbarous nations who dwell in the remotest parts of that vast empire, had orders to send deputies to Moscow, to present their ideas on the laws that were the fittest for their peculiar exigencies. Catharine herself repaired to that antient capital. The opening of the states was held with extraordinary pomp. It was surely an interesting and novel transaction, to see deputies of numerous people, different in their manners, their dress, their languages; and they themselves must have been astonished at being here thus assembled for the purpose of discussing their laws, people who had never thought about law any farther than to obey the arbitrary will of a master, whom it often happened that they did not know.

The empress, desirous to leave to this assembly the appearances of the completest liberty, had a sort of gallery constructed in the hall in such manner, that,

that, without being perceived, she could see and hear all that passed. The business was begun by reading the instructions translated into the Russian language, the original whereof in French, almost entirely in the hand-writing of Catharine, has since been deposited, enclosed in a magnificent case of silver gilt, in an apartment of the imperial academy of sciences at St. Petersburg*.

“ The sovereigns of Russia possessed the most extensive dominions in the world, and every thing was yet to be done: at last,” says M. de Voltaire †, “ Peter was born and Russia was formed;” that is, doubtless, to say, that at this period it arose out of chaos. The bare idea of forming it was grand, and its execution might justly excite astonishment. Tzar Alexèy Mikhailovitch, his father, had already sketched out the work, and it must be confessed that Peter advanced it to a

* Mathonius and Rozetfky assisted the empress in the composition of these instructions, and afterwards translated them into Russian. This work may be chiefly taken from the writings of Montesquieu and some other of the French philosophers; but it must always redound to the glory of Catharine that she had the liberality of mind to draw from such sources. That princess had as much respect for Montesquieu as she had dislike for John Jaques Rousseau, whose political principles she dreaded. Accordingly she never let slip an opportunity for attacking the writings of Rousseau on their weak side. She seemed to have some preface of the revolution to which they so much contributed.

† History of the Russian empire, vol. i. p. 74.

surprising degree. To leave his country, that he might return to govern it with greater glory; to go and seek light in all parts where it enlightened mankind; to submit for several years to be the disciple of other nations, in order to become the master and the reformer of his own; to work as a simple carpenter at Saardam, to prepare himself for creating a navy that should be formidable to his enemies; to lower himself to a common soldier, in order to become a great commander; to form on all hands establishments of great utility, till then unknown to his subjects; to attack at once all the abuses both in church and state, in the manners and customs that had been most sanctioned by inveterate habit; to extend reformation and care to every particular that was deserving of them; to temper the severity of his discipline by the total abolition of the word slave; to mix pomp with toil, and annex prosperity to triumphs; all together characterised him as the great genius, the great man, and the great monarch.

But if that prince, so justly renowned to all posterity, polished his country in so many respects; if he made regulations worthy of admiration and praise, with all this he framed no permanent laws, and much less a system of legislation that should embrace all objects. That great work was left for Catharine II. It was she alone who conceived the grand idea of undertaking it, and she alone had the

the courage to put it in execution. A code of laws, and especially laws founded on wisdom, is the noblest present that can be made to a people: no woman had yet been a legislatrix; and that part the empress of Russia resolved to act.

The reading of the instructions was frequently interrupted by bursts of applause. All present extolled the sagacity, the wisdom, the humanity of the sovereign. But fear and flattery had a greater share in these exclamations than an admiration proceeding from a just knowledge of the matter. It was hoped, perhaps, by that means to attract the favour of the empress, or at least to escape Siberia. The deputies of the Samoyedes alone had the courage to speak freely. One of them stood up in the name of his brethren, and said: — “We are a simple and honest people. We quietly tend our rein-deer. We are in no want of a new code: but make laws for the Russians, our neighbours, that may put a stop to their depredations.”

The following sittings did not pass so quietly. Much had been said about giving liberty to the boors. Some thousands of this oppressed class of beings were preparing to support by force what they expected from equity. The nobility dreaded an insurrection; they dreaded, above all, a defalcation of their revenues; and some nobles were rash enough to assert, that they would poignard the first man who should move for the enfranchisement of the

the vassals*. Notwithstanding this, however, count Scheremetof, the richest individual of all Russia†, got up, and declared that he would willingly agree to this enfranchisement. The debate was carried on with great warmth, which grew to such a height, that fatal consequences were to be apprehended; and the deputies were dismissed to their respective provinces.

However, previous to the dissolution of this assembly, the members were required to signalize the meeting by some conspicuous act of gratitude. It was thought right that, though the benefit that was intended for the subjects should be lost to them, it ought not to be so to the sovereign who had conceived the noble idea of it. Accordingly, by a general acclamation, the titles of Great, Wise, Prudent, and Mother of the Country, were decreed to that princess; but when she was petitioned to accept of those titles, she answered, with an assumed modesty, "That if she had rendered herself
"worthy of the first, it belonged to posterity to
"confer it upon her; that wisdom and prudence
"were the gifts of heaven, for which she daily gave
"thanks, without presuming to derive any merit
"from them herself; that lastly, the title of Mother

* This fact has been several times attested by Andrew Schuvalof, known in France by his pretty epistle to Ninon.

† Potemkin was not as yet favourite. Count Scheremetof possessed an annual income of six hundred thousand rubles. He had belonging to him one hundred and twenty thousand peasants.

"of the Country was the most dear of all in her
"eyes, the only one that she could accept, and
"which she regarded as the most benign and
"glorious recompence for her labours and sollicitudes in behalf a people whom she loved."

It will not be superfluous to observe that the empress made a present to each of the deputies of a gold medal, for the purpose of transmitting to posterity the motive that had called them together; and that the generality of these rude and unpolished people almost immediately fold these medals to the goldsmiths.

Proud of the work which had obtained her such flattering marks of homage, Catharine eagerly dispatched copies of her instructions to the sovereigns whose approbation she most coveted. They complimented her on her laborious enterprise, and made no hesitation to pronounce that it would be an eternal monument to her glory. The king of Prussia, who knew how sensible she was to praise, and who was always lavish of it with less delicacy than ease, wrote to her a long letter, which, among other things, contained this flattering observation: "No woman has hitherto been a legislatrix. That
"glory was reserved for the empress of Russia, who
"well deserves it."

The empress received this letter* at Kazan, being then on a progress to her provinces in Asia and the far-famed shores of the Volga.

* Which see in the appendix, No. VI. of the second volume.

Count Solms, minister of the king of Prussia, on sending this letter to count Panin, wrote him a note to the following purport: "I hasten to transmit to your excellency the letter which the king my master has had the honour to compose, in answer to that with which her imperial majesty was graciously pleased to accompany the present of her instruction for the formation of the new code in Russia, ordering me to cause it to be presented to her imperial majesty. He subjoins, with his own hand, in the dispatch which he has addressed to me, 'I have read with admiration the work of the empress. I was not willing to tell her all that I think of it, because she might have suspected me of flattery; but I may say to you, with due deference to modesty, that it is a masculine performance, nervous, and worthy of a great man.' We are told by history, that Semiramis commanded armies. Queen Elizabeth has been accounted a good politician. The empress-queen has shewn great intrepidity on her accession to the throne: but no woman has hitherto been a legislatrix. That glory was reserved for the empress of Russia, who well deserves it."

It certainly redounds much to the praise of Catharine, that these instructions are founded on the principles of an enlightened humanity; and that, though autocratrix and of unlimited power, she recognizes no legitimate authority but that which is founded on justice; every particular in her laws has

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a tendency to enervate despotism, and to render a just authority respectable. Her purpose is to form a solid, and not an arbitrary legislation. Her whole plan is directed to prevent all those who govern under her from exercising a capricious and cruel authority, by subjecting them to invariable laws, which no authority should be able to infringe.

The accomplishment of this grand design, however, did not proceed so smoothly as the first steps gave room to expect. Either it was found that the plan of a convocation of the nation by its deputies was beginning at too high a pitch, and that in an assembly composed of such a diversity of tribes, manners, and tongues, it would be impossible to come to any common conclusions; or the whole apparatus was used only as a machine, and suffered to fall when it had answered the end for which it was contrived.

A few articles in these instructions will suffice to shew the principles on which they are drawn up.

"The spirit of the nation, the nation itself, ought to be consulted in the framing of laws.

"These laws should be considered no otherwise than as a means of conducting mankind to the greatest happiness.

"It is our duty to mitigate the lot of those who live in a state of dependence.

"The liberty and the security of the citizens ought to be the grand and precious objects of all laws;

“ laws; they should all tend to render life, honour,
 “ and property, as stable and secure as the con-
 “ stitution of the government itself.

“ The liberty of the subjects ought only to be
 “ restricted concerning what it would be disadvan-
 “ tageous to them to do.

“ In causes purely civil, the laws should be so
 “ clear and precise, that the judgments resulting
 “ from them be always in perfect unison in the
 “ same cases, in order to remove that jurisprudence
 “ of decisions which is so often a source of uncer-
 “ tainties, of errors, or acts of injustice, according
 “ as a cause has been well or ill defended at one
 “ time or at another, gained or lost according to
 “ influence or circumstances.”

We read with equal pleasure the instructions
 she prescribes to be followed in the criminal con-
 stitution :

“ It is incomparably better to prevent crimes
 “ than to punish them.

“ The life of the meanest citizen is of conse-
 “ quence; and no one should be deprived of it,
 “ except when it is attacked or required by the
 “ country.

“ In like manner his liberty should be respected,
 “ by being difficult about imprisonment, by care-
 “ fully distinguishing the cases where the laws will
 “ dispense with it, as also those in which the public
 “ safety requires arrestation, detention, or formal
 “ impri-

“ imprisonment, and in this case even concerning
 “ different prisons.

“ In the methods of trial, the use of torture
 “ is contrary to sound reason. Humanity cries
 “ out against this practice, and insists on its being
 “ abolished.

“ A prisoner is not to be sacrificed to the torrent
 “ of opinions. Judgment must be nothing but the
 “ precise text of the law; and the office of the
 “ judge is only to pronounce whether the action is
 “ conformable or contrary to it.”

Concerning punishments :

“ The aim of punishment is not to torment
 “ sensible beings.

“ All punishment is unjust when it is not necessary
 “ to the maintenance of the public safety.

“ The atrocity of punishments is reprobated by
 “ the compassion that is due to human nature;
 “ whenever it is useless, it is a sufficient reason to
 “ regard it as unjust, and, as such, to reject it.

“ In the ordinary state of society, the death of a
 “ citizen is neither useful nor necessary.”

All that follows under this head, touching the
 proportion that should be observed between crimes
 and punishments; on the rarity of the cases where
 the crime deserves death; on the rule to be ob-
 served in confiscations, which the empress would not
 extend beyond acquired property, and a number of
 other ideas, are such as could only proceed from
 goodness of heart and profound meditation. The
 whole

whole number of the articles of her instructions is 525; and the very publication and dispersion of the book throughout the empire has been attended with salutary effects. It was doubtless a great and arduous undertaking, and worthy of an exalted mind.

The instruction of the empress is not a law-book itself. She only says, "Such regulations should be made. — In the first place, it should be examined whether," &c. But it must be confessed that excellent suggestions are thus delivered, which certainly have produced, and must continue to produce, great effects. Thus we find it said, chap. xi. "Peter I. promulgated a law in 1722, that persons who were not of sound mind, and who oppress their serfs, should be put under guardians. The former point of this law has been kept up; why the latter is not enforced is not known." — Again, chap. xii. "It seems too, that the new manner in which noblemen exact their dues from the peasantry is hurtful to population. There is scarcely a village which does not pay certain tributes to its lord in money. The lord, who never, or but very rarely, fees his village, imposes on every head a tax of one, two, and even to five rubles, without concerning himself how the peasant is to pay that sum. It will be absolutely indispensable to prescribe laws to the nobility, obliging them to act more circumspectly in the manner of levying their dues, and to require of the peasant
 " tributes

"tributes of such a nature as shall remove him as little as possible from his house and family. By this means agriculture will be better followed, and the population of the empire be increased. At present, a labourer leaves his home at the age of fifteen to go and seek his subsistence in distant towns; roams about the empire, and pays his dues annually from what he earns."

"If, for some political reason, it be not practicable to free the boors throughout the empire from their vassalage, yet means should be thought of to enable them to acquire property. In pursuance of this idea, should not a method be devised for gradually bettering the condition of this lower class of people?" Is not such language, which evinces so much sagacity and benevolence, the fittest for the mouth of a monarch who is desirous of making improvements, without undertaking the boisterous and intemperate part of an austere reformer? It is a great matter, if a prince shews that he understands the vices of the country, and knows how they may be remedied. Suppose even that nothing farther is done, must not every considerate spectator feel himself inclined to believe that this sagacity and this benevolence have met with difficulties which were absolutely not to be overcome? But such words are never lost: under Catharine much was effected by what she planned with prudence and moderation. In some places, however, she expresses herself decisively, and with command;
 and

and wherever this is the case, the instruction retains the virtual force of a law.

The whole performance is an excellent compendium of choice observations, of just maxims, and of generous sentiments; and at the same time a beautiful collection of striking passages from the celebrated philosophers of Greece and Rome, of apt examples from ancient and modern history, from the manners of cultivated and savage nations, and even from such nations as are not very much known to the rest of Europe, the Chinese and other Asiatics. Whoever would make himself acquainted with the philosophy of legislation, might reap considerable advantage by taking it as his manual.

In addition to the passages above cited from this work, as a specimen of the sentiments of Catharine, it will not beamiss to extract a few others, if it be only to shew, that upwards of thirty years ago a monarch delivered the best of those which, in the opinion of some, were first discovered by the republicans of the present day. A lofty philosophical station is taken in the sixth chapter: "Several things influence mankind, religion, climate, laws, maxims of government, examples of things past, manners, customs, from which, as the result, a public mind is formed." Elucidations of this maxim from the characteristics of various nations succeed to this. Then, "It is the business of the legislator to follow the temper of the nation; for we do nothing

" better than what we do voluntarily, and in pursuance of our natural disposition. For establishing a more perfect legislation, it is necessary that the minds of men should be previously prepared for it. But in order to defeat the pretext usually alleged, that it is not possible to do good, because the minds are not yet disposed to admit it, take the pains to prepare them for it: this will be already a great step advanced." — "When it is intended to make great changes in a nation, which may turn to its benefit, that which has been established by laws should be reformed by laws; and what custom has brought into practice should be changed by custom; and it is very bad policy to change by laws what ought to be changed by custom."

Chap. viii. of punishments. "Examine with attention into the cause of all relaxations, and it will be seen that they arise from the impunity of crimes, and not from the moderation of punishments." — "It often happens that a legislator, who intends to correct an evil, confines his thoughts to that correction: his eyes are open to that object, and shut to the inconveniencies attending it." — Chap. ix. "If you consider the forms of law in regard to the trouble a citizen has to obtain his right, or to get satisfaction for some injury, you will doubtless find them too many; if you regard them in the relation they bear to the liberty and security of the citizens, you

“ you will often find them too few, and you will
 “ see that the punishments, the expences, the delays,
 “ even the danger of the decision are the price that
 “ every citizen pays for his liberty.” Not to be
 farther tedious, we will conclude with the fol-
 “ lowing: “ Would you prevent crimes; contrive
 “ that the laws favour less the different orders of
 “ citizens, than each citizen in particular. Let
 “ men fear the laws and nothing but the laws.
 “ Would you prevent crimes; provide that reason
 “ and knowledge be more and more diffused among
 “ mankind. To conclude: the most sure, but the
 “ most difficult method of making men better, is by
 “ rendering education more complete.” Nothing
 that relates to government is left untouched in this
 little book. The maxims of politics, of toleration,
 and of justice, are thus loudly and powerfully
 delivered from the throne, and have thereby received,
 as it were, one sanction more.

Still proceeding on the same enlarged and en-
 lightened plan which we have before had occasion
 to commend, the empress continued to cultivate
 and encourage the arts and sciences; to make her
 empire an asylum to the learned and ingenious;
 and to reform the manners and instruct the minds
 of the people, through the extent of its most distant
 provinces.

The transit of the planet Venus over the sun,
 which was to happen in the summer of 1769, added
 a new opportunity of shewing as well the muni-
 ficence

ficence of Catharine as the attention she paid to
 astronomy. This great princess wrote a letter from
 Mosco with her own hand, to count Vladimir Orlof,
 director of the academy of sciences at Petersburg *;
 wherein she desires the academy to inform her of
 the most proper places in her dominions for the
 making of those observations; with an offer to send
 workmen and artists, and to construct buildings
 in all those places which the academy might think
 proper for the purpose, and to grant every other
 assistance requisite to the undertaking. She also
 desired, that if there were not sufficient astronomers
 in the academy to make observations in all the
 places required, to give her notice, that she might
 send a proper number of the officers of her marine,
 to qualify themselves under the eye of the professors
 in the academy, for that undertaking. Such is the
 extent of that vast empire, that the observations
 which were made, both on the transit and exit of
 this planet, the one in the frozen regions towards
 the pole, and the other on the borders of the
 Caspian, were made within its own limits; to
 some part of which astronomers from every corner
 of Europe went to behold that remarkable oc-
 currence.

The academy at Petersburg applied to a member
 of the royal society of London, to procure the
 necessary instruments for the purpose of proceeding

* For which the reader is referred to the appendix, No. VII.
 at the end of the second volume.

successfully in that important observation*. Mr. Ramofsky, who was the writer upon this occasion, candidly acknowledged the great joy of the academy, and their obligations to Mr. Short, for procuring them those instruments; and confessed their doubts of being able to answer the views of the empress, till they had received his letter.

What appears somewhat surprising is, that while Catharine was striving to build her fame upon a solid basis, she made it a matter of much importance to obtain from all the powers of Europe the title of Imperial majesty, which some of them had refused her. The king of Sweden had long since given it to Catharine; but the swedish diet could not be brought to grant it till the commencement of this year †.

1768. Lewis XV. pertinaciously delayed to mention her by that style. Knowing that the sovereigns of Russia only began to assume the title of emperor in the time of Peter the great, he regarded them in some sort as a new nobility: never considering that it is the power of princes, and not the antiquity of their race, on which their rights are built. This refusal of the king of France mortified Catharine; but it was not the only reason she had to be irritated against him. She had no doubt that

* See the appendix, No. VII. at the end of the second volume.

† The 6th of February. See the appendix, No. VIII. at the end of this volume.

this

this monarch was informed of all the secrets of the conspiracy that had placed her on the throne; and she knew, besides, that the ambassador of France at the Porte had been long labouring to make the Turks declare against Russia.

What then would she have thought if she had read a letter concerning this, written by the duke de Choiseul? — “We know,” said he, “the ill-judged animosity of the court of Russia against France. The king so heartily despises at once the princess who reigns in that country, and her sentiments and her conduct, that it is our intention not to take a single step towards inducing her to change them. The king thinks that the hatred of Catharine II. is far more honourable than her friendship. At the same time he is desirous of avoiding an open rupture.”

But the shuffling tricks of a foreign court and the dangers of war could cause no great disturbance to Catharine; perhaps they were even as necessary to her as the cares she bestowed on the administration of the empire, for eluding the bitterness of such reflections as might occasionally arise in her mind. She often imagined that in one adverse moment she might be despoiled of the fruit of her labours and ingenuity, and that some of her subjects might be ardently wishing for its arrival. The name of Peter III. was become dear to the Russians. They recollected with pleasure the good he had done, and the desire he had of doing more: they forgot
his

his failings and infirmities, expiated by a series of misfortunes. They lamented the deplorable end of that prince; and the multitude of malcontents dispersed throughout the empire might secretly contain more than one avenger.

Sensibly touched with the deplorable death of the tzar, and incensed at seeing his murderers sharing his power, a young officer, named Tschoglokokof*, resolved to avenge it, and even thought himself inspired with the design by the suggestions of heaven. After having long reflected on the means of executing his sanguinary project, he resorted to the palace for several days in succession, always lurking in some of the dark passages leading to the inner apartments, to which the empress retired when she wished to be alone. The preservation of her majesty was on this occasion owing to an accidental circumstance, which prevented her from going, according to custom, along the passage where Tschoglokokof was waiting her coming. Disconcerted by a delay which he had not foreseen, and impatient to strike the blow which he thought beneficial to his country and glorious to himself, this young man had the imprudence to trust his secret to another officer whom he thought his friend. This officer ran in haste to betray him. Orlov, thus informed of the measures that were taken by

* Tschoglokokof was a descendant of the family of that Skavronsky whom Catharine I. acknowledged as her brother: consequently he was related to Elizabeth and to Peter III.

Tschoglokokof,

Tschoglokokof, and the instant when he was again to expect the empress, caused him to be arrested in his ambuscade. He was found armed with a long poignard, and confessed, without hesitation, the use for which he designed it. Catharine, always sufficiently mistress of herself for concealing her indignation and her fears, pretended to forgive the rash attempt of the youth, whom political fanaticism had deluded from his duty. She even had him brought into her presence, and spoke to him with mildness. This generosity was only apparent. Catharine wished to conceal from the public a wicked design, which, if it had been known, might soon have been imitated. But, as she did not flatter herself with the hopes of entirely converting a man who, from an excess of humanity, was about to become an assassin, she quickly caused Tschoglokokof to be put into prison, and afterwards banished to the heart of Siberia*.

Some time before the period of which we are treating, the deputies of the two russian trading companies, one established at Kamtschatka, and the other at the mouth of the river Kovima, gave the court of Petersburg an account of their discoveries. Those of Kovima, setting out from that river, doubled the cape called Tschutskoi-nofs, in 74 deg. north lat. and falling down to the south, through the strait which separates Europe from

* The daughter of Tschoglokokof was afterwards appointed one of the maids of honour to Catharine.

America, they discovered some inhabited islands in the 64th degree of latitude, where they went ashore, and settled a trade with the inhabitants, for their finest furs, some of which they brought to the empress, particularly a parcel of the most beautiful black foxes skins that ever were seen. They named these islands the islands of Aleyut; some of them are very near the continent of America*. Those of Kamtschatka went to the northward, and met their companions at the above islands; so that, for the convenience of trade, they fixed a factory at the isle of Behring. When this report was made, the court came to a resolution of pushing these discoveries; and lieutenant-colonel Blenmer was sent, accompanied by several able geographers, with orders to sail from the river Anadyr to the same coasts, and even beyond them.

About the middle of the year 1767, the empress conceived the useful project of sending several learned men to travel into the interior of her vast territories, for the purpose of determining the geographical position of the principal places, of marking their temperature, and of examining into the nature of their soil, their productions, their wealth, as well as the manners and characters of the several people by whom they are inhabited.

* For a farther account of some of these discoveries the reader is referred to "Varieties of Literature," vol. ii. p. 1. printed for Debrett, Piccadilly.

A country

A country of such a prodigious extent as the russian empire must naturally attract the notice of every man who wishes to increase his knowledge, whether it be considered in regard to the astonishing number of tribes or nations by which it is inhabited, the great diversity of climates under which they live, or the almost infinite quantity of natural curiosities with which it abounds. But the greater part of this country is still immersed in the profoundest barbarism, and almost inaccessible to the investigations of the ordinary traveller. Here, vagrant hordes of people, who, entirely addicted to the pastoral life, roam from place to place, shunning the social manners of towns and villages, negligent of agriculture, and leaving uncultivated and almost in a desert state vast tracts of land blessed with the most favourable soil and the most happy temperature of seasons: there, peasants, and even in many places inhabitants of towns, slaves to a thousand prejudices, languishing in bondage to the most stupid superstitions; brought up, besides, in the severest servitude, and being accustomed to obey by no other means than blows, are forced to submit to the harshest treatment: none of those affectionate admonitions, those prudent and impelling motives, which usually urge mankind to action, make any impression on their degraded minds; they reluctantly labour the fields of a hard master, and studiously conceal from his knowledge those riches which some accident, so

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desirable

desirable in other countries, should have led them to discover; as they would only augment the number of their toils and the heaviness of their yoke. Hence that careless contempt for the treasures presented them by nature, and the neglect of those bounties she lavishes on them. Hence those immense deserts almost totally destitute of cultivation, and so many towns that are falling to decay.

Peter the great, of too penetrating a view not to perceive both the evil and its causes, took all imaginable pains, and adopted the wisest measures to ameliorate the condition of an empire, so powerful from numberless other circumstances, to free his subjects by gentle degrees from the shackles of barbarism, to diffuse on all sides the benign light of arts and sciences, to discover the treasures concealed in his dominions, and to furnish agriculture with the remedies and assistances adapted to its improvement. His travels into several countries of Europe for the acquisition of such kinds of knowledge as were most applicable to the use of his dominions, are sufficiently known; as well as that in 1717 he honoured the royal academy of sciences at Paris with his presence, and expressed his desire the following year to be admitted a member; that he kept up a regular correspondence with that illustrious body, and that he sent to it, as the first essay of his ingenious and magnificent enterprises, an accurate chart of the Caspian, which he caused to be scrupulously

puloufly taken on the spot. At the same time he fitted out and dispatched several men of letters to various parts of his empire; one of them to make the tour of Russia, and two others to proceed to Kazan and Astrakhan, to gain information of every thing of consequence to be known in those countries. In the year 1719, Daniel Amadeus Mefferschmidt, a physician of Dantzic, was sent into Siberia, for the purpose of making inquiries into the natural history of that immense province, from which expedition he only returned at the beginning of 1727. This learned man did honour to the choice that had been made of him, by an indefatigable activity, and by the proofs he gave of his profound knowledge, not only in every department of natural history, but likewise in antiquities, as well as in astronomy, having carefully determined the elevation of the pole in all the places where he stopped.

The northern regions, particularly those of Siberia, being as yet but little known, and it being very uncertain whether the extremity of these latter might not touch upon America, Peter I. sent from Archangel two ships, with orders to proceed, by the White-sea and the Northern-ocean into the Frozen-ocean, where they experienced the same disasters as had befallen the other vessels that had gone before them in this attempt; for one of the two was caught among the fields of ice, and disabled from proceeding any farther; and as no tidings were ever heard of the other, it in all probability perished.

Peter I. was not discouraged by the failure of this undertaking; but he was carried off by death as he was preparing a new expedition; he had given the charge of it to two danish captains, Behring and Spangberg, and a russian named Tschirikof, with orders to go to Kamtschatka, whence they were to sail for exploring the northernmost coasts of Siberia. The sorrowful event of the emperor's death made no alteration in these dispositions; and the plan was carried into execution, the same winter, by the empress Catharine the first, who sent a small company of literati, provided with a paper of instructions, which Peter had framed with his own hand. They returned in 1730, after having penetrated very far towards the north.

The empress Anne was desirous of prosecuting these important researches still farther, and ordered the erection of a new company, in which Behring was to be employed as captain of the ship. Kamtschatka was again the point of departure for making the principal discoveries, and the travellers had orders to neglect nothing that might shed any light on the knowledge of the globe. One part of this society was to navigate the northern seas, while the others were to repair by land to Kamtschatka over Siberia. These latter were to act conformably with the instructions of the imperial academy of Petersburg, and to employ themselves particularly in astronomical observations, geometrical operations,

and descriptions relative to the political and natural history of the countries through which they were to pass.

In 1760, M. l'abbé Chappe d'Auteroche was sent into Russia, by order and at the expence of the king of France, for observing at Tobolsk the transit of Venus over the sun: his observations, published with great ostentation, contain not near so much as was expected from that academician; and many of those which he relates had been already long since known.

The empress Catharine II. determined to prosecute these useful investigations, and accordingly gave orders to the academy of sciences to make choice of a company of able and learned men to travel over different districts of the empire with attention and observation. The selection of the learned travellers, the helps that were granted them, the excellent instructions and advice that were given them, will be a lasting honour to that academy. The very names of a Pallas, a Gmelin, and a Guldensædt, already promised much. M. Lepekhin had likewise acquired a reputation by different papers inserted in the academical collections: and the result of the labours of these enlightened men has been seen in the extensive utility which they have since produced. Very few of the accounts that have been given by travellers contain so great a variety of new and important matters. The journals

nals of these celebrated scholars even furnish such a great quantity of materials, entirely new, for the history of the three kingdoms of nature, for the theory of the earth, for rural œconomy, in short, for so many different objects relative to the arts and sciences, that it would require, according to the judicious remark of M. Bekmann of Gœttingen, whole years and the labour of several literary men only to put these materials in order, and properly to class them*.

The discoveries made by the Russians at sea at various epochas, and particularly during the reign of Catharine II. have been faithfully laid before the public by Mr. Coxe, in his well-known work professedly written on that subject. It is impossible to consider these expensive and important missions without testifying our acknowledgment of the benefits that have accrued to science from these learned and laborious investigations.

The court of Catharine became now the asylum of the sciences, to which she invited learned men from every part of Europe. Among the rest the celebrated professor Euler from Berlin, on whom her majesty settled a large annual stipend, made him a present of a house, besides shewing him many other marks of her imperial favour and protection.

* It was to this enterprise that we owe the interesting works of Pallas and Gmelin. Two volumes in quarto have also appeared of the observations of Guldenstædt, edited by the indefatigable Dr. Pallas.

Well

Well knowing, that it is not so much by the power of arms as by precedence in the sciences and the arts that nations obtain a conspicuous place in the annals of the world, Catharine with a laudable zeal encouraged artists and scholars of all denominations. She granted new privileges to the academy of sciences, and exhorted its members to add the names of several celebrated foreigners to those which already conferred a lustre on their society.

Nor was she less attentive to the academy of arts, by increasing the number of its pupils, and adding such regulations as tended more than ever to the attainment of the end of its endowment. Scholars were now not to be taken in after the age of six years, that the defects of a bad education might not yet have had time to spoil their temper or corrupt their manners. Delivered for three years to the care of women, they are then put into the hands of tutors, and are devoted to the art to which they shew the most inclination. They may become painters, sculptors, architects, watchmakers, engravers, or learn the art of casting in metals, and of making mathematical and optical instruments. During the whole of the time they are in the academy they are not permitted to receive anything from their parents. They are clothed, fed, and lodged at the public expence. At the end of fifteen years they leave the institution; and, if their behaviour correspond with the pains that have been bestowed

on

on their education, they are presented with patents of nobility.

Independently of these advantages, such of the pupils as have carried the highest prizes, receive the before-mentioned pension for travelling three years over Europe.

It is frequently observed, that though this institution has now subsisted upwards of half a century, yet it has produced no great artist; and that it has served no other purpose than to furnish Voltaire with a subject of pompous declamation, and to make annually a paragraph in the newspapers of Germany, ostentatiously describing the ceremony of distributing the prizes in the presence of the empress and the grand duke, with their pathetic speeches on the occasion; and that, answering that purpose, nothing farther was intended. Yet even admitting the love of fame to be the only motive at the time, the institution may hereafter find motives of its own, arising from interest, or a desire of excelling, as a civilized public shall increase, and the approbation of their performances no longer be considered as a matter of form and confined to the court.

Still farther to encourage the fine arts in her dominions, the empress assigned an annual sum of five thousand rubles for the translation of foreign literary works into the russian language.

At this time the small-pox was very rife in St. Petersburg, which occasioned the empress and the grand duke her son to remain at Tzarisko-selo, instead

instead of coming to town as usual. The countess Scheremetof was carried off by that distemper a few days before she was to have been married to count Panin, for which event great preparations had been made. It was neither possible, nor was it material, to ascertain how the infection penetrated the recesses of the court; but persons of rank and fortune were alarmed that neither one nor the other afforded any security against the ravages of this dreadful disease. The danger to which her majesty and the grand duke were exposed, together with her majesty's zeal for the welfare of her subjects, gave rise to a proposal for introducing the practice of inoculation.

The first personages in the empire determined to set the example, by submitting to the operation; and a resolution was accordingly taken by the empress, to invite a physician from England, where inoculation had been most practised, and was generally allowed to have received some modern and very considerable improvements*.

Accordingly Dr. Thomas Dimsdale, about the beginning of July 1768, received a letter at Hertford from M. Pouschin, the russian minister at the court of London, representing that the empress, having a desire to engage an able physician to go to St. Petersburg, in order to introduce inoculation, he wished to see him as soon as possible. At the

* See tracts on inoculation, written and published at St. Petersburg in the year 1768, by command of the empress of Russia, by the hon. baron T. Dimsdale, 1781.

interview that ensued, great encouragements were held out; but the doctor, from domestic considerations, at first shewed some hesitation; when a second courier arriving, and some circumstances rendering it apparent that the empress and grand duke were immediately interested in the application, he prepared for his journey with all expedition, and accordingly set out on the 28th of July.

Two days after his arrival, the doctor, in consequence of a previous notice, waited on count Panin, who, after the usual salutations, said to him, "You are now called, sir, to the most important employment that perhaps any gentleman was ever entrusted with. To your skill and integrity will probably be submitted no less than the precious lives of two of the greatest personages in the world, with whose safety the tranquillity and happiness of this great empire are so intimately connected, that should an accident deprive us of either, the blessings we now enjoy might be turned to the utmost state of misery and confusion. May God avert such unspeakable calamities! But the hazard of the infection of the small-pox, in the natural way, is so threatening, that we are compelled to have recourse to the expedient of inoculation; which, though so little known in this country, has been adopted and practised in England with the greatest success. We have physicians of great learning and abilities in their profession; but not being experienced in
" this

" this new branch of practice, her imperial majesty was pleased to lay her commands upon her ministers, to inquire after and engage a person of the best abilities in it, and whose success had been confirmed by long practice. You come to us well recommended in these essential points; I shall therefore repose the utmost confidence in you, and have only to request that you will act without the least reserve.

" As to the resolution of the empress in this particular, with regard to herself, I must leave to her majesty to explain her own sentiments; but with respect to the grand duke, he is already determined on the operation, provided you encourage it: it has been submitted to his own consideration; he approves, and even wishes it. I have therefore to request, that before an affair of so great consequence is finally settled, you would make yourself well acquainted with his constitution and state of health.

" His imperial highness knows you are arrived, expects to see you, and invites you to wait on him to-morrow. I can venture to assure you, that he will be easy of access, and willing to be acquainted with you. Be with him as much as possible; see him at his table, and at his amusements; make your observations, and, in short, study his constitution. Let us not be too precipitate; but when every circumstance has been duly attended to, report your opinion freely, and
" depend

“ depend on this, that if you should deem the
 “ operation hazardous, and advise against it, we shall
 “ think ourselves equally obliged to you ; nor will
 “ the acknowledgments on account of this expe-
 “ dition be inferior to what it will be upon the
 “ utmost success.”

In answer to this, the doctor assured the count that he would in every respect attend to his intimations, and that he might depend on his making a just report.

The empress came to town that evening, and the next day the two Dimsdales were presented. On this occasion there were only present with her majesty, count Panin and baron Cherkassoff, president of the college of medicine, who having been educated at the university of Cambridge, spoke very good English. Catharine shewed great perspicacity in the questions she put concerning the practice and success of inoculation. On his retiring, Dr. Dimsdale was invited to dine with her majesty the same day ; and as the account of the manners observed at the empress's table will neither be foreign to our purpose, nor unentertaining to the reader, we shall give it in the doctor's own words :

“ The empress sat singly at the upper end of a long table, at which about twelve of the nobility were guests. The entertainment consisted of a variety of excellent dishes, served up after the french manner, and was concluded by a dessert of the finest fruits and sweetmeats, such as I little expected

expected to find in that northern climate. Most of these luxuries were, however, the produce of the empress's own dominions. Pine-apples indeed are chiefly imported from England, though those of the growth of Russia, of which we had one that day, are of good flavour, but generally small. Water-melons and grapes are brought from Astrakhan ; great plenty of melons from Mosco, and apples and pears from the Ukraine.

“ But what enlivened the whole entertainment was the most unaffected ease and affability of the empress herself. Each of her guests had a share of her attention and politeness ; the conversation was kept up with a freedom and cheerfulness to be expected rather from persons of the same rank, than from subjects admitted to the honour of their sovereign's company.”

On the following day another conversation with the empress ensued, in which Dr. Dimsdale requested the assistance of the court physicians, to whom he desired to communicate every proposed regulation and medicine ; but the empress would by no means consent to any such consultation, and gave her reasons as follows :

“ You are come well recommended to me ; the
 “ conversation I have had with you on this subject
 “ has been very satisfactory ; and my confidence
 “ in you is increased. I have not the least doubt
 “ of your abilities and knowledge in this practice ;
 “ it is impossible that my physicians can have much

“ skill in this operation; they want experience;
 “ their interposition may tend to embarrass you,
 “ without the least probability of giving any useful
 “ assistance. My life is my own; and I shall with
 “ the utmost cheerfulness and confidence rely on
 “ your care alone. With regard to my constitution
 “ you could receive no information from them. I
 “ have had, I thank God, so good a share of health,
 “ that their advice has never been required; and
 “ you shall, from myself, receive every information
 “ that can be necessary. I have also to acquaint
 “ you, that it is my determination to be inoculated
 “ before the grand duke, and as soon as you judge it
 “ convenient. At the same time I desire that this
 “ may remain a secret business; and I enjoin you
 “ to let it be supposed that, for the present, all
 “ thoughts of my own inoculation are laid aside.
 “ The preparation of this great experiment on the
 “ grand duke will countenance your visits to the
 “ palace; and I desire to see you as often as it may
 “ seem necessary, that you may become still better
 “ acquainted with what relates to my constitution,
 “ and also for adjusting the time and other circum-
 “ stances of my own inoculation.”

He promised obedience to her majesty's commands; and only proposed that some experiments might first be made by inoculating some of her own sex and age, and as near as could be of similar habit. The empress replied, “ that if the practice had been

“ novel, or the least doubt of the general success

“ had remained, that precaution might be necessary;
 “ but, as she was well satisfied in both particulars,
 “ there would be no occasion for delay on any
 “ account.”

The empress, on being inoculated privately, went the next morning* to Tzariko-selo. At first no other persons were there but the necessary attendants, it being given out that her majesty's journey was only to give directions about some alterations, and that her stay would be short. But several of the nobility soon followed, and the empress observing among them some whom she suspected not to have had the small-pox, said to Dr. Dimsdale: “ I must rely
 “ on you to give me notice when it is possible for
 “ me to communicate the disease: for, though I
 “ could wish to keep my inoculation a secret, yet
 “ far be it from me to conceal it a moment, when
 “ it may become hazardous to others.” The empress, during this interval, took part in every amusement with her usual affability, without shewing the least token of uneasiness or concern; constantly dined at the same table with the nobility, and enlivened the whole court with those peculiar graces of conversation, for which she was ever distinguished†.

The

* On the 12th of October.

† Shortly after being inoculated Catharine wrote to Voltaire: — “ I have not kept my bed a single instant, and I have received
 “ company every day. I am about to have my only son inocu-
 “ lated,

The grand duke shortly after * submitted to the operation; and, on his recovery, Catharine rewarded the services of Dr. Dimfdale by creating him a baron of the russian empire, and appointing him actual counsellor of state and physician to her imperial majesty, with a pension of 500*l.* a-year, to be paid him in England; besides 10,000*l.* sterling which he immediately received; and also presented him with a miniature picture of herself, and another of the grand duke, as a memorial of his services. Her majesty was likewise pleased to express her approbation of the conduct of his son, by conferring on him the same title, and ordering him to be presented with a superb gold snuff-box, richly set with diamonds.

The examples of these illustrious personages had such immediate influence, that most of the nobility

* On the 1st of November.

“ lated. The grand master of artillery, count Orlof, that hero
“ who resembles the antient Romans in the best times of the
“ republic (1), both in courage and in generosity, doubting
“ whether he had ever had the small-pox, has put himself under
“ the hands of our Englishman; and the next day after the
“ operation, went to the hunt, in a very deep fall of snow. A
“ great number of courtiers have followed his example, and
“ many others are preparing to do so. Besides this, inoculation
“ is now carried on at Petersburg, in three seminaries of educa-
“ tion, and in an hospital, established under the inspection of
“ M. Dimfdale.”

(1) Romans! — the Orlofs!

both of St. Petersburg and Mosco were impatient to have their families inoculated. This business being happily accomplished, baron Dimfdale was preparing to return to England, and indeed was just setting out, when a nobleman came to inform him that the empress was desirous of seeing him. The baron was much concerned to find her with every symptom of a pleuretic fever, and therefore at her desire again took up his residence in the palace. The symptoms increased; but, upon being bled, her majesty received immediate relief, and in a short time the most alarming symptoms abated. So soon as the empress was recovered, which was in about three weeks, the baron again prepared for his journey to England. Having taken his leave, and received farther proofs of the munificence of her imperial majesty, the baron was attended to Riga by an officer commissioned to see that every necessary accommodation should be provided, in the same manner as at his first arrival in the country*.

On the 3d of December 1768, a thanksgiving service was performed in the chapel of the palace, on account of her majesty's recovery and that of the grand duke from the small-pox. The ceremony was very solemn and magnificent. On each side

* Before baron Dimfdale took his departure from St. Petersburg, the empress purchased the house that had been built by baron Wolf, formerly british consul in that city, for the purpose of converting it into an inoculation hospital, which she accordingly did, and the institution is still supported.

of the imperial chapel, which is a lofty and spacious room in the winter palace, is a row of gilt ionic columns. The walls are covered with taudry and ill-executed pictures of russian faints. On the roof, over the catapetasma and holy doors, is a representation of the Supreme Being, under the figure of an old man in white raiment. Within a railing that extends across the room, and contiguous to the pillar nearest to the holy doors, on the south side, stood the empress and her son; for, by the greek ritual, no person is allowed to sit in church: accordingly there are no seats, not even for the sovereign, who always stands during the whole service under a canopy, when not making the usual prostrations. In the same area, and on both sides of the sanctuary, were choristers, gaudily appareled. All the rest of the congregation stood on the outside of the balustrade.

The ceremony opened with solemn vocal music, no other being admissible in the greek church; to this succeeded the prayers and ejaculations, which constituted the first part of the office. Presently the folding doors of the holiest were opened from within, and displayed to view the penetralia of the temple. Directly opposite appeared a large picture of the descent from the cross; on each side a gilt colonnade of the ionic order: in the middle of an altar covered with golden tissue; and on the altar a crucifix, a three-armed candlestick, with lighted tapers, emblem of the trinity, and chalices, flagons, patens,

patens, and other holy vessels. A number of venerable priests with hoary heads and flowing beards, wearing mitres, studded with precious stones of every colour, and costly robes of silk and damask, stood in solemn attitudes, among the columns of this gorgeous sanctuary.

From the adytum, or inmost recess, with slow and solemn steps, advanced a priest, bearing in his hand a two-branched candlestick with lighted tapers, significant of the hypostatic union of the two natures of the Son of God. He was followed in like manner by another, reciting prayers as he moved along, and swinging a censer smoking with fragrant odours. Advancing towards her majesty, he waved the censer thrice before her, during which she several times gracefully bowed, and as often made the sign of the cross upon her breast. A third priest succeeded him, bearing on his arms the volume of the gospel; out of which having read some passages adapted to the occasion, he presented it to the empress, who kissed it with great devotion.

The priests then retired: the folding doors of the sanctuary were closed: the choristers sung an anthem, and were answered by musical voices from within. The intonations were deep and sublime. In a few minutes the folding doors again flew open; the ceremonies of the tapers and incense were repeated. Two priests advanced, bearing the sacred symbols, the bread and wine of the holy eucharist, veiled with cloth

cloth of gold. Having administered this*, they retired. The doors were closed, and the choral harmony began afresh.

The doors were opened, and the same ceremonies a third time repeated. After this the metropolitan ascended the pulpit against a column opposite to the empress, and delivered a discourse: in which he celebrated her resolution and magnanimity; and in the course of his sermon remarked, "that the
" Russians had borrowed assistance from Britain,
" that island famed for wisdom, bravery, and virtue." The sermon ended, several priests came from the recess, and concluded the service with prayers and benedictions.

The senate decreed that the event of the recovery after inoculation of the sovereign and his imperial highness should be solemnized by an anniversary festival, which has been regularly observed ever since.

* In the greek church the bread and wine are mixed up together, and administered with a spoon.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

APPENDIX

TO THE

FIRST VOLUME.

No. I.

Succession of the SOVEREIGNS of RUSSIA, GRAND PRINCES or GRAND DUKES, TZARS, and afterwards EMPERORS; PATRIARCHS, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS, &c.

	A. M.	A. C.
<i>Rurik</i> - - - - -	6369	861
<i>Igor</i> , his son, at first under the regency of his uncle <i>Oleg</i> - - - - -	6386	878
<i>Svetoslav</i> , son, first under the regency of his mother <i>Olga</i> , who embraced christianity. Kief was at this time the residence or capital -	6453	945
<i>Tarapolk</i> , son of the grand duke -	6480	972
<i>Vladimir</i> , brother, first christian prince, and apostle of his nation - - - - -	6488	980
<i>Taroslav</i> , son of the grand duke at Kief: his brothers have appanages: thence the different dukedoms - - - - -	6523	1015
<i>Isiaslaf</i> , son - - - - -	6562	1054
<i>Vsevolod</i> , brother - - - - -	6586	1078
<i>Sviatopolk</i> , son of the grand duke <i>Isiaslaf</i> -	6601	1093
<i>Vladimir II.</i> brother of <i>Vsevolod</i> -	6622	1114
<i>Mstislaf</i> ,		

	A. M.	A. C.
<i>Mstislaf</i> , son - - - -	6633	1125
<i>Yaropolk</i> , brother - - - -	6640	1132
<i>Viatcheslaf</i> , brother, abdicates - - - -	6646	1138
<i>Vsevolod</i> II. great grandson of the grand duke Yaroslav - - - -		
<i>Ishaslaf</i> II. son of Mstislaf - - - -	6654	1146
<i>Rostislaf</i> , brother of Vsevolod II. - - - -	6662	1154
<i>Ishaslaf</i> III. son of David, and great grandson of Yaroslav - - - -		
<i>Iuri</i> , or <i>Igor</i> , or <i>George</i> , fourth son of the grand duke Vladimir II. He built Mosco: his successors leave Kief, and reside at Vladimir - - - -	6663	1155
<i>Michael</i> , son, governs with his brother Andrew, and after his death alone - - - -	6665	1157
<i>Vsevolod</i> III. brother - - - -	6685	1177
<i>Igor</i> , or <i>George</i> II. son. Constantine his brother during two years - - - -	6721	1213
<i>Yaroslav</i> II. brother, in subjection to the Tartars, as the following - - - -	6746	1238
<i>St. Alexander Nefsky</i> , son - - - -	6753	1245
<i>Yaroslav</i> III. brother - - - -	6771	1263
<i>Vassili</i> , or <i>Basil</i> , brother - - - -	6778	1270
<i>Dmitri</i> , or <i>Demetrius</i> , brother. His brother Andrew set up by the Tartars - - - -	6785	1277
<i>Daniel</i> , fourth brother: since whom the grand dukes reside at Mosco - - - -	6802	1294
<i>Igor</i> , or <i>George</i> , son, deposed - - - -	6810	1302
<i>Michael</i> , son of Yaroslav III. - - - -	6813	1305
<i>Vassili</i> , or <i>Basil</i> II. brother - - - -	6828	1320
<i>Igor</i> , re-established - - - -	6833	1325
<i>Ivan</i> , or <i>John</i> , brother - - - -	6836	1328
<i>Simeon</i> , son - - - -	6848	1340
<i>Ivan</i> II. brother - - - -	6861	1353
<i>Demetrius</i> II. son. Demetrius, his relation, set up by the Tartars, two years - - - -	6867	1359
<i>Vassili</i> , or <i>Basil</i> III. son - - - -	6897	1389

Vassili

	A. M.	A. C.
<i>Vassili</i> IV. son. Igor, his uncle, usurps - - - -	6933	1425
<i>Ivan</i> III. son. The famous Ivan Vassillievitch who threw off the yoke of the Tartars - - - -	6970	1462
<i>Vassili</i> V. son - - - -	7014	1506
<i>Ivan</i> IV. son, surnamed the tyrant, assumes the title of tzar - - - -	7042	1534
<i>Feodor</i> , or <i>Theodore</i> , son; the last of the race of Rurik - - - -	7092	1584

The following are of different families:

<i>Borice Godunof</i> - - - -	7106	1598
<i>Feodor</i> II. son - - - -	7113	1605
<i>Gregory Atrepiet</i> , falsely calling himself Demetrius, brother of Feodor I. - - - -		
<i>Vassili Zuiski</i> (or <i>Basil</i> VI.) elected - - - -	7114	1606
<i>Vladislaus</i> of Poland, elected, afterwards rejected - - - -	7118	1610
<i>Michael</i> , of the family Romanof (still reigning) elected - - - -	7121	1613
<i>Alexey</i> , or <i>Alexius</i> , son - - - -	7153	1645
<i>Feodor</i> , or <i>Theodore</i> III. son - - - -	7184	1676
<i>Ivan</i> V. and <i>Peter</i> , brothers, together - - - -	7190	1682
<i>Peter</i> alone, afterwards styled, the Great, emperor - - - -	7204	1696

Russians cease to reckon by the year of the world.

<i>Catharine</i> , widow of Peter - - - -	1725
<i>Peter</i> II. grandson of Peter the great - - - -	1727
<i>Anne</i> , daughter of Ivan - - - -	1730
<i>Ivan</i> VI. grandson of Ivan - - - -	1740
<i>Elizabeth Petrovna</i> , or daughter of Peter the great - - - -	1741
<i>Peter</i> III. nephew, deposed - - - -	1762
<i>Catharine</i> II. his widow - - - -	1762
<i>Paul</i> , son - - - -	1796

Before the great reformation made by Peter I. both in church and state, the Russian ecclesiastics lived in the most consummate indolence and licentiousness, maintaining, at the same time, an unlimited authority over the people. All matters of controversy were prohibited them under pain of death. Public instruction was

was given but twice in the year to the people; and that consisted only of a portion of some homily translated from one of the greek fathers.

The hierarchy consisted of the patriarch, who was the next in dignity and authority to the czar, and always resided in the city of Mosco; of four metropolitans, seven archbishops, and but one bishop: the other clergy were archdeacons, protopopes, and popes or priests.

The patriarchs of Russia were :

<i>Job</i> , established by Jeremiah of Constantinople, in	1588.
<i>Ignatius</i> , placed by the false Demetrius	- 1605.
<i>Hermogenes</i> , after the expulsion of Ignatius	- 1606.
<i>Philaretus</i> , father of the czar Michael	- 1615.
<i>Joasaph</i>	- 1634.
<i>Joseph</i>	- 1642.
<i>Nicon</i> , deposed afterwards, in a full synod, for ambition and turbulence	- 1660.
<i>Joasaph</i>	- 1667.
<i>Pityroun</i> , or <i>Pestierim</i>	- 1675.
<i>Joachim</i>	- 1680.
<i>Adrian</i>	- 1684.

Since whose death, in 1703, there has been no patriarch.

The patriarch was absolute judge in all ecclesiastical affairs: he had the power of taking what steps he pleased towards the reformation of manners, and to condemn capitally such as he judged guilty of profligacy, or of violating the moral order. His sentences were executed with the quickest dispatch; and such as appealed to his tribunal could not be cited to that of the sovereign. They had sometimes even struggled with the authority of the throne. Nicon openly opposed its power*; and Joachim endeavoured to undermine it by artifice and fraud.

On

* The patriarch Nicon, whom the monks regard as a saint, and who filled the patriarchate in the time of Alexey Mikhailovitch, the father of Peter the great, wanted to raise his chair above the imperial throne; he not only claimed the right of sitting in the senate by the side of the czar, but he pretended that neither

On Palm Sunday, which is a great day in Russia, the patriarch, mounted on a horse, represented our Saviour riding into Jerusalem. The czar used to go from the castle, with the patriarch, to the church which is called Jerusalem. After a number of people, whose business it was to clean the way, followed a very large chariot drawn by six horses, in the manner of a pageant; in this chariot was placed a tree, with apples, grapes, and figs tied upon its branches, and a number of boys about it, with green twigs and boughs in their hands. All the boyars and nobility of the court attended this magnificent ceremony, and joined in the exclamation of "*Hosannab to the Son of David! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord! Hosannab in the highest!*" as the patriarch moved along, clothed all in white. The czar, supported by two boyars, and with the imperial diadem on his head, led the horse by the bridle, which was three or four yards in length. The patriarch wore on his head the great patriarchal insula or mitre, richly set with jewels. In his right hand he held a cross of gold, embellished with a profusion of diamonds, and other precious stones, with which he made the sign of the cross over the multitude that thronged about him with great reverence and devotion, expressed by genuflections and prostrations. The horse on which he sat was adorned with splendid trappings and the richest caparisons; but disguised, so as to bear somewhat of the resemblance of an ass. On each side of the patriarch went several bishops on foot, clothed all in white, and holding thuribles in their hands. The pictures of saints, the chalice, books, bells, tapers, and other things used at mass, as well as the rest of the church ornaments, were borne by the superior clergy, some of

neither war nor peace could be made without his consent. His authority, supported by his riches and his intrigues, by the clergy and by the people, held his master in a kind of subjection. He dared to excommunicate certain senators who opposed his excesses. In short, Alexius, being sensible that he was not powerful enough to depose the patriarch by his sole authority, was obliged to convoke a synod of all the bishops. He was accused to them of having received money of the Poles; he was deposed; he was confined for the rest of his days in a cloister, and the prelates chose another patriarch,

whom

whom also carried the consecrated banners of the saints. The way from the palace to the Crescent was all laid with scarlet cloth. At this place it was that the patriarch used first to take horse. He found it tied to a pale, and sent two of the bishops to untie it, and bring it to him. As the proceffion passed along, some of the people pulled off their upper garments, and spread them in the road; others, who had more piety, purchased cloths and silks, of several yards in lengths, on purpose; and the rest, who had but little covering, and no money, contented themselves with cutting branches and boughs from the birch-trees, and strewed them in the way.

Thus they proceeded to the beforementioned church; where having staid above half an hour, they returned in the same order, till they came to a sort of stage or platform, where the patriarch presented the tzar and the principal boyars with palm twigs; after which he took off the tzar's crown, and laid it in a silver dish, and then gave him the diamond cross to kiss. This being done by the tzar with a very profound reverence, the patriarch lifted up the cross, and waved it aloft on different sides, first towards those upon the platform, and then towards the people in general, who at that instant prostrated themselves flat upon the ground. The whole ceremony was concluded by singing a number of hymns; and the patriarch, as an acknowledgment to the sovereign for leading his horse, presented him with a purse of 200 rubles.

We have been thus explicit on this ceremony, that the reader may be the better able to judge of the magnificence and authority of the patriarchs during their existence. The above account was had from a gentleman whose ancestor related it to his father, as one that he was present at in the patriarchate of Joasaph.

Peter the great abolished this dignity, and established a perpetual synod for all decision in matters of religion. This synod is composed of a president, which the tzar seems to have intended to fill himself, as he never appointed any one to that dignity; a vice-president, who must be an archbishop (at present the arch-
bishop

bishop of Mosco); six counsellors, who are bishops; and of six archimandrites*, who have the quality of assessors.

Upon the present establishment, there are in Russia, three metropolitans, seven archbishops, and eighteen independent bishops†

Mosco and Kaluga, metropolitan.

Novgorod and St. Petersburg, metropolitan.

Kief, metropolitan †.

Pskove and Riga, archbishop.

Tver and Kashin, archbishop.

Rostof and Yaroslavl, archbishop.

Mohilef, Mtsislavl, and Orsha, archbishop.

Kazan and Saviashsk, archbishop.

Astrakhan and Stavropol, archbishop.

Ekatarinoslaf, Kherfon, and Taurida, archbishop ‡.

Archangel and Olonetz, bishop.

Vologda and Velikoy Ustiug, bishop.

Kostroma and Galitch, bishop.

Viatka and Velikaya Perme, bishop.

Tobolsk and Siberia, bishop.

Smolensk and Dorogobuzh, bishop.

Tchernigof and Niejin, bishop.

Novgorod-Sieverskoy, and Glukhof, bishop.

Bielgorod and Kursk, bishop.

Orel and Sievsk, bishop.

Krutitzi, bishop.

Kolomna and Tula, bishop.

Riazan and Shatsk, bishop.

Sudal and Vladimir, bishop.

Nishney-Novgorod and Alatyr, bishop.

Tambof and Penza, bishop.

Voronetch, bishop.

Irkutsk and Nertchinsk, bishop.

* Archimandrite, in the greek church, is much the same thing as bishop in other christian churches.

† This metropolitan has a coadjutor, who lives in the town of Slutsk, beyond the frontier, and has the direction of the greek clergy residing in Poland.

‡ He is also vicar of the exarchy of Moldavia and Valakhia.

The bishops enjoy in their dioceses the same rights and privileges as the archbishops. These dioceses, which are called eparchies, have each its peculiar consistory, and for the most part a seminary for the instruction of ecclesiastics. The number of religious houses may amount to 960, whereof those for nuns compose a fourth part. The greek churches are reckoned at about 18,350, and the whole number of ecclesiastics is calculated at 67,900.

Several of the bishops had formerly the honorary title of archbishops.

Before the erection of the patriarchate, the chief of the clergy was called metropolitan, and had his residence first at Kief, afterwards at Vladimir, and finally at Mosco. As the list of them all is not very long, we shall insert it from the chronicle:

AT KIEF.			
		<i>Nikephor II</i>	- - 1103
<i>Michael Syrus</i> , sent by		<i>Niketa</i>	- - 1132
the patriarch of Con-		<i>Michael</i>	- - 1142
stantinople to be head		<i>Cyril</i>	- - 1161
of the clergy, in	988	<i>Clement</i>	- - 1165
<i>Leontei</i> , or <i>Leon</i>	992	He was ordained in Russia, on	
<i>Ivan I.</i>	1008	account of the revival of the	
<i>Igor Nikephor</i>	1038	schism of the Greeks.	
<i>Theopentus</i>	1048	<i>Constantine</i>	- - 1176
<i>Hilarion</i>	1051	<i>Theodore</i>	- - 1182
<i>Igor II.</i>	1071	<i>Ivan IV.</i>	- - 1191
<i>Ivan II.</i>	1076	<i>Nikephor III.</i>	- - 1195
The three last were Russians,		<i>Matthias</i>	- - 1226
and were chosen by the		<i>Cyril II.</i>	- - 1238
clergy.		<i>Joseph of Nicæa</i>	- - 1248
<i>Ivan III.</i>	1077	<i>Cyril III.</i>	- - 1252
<i>Ephraim</i>	1078	<i>Maxime</i>	- - 1283
He received the bull from pope			
Urban II. for the feast of the			
translation of St. Nicholas.			
AT VLADIMIR.		<i>Peter</i> , the wonder-	
		worker	- - 1308

AT

AT MOSCO.			
<i>Theognostus</i>	1328	<i>Jonas</i> , or <i>Jonathan</i>	- 1448
<i>Alexius</i> , the wonder-		<i>Theodosion</i>	- - 1460
worker	1353	<i>Philip I.</i>	- - 1468
<i>Zosimus</i> , or <i>Timen</i>	1373	<i>Hieronti</i>	- - 1473
<i>Cyril IV.</i>	1376	<i>Zosimus II.</i>	- - 1489
<i>Cyprian</i>	1378	<i>Simon</i>	- - 1492
<i>Phocius</i>	1409	<i>Varlaam</i>	- - 1511
He was deposed by a		<i>Daniel</i>	- - 1522
party of Russians, on		<i>Joseph</i>	- - 1539
account of his zeal		<i>Macarion</i>	- - 1542
for the schism, in	1415	<i>Athanasius</i>	- - 1564
<i>Isidore</i>	1438	<i>Philip II.</i>	- - 1566
Rejoins the latin church		<i>Cyril V.</i>	- - 1568
at the council of Flo-		<i>Anthony</i>	- - 1570
rence, and is deposed		At his death, <i>Job</i> was ap-	
in Russia, on his re-		pointed patriarch, in 1588:	
turn, in	1442	the succession under which	
The schism is thenceforward		title has been given in the	
fixed and total.		former part of this article.	

No. II.

The ORDINANCE, or UKASE, which rendered PETER so dear at first to the RUSSIAN Nobility, ran as follows:

We Peter III. &c.

THE troubles and inconveniences experienced by the wise sovereign our late dear grandfire, Peter the great, of immortal memory, in his endeavours for the good of his country, and for procuring his subjects a competent knowledge as well in military discipline, as in civil and political affairs, are known to all Europe, and the greater part of the globe.

In the attainment of this end, he found it necessary to begin by convincing the russian nobility, which is the first body of the

state,

state, of the immense advantages possessed by the nations well versed in the sciences and the arts, over those people who continue benighted in ignorance and sloth. The state of things at that time imperiously demanded that he should oblige his nobility to enter the military service and engage in civil functions; that he should send them to travel into foreign countries, that they might get a tincture of the useful arts and sciences, and therefore he established in his own country schools and academies, that the seeds of these his salutary regulations might be cherished in their growth, and more speedily matured. The nobility had the less reason to complain of the constraint thus laid upon them, as, independently of the utility both public and private that naturally resulted from it, it was their duty to concur with the wishes of an emperor to whom they were under so many obligations.

The execution of these projects seemed at first to be attended with the utmost difficulty. They were intolerable to the nobility, who saw themselves obliged to abandon a soft and indolent life, to quit their dwellings, to serve in war and in peace, and to enrol their children for future services. Several members of their body withdrew from the service, and were therefore deprived of their estates, which were confiscated, and that for the best of reasons. They rendered themselves criminal towards their country, which they basely deserted.

These excellent ordinances, though at the beginning inseparable from certain methods of constraint, have served as a model to all the successors of Peter the great, and especially to our dear aunt the empress Elizabeth Petrovna, of glorious memory; who determined to follow the example of her father, encouraged, by a special protection, the advancement of the arts and sciences. Of this we are now reaping the fruits; and every impartial man will agree that they are considerable. Manners have been improved; minds indifferent to the happiness of the country have been roused from their fatal lethargy, and have habituated themselves to reflect on the public welfare; zeal in the service is augmented; generals, already valiant, are become experienced; intelligent ministers; enlightened magistrates; in a word, patriotism,

patriotism, love and attachment to our person, activity in all offices and posts, and every generous sentiment, are now the happy lot of the russian nation. — For all these reasons, we have judged it to be no longer necessary to compel into the service, as hitherto has been the practice, the nobility of our empire.

In consideration whereof, in virtue of the full power to us granted by God, and of our imperial especial grace, we grant to the russian nobility, from this moment and for ever, in the name of all our successors, permission to take service in our empire, as well as in all those of the european powers in alliance with us; and to this end we have given the following ordinance as a fundamental law, &c.

[Then follow nine articles concerning the terms on which liberty of resignation, of travelling abroad, of entering the service, &c. may be asked for and granted: concluding thus:]

Granting as we do, graciously and to perpetuity, to our nobility this franchise, making it a fundamental and unalterable law, we promise them equally on our imperial word, and in the most solemn manner, to observe the present ordinance sacredly and irrevocably, in all its tenor, and to maintain the prerogatives therein expressed. — Our successors on the throne ought not to alter it in any manner. The execution of our said ordinance being the principal support of the imperial throne, we hope that from gratitude for this benefit, the russian nobility will serve us faithfully and zealously; and that, instead of withdrawing from our service, will enter it with eagerness, and that they will carefully educate their children. — We therefore command all our faithful subjects and true sons of the country, to despise and avoid those who have wasted their time in idleness, and who have not educated their children in the useful sciences, as people who have never had the public good at heart, who shall have no access to our court, nor be admitted to the public assemblies and the national festivities.

Given at St. Petersburg, Feb. 18, 1762.

No. III.

PAPERS relating to the re-establishment of PEACE.

DECLARATION delivered by order of PETER III. EMPEROR of RUSSIA, to the IMPERIAL, FRENCH, and SWEDISH Ministers residing at ST. PETERSBURG.

HIS imperial majesty, who, upon his happy accession to the throne of his ancestors, looks upon it to be his principal duty to extend and augment the welfare of his subjects, sees with extreme regret, that the flames of the present war, which has already continued for six years, and has been for a long time burthenfome to all the powers engaged in it, far from tending now to a conclusion, are, on the contrary, gathering fresh strength, to the great misfortune of the several nations; and that mankind has so much the more to suffer from this scourge, as the fortune of arms, which has hitherto been subject to so many vicissitudes, is equally exposed to them for the future.

Wherefore his imperial majesty, compassionating, through his humane disposition, the effusion of innocent blood, and being desirous on his part, of putting a stop to so great an evil, has judged it necessary to declare to the courts in alliance with Russia, that, preferring to every other consideration the first law which God prescribes to sovereigns, which is the preservation of the people intrusted to them, he wishes to procure peace to his empire, to which it is so necessary, and of so great value; and at the same time, to contribute, as much as may be in his power, to the re-establishment of it throughout all Europe.

It is in order to this, that his imperial majesty is ready to make a sacrifice of the conquests made by the arms of Russia in this war, in hopes that the allied courts will, on their part, equally prefer the restoration of peace and tranquillity to the advantages which they might expect from the war, and which they cannot obtain but by the continuance of the effusion of human blood. And to this end his imperial majesty, with the best intention,

tention, advises them to employ, on their side, all their power towards the accomplishment of so great and so salutary a work.

St. Petersburg, Feb. $\frac{1}{2}$, 1762.

The ANSWER of the EMPRESS-QUEEN to the foregoing DECLARATION.

THAT animated with the same zeal, and being of the same opinion, as his imperial majesty, with regard to the salutary work of peace, and to the putting an end to the troubles and ravages that desolate Germany, she was ready to concur with him therein; but that, for that end, she desired his imperial majesty to furnish her with the means of beginning the negotiation, by imparting to her the proposed terms of peace, which she would, without loss of time, communicate to her high allies, who, as well as herself, would be always ready to co-operate in a matter so much desired, provided the terms were not inadmissible, and contained nothing injurious either to their honour, or her own.

The ANSWER given by the FRENCH COURT to the aforesaid DECLARATION.

THE king maintaining with regret, these six years past, a twofold war for his own defence and that of his allies, has sufficiently manifested, on every occasion, how much he abhors the effusion of human blood, and his constant desire to put an end to so cruel a scourge. His personal disinterestedness, the steps which he thought could be taken consistent with his dignity, and the sacrifices which he did offer, in order to procure to Europe the desirable blessing of peace, are sure pledges of the humane sentiments with which his heart abounds. But at the same time, his paternal tenderness, which makes the happiness and preservation of his subjects a duty to him, cannot make him forget the first law that God prescribes to sovereigns, even that which constitutes the public safety, and fixes the condition of nations and empires, fidelity in executing treaties, and punctuality in performing

performing engagements to their full extent, preferably to every other consideration.

It is with this view, that after having given so great examples of constancy and generosity, his majesty declares that he is ready to listen favourably to propositions for a solid and honourable peace, but will always act in the most perfect concert with his allies; that he will receive no counsels but such as shall be dictated to him by honour and probity; that he should think himself guilty of a defection, in lending a hand to secret negotiations; that he will not tarnish his glory, and that of his kingdom, by abandoning his allies; and that he rests assured each of them will, on their part, faithfully adhere to the same principle.

ANSWER given by the KING of POLAND, ELECTOR of SAXONY, to the same DECLARATION.

ALL my allies wish as much as myself, that the public tranquillity may be restored upon solid foundations. It is well known to all Europe, that I did not seek the war; but, on the contrary, employed every means to keep the calamities of it at a distance from my dominions. My love to mankind in general, and to my own subjects in particular, ought to engage me to facilitate, as much as in me lies, the restoration of peace, and to exercise all moderation as to my equitable pretensions. I am of opinion, that a just and solid peace cannot be agreed on but by the congress proposed and accepted by all the powers at war.

I place a full confidence in the friendship of your imperial majesty, to whom the house of Saxony is bound by sacred ties. It is not unknown to your majesty, that Saxony hath been attacked merely on account of its connexions with the russian empire; and that the king of Prussia has taken occasion to charge us with entering into defensive treaties with that empire against him. We therefore flatter ourselves with the hope, that so ancient and so equitable an ally of Saxony will not suffer our dominions, which are already reduced to the utmost distress, as well by exorbitant contributions, as by the alienation of our revenues,

and

and of the funds which were allotted for the payment of debts, to be completely ruined.

The whole world agrees, that we are entitled to an equitable restitution and reparation of the damage sustained. But notwithstanding all these considerations, and though all the powers at war shew themselves inclined to contribute to the general pacification, yet Saxony remains threatened with irretrievable ruin.

We therefore hope that your majesty's philanthropy and magnanimity will prevail with your majesty to take care that, before all things, the electorate of Saxony be speedily evacuated, in order thereby to put an end to the calamities which overwhelm it; this being the means of facilitating and accelerating the conclusion of a general peace.

No. IV.

MANIFESTO of the EMPRESS CATHARINE II. which was caused to be printed and distributed about the city.

By the grace of God, Catharine II. empress and autocratrix of all the Russias, &c.

ALL true sons of Russia have clearly seen the great danger to which the whole russian empire has actually been exposed. First, the foundations of our orthodox greek religion have been shaken, and its traditions exposed to total destruction; so that there was absolutely reason to fear, that the faith which has been established in Russia from the earliest times, would be entirely changed, and a foreign religion introduced. In the second place, the glory which Russia has acquired at the expence of so much blood, and which was carried to the highest pitch by her victorious arms, has been trampled under foot by the peace lately concluded with its most dangerous enemy. And lastly, the domestic regulations, which are the basis of the country's welfare, have been entirely overturned.

For

For these causes, overcome by the imminent perils with which our faithful subjects were threatened, and seeing how sincere and express their desires on this matter were; we, putting our trust in the Almighty and his divine justice, have ascended the sovereign imperial throne of all the Russias, and have received a solemn oath of fidelity from all our loving subjects.

St. Petersburg, June 28, 1762.

No. V.

MANIFESTO of the EMPRESS CATHARINE II. giving an account of her motives for taking the reins of government into her hands.

By the grace of God, we Catharine II. empress and sovereign of all the Russias, make known these presents to all our loving subjects, ecclesiastical, military, and civil.

OUR accession to the imperial throne of all the Russias, is a manifest proof of this truth, that when sincere hearts endeavour for good, the hand of God directs them. We never had either design or desire to arrive at empire, through the means by which it hath pleased the Almighty, according to the inscrutable views of his providence, to place us upon the throne of Russia, our dear country.

On the death of our most august and dear aunt, the empress Elizabeth Petrovna, of glorious memory, all true patriots (now our most faithful subjects), groaning for the loss of so tender a mother, placed their only consolation in obeying her nephew, whom she had named for her successor, that they might shew thereby, in some degree, their acknowledgments to their deceased sovereign. And although they soon found out the weakness of his mind, unfit to rule so vast an empire, they imagined he would have known his own insufficiency. Whereupon they sought our maternal assistance in the affairs of government.

But

But when absolute power falls to the lot of a monarch, who has not sufficient virtue and humanity to place just bounds to it, it degenerates into a fruitful source of the most pernicious evils. This is the sum, in short, of what our native country has suffered. She struggled to be delivered from a sovereign who, being blindly given up to the most dangerous passions, thought of nothing but indulging them, without employing himself in the welfare of the empire committed to his care.

During the time of his being grand duke, and heir to the throne of Russia, he often caused the most bitter griefs to his most august aunt and sovereign, (the truth of which is known to all our court,) however he might behave himself outwardly; being kept under her eye by her tenderness, he looked upon this mark of affection as an insupportable yoke. He could not, however, disguise himself so well, but it was perceived by all our faithful subjects, that he was possessed of the most audacious ingratitude, which he sometimes shewed by personal contempt, sometimes by an avowed hatred to the nation. At length throwing aside his cloak of hypocrisy, he thought it more fit to let loose the bridle of his passions, than conduct himself as the heir of so great an empire. In a word, the least traces of honour were not to be perceived in him. What were the consequences of all this?

He was scarcely assured that the death of his aunt and benefactress approached, but he banished her memory entirely from his mind; nay, even before she had sent forth her last groan. He only cast an eye of contempt on the corpse exposed on the bier; and as the ceremony at that time required obliged him to approach it, he did it with his eyes manifestly replete with joy; even intimating his ingratitude by his words. We might add, that the obsequies would have been nothing equal to the dignity of so great and magnanimous a sovereign, if our tender respect to her, cemented by the ties of blood, and the extreme affection between us, had not made us take that duty upon us.

He

He imagined that it was not to the Supreme Being, but only to chance, that he was indebted for absolute power; and that he had it in his hands, not for the good of his subjects, but solely for his own satisfaction. Adding, therefore, licence to absolute power, he made all the changes in the state which the weakness of his mind could suggest, to the oppression of the people.

Having effaced from his heart even the least traces of the holy orthodox religion, (though he had been sufficiently taught the principles thereof,) he began first by rooting out this true religion, established so long in Russia, by absenting himself from the house of God, and of prayers, in so open a manner, that some of his subjects, excited by conscience and honesty, seeing his irreverence and contempt of the rites of the church, or rather the raileries he made of them, and scandalizing them by his behaviour, dared to make remonstrances to him concerning it; who, for so doing, scarcely escaped the resentment which they might have expected from so capricious a sovereign, whose power was not limited by any human laws. He even intended to destroy the churches, and ordered some to be pulled down. He prohibited those to have chapels in their own houses, whose infirmities hindered them from visiting the house of God. Thus he would have domineered over the faithful, in endeavouring to stifle in them the fear of God, which the holy scripture teaches us to be the beginning of wisdom.

From this want of zeal towards God, and contempt of his laws, resulted that scorn to the civil and natural laws of his kingdom; for having but an only son, which God had given us, the grand duke Paul Petrovitch, he would not, when he ascended the throne of Russia, declare him for his successor; that being reserved for his caprice, which tended to the detriment of us and of our son, having an inclination to overthrow the right that his aunt had vested in him, and to make the government of our native country pass into the hands of strangers; in opposition to that maxim of natural right, according to

to which nobody can transmit to another more than he has received himself.

Although with great grief we saw this intention, we did not believe that we ourselves, and our most dear son, should have been exposed to a persecution so severe: but all persons of probity having observed that the measures that he pursued, by their effects, manifested that they had a natural tendency to our ruin, and that of our dear successor, their generous and pious hearts were justly alarmed: animated with zeal for the interest of their native country, and astonished at our patience under these heavy persecutions, they secretly informed us, that our life was in danger, in order to engage us to undertake the burthen of governing so large an empire.

While the whole nation were on the point of testifying their disapprobation of his measures, he nevertheless continued to grieve them the more, by subverting all those excellent arrangements established by Peter the great, our most dear predecessor, of glorious memory, which that true father of his country accomplished by indefatigable pains and labour through the whole course of a reign of thirty years. The late Peter the third despised the laws of the empire, and her most respectable tribunals, to such a degree that he could not even bear to hear them mentioned.

After one bloody war, he rashly entered upon another, in which the interests of Russia were no way concerned. He entertained an insuperable aversion to the regiments of guards, which had faithfully served his illustrious ancestors, and made innovations in the army, which, far from exciting in their breasts noble sentiments of valour, only served to discourage troops always ready to spill their best blood in the cause of their country. He changed entirely the face of the army; nay, it even seemed that, by dividing their habits into so many uniforms, and giving them so many different embellishments, for the most part fantastical to the greatest degree, he intended to infuse into them a suspicion that they did not, in effect, belong to one master, and thereby provoke the soldiers, in the heat of battle, to slay one another; although experience demonstrated that uniformity in dress had not a little contributed towards unanimity.

Inconsiderately and incessantly bent on pernicious regulations, he so alienated the hearts of his subjects, that there was scarcely a single person to be found in the nation who did not openly express his disapprobation, and was even desirous to take away his life; but the laws of God, which command sovereign princes to be respected, being deeply engraved on the hearts of our faithful subjects, restrained them, and engaged them to wait with patience, till the hand of God struck the important blow, and by his fall delivered an oppressed people. Under those circumstances, now laid before the impartial eyes of the public, it was, in fact, impossible but our soul should be troubled with those impending woes which threatened our country, and with that persecution which we, and our most dear son, the heir of the russian throne, unjustly suffered; being almost entirely excluded from the imperial palace; in such sort, that all who had regard for us, or rather those who had courage enough to speak it (for we have not been able to find that there is one person who is not devoted to our interest) by expressing their sentiments of respect due to us, as their empress, endangered their life, or at least their fortune. In fine, the endeavours he made to ruin us, rose to such a pitch, that they broke out in public; and then charging us with being the cause of the murmurs, which his own imprudent measures occasioned, his resolution to take away our life openly appeared. But being informed of his purpose by some of our trusty subjects, who were determined to deliver their country, or perish in the attempt, relying on the aid of the Almighty, we cheerfully exposed our person to danger, with all that magnanimity which our native country had a right to expect in return for her affection to us. After having invoked the Most High, and reposed our hope in the divine favour, we resolved also either to sacrifice our life for our country, or save it from bloodshed and calamity. Scarcely had we taken this resolution, by the direction of favouring Heaven, and declared our assent to the deputies of the empire, than the orders of the state crowded to give us assurances of their fidelity and submission.

It now remained for us, in pursuance of the love we bore our faithful subjects, to prevent the consequences which we apprehended,

hended, in case of the late emperor's inconsiderately placing his confidence in the imaginary power of the holstein troops, (for whose sake he stayed at Oranienbaum, living in indolence, and abandoning the most pressing exigencies of the state,) and there occasioning a carnage, to which our guards and other regiments were ready to expose themselves, for the sake of their native country, for ours, and that of our successor. For these reasons we looked upon it as a necessary duty towards our subjects (to which we were immediately called by the voice of God) to prevent so great a misfortune, by prompt and proper measures. Therefore, placing ourselves at the head of the body-guards, regiments of artillery, and other troops in and about the imperial residence, we undertook to disconcert an iniquitous design, of which we were as yet only informed in part.

But scarcely were we got out of the city, before we received two letters from the late emperor, one quick on the heels of the other. The first by our vice-chancellor the prince Gallitzin, entreating us to allow him to return to Holstein, his native dominions; the other by major-general Michael Ismailof, by which he declared, that of his own proper motion he renounced the crown and throne of Russia. In this last he begged of us to allow him to withdraw to Holstein with Elizabeth Vorontzof and Gudovitch. These two last letters, stuffed with flattering expressions, came to our hands a few hours after he had given orders for putting us to death, as we have been since informed from the very persons who were appointed to execute those unnatural orders.

In the meantime, he had still resources left him, which were to arm against us his holstein troops, and some small detachments then about his person; he had also in his power several personages of distinction belonging to our court; as he might therefore have compelled us to agree to terms of accommodation still more hurtful to our country, (for after having learned what great commotions there were among the people, he had detained them as hostages at his palace of Oranienbaum, and our humanity would never have consented to their destruction, but, to save

their

their lives, we would have risked seeing a part of those dangers revived by an accommodation,) several persons of high rank about our person requested us to send him a billet in return, proposing to him, if his intentions were such as he declared them to be, that he should instantly send us a voluntary and formal renunciation of the throne, wrote by his own hand, for the public satisfaction. Major-general Ismailoff carried this proposal, and the writing he now sent back was as follows:

During the short space of my absolute reign over the empire of Russia, I became sensible that I was not able to support so great a burden, and that my abilities were not equal to the task of governing so great an empire, either as a sovereign, or in any other capacity whatever. I also foresaw the great troubles which must have thence arisen, and have been followed with the total ruin of the empire, and covered me with eternal disgrace. After having therefore seriously reflected thereon, I declare, without constraint, and in the most solemn manner, to the Russian empire, and to the whole universe, that I for ever renounce the government of the said empire, never desiring hereafter to reign therein, either as an absolute sovereign, or under any other form of government; never wishing to aspire thereto, or to use any means, of any sort, for that purpose. As a pledge of which, I swear sincerely, before God and all the world, to this present renunciation, written and signed this 29th of June 1762 O. S.

PETER.

It is thus, without spilling one drop of blood, that we have ascended the Russian throne, by the assistance of God, and the approving suffrages of our dear country. — Humbly adoring the decrees of Divine Providence, we assure our faithful subjects, that we will not fail, by night and by day, to invoke the Most High to bless our sceptre, and enable us to wield it for the maintenance of our orthodox religion, the security and defence of our dear native country, and the support of justice; as well as to put an end to all miseries, iniquities, and violences, by strengthening and fortifying our heart for the public good. And as we ardently
with

with to prove effectually how far we merit the reciprocal love of our people, for whose happiness we acknowledge our throne to be appointed, we solemnly promise, on our imperial word, to make such arrangements in the empire, that the government may be endued with an intrinsic force to support itself within limited and proper bounds; and each department of the state provided with wholesome laws and regulations, sufficient to maintain good order therein, at all times, and under all circumstances.

By which means we hope to establish hereafter the empire and our sovereign power, (however they may have been formerly weakened,) in such a manner as to comfort the discouraged hearts of all true patriots. We do not in the least doubt but that our loving subjects will, as well for the salvation of their own souls, as for the good of religion, inviolably observe the oath which they have sworn to us in the presence of the Almighty God; we thereupon assure them of our imperial favour.

Done at Petersburg, July 6, 1762.

No. VI.

DECLARATION published by the EMPRESS CATHARINE II. upon recalling Count BESTUCHEF RIUMIN from his banishment in SIBERIA.

THE most ordinary understanding cannot be ignorant of the intimate obligation which all mankind contract towards God and towards each other, to transgress on no occasion whatever the demands of justice, and especially not to heap misfortunes and oppression on the head of the innocent.

Ere we mounted our imperial throne of Russia, we were well acquainted with the long and signal services rendered to this empire by the unfortunate but irreproachable count Bestuchef Riumin. Her public decrees of the 27th of February 1758,

induced us to presume that the crime which had drawn upon him so severe an animadversion on the part of our dear aunt the empress Elizabeth, must have been very heinous; but the second manifesto, of the 6th of April 1759, which contained a vague detail of the crimes attributed to him, and whereof none were specified, obliged us to suspend our judgment, and led us to suspect that the indignation of that humane sovereign, and the vengeance to which she had been brought, were no more than the effects of calumny and intrigue; for the contents of this second manifesto related not to a malefactor, but to an oppressed man condemned beforehand.

From our natural humanity we have thought fit to soften the severity of the sentence, to pardon the guilty rather than to leave in oblivion the services which the said count Bestuchef rendered during so many years to our empire, and to let him (which would have been still more blamable) terminate his days in an ignominious exile.

As soon therefore as Providence placed the sceptre in our hand, submissive to the emotions of our sensibility, and to the voice of justice, we have recalled from his exile that old and faithful servant of our empire; but, not ignorant of our readiness to hearken to the dictates of justice, he, presenting himself before us, has humbly implored the permission to make his innocence appear to our eyes, a permission which we granted him with all our heart; and, after having specified the intrigues and the calumnies, which appeared to us authenticated and clearer than light, he excited in our heart the most lively compassion. We experienced at the same time a tender satisfaction, on perceiving that the liberty to which we restored him was in perfect agreement with that love of order and justice by which we commenced our reign.

His example has convinced us, that the more weighty the accusation, the more severe ought the examination to be, as without this precaution sentence of condemnation may fall upon an innocent person. Granting that our very dear aunt the empress Elizabeth had, to our knowledge and to that of the whole

world, great intelligence and sagacity; nevertheless, as no one is infallible the affair of count Bestuchef took a turn highly disadvantageous to the honour of our dear aunt. . . .

For these reasons, desirous of restoring the lustre of her name, and the virtues which guided her reign, and to prove how much we cherish her memory, and to fulfil with exactitude the duty of every christian, as becomes a mother of the country, we have thought ourselves obliged to declare solemnly that the said count Bestuchef Riumin was deserving, in the highest degree, of the confidence of our deceased aunt, &c.

Given at St. Petersburg, this 13th of August 1762.

No. VII.

TRANSLATION of a LETTER from the EMPRESS of RUSSIA to M. D'ALEMBERT, at PARIS, whom she had invited into RUSSIA to educate her SON.

M. D'ALEMBERT,

I HAVE just received the answer you wrote to Mr. Odart, in which you refuse to transplant yourself to assist in the education of my son. I easily conceive that it costs a philosopher, like you, nothing to despise what the world calls grandeur and honour: these, in your eyes, are very little; and I can readily agree with you that they are so. Considering things in this light, there would be nothing great in the behaviour of queen Christina [of Sweden] which has been so highly extolled; and often censured with more justice. But to be born and called to contribute to the happiness and even the instruction of a whole nation, and yet decline it, is, in my opinion, refusing to do that good which you wish to do. Your philosophy is founded in a love to mankind: permit me then to tell you, that to refuse to serve mankind, whilst it is in your power, is to miss your aim.

I know you too well to be a good man, to ascribe your refusal to vanity. I know that the sole motive of it is the love of ease, and leisure to cultivate letters and the friendship of those you esteem. But what is there in this objection? Come, with all your friends; I promise both them and you, every convenience and advantage that depends upon me; and perhaps you will find more liberty and ease here, than in your native country. You refused the invitation of the king of Prussia, notwithstanding your obligations to him; but that prince has no son. I own to you, that I have the education of my son so much at heart, and I think you so necessary to it, that perhaps I press you with too much earnestness. Excuse my indiscretion for the sake of the occasion of it; and be assured that it is my esteem for you that makes me so urgent.

Mosco,
Nov. 13, 1762.

CATHARINE.

In this whole letter I have argued only from what I have found in your writings; you would not contradict yourself.

No. VIII.

The DECLARATION which the EMPRESS caused to be delivered to the Foreign Ministers.

THE style of IMPERIAL, which Peter the great, of glorious memory, assumed, or rather revived for himself and his successors, has long appertained as well to the sovereigns as to the crown and to the monarchy of all the Russias.

Her imperial majesty regards as contrary to the substance of that principle, all renewal of the reversals which have been given successively to every potentate on its acknowledgment of that title. In consequence whereof, her majesty has just given orders to her minister to make a general declaration, that the style of IMPERIAL being by its very nature once attached to the crown and to the monarchy of Russia, and perpetuated for a long course

of

of years and successions, neither herself, nor her successors for ever, can any more renew the said reversals, and still less preserve any correspondence with the powers who shall refuse to acknowledge the imperial title in the persons of the sovereigns of all the Russias, as well as in their crown and their monarchy: and to the end that this declaration may terminate for ever all difficulties in a matter which ought not to admit of any, her majesty, in conformity to the declaration of Peter the great, declares that the style of IMPERIAL shall communicate no alteration to the ceremonial in use among courts, which shall remain always on the same footing.

(Signed)

VORONTZOF.

Mosco, Nov. 21, 1762.

B. A. GALLITZIN.

[The ambassador Breteuil having transmitted this declaration to Versailles, Lewis XV. wrote the following answer, which was delivered to the ministers of Catharine:]

Titles are of themselves nothing. They possess no other reality than inasmuch as they are acknowledged, and their value depends on the idea attached to them, and the extent given to them by those who have the right to admit them, to reject them, or to limit them. — Sovereigns themselves cannot attribute to themselves titles at their own choice: the consent of their subjects is not sufficient; that of the other powers is necessary; and every crown, at liberty to acknowledge or to refuse a new title, may also adopt it with such modifications and conditions as are agreeable to it.

Agreeably to this principle, Peter I. and his successors to the empress Elizabeth, have never been known in France but under the denomination of TZAR. — That prince is the first of all the sovereigns of Russia to whom the king granted the style IMPERIAL; but it was under the express condition that this title should communicate no prejudice to the ceremonial in use between the two courts.

The empress Elizabeth subscribed, without scruple, this condition, and explained herself on that head most circumstantially

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in the reverfal framed by her order, and figned in the month of March 1745, by the counts Bestuchef and Vorontzof.—The daughter of Peter I. therein testifies her entire fatisfaction. She therein acknowledges, that it is *from friendship, and from a truly peculiar attention of the king to her, that his majesty had condescended to the acknowledgment of the style of imperial, which other powers had already conceded*; and she confesses that *this complaisance of the king of France is highly agreeable to her.*

The king, actuated by the same sentiments for the empress Catharine II. makes no hesitation in granting to her at present the style of IMPERIAL, and to acknowledge it in her, as attached to the throne of Russia: but his majesty means that this acknowledgment should be made under the same conditions as under the two foregoing reigns; and he declares, that, if hereafter any one of the successors of the empress Catharine, unmindful of this solemn and reciprocal engagement, shall think proper to form any pretension contrary to the usage uniformly followed between the two courts, concerning rank and precedence; from that moment, the crown of France, by an equitable reciprocity, shall resume its ancient style, and cease to give the style of IMPERIAL to that of Russia.

This declaration, tending to prevent all subject of difficulty for the future, is a proof of the friendship of the king for the empress, and of the sincere desire he has to establish between the two courts a solid and unalterable union.

(Signed) PRASLIN.

Done at Versailles, Jan. 18, 1763.

No. IX.

SUBSTANCE of a MEMORIAL delivered on the 16th of July by the CHANCELLOR of RUSSIA to the POLISH RESIDENT at PETERSBURG.

IN this memorial her imperial majesty first sets forth her great love of peace, and how careful she has been to preserve it; and

and then proceeds thus: “ Filled with these sentiments, it is
“ with regret, that the empress sees his Polish majesty follow
“ different maxims with regard to her, and make no return to
“ her friendly proceedings but by proceedings directly opposite.
“ In the first place, in the affair of Courland, her imperial
“ majesty, attentive to every thing that concerned the dignity of
“ the king of Poland, has not ceased to claim his justice, in which
“ she always placed the greatest confidence.

“ Secondly, she has not only paid all possible regard to the
“ representations made to her, touching the damage which the
“ Poles might have suffered by the passage of the russian troops;
“ but even at this moment she waits only for the naming of
“ commissaries by the republic, to settle and give orders for in-
“ demnification.

“ Her imperial majesty is not content with convincing his
“ Polish majesty of her friendship in those two general objects
“ which regard the respective estates; she has no less at heart the
“ giving proofs of her personal regard for his majesty and his
“ family. She has already interested herself, and will still in-
“ terest herself at every favourable opportunity, to procure a
“ proper establishment for his royal highness the king’s son,
“ prince Charles: nevertheless, his majesty the king of Poland
“ has hitherto refused to listen to any overtures for an accom-
“ modation, or for making satisfaction for the many complaints
“ of the empress: not to mention the treaty of perpetual peace
“ established between Russia and the republic of Poland, and
“ which has been infringed by Poland, in many points; her im-
“ perial majesty complains, first, that, notwithstanding the re-
“ quisition made by her ambassador, the king has not given her
“ satisfaction with regard to the irregular conduct of the four
“ ministers, who signed a memorial highly offensive to the court
“ of Russia and its sovereign. Secondly, that the king has not
“ yet acknowledged the lawful duke of Courland. Thirdly,
“ that the laws and liberties of Poland are oppressed, as well as
“ the friends of Russia, who are kept from all employments, and
“ from all favours, because they support liberty and the laws;

“ and

“and who, on that very account, merit the protection of Russia;
 “who, being the guarantee of the rights of the republic, must
 “not suffer any change in its constitution, but must be its firmest
 “support,” &c.

No. X.

*MANIFESTO published by the Court of PETERSBURG, on occasion
 of the Death of Prince IVAN.*

By the grace of God, we Catharine the Second, empress
 and sovereign of all the Russias, &c. to all whom these
 presents may concern.

WHEN, by the divine will, and in compliance with the
 ardent and unanimous desires of our faithful subjects, we ascended
 the throne of Russia, we were not ignorant that Ivan, son of
 Anthony, prince of Brunswic-Wolfenbuttle, and the princess
 Anne of Mecklenburgh, was still alive. This prince, as is well
 known, was, immediately after his birth, unlawfully declared
 heir to the imperial crown of Russia; but, by the decrees of
 Providence, he was soon after irrevocably excluded from that
 high dignity, and the sceptre placed in the hands of the lawful
 heirs, Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the great, our beloved aunt
 of glorious memory. After we had ascended the throne, and
 offered up to heaven our just thanksgivings, the first object that
 employed our thoughts, in consequence of that humanity that is
 natural to us, was the unhappy situation of that prince, who
 was dethroned by the Divine Providence, and had been unfor-
 tunate ever since his birth; and we formed the resolution of
 alleviating his misfortunes, as far as was possible. We immedi-
 ately made a visit to him, in order to judge of his understanding
 and talents, and, in consequence thereof, to procure him an agree-
 able and quiet situation, suitable to his character and the educa-
 tion he had received. But how great was our surprise, when,
 besides a defect in his utterance, that was uneasy to himself, and
 rendered

rendered his discourse almost unintelligible to others, we observed
 in him a total privation of sense and reason! Those who ac-
 companied us during this interview saw how much our heart
 suffered at the view of an object so fitted to excite compassion;
 they were also convinced that the only measure we could take
 to succour the unfortunate prince, was to leave him where we
 found him, and to procure him all the comforts and conveniences
 that his situation would admit of. We accordingly gave our
 orders for this purpose, though the state he was in prevented his
 perceiving the marks of our humanity, or being sensible of our
 attention and care; for he knew nobody, could not distinguish
 between good and evil, nor did he know the use that might be
 made of reading, to pass the time with less weariness and disgust:
 on the contrary, he sought after pleasure in objects that dis-
 covered, with sufficient evidence, the disorder of his imagination.

To prevent, therefore, ill-intentioned persons from giving him
 any trouble, or from making use of his name or orders to disturb
 the public tranquillity, we gave him a guard, and placed about
 his person two officers of the garrison, in whose fidelity and in-
 tegrity we could confide. These officers were captain Vlassief
 and lieutenant Tschekin, who, by their long military services,
 which had considerably impaired their health, deserved a suitable
 recompence, and a station in which they might pass quietly the
 rest of their days; they were accordingly charged with the care
 of the prince, and were strictly enjoined to let none approach
 him. Yet all these precautions were not sufficient to prevent an
 abandoned profligate from committing at Schlusselburg, with
 unparalleled wickedness, and at the risk of his own life, an out-
 rage, whose enormity inspires horror. A second lieutenant of
 the regiment of Smolensko, a native of the Ukraine, named Basil
 Mirovitch, grandson of the first rebel that followed Mazeppa,
 and a man in whom the perjury of his ancestors seems to have
 been infused with their blood; this profligate, having passed his
 days in debauchery and dissipation, and being thus deprived of
 all honourable means of advancing his fortune; having also lost
 sight of what he owed to the law of God, and of the oath of al-
 legiance he had taken to us; and knowing prince Ivan only by
 name,

name, without any knowledge either of his bodily or mental qualities; took it into his head to make use of this prince to advance his fortune at all events, without being restrained by the consideration of the bloody scene that such an attempt was adapted to occasion. In order to execute this detestable, dangerous, and desperate project, he desired, during our absence in Livonia, to be upon guard, out of his turn, in the fortress of Schlusselfburg, where the guard is relieved every eight days; and the 15th of last month, about two o'clock in the morning, he all of a sudden called up the main guard, formed it into a line, and ordered the soldiers to load with ball. Berednikof, governor of the fortress, having heard a noise, came out of his apartment, and asked Mirovitch the reason of this disturbance, but received no other answer from this rebel than a blow on the head with the butt-end of his musket. Mirovitch, having wounded and arrested the governor, led on his troops with fury, and attacked with fire-arms the handful of soldiers that guarded prince Ivan. But he was so warmly received by those soldiers under the command of the two officers mentioned above, that he was obliged to retire. By a particular direction of that Providence that watches over the life of man, there was that night a thick mist, which, together with the inward form and situation of the fortress, had this happy effect, that not one individual was either killed or wounded. The bad success of this first attempt could not engage this enemy of the public peace to desist from his rebellious purpose. Driven on by rage and despair, he ordered a piece of cannon to be brought from one of the bastions, which order was immediately executed. Captain Vlassief and his lieutenant Tischekin, seeing that it was impossible to resist such a superior force, and considering the unhappy consequences that must ensue from the deliverance of a person that was committed to their care, and the effusion of innocent blood that must follow from the tumults it was adapted to excite, took, after deliberating together, the only step that they thought proper to maintain the public tranquillity, which was to cut short the days of the unfortunate prince. Considering also, that if they set at liberty a prisoner, whom this desperate

desperate party endeavoured to force with such violence out of their hands, they ran the risk of being punished according to the rigour of the laws, they assassinated the prince, without being restrained by the apprehension of being put to death by a villain reduced to despair. The monster (Mirovitch), seeing the dead body of the prince, was so confounded and struck at a sight he so little expected, that he acknowledged, that very instant, his temerity and his guilt, and discovered his repentance to the troop which about an hour before he had seduced from their duty, and rendered the accomplices of his crime.

Then it was, that the two officers, who had nipped this rebellion in the bud, joined with the governor of the fortress, in securing the person of this rebel, and in bringing back the soldiers to their duty. They also sent to our privy counsellor Panin, under whose orders they acted, a relation of this event, which, though unhappy, has nevertheless, under the protection of Heaven, been the occasion of preventing still greater calamities. This senator dispatched immediately lieutenant-colonel Kaschkin, with sufficient instructions to maintain the public tranquillity, to prevent disorder on the spot, (*i.e.* where the assassination was committed,) and sent us, at the same time, a courier with a circumstantial account of the whole affair. In consequence of this, we ordered lieutenant-general Veymarn, of the division of St. Petersburg, to take the necessary informations upon the spot; this he has done, and has sent us accordingly the interrogatories, depositions, and the confession of the villain himself, who has acknowledged his guilt.

Sensible of the enormity of his crime, and of its consequences with regard to the peace of our country, we have referred the whole affair to the consideration of our senate, which we have ordered, jointly with the synod, to invite the three first classes, and the presidents of all the colleges, to hear the verbal relation of general Veymarn, who has taken the proper informations; to pronounce sentence in consequence thereof; and, after that sentence has been signed, to present it to us for our confirmation of the same.

The original is signed by her imperial majesty's own hand.

CATHARINE.

No. XI.

ALPHABETICAL LIST of the TOWNS of the RUSSIAN EMPIRE,
*showing in what Government they lie, and how many Vershs distant
 from the Residence, from the Metropolis, and from their respective
 Government Towns, as far as could be collected from the Accounts
 delivered to CATHERINE II.*

The names of the government towns are distinguished by *italic*.

Towns.	In what government.	Versts from St. Peterb.	Versts from Mosco.	Versts from government town.
Aktyrka	Kharkof	1453	723	106
Aklansk	Irkutsk	10497	9767	4674
Alapayevsk	Perme			510
Alatyr	Simbirsk	1358	618	133
Alexandriya	Ekatarinoslavl			184
Alexandrof	Vladimir	824	101	117
Alexandrofsk	Caucasus			150
Alexin	Tula	860	130	60
Alexopol	Ekatarinoslavl			115
<i>Archangel</i>		1145	1236	
Ardatof	Nishnè-Novgorod			150
Ardatof on Alatyr	Simbirsk	1337	597	148
Arensberg	Riga	626	1356	319
Arfamas	Nishnè-Novogorod	1120	380	109
Arsk	Kasan	1463	735	55
Asof	Ekatarinoslavl	1998	1268	625
Astrakhan	Caucasus	2142	1412	630
Atkarsk	Saratof	1630	902	79
Atschinsk	Tobolsk	4694	3964	1809
Babinovitschy	Mohilef			111
Bachmut	Ekatarinoslavl	1490	760	368
Balachna	Nishnè-Novgorod	1145	415	32
Balafchhof	Saratof			244
Baltic port	Reval	394	1122	44
Bargufinsk	Irkutsk	6345	5617	524
Belebey	Ufa			139
Berefin	Tschernigof			36

Berefof

Towns.	In what government.	Versts from St. Peterb.	Versts from Mosco.	Versts from government- town.
Berefof	Tobolsk	3814	3084	929
Bielef	Tula	973	239	120
Bielgorod	Kursk	1356	626	132
Bielitza	Mohilef			194
Bieloy	Smolensk	709	410	143
Bielopolye	Kharkof	1585	857	217
Bieloserfsk	Novgorod	569	540	532
Bielovodsk	Voronetskh	1545	803	307
Biezvefsk	Tver	625	287	121
Biisk	Kolhyvan			260
Biryutskh	Voronetskh	1357	617	150
Birsk	Ufa	1927	1197	105
Bobrof	Voronetskh	1265	535	87
Bogatye	Kursk	1330	600	106
Bogodukhof	Kharkof	1471	741	60
Bogoroditzk	Tula	957	227	45
Bogorodsk	Mosco			50
Bogutschar	Voronetskh	1475	735	238
Bolkhof	Orel	1020	290	54
Borifoglyebfk	Yaroslavl	*	†	32
Borifoglyebfk on the				
Vorona	Tambof	1359	629	152
Borovitschi	Novgorod	360	454	183
Borofsk	Kaluga	893	163	78
Borsna	Tchernigof	1396	666	90
Briansk	Orel	1077	347	138
Bronnitsy	Mosco	781	51	
Bugulma	Ufa	1687	957	220
Buguruslan	Ufa			279
Bui	Kostroma	932	396	130
Buinsk	Simbirsk	1462	722	70
Busuluk	Ufa			375
Cronstadt	St. Petersburg	47	777	
Dalmatof	Perme			510
Danilof	Yaroslavl	810	316	63
Dankof	Riazane	950	220	158
Defchkin	Orel	1060	330	58
St. Dmitri fort	Ekatarinoslavl	1968	1238	595
Dmitriyef	Kursk	1241	511	99

* By the way of Uglitsch 814, by the way of Pofchek 797.

† By the way of Yaroslavl and Rost. 273, by the way of Pofchek 265.

Dmitrof

Towns.	In what government.	Vershs from St. Peterfb.	Vershs from Mosco.	Vershs from governmēt- towns.
Dmitrof	Mosco	702	62	
Dmitrofsk	Orel	1181	451	84
Dnieprofsk	Tavrida			300
Donetzsk	Ekatarinoslavl			443
Dorogobusha	Smolensk	793	298	86
Doroninsk	Irkutsk	6644	5964	871
Dorpat.	Riga	319	1049	230
Driezin	Polotsk	691	697	68
Dukhofshina	Smolensk	727	363	51
Dynaburg	Polotsk	794	800	173
Ekatarinenburg	Perme	2308	1578	358
Ekatarinoslavl		1596	868	
Elizabethgrad	Ekatarinoslavl	1759	1411	211
Epiphan	Tula	962	232	50
Eupatoria	Tavrida			60
Fatefsch	Kursk	1193	463	46
Fellin	Riga			241
Frederiksham	Vyburg	326	1056	186
Gadyatch	Tchernigof	*	†	254
Galitch	Kostroma	919	396	117
Gdof	St. Petersburg	216	871	
Georgiefsk	Caucasus	2528	1800	60
Glasof	Viatska			214
Glink	Tchernigof			210
Glukhof	NovgorodSievskoi	1280	550	
Goltva	Kief			283
Gordatof	Nishnè-Novgorod			70
Gorodetz	Polotsk	698	553	144
Gorodischtsche	Penfa			42
Gorodnia	Tchernigof			50
Gorokovetch	Vladimir	1039	332	157
Gradischtsche	Ekatarinoslavl			136
Griafovetch	Vologda	709	384	42
Giaske	Smolensk	581	160	222
Habfal	Reval	456	1126	95
Infara	Penfa	1290	560	89
Irbitt	Perme	2683	1953	572
Irkutsk		5823	5093	
Iichim	Tobolsk	2935	2205	344
* Via	Mtzensk and Kursk	— —	1450	720
† Via	Smolensk and Baturia	— —	1712	982

* *Via* Mitzenfk and Kursk — —† *Via* Smolensk and Baturin — —

Ischiginſk

Towns.	In what government.	Versts from St. Peterb.	Versts from Moscow.	Versts from government-town.
Ichiginsk	Irkutsk	10307	9577	4484
Iium	Kharkof	1550	820	111
Kadnikof	Vologda	695	468	42
Kadyi	Kostroma	950	427	147
Kaigorod	Viatka	1972	1242	246
Kainsk	Tobolsk	3788	3058	903
Kaliafin	Tver	734	294	168
Kalitva	Voronetch	1421	681	193
<i>Kaluga</i>		890	160	
Kamyschin	Saratof	1806	1076	174
Kamyschlof	Perme			483
Kanadyei	Simbirsk	1537	797	131
Karatfchef	Orel	1102	372	84
Kargopol	Olonetz	618	1078	342
Karlun	Simbirsk	1423	683	91
<i>Kasan</i>		1465	735	
Kaschin	Tver	716	312	150
Kasimof	Riazane	1010	280	140
Kem	Olonetz	885	1479	455
Kerenfk	Penfa	1199	460	135
Kexholm	Viborg	146	876	130
<i>Kharkof</i>		1421	680	
Kherson	* Ekatarinoslavl		†	290
Kholm	Pleskof	336	592	268
Khopersk	Saratof	1419	689	
Khorol	Kief			223
Khotmyshsk	Kharkof	1455	725	71
Khvalynsk	Saratof			197
<i>Kief</i>		1582	852	
Kinburn fort	Tavrida	2091	1361	
Kineschma	Kostroma	885	347	83
Kirensk	Irkutsk	6768	6038	945
Kirilof	Novgorod	590	495	580
Kirfanof	Tambof	1295	565	88
Kirshatsh	Vladimir	850	123	115
Kisliar	Caucasus	2642	1912	
Klimovitschy	Mohilef			128
Klin	Mosco	648	82	
Kniaginina	Nishnè-Novgorod			96
* Via Mzensk, Kursk, and Kremenshuk —		1903	1174	
† Via Smolensk, Baturin, Polt. and Kremenshuk		2141	1411	

Towns.	In what government.	Verfs from St. Peterb.	Verfs from Mosco.	Verfs from government-town.
Kola	Archangel	1379	2109	1021
Kolmogory	Archangel			
Kologrif	Koftroma	968	534	254
Kolomna	Mosco	830	100	
Kolyvan		5154	4424	
Konotop	Novgorod Sieverskoi	1345	615	115
Konftantinograd	Ekatarinoflavl	973	864	104
Kopyfs	Mohilef			49
Korop	Novgorod Sieverskoi			70
Korotoyak	Voronetch	1313	573	80
Korotfcha	Kurfk	1359	629	135
Kortfcheva	Tver			82
Kofchira	Tula	900	170	80
Kofeletz	Kief	1510	780	72
Kofelfk	Kaluga	940	210	57
Koflof	Tambof	1155	425	72
Koftroma		802	280	
Kotelnitfch	Viatka	1811	1081	95
Kotiakof	Simbirfk	1404	664	110
Kovrof	Vladimir	964	237	62
Krafnoborsfk	Vologda	1100	1006	580
Krafnoy	Smolenfk	823	430	46
Krafnoy-Kholm	Tver	586	326	161
Krafnoy-Yar	Afttrakhan	2112	1382	30
Krafnoyarsfk	Kolyvan	4839	4109	1981
Krafnokutfk	Kharkhof	1508	767	86
Krafnoflobodfk	Penfa	1564	834	173
Krafnoufimfk	Perme	2077	1347	188
Krefczy	Novgorod	279	451	93
Krolevetch	Novgorod Sieverskoi	1319	589	64
Kromy	Orel	1133	403	36
Kropivna	Tula	952	222	40
Kungur	Perme	2051	1323	91
Kupenfk	Voronetch	1663	923	283
Kurgan	Tobelfk	2875	2145	414
Kurmysch	Simbirfk	1237	500	257
Kurfk		1224	494	
Kufmodemyansk	Kazan	1294	564	181
Kufnetzfk	Kolyvan	4737	4007	
Kufnetzfk	Saratof			197
Ladoga	St. Petersburg	150	744	
Lalfchef	Kazan			51

Lalfk

Towns.	In what government.	Verfs from St. Peterb.	Verfs from Mosco.	Verfs from government-town.
Lalfk	Vologda	1110	981	555
Lebedyan	Tambof	1104	374	177
Lebedin	Kharkof	1540	810	147
Levkopol	Tavrida			80
Lgof	Kurfk	1295	565	71
Lichyin	Kaluga	940	210	45
Lipetzfk	Tambof	1162	432	149
Linbim	Yaroflavl	826	354	101
Liutzin	Polotfk	593	758	164
Livenfk	Voronetch	1403	654	175
Livny	Orel	1090	360	128
Lochvitza	Tfchernigof	1462	732	210
Lodeinoë Pole	Olonetz	276	809	215
Lubney	Kief	1505	775	190
Luch	Koftroma	913	347	129
Luga	St. Petersburg	135	614	
Lukoyanof	Nifhnë-Novgorod			158
Makarief	Nifhnë-Novgorod			80
Makarief	Koftroma	98	474	195
Malmyfh	Viatka			249
Maloarchangel	Orel	1143	413	70
Maloyaroflavl	Kaluga	847	113	52
Mamadyfh	Kazan			146
Mariupol	Ekatarinoflavl			321
Medynfk	Kaluga	869	135	57
Melenki	Vladimir	1040	313	138
Melitopol	Tavrida			220
Menselinfk	Ufa	1769	1035	236
Mefchtschofsk	Kaluga	980	250	69
Mefen	Archangel	1445	1575	511
Mglinsk	Novgorod Sieverskoi			141
Mikhailof	Ræzan	910	180	50
Mirgorod	Kief	1784	1054	233
Miropolie	Kharkof	1515	785	133
Mohilef		751	534	
Mokfchan	Penfa	1368	638	37
Mologa	Yaroflavl	740	260	110
Morfchanfk	Tambof	1156	426	88
Mofalfk	Kaluga	940	210	77
Mofdok	Caucafus		243	34
Mofhaifk	Mosco	816	99	
MOSCO	Metropolis	728		

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Maflav

Towns.	In what government.	Versts from St. Peterb.	Versts from Mosco.	Versts from government-town.
Mitislavl	Mohilef	914	501	94
Murom	Vladimir	1022	295	120
Myshkin	Yaroslavl	763	209	92
Mzensk	Orel	1044	314	53
Nakhitschevan	Ekatarinoslavl			
Nagaibak	Orenburg	1733	1003	540
Naroftichat	Penfa	1356	626	125
Narva	St. Petersburg	145	875	
Narym	Tobolsk	4644	3934	1759
Nedrigailof	Kharkof	1574	844	195
Nerechta	Kostroma	846	236	43
Nerschinsk	Irkutsk	6784	6054	961
Neyshlott	Viburg	390	1120	250
Nevel	Polotsk	1338	618	99
Nieshin	Tschernigof	1444	714	74
Nekitsk	Mosco		31	
Nikolsk	Vologda	1164	1061	637
Nishnaia Dievitza	Voronetch	1284	544	57
Nishnè Kamtschatka	Irkutsk	11699	10969	5876
Nishnè Lomof	Penfa	1339	609	96
Nishnè Novgorod		1120	390	
Nishneudinsk	Irkutsk	5348	4618	475
Nolin	Viatka			112
Novgorod		186	544	
Novgorod Sieverskoi		*	†	
Novomiesto	Novgorod Sieverskoi			144
Novomirgorod	Ekatarinoslavl			288
Novomoskofsk	Ekatarinoslavl			18
Novorshet	Pleskof	478	853	132
Novofil	Tula	1292	458	176
Oboian	Kursk	1283	553	59
Obvinsk	Perme			50
Odoyef	Tula	940	210	70
Okhansk	Perme			67
Okhotsk	Irkutsk	9259	8529	3436
Olekminsk	Irkutsk	7754	7024	1931
Olenk	Irkutsk	9309	8579	3496
Olonetz	Olonetz	280	874	150
Omsk	Tobolsk	3286	2556	693

* By Star, and Smolensk

† By Tula and Mosco

Omsk

Towns.	In what government.	Versts from St. Peterb.	Versts from Mosco.	Versts from government-town.
Onega	Archangel	900	1560	232
Opotfcha	Pleskof	491	727	137
Oranienbaum	St. Petersburg	40	768	
Oranienburg	Riazane	1093	363	170
Orel		1097	367	
Orenburg	Ufa	1984	1254	319
Orlof	Viatka	1663	933	51
Orfcha	Mohilef	685	466	66
Osa	Perme	2020	1290	113
Osokol, old	Kursk	1309	579	130
Osokol, new	Kursk	1379	639	191
Ostafchikof	Tver	426	347	183
Oster	Kief	1532	802	89
Ostrogolsk	Voronetch	1326	588	95
Ostrof	Pleskof	425	800	56
Pavlograd	Ekatarinoslavl			202
Pavlofsk	Voronetch	1380	640	150
Penfa		1394	660	
Pereiaslavl	Kief	1533	823	78
Perekop	Tavrida			140
Peremyschl	Kaluga	925	195	28
Pereaslavl Riaz.		910	180	
Pereaslavl Saliesk	Vladimir	750	125	120
Perevolotschna	Novgorod	2002	1272	50
Perevos	Nishnè Novgorod			90
Perme		1949	1219	
Pernau	Riga	479	1190	72
Petropavlofskoi	Irkutsk	10648	9918	4620
Petrozavodsk	Olonetz	430	1024	
Petrofsk	Yaroslavl	819	167	76
Petrofsk	Saratof	1490	760	105
Petschory	Pleskof		807	54
Phanagoria	Tavrida			240
Pinega	Archangel	1245	1288	210
Piriatin	Kief	1480	750	161
Ples	Kostroma	856	295	54
Pleskof		*	717	
Podol	Mosco	765	35	
Pogor	Novgorod Sieverskoi	1400	670	64
Pokrof	Vladimir	824	97	78

* By way of Narva

By way of Luga

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Polotsk

Towns.	In what government.	Versts from St. Peterb.	Versts from Mosco.	Versts from government-town.
<i>Polotsk</i>		643	1373	
Poltava	Ekatarinofslavl	1535	805	171
Porkhof	Pleskof	336	694	85
Porietfchy	Smolensk	752	430	73
Pofchekonja	Yarofslavl	718	314	112
Potfchinky	Nifhnè Novgorod			212
Povienetz	Olonetz	595	1189	765
Priluky	Tfchernigof	1453	723	
Pronfk	Ræzan	950	220	50
Pudafh	Olonetz	516	996	240
Putevl	Kurfk	1404	674	100
Refitza	Polotfk	619	784	190
<i>Reval</i>		340	1070	
Riafhtk	Ræzan	1000	270	
<i>Riga</i>		552	1053	
Rogatfhef	Mohilef	1396	636	102
Romanof	Yarofslavl	796	266	34
Romen	Tfchernigof	1412	682	194
Rofheftvenfk	St. Petersburg	79		
Roflavl	Smolensk	880	443	116
Roitof	Yarofslavl	806	189	54
Rhfef	Tver	631	300	127
Rufa	Mosco	759	88	
Rybnoy	Yarofslavl	806	252	78
Rylfk	Kurfk	1340	610	116
Sadonfk	Voronetch	1130	400	85
Samara	Simbirfk	1633	893	177
St. PETERSBURG	<i>Refidence</i>		728	
Sapofhok	Ræzan	1030	300	120
Saraifk	Ræzan	860	130	56
Saranfk	Penfa	1276	546	123
Sarapul	Viatka	1812	1082	380
<i>Saratof</i>		1632	902	
Safchiverfk	Irkutfk	9192	8462	3369
Schadrinfk	Perme	2488	1758	556
Schatzk	Tambof	1090	360	157
Schenkurfk	Archangel	800	848	388
Schefchkeyef	Penfa	1306	576	144
Schluffelburg	St. Petersburg	60	790	
Schtschigry	Kurfk	1290	478	50
Schuya	Vladimir	969	239	90
Sebefh	Polotfk	533	718	104

Selenginfk

Towns.	In what government.	Versts from St. Peterb.	Versts from Mosco.	Versts from government-town.
Selenginfk	Irkutfk	6226	5496	403
Semeonof	Nifhnè Novgorod			60
Semipalatfk	Kolyvan	2992	2262	
Semlianfk	Voronetch	1204	464	40
Serdob	Saratof			175
Serdobol	Viburg			238
Sergatfch	Nifhnè Novgorod			138
Sergiefsk	Ufa			350
Serpeifk	Kaluga	980	250	82
Serpukhof	Mosco	818	88	
Sevaftopol	Tavrida			
Shiganfk	Irkutfk	9125	8395	3302
Shifdra	Kaluga	1054	320	156
Sienkof	Tfchernigof			286
Siennoi	Mohilef			151
Sievfk	Orel	1242	512	145
<i>Simbirfk</i>		1485	745	
Simpheropol	Tavrida	2187	1459	
Singileyef	Simbirfk	1519	779	49
Skopin	Ræzan	1026	296	88
Slavianfk	Ekatarinofslavl	1440	710	200
Slobodfkoy	Viatka	1740	1010	28
<i>Smolensk</i>		716	384	
Solgalitzkaia	Koftroma	799	502	223
Solikamfk	Perme	2227	1497	263
Solotonofcha	Kief			130
Solotfchef	Karkof	1459	718	36
Solvytfchegodfk	Vologda	1086	988	560
Sophia	St. Petersburg	22	706	
Sofnitza	Novgorod Sieverskoi			
Spafk	Kazan			134
Spafk	Ræzan	966	232	52
Spafk	Tambof	1300	570	207
Spafk	Novgorod	306	664	120
Staraja Ruffa	Tver	595	237	73
Staritza	Mohilef	984	569	38
Starodub	Novgorod Sieverskoi	1083	480	81
Stavropol	Caucafus			
Stavropol	Simbirfk	1589	849	133
Sterlitamazk	Ufa			111
Strietensk	Irkutfk	6866	6136	1043
Subtzof	Tver	628	280	116

Sudogda

Towns.	In what government.	Versts from St. Peterb.	Versts from Mosco.	Versts from government- town.
Sudogda	Vladimir	939	212	37
Sudzha	Kursk	1315	585	91
Sumy	Kharkof	1383	653	175
Suraih	Polotsk	769	558	149
Surahsk	Novogorod Sieverskoi			141
Surgut	Tobolsk	3610	2875	725
Sutdal	Vladimir	936	209	32
Svenigorod	Mosco	718	48	
Sviyabsk	Kazan	1445	715	30
Syfran	Simbirsk	1565	825	123
Sytschovka	Smolensk		219	227
Tagay	Simbirsk	1436	696	49
Taganrok	Ekatarinossavl	2036	1306	460
Tambof		1207	477	
Tara	Tobolsk	3445	2715	560
Tarufa	Kaluga	848	118	62
Temnikof	Tambof	1279	549	291
Tetyuschy	Kazan	1585	855	85
Theodosia	Tavrida			
Tichvin	Novgorod	243	744	210
Tim	Kursk	1243	513	64
Tiumin	Tobolsk	2631	1901	254
Tobolsk		2885	2155	
Tomik	Tobolsk	4309	3579	1424
Toropetz	Pfcove	610	497	347
Torshok	Tver	503	227	63
Totma	Vologda	889	626	200
Troitzk	Penfa	1386	656	134
Troitzk	Ufa			462
Trubtschevsk	Orel	1166	436	169
Tschaufy	Mohilef			43
Tschebokfar	Kazan	1350	620	124
Tschelyabinsk	Ufa	2488	1758	400
Tschembar	Penfa			129
Tscherdyn	Perme	2321	1591	364
Tscherekof	Mohilef			82
Tscherepovetch	Novgorod			476
Tscherkask	Ekatarinossavl	1936	1208	
Tschernigof		1124	676	
Tschern	Tula	970	240	
Tschernoi Yar	Saratof	1972	1242	499
Tschistopoliye	Kazan			125

Tschuchloma

Towns.	In what government.	Versts from St. Peterb.	Versts from Mosco.	Versts from government- town.
Tschuchloma	Kostroma	920	473	167
Tschuguyef	Kharkof	1414	684	34
Tula		912	182	
Turinsk	Tobolsk	2480	1750	405
Turuchansk	Tobolsk	6190	5460	3305
Tver		568	162	
Tzarevo Kokshaisk	Kazan	1354	624	126
Tzarevo Santschurisk	Viatka	1414	684	253
Tzaritzin	Saratof	1772	1042	355
Tzyvlsk	Kazan	1390	660	102
Ufa		1913	1183	
Uglitsch	Yaroslavl	734	180	101
Urthym	Viatka	1631	901	163
Usman	Tambof	1226	496	158
Ustingvelikoy	Vologda	1000	899	473
Ultioshna	Novgorod	450	368	357
Ustysolsk	Vologda	1400	1300	876
Valday	Novgorod	338	392	152
Valk	Riga			149
Valky	Kharkof	1466	725	53
Valniky	Voronetch	1376	630	208
Vargavin	Kostroma	1132	666	387
Vasil	Nishnè Novgorod	1255	525	144
Veissenstein	Reval			34
Velikiye Luky	Pfcove	528	601	259
Velisk	Polotsk	809	598	189
Velsk	Vologda	870	706	280
Vende	Riga			100
Venef	Tula	860	130	40
Verchney Lomof	Penfa	1339	609	106
Verkhoturije	Perme	2503	1773	540
Verkhoudinsk	Irkutsk	6116	5388	295
Verkhouralsk	Ufa			309
Vereya	Mosco	831	98	
Verro	Riga			236
Vesenberg	Reval			80
Vesegonik	Tver	502	406	241
Vetluga	Kostroma	1084	619	339
Viasma	Smolensk	587	221	163
Viasniky	Vladimir	1022	295	120
Viatka		1815	1085	
Vilmanstrand	Vyburg	190	920	50

Vitebsk

Towns.	In what government.	Versts from St. Peterb.	Versts from Mosco.	Versts from government- towns.
Vitebsk	Polotsk	729	518	109
Vladimir		902	175	
Volmar	Riga		1171	103
Vologda		689	426	
Voloko Lamsk	Mosco	712	101	
Volok	Saratof			110
Voltschansk	Kharkof			60
Voronetch		1220	490	
Voskreſensk	Mosco		42	
Vyburg		140	870	
Vyschney Volotschok	Tver	432	298	134
Vytegra	Olonez	426	876	
Yadrin	Kazan	1250	520	186
Yakutsk	Irkutsk	8309	7579	2486
Yalutorofsk	Tobolsk	2715	1985	254
Yamburg	St. Petersburg	121	854	
Yaransk	Viatka	1706	972	202
Yarensk	Vologda	1721	1147	721
Yaroslavl		830	243	
Yegoriefsk	Razan	814	80	95
Yelabuga	Viatka			373
Yelatma	Tambof	1055	325	264
Yeletz	Orel	1094	364	183
Yelna	Smolensk		326	90
Yenefeisk	Tobolsk	5032	4300	2147
Yenotaiyefsk	Astrakhan	2084	1354	
Yephremof	Tula	1024	294	112
Yuknof	Smolensk		251	194
Yurief Polskoy	Vladimir	820	90	50
Yuryevetz Povolkskoy	Kostroma	974	347	172

END OF THE APPENDIX.

LEABHARLANN LÁIR,
NA MBRÁITHRE CRÍOSTAÍ.



