

added the hundred thousand square leagues of the Ottoman territory in Asia and Europe, there would be an end of all balance of political forces in the world. Then would be inscribed upon the whole of our hemisphere and half of the other the famous *finis Polonior*, applied no longer to Sarmatia, but to entire Europe.

Let us hear upon this subject a man who was, unfortunately for France and for himself, the improvident ally of Russia against the Turks.

It is known that Napoleon liked much to discourse and little to reply. He used to say all things, even the truth, in those historical monologues thrown out intentionally to be echoed, and which his familiars used to call his *causeries*. Count de Rambuteau, then chamberlain, since prefect of Paris, where he has left some trace of the first edile of France, was present one night at the Tuilleries, on occasion of one of these outpourings. These conversations were kept in memory, not only from the importance of the speaker, but also because of the prodigious current of ideas and images which hurried along the mind in those extemporisations of the great talker. It was in the beginning of January, 1813, a time when fortune had already blasted very many of his illusions; Marshal Davoust and Count de Lobau were, as well as M. de Rambuteau, listening in respectful silence, to the funereal anecdotes about the retreat from Russia. Napoleon stopped of a sudden in the recital of his reverses, as if the phantom of the future had first arisen before his eyes. "Alas!" said he, "how the best calculated plans may be frustrated by the most unforeseen circumstances. Placed in 1812 at the head of Europe, disposing of the whole force of the West, I had deemed the moment come for the invasion of Russia; I designed to raise against her a barrier she could never pass; I hoped to at least retard for a hundred years that power, and I in fact have but advanced her a century. If ever she gets hold of Constantinople, leaning on the Baltic and the Bosphorus, she will subjugate Europe and Asia to the same yoke. Ah, if I had known earlier the importance of the Turkish counterpoise at Constantinople!"

Imagine, in fact, a Czar who already recruits his armies among sixty-five millions of men—men whose sole trade it is, as in the steppes of Attila, to die bravely at the master's order; add, moreover, to this formidable power of recruitment, the forty millions of Ottoman subjects, Turks, Greeks, Abases, Armenians, Circassians, Kurds, Arabians, Druses, Maronites, and let us superadd the twenty-five millions of Persians, who already tremble at the vanguards of Russia. One hundred and thirty millions of men in a single despotic hand, for the oppression of one hundred million remaining!

What becomes of the Black Sea, that lake of Europe and of Asia? It becomes the grand dock of Russia, where her military fleets will be constructed and exercised in silence, behind a chain drawn from Asia to Europe, till the day when those countless sails will issue through the Dardanelles into the Mediterranean, saying to the winds, as the barbarians did: "Blow

where thou listest, whithersoever thou shalt bear us, the land is ours."

What becomes of the Danube, which after having flowed free for six hundred leagues through Germany, will be enchained at its mouth, and will find a Muscovite blockade at its junction with the seas wherein it went to seek the sun and the treasures of the East?

What would become of the Adriatic, wherein Austria began to exercise herself in navigation and commerce through Trieste and Venice, and which Dalmatia, Epirus, Albania, become Russian, will thenceforth close, like a second Black Sea, to the Austrian flag?

What becomes of Constantinople, seated upon two continents, on the shores of three seas and two straits, of whose commercial ports the keys should be in neutral, friendly, and free hands? Constantinople becomes a Moscow of the Bosphorus, of which the Kumlin, raised on the site of the gardens of the seraglio, will pass, like slaves, the vessels of Europe beneath its cannon?

What becomes of the Mediterranean? Either a Russian lake, or a battle-field of centuries between the Russian and the British fleets, keeping the commerce of Europe between two fires.

What becomes of maritime France, in a sea where she possesses neither Malta, nor Gibraltar, nor Corfu? Maritime France becomes the subaltern vassal of the naval power preponderant upon the seas, the English; or else the butt of Russian insults in its very ports. When Russia holds the Dardanelles, the Russian frontier is at Marseilles and Toulon.

What becomes of Germany? Swayed already for some thirty years by Russian diplomacy or intervention, which it was still able to keep in check, so long as the Czar felt in his rear the counterpoise of Turkey, Germany becomes Russian. The confederation of the Rhine, dreamt by Bonaparte, becomes a fact, upon the annihilation of Constantinople by the Czar. Germany, great and small, becomes a confederation of the Danube against France.

At this price Prussia keeps a fragment of Poland and the Rhenish provinces; at this price Austria keeps Italy. and if Italy stirs at the voice of France, a new Swarrow descends from Illyria into the plains with two hundred thousand Russians to aid as many Germans. Continental France can no longer move upon its own frontiers, without encountering the German vanguards of Russia, or without coming to blows with Russia, the reserve corps of Germany. The treaties of 1815 are curtailed, as against France, by whatever remains unconquered in the East, independent in Germany, and vital in Italy. It is no longer the accidental and passing coalition of 1815, but the perpetual coalition of a single power of Russia, that will dictate the clauses, and give the passwords to entire Europe.

England alone will remain uncizable and free, because no chains can be put upon the winds and the waves. She will be subject to the "continental blockade" of Bonaparte, augmented by the blockade of the East by the Czars. She will wait anxiously the epoch when