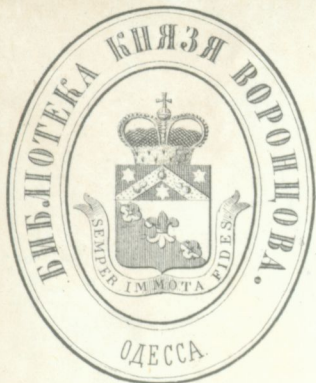


ИЗ СОБРАНИЯ
ВОРОНЦОВЫХ

9598



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ИЗ СОБРАНИЯ
ВОРОНЦОВЫХ

9598

НАУКОВА БІБЛІОТЕКА ОНУ ім. І.І. МЕЧНИКОВА

TRAVELS
IN
TURKEY, ITALY,
AND
RUSSIA,

During the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, & 1806.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF
SOME OF THE GREEK ISLANDS.

BY
THOMAS MACGILL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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AND
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1808.

PREFACE.

With diffidence the following sheets are presented to public notice. The author of them, engaged almost constantly in the pursuits of commerce, has had little, in fact no leisure for those of literature: he is aware, however, that when, under such circumstances, a man publishes a book, he ought to be able to give reasons which may in some measure justify him for so doing. Various are the pleas offered by writers for their appearance before the Public: many urge the

НАУКОВА БІБЛІОТЕКА ОНУМ. І.І. МЕРНИКОВА

solicitation of their friends as a motive, and of this, frequently as it has been offered, the writer of the following letters must now avail himself: he submitted them to the inspection of friends, who, being of opinion that they might be favourably received, advised him to publish them. Independently however of this, he ventures to express his hope that they will not prove altogether uninteresting; his occupations having led him to visit, and take up his residence for some time in different foreign countries, he has by these means been enabled to form an acquaintance, and, in some cases, a strict intimacy with the inhabitants of those countries; he has witnessed their manners, customs, and habits in private and domestic life, particularly in Turkey;

as far as he possessed the capacity, he has faithfully delineated them.

To the contemplative mind, the present state of Ephesus, when contrasted with its former glory and magnificence, may form a picture not devoid of interest. From the account of Taganrock and Odessa, perhaps some information may be derived; the merchant may feel gratification in a perusal of the details of commerce. In short, though with doubt and hesitation, it is likewise with some degree of confidence, that these letters are submitted to public view: their author would not defy or challenge criticism, neither would he meanly deprecate the wrath of the critic: he is aware that many faults may be discoverable in his work, he hopes

that he can bear patiently to be told of them; and should he be considered as having in any degree contributed to the public information or amusement, it will give him the most sincere satisfaction.

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LETTERS FROM ITALY,

&c.
 ————
 LETTER I.
 ————

Venice.—Given by the French Republic to the Emperor of Germany.—His disregard of his promises.—General distress of the Venetians.—Anecdote of the Countess C——r.

DEAR ———

Venice, April 1804.

ON the breaking out of the war between Great Britain and France, in the spring of the year 1803, the few of the English who had it in their power, quitted those parts of Italy which were under subjection to the Corsican usurper, and took shelter in Venice, where they were

secure from his persecution. Returning at this period, from a voyage to the Levant, I found myself, in common with my countrymen, under the necessity of carrying on business in those parts, only through the medium of a correspondence; and, being so situated, was obliged to remain a citizen of Venice, nearly twelve months.

Venice was formerly the abode of mirth and gaiety, and strangers who visited that city, never departed from it, but with regret; now, however, her gaiety has given place to melancholy; and to the serenades of the lover, to the voice of pleasure and merriment, have succeeded the groans of indigence and misery.

You may probably recollect, that when the French first came to Venice, they solicited permission to enter her territories as friends; which, from her inability to make any resistance to them, she granted;

but they shortly usurped, and then overturned the government.

At the conclusion of peace with the French Republic, and the Emperor of Germany, the Republic gave Venice to the Emperor, in lieu of some other state; and he, it is asserted, became bound to maintain, in their pristine condition, many of the branches of government, and to pay the annuities with which the state was burdened; annuities arising from money which had been lent at some former period, and for the payment of which, a certain part of the revenue had always been set aside. He also agreed to maintain all officers, either of the army or the navy, in their accustomed rank and pay.

But, alas! the unhappy Venetians soon experienced to their sorrow, that they were fallen indeed. Every promise which had been made was disregarded, the pensions and annuities were withheld from

many, reduced to all. The offices of government were filled by greedy Hungarians, Milanese, or French emigrants; and those men in the navy or army, who, at former periods, had distinguished themselves, suffered total neglect, and were either without pay, or that pay reduced to a trifle, which trifle was to be obtained only on terms and conditions so humiliating, that many even hesitated whether to run the risk of starving altogether without, or half-starving with the allowance granted by German munificence. The Venetians who formerly had never beheld a soldier in their streets, were now insulted at every corner by brutes in the human shape, bearing arms; their pockets were picked in the open day, and if at that time any trifle about them escaped plunder, they were certain of being robbed of it at night. Those who resided at Venice in the summer of 1803, will recollect many instances of this kind. I was one day walking on the Merceria with an

English officer, when his pocket was picked of his handkerchief; but, the thief not having been very dexterous, he was aware of the robbery, and turning quickly about, found the handkerchief lying in the street, and no person within sight but a Hungarian, who was making off with all the speed in his power.

The most illustrious persons in Venice, were reduced to the extreme of indigence; but, small was the number of those who escaped the general ruin. It was computed that this year, no less than a thousand of the heads of noble families were begging in the streets. At every corner, on every bridge, might be seen some fair Venetian lady, covered with a veil, and on her knees imploring the aid of charity; whilst her male relations were occupied in pursuits far less honorable, in order to procure subsistence.

The distresses of the nobles and of the wealthy, were not confined to themselves

alone; for, the Venetians being naturally ostentatious, thousands of menials and of the lower classes of the people, were supported by their bounty; these, therefore, were now abandoned to all the horrors of want; for, in the general disorder and misery of the state, where was employment to be found for them? Innumerable gay gondolas were laid aside, and their skilful rowers being utterly unqualified for any other occupation, were in a state of starvation.

It is scarcely possible to depict the miserable situation of the nobles. The Abbé ——, a man of talents and of probity, with whom I was very intimate, one morning at breakfast related to me with tears in his eyes, the following circumstance, which he said, had happened only the night before. The Abbé had passed that evening at the house of a friend, in the course of it, they were attracted and charmed by the singing of a female in the street, immediately under-

neath the window. The pleasure of the good Abbé was, however, soon converted into melancholy; he thought he recognized the voice of a friend, and hastened to the street to ascertain the truth. The person was so muffled up that he could not discover her. He ran to her house, and his repeated knocks at the door were at length answered from within by her children, who informed him, that their mother had gone out with their father and a friend, to procure something for supper, and that having now no servant, they were locked in till their return. Being now persuaded that the songstress was his old friend, he returned to her, and with the utmost regret, discovered that she was the Countess C——r, who was thus singing in the streets, in the hope of collecting a few soldi to purchase food for her starving children.

In her days of affluence, she had been a remarkably fine player on the piano-forte,

as well as a charming singer; the Abbé, who possessed an excellent taste in music, had frequently joined in the concert with her. In those days, this unfortunate Countess was the ornament and the delight of the society in which she lived.

ADIEU.

LETTER II.

Destruction committed by the French in Venice. — Gondolas. — Ducal Palace. — Library. — Bridge of the Rialto.

Venice, April 1804.

FROM the unsteadiness of the government, and from the decided preference given by the Germans to the port of Triest, the trade of Venice has dwindled away almost to nothing; and, the arsenal which was formerly one of the finest in the world, serves now only as a receptacle for a few German imperial gun-vessels; the French having laid the Emperor under a restriction, to employ none but small ships of war.

Before the French quitted Venice, what they could not take away with them they destroyed; eight fine ships of the line, and several frigates, which were then on the stocks in an unfinished state, they rendered useless, cutting their stem, stern-post and keel in different places, and taking away the shores from their starboard and larboard quarter, so that they fell down, never more to be rendered serviceable until entirely taken to pieces. This arsenal used formerly to furnish employment to some hundreds of workmen, now its only inhabitants are a few slaves or malefactors, who are chiefly occupied in making into fire-wood the remains of those fabrics which the French have destroyed, and which were formerly the pride and glory of the Venetians. A large portion of the arsenal is formed into an oyster bed, which produces no small revenue; the oysters are large, and of an exquisite flavour, From the want of a proper police, the canals of Venice are filling up very fast,

and the stench exhaling from them at low water is extremely unpleasant; at this time of the tide, the small canals are in many places nearly dry. Several of the fine marble palaces are falling into ruins, their owners being no longer able to preserve them; and, many of them serve as barracks to the German soldiery.

Notwithstanding the ravages committed in Venice, both by the French and the Germans, to alter her appearance, was out of their power; innumerable magnificent buildings still serve to evince what she once was. The square of St. Mark is grand: the church of that name, resembling in an inferior degree that of St. Sophia at Constantinople, is dark, and contains nothing remarkable, but the bones of its tutelar saint. St. Mark's tower is a high square brick building, the ascent to which is not by steps, but by a winding path; the prospect from the top of this tower is extensive, and the view of Venice

which presents itself is singular. You behold yourself surrounded by canals and bridges, and even still may be seen many gay gondolas skimming along the surface of the water. You never saw a gondola: it is a barge of considerable length, and from its peculiar construction, sits very steady in the water; it is painted black by order of government, and has on its prow, a piece of flat iron, highly polished, resembling the neck of a horse; the after part of the boat is several feet out of the water, and almost on the point of the stern stands the rower, who having from long practice acquired great dexterity, steers his gondola with one oar, with much exactness and velocity. I mention the one-oared gondola, because I admire it the most, and think it by far more singular than any other. I never saw men stand and row so elegantly as the Venetian gondoliers. In the middle of the boat is a small place covered with black velvet, which much resembles a hearse;

in the front of this is a curtain, at each side, a window with Venetian blinds, and on the part next the stern, is a cushion large enough for two people, underneath each window is a stool, on a level with the cushion, so that the persons within are placed in a reclining posture. These gondolas will turn a corner at full speed, and it is very rarely that any accident happens to them; the rowers have certain expressions which they repeat to one another in order to give warning of their approach, and which serve as a mutual direction which side of the canal they are to take.

The ducal palace is near St. Mark's: I think it but a paltry building, particularly when viewed from without. The court, in the interior, is rather more worthy observation; it is composed of marble, and around the top of the first stair-case, is a gallery of the same stone; in this gallery is the lion's mouth, or rather there

are several lions mouths, for the purpose of conveying secret information. The inside of the palace is not amiss: there are good paintings in some of the rooms, the judgment hall, hung round with black, has a truly awful appearance; by the bridge of Sighs which connects this palace with the prison, how many unhappy wretches have passed, who never returned!

The library of Venice is esteemed a very good one: it is large, and seems well furnished with books. I was much struck with an exquisite piece of sculpture in white marble, depending from the roof, representing Ganymede carried off by the eagle Jupiter.

The grand canal of Venice has a very magnificent appearance, and each side of it is adorned with stately marble palaces; but the bridge of the Rialto, by no means equalled my expectations; it consists indeed of one large arch, but it is very

low, and encumbered on the top with a number of shops, which entirely conceal the effect it might otherwise produce. It will not bear a comparison with our grand cast-iron bridges, which would certainly be very well adapted to Venice, as there, neither horse or cart would ever pass over them.

I defer giving you an account of the Lazaretto, where we performed quarantine, as I may in the course of my future travels, be enabled to furnish you with a description of other buildings of the same kind, which will perhaps afford you more interesting information.

LETTER III.

Venice during Carnival.—Theatres.—Masquerades.—Visit to Ancona.—Image of the Virgin Mary.—Bonaparte.—Horse-racing in Italy.—Loretto.—House of the Holy Family.—Church.—Observatory.—Curious vases.—Return to Ancona and Venice.

Venice, 1804.

IN all Roman Catholic countries, the time of Carnival is one of great festivity. Venice in former days excelled all the other parts of Italy at this season, both in the variety and the splendour of her entertainments. The theatres, which are numerous, are on this occasion all open, and even yet, in general, well filled, particularly on Sundays and great

holidays. La Fenice, one of the first theatres in the world, must in consequence of its peculiar regulations, produce to the public at the Carnival, two new operas; and, as the manager pays no rent, he is obliged also to bring forward performers of the first class; on these, a committee of gentlemen sit in judgment. La Fenice is open only during Carnival, or on some grand occasion. The boxes in all Italian theatres are private property, or else, rented by the year; but, although you have a box, you must nevertheless pay for admission, either at the door, or for the season; it is an easy matter, however to procure the key of any box, by application at an office in St. Mark's square; for, most of the Venetian nobility will let their's for a night, if they do not intend going to the theatre themselves. The Platea, or pit, is fitted up for the reception of strangers, or such as do not chuse to take a box. I believe you never saw an Italian theatre: the boxes are all

divided into little parlours, open only in front, to which in general, there are blinds that draw up, or curtains that let down; they are perfectly well calculated for the country in which they are made use of, where intrigue forms the chief enjoyment, I may safely affirm, of all classes. The proprietors of these boxes frequently have card parties in them, and on ball nights in Carnival, suppers also; on these ball nights, the theatre which on other occasions is dark, is finely illuminated; the seats are taken out of the platea, and arranged round the sides, the scenery is withdrawn from the stage, which is then formed into a large hall, with stairs at each side to descend into the pit; in the middle, between the stairs, the orchestra is placed, and the dancers exhibit themselves both above and below. The masks are extremely insipid, they seldom attempt any character, and when they do, it is ill supported; during several winters that I have passed in Italy, I never saw

a good character at a masquerade above once or twice. Dominos and devils are best suited to the taste of the Italians; the dominos are mute, and the devils, particularly the she ones, attempt to disguise their natural voice, by uttering some horrid shrill cry.

During Carnival, masquerades were more frequent in Venice than in any other part of Italy; they are a species of amusement far better suited to the Venetians, than to any other of the natives of their country, as they are possessed of a much greater share of wit and spirit; the Germans have, however, restricted this diversion to the three last days of Carnival, and even then it is allowed only at the theatres.

At this time I escaped, from the dejection of my Venetian friends, to Ancona; and certainly, on the score of amusement, made no bad exchange.

There we had plenty of masquerades, horse-racing, and bull-fighting. Ancona is a neat small town in the Pope's dominions, situated on the south side of the Adriatic; it contains very little that is remarkable. Since it was besieged by the Russians and the Germans, the walls have never been repaired, and very few guns are mounted either inland, or toward the sea. The port, after you are once within it, is safe and commodious, and the force of the sea is entirely broken by a mole of considerable length which runs out into it; on the point of this mole are built a light-house and a battery. Outside of the walls there is a very fine Lazzaretto, surrounded by the sea; the quarantine laws are very strict, although no vessel with a foul bill of health is allowed to enter any port in his Holiness's dominions. The trade of Ancona is but trifling, as indeed is that of all the state; the riches of which are consumed by a multitude of idle priests.

The only curiosity to be seen at Ancona, is an image of the Virgin in the church, which has performed great miracles; according to the information of the inhabitants, this lady sometimes gets out of humour, and has been known to open and shut her eyes, previous to any great event. When Bonaparte was at Ancona, he went to see this wonderful personage, but she being very rich, he visited her, not to pray, but to steal. A sage priest informed me, that after admiring her for some time, he summoned one of his Aids-de-camp, and desired him to hold out his hat; the conqueror then began to strip the image, one by one, of all the rich appendages with which folly had decorated her, and deposited them in the hat of his officer; which having finished, he turned to take a last look, naturally to see if "unadorned, adorned the most;" but, immediately in a hurried manner, he called back the officer, and taking the jewels out of

the hat again, replaced them as he found them; after which, he hastily quitted the church. The reason assigned by superstition for the capricious conduct of Bonaparte on this occasion, was, that the holy image had given him a menacing look; but, as she stands in a spot where only one person can see her at a time, of course there could be no witness to this but himself. Others suppose, that he discovered the jewels to be false, the lady having been visited before by some one as cunning as himself; whilst many assert, and with great appearance of probability, that he had previously prepared false jewels, exactly resembling those upon the figure, and adopted this method of exchanging them, which served at the same time to strengthen the belief of the devotees in the wonderful powers which they ascribed to this image.

The method of horse-racing in Italy is singular: the horses run without riders,

and to urge them on, little balls with sharp points in them are hung to their sides, which when the horse is employed in the race, act like spurs; they have also pieces of tin foil fastened on their hinder parts, which, as the animals rush through the air, make a loud rustling noise and frighten them forward; I was much amused with the horse-races at Ancona. A gun is fired when they first start, that preparations may be made to receive them at the farther end; when they have run half-way another gun is fired, and a third when they arrive at the goal. To ascertain without dispute which wins the race, across the winning post, a thread is stretched, dipped in red lead, which the victor breaking, it leaves a red mark on his chest, and this mark is decisive. The first race was declared unfair, as one horse had started before the rest, and the governor ordered another to be run the following evening. To guard the course, a great number of Roman soldiers under

arms were ranged on each side of it, from one end to the other. The morning after the first race, the wind blew from the north, and was rather cold; I was sitting with his Excellency the governor, Signor Vidoni, when a messenger arrived from the general, with his compliments, requesting that the race might be deferred till another day, as he thought the weather too cold to put his troops under arms; the governor replied to him, that "as the weather was not too cold for the ladies, he thought it was not too much so for Roman soldiers." I have seen on a day which only threatened rain, a guard of Romans turn out, every one of which had an umbrella under his arm, the drummer and fifer alone excepted.

About ten miles distance from Ancona, stands the village of Loretto, famous for containing, according to tradition, La Casa Santa, or house of the Holy Family, which about four hundred years ago, was brought

here from Nazareth by a legion of angels, as Palestine was then in the hands of the infidels. A man of rank in Ancona informed me, that the archives of his family contained a full account of this miracle; they relate that one stormy night, a company of angels were heard in the air singing hymns, and that the heavens around them were illuminated; in the morning, on the summit of the mountain where it now stands, was found this holy vestige, saved thus miraculously from pollution, and containing the images of the Virgin and our Saviour. Pilgrims who had visited Palestine recognized it for the same which they had formerly seen; and others, who were on their way thither, found, to their deep sorrow, when they arrived at Nazareth, that it was gone. These Pilgrims assert also, that the images found in the house are the same which were made by the hands of St. Luke. The house is built of brick, and is divided into two parts by a wall of considerable height.

One of these parts comprises three-fourths of the dwelling, and the remaining fourth forms the other; in the smallest in a niche of the wall, sufficiently high to be seen in either room, are placed the images of the virgin and child; they are of bronze, and are neither well featured, nor well proportioned. Below the niche is the fire-place, still black and sooty, in which the virgin used to perform her cookery; and, in a closet of the same apartment, is shewn a deep plate, made of very ordinary materials, but richly embossed with gold on the outside, and out of this our Saviour used to eat what she had prepared. This chimney and this plate are held in high veneration by the devotees, who bring hither rosaries, or strings of beads, which being held a few seconds over the dish become sanctified. In the large apartment there is nothing to be seen but the window through which the angel Gabriel entered at the Annunciation. The exterior of this wonderful

building is covered with fine marble, elegantly sculptured in relief, displaying the history of the Holy Family; and, over the whole is built a large and beautiful church of fine stone brought from Istrea, celebrated for its durable quality.

The Lady of Lorretto was formerly immensely rich, but his Holiness took alarm at the near approach of the French, and had all her wealth transported to Rome. A gentleman in Ancona assured me, that returning from Rome, he passed fifteen waggons, all of which were loaded with these riches; and, that they were guarded by a troop of horse. When Bonaparte arrived at Lorretto, he found all was gone but the chief treasure of the temple, namely, the image of the virgin, which in an impious rage, he took off with him in his carriage; this, however, was afterwards restored, and though his Holiness was the actual plunderer of the church, yet Bona-

parte, as chief robber, came in, in process of time, for a large share of the booty.

The niche in which the lady stands, was formerly lined with gold; now it is hung with a rich gold stuff. She herself when I saw her, wore a stuff gown richly embroidered; on one of her fingers was a brilliant of great value, and she had several strings of pearls round her neck. In the vestry adjoining the church, are still to be seen many fine paintings by eminent masters, some of which had been piously secreted from the general plunder, and were afterwards restored. There are also several fine paintings in the church, close by it there is a very good observatory, from which the view of the Adriatic sea and the surrounding country is delightful. Some curiosities have escaped the tyrant's observation, and it is wonderful they should; these are the vases in the laboratory belonging to the church, on which

are painted the Iliads of Homer by Michael Angelo, who presented them to the lady of Lorretto.

Excepting what I have described, Lorretto affords nothing worthy of notice; it has no trade but that of priestcraft. The road to it is rugged and hilly, with here and there a nobleman's seat.

During my stay at Ancona, I was much amused; and several little circumstances occurred which contributed to pass the time agreeably, among others was a Jewish marriage, at which I was present. I likewise witnessed the ceremonies attendant on the conversion of a Jew, some of which were very ridiculous and absurd; one of the duties enjoined him by the church, was to parade several times a day, dressed in white, from one end of the town to the other, particularly in that part where the Jews reside; who, when they saw him would spit upon him, and

otherwise maltreat him. The great eclipse this year, likewise, happened while I was here, and threw the whole country into terror; the priests being always on the watch to turn every event to their pecuniary advantage, had wrought up the minds of the people to an extraordinary pitch: all the houses and shops were shut up, no place was open but the churches, whither, at the height of the eclipse, every one hastened for protection.

I returned from Venice to Ancona by sea, for although the papal government had procured me a passport from Cardinal Fesch, to return by land if I chose it, I was afraid to trust myself in the hands of men, destitute of faith and honour. The Brabacola, in which I embarked, was obliged, by contrary winds, to put into the port of Lussina, in Dalmatia; this place presented nothing but a picture of industry and wretchedness. The women of Lussina are the hand-

somest I almost ever saw, they have dark hair, their features are remarkably fine, and there is a beautiful bloom upon their countenances. After again embarking, we arrived, in a day or two, in safety at Venice.

LETTER IV.

Departure from Venice.—Triest.—Voyage.—Greek Islands.—Zia.—Visit to the Governor.—Inhabitants.—Scio.—Trade and Climate.—Dress of the Women.—Fortress.—Homer's School.—King's Birth Day.—British Consul.—Frenchman.—Journey by land to Smyrna.

Smyrna, June, 1804.

EMBRACE the first opportunity which has occurred since my landing, of giving you an account of my safe arrival here. Shortly after my last letter left Venice, I embarked on board of a Venetian Polacca, for this port. We quitted Venice at day break, in the month of April, and without meeting with any thing remarkable, arrived the day following in

the port of Triest, to which all vessels sailing from Venice outward-bound must repair. This is considered as a great hardship by the Venetians, and undoubtedly it is so; as thereby, much time is lost, and much expense incurred; this regulation was made by the Imperial government, in order to enrich Triest to the injury of Venice.

Triest is situated at the bottom of a deep gulph, called the gulph of Triest. The port is by no means safe, and is subject to a wind called a Bora, which blows with such violence, that it frequently drives ships from their anchors to their total destruction. A great deal of trade is carried on in the town, Triest being a kind of free port. The buildings here are but little worthy observation, excepting a new theatre, and some other public edifices, as yet in an unfinished state.

The merchants of Triest are, in general,

not the most upright characters in the world; many of them are Greeks, who carry on commerce, more on speculation than on real capital.

Having got our manifest signed by the officer appointed for the purpose, and paid the dues, we soon bade farewell to Triest. The wind usually serving best for coasting that side of the gulph of Venice on which Istria stands, we kept close to the shore, and as we passed along, enjoyed from a distance, a fine view of the ruins of the grand amphitheatre of Pola. We had for many days but weak and baffling winds, and sailed slowly by Corfu and the islands in the Adriatic. Approaching rather nearer to the Italian shore than we had intended, the French camp at Otranto was plainly to be discerned, but I could form no idea of its extent; it appeared to cover a vast space of ground. The Adriatic is at this season of the year, filled with fine fish, particu-

larly the tunny and the boneta; for several days we were so fortunate as to catch regularly one tunny and several bonetas, and once or twice we caught a pilot fish: this is a fish you have never seen: it is about the size of a small mackarel, and has alternate cross stripes of black and light blue.

We passed to the southward of Cephalonea, and close by the north side of Zante, which appears to be well-peopled and well cultivated. For several days we were on the north-west coast of the Morea, and had Mount Olympus in sight a considerable time. A favourable breeze carried us at length abreast of the island of Serigo. This island is now almost uninhabited, and is extremely dangerous to pass, as the Greek pirates often make it their hiding place; the creeks are favourable for their boats to run into, and from the heights of the mountains they can descry, whether they may attack

vessels with impunity. These wretches are not contented with plunder, but put to death all those who fall into their hands, in order to prevent a discovery. Our Polacca was well armed, we had two long twelve-pounders, and four brass six-pounders, besides small arms; we were likewise manned by fifteen able-bodied men; yet, we were not without our apprehensions, and therefore, to borrow a sailor's phrase, we gave the island a wide birth. Serigo is just at the entrance of the Archipelago, the prevailing winds here are north-east, which blow down the Arches; I remember when I made last year the same voyage, off Serigo, we spoke the Mary, Tate, seventeen days from England; three of which we had been in sight of her, and we were ten days detained in sight of the island by gales and contrary winds. We kept a strict look out on board of our Polacca, but nothing occurred to disturb us; and again a fair wind springing up, carried us past Milo, where

vessels in general take a pilot; and Falconera, which is inhabited only by a few Greek shepherds. This wind brought us likewise to the island and port of Zia, we had also a peep of Cape Colonna, crowned with the ruins of the temple of Minerva, from the pillars of which, the Cape takes its name. A storm of northerly wind took us aback before we reached the Douro passage, and obliged us to take refuge in the harbour of Zia, where a whole fleet may ride in security from every gale. The entrance to this creek or arm of the sea, is very safe, by keeping it, in the sea phrase, open; and when once within it, ships of whatever burden, may come to an anchor in any depth of water they please, in good anchoring ground. We lay moored to the shore.

The Venetians are not bad sailors, but when they have a port under their lee, they will seldom keep at sea with a

contrary wind; and, as they are all, from the captain to the cabin-boy, merchants on their own private account, they endeavour to turn every unfavourable gust to their advantage. We lay several days at Zia, and supplied its poor inhabitants with many necessaries.

On my arrival at Zia, the governor, and all the different consuls visited me, and invited me in the most cordial manner to partake of every pleasure which the island afforded, during my stay here. In return for this piece of kindness, my captain, who was one of the best men in the world, gave a dinner on board his vessel to all the first men in the island. Many ships, under various colours, had like ourselves, here taken refuge from the storm; and our captain embraced this opportunity to invite all their commanders to partake of the entertainment. Such a day was never seen at Zia: the governor and all the consuls were received when

they came on board, with a salute from each ship, and the healths of our sovereigns were drank amid the roar of cannon. In the afternoon, a visit was paid to every vessel in the port, each of which severally saluted; and, in the evening, we accompanied his Excellency and suite back to the town, with a band of music.

The island of Zia is but thinly peopled, and as poorly cultivated; their only articles of exportation are Valonea, or gall nuts, and sheep's wool; of the former, some hundreds of tons are shipped yearly; of the latter, the quantity is but very trifling.

The town stands upon a hill, it is about an hour's walk from the shore, and consists of a few mean looking, flat-roofed houses, built of stone and mud. The inhabitants are both filthy and indolent, the only decent looking families in Zia, are those of the Imperial and British

Consuls, who are kind hospitable people, and had it not been that their houses were at too great a distance from the water-side, I should have availed myself of their friendly invitation, to take up my residence with them. I dined, however, with each of them, and drank some charming wine of the country, not unlike Champagne. The governor, having only a short time preceding, arrived at Zia, had not a house in which he could see company; but, in return for our naval fête, he gave us a rural one at a tower, called the tower of St. Helen, which is situated in a delightful spot at the entrance of the island; this building is square, and composed of white marble; the walls are entire, but the stairs being in a very ruinous state, rendered an ascent to the top, a difficult and hazardous undertaking; from thence, however, the view of the country around, and the distant sea, is very fine. We were met a little way from the tower, by a band

of music, and saluted on our arrival, by repeated discharges of musketry. The governor and primate of the island were waiting our appearance. After walking about a little, we sat down to a repast, which consisted of all the delicacies that the island could produce, with some dishes peculiar to it. During dinner, the band entertained us with many sweet and simple airs. The principal instruments were the lyre and the lute, and these were at intervals accompanied by the voice, agreeably to the Grecian manner; the inhabitants of Zia play remarkably well on the lyre, which they boast, was invented in their island; certain it is, that Simonides put an additional chord to it; the music of the lyre is soft and melodious, and pleases my ear better than that of the violin; its notes are much wilder. The manner of playing on these two instruments is the same, with this difference only, that the bottom of the lyre rests upon the knee.

This island displays no traces in the present day of what it was formerly. The only thing pointed out to my notice, supposed to be an antique, was a piece of stone, on which can be traced something resembling a lion, but its appearance is so rude as to render it doubtful whether it was an effort of art. There are some slight remains of a subterranean passage near the town, and at a distance may be seen the foundation of the temple.

On account of the repeated incursions of pirates, the town of Zia was built at several miles distance from the sea, on a hill, that the inhabitants might be able to discern their approach, and make preparations for their defence; of late, however, their visits are become less frequent, and a little colony have begun to establish themselves by the water-side, where they have erected houses and small magazines, and carry on a trade in salt, and some other necessaries for domestic

use. I have before observed that the inhabitants of Zia are indolent, they seem to be utterly destitute of that spirit of activity so observable amongst the generality of the Greeks; they are not even fishermen, though all around the island there is abundance of the finest fish, which, however, they never attempt to take, unless urged to do so by necessity; it is no uncommon thing to see a whole family, in which there are boys and girls of twelve or fourteen, following one poor ass, from the product of whose labours they derive all their subsistence, excepting a few herbs and roots which they gather in passing from the town to the port.

The wind at length became favourable, and we got under weigh; during the afternoon, and through the night, we continued to gain ground; but, in the morning, our hopes were again blasted by adverse gales, and we could not wea-

ther the Douro passage. Having supplied the inhabitants of Zia with all the necessaries for which they had occasion, and no other port near being reckoned secure from pirates, we kept out to sea, beating about for two days, and at length bore away for the passage between Tino and Meconi. When a contrary wind blows through the Douro passage, which is formed by Negroponte and Andro, the current sets in with the wind, so that it is almost impracticable to weather it; and both of these islands being very thinly populated, their ports are often the lurking place of pirates. The passage of Tino and Meconi is very narrow, but very safe, and when vessels cannot attempt the other, they often bear away for it, though at the risk of losing much time, as in consequence of so doing, they are thrown so far to leeward, which in these seas, it is no easy matter to make up again.

Tino appears to be a fruitful island, and is inhabited by several Greeks, who are amongst the most industrious of that people; Meconi does not wear the same appearance of plenty, nor are the persons who live in it so remarkable for their industry. We at length arrived in the channel, or as it is called, the canal of Scio; and having proceeded to the north end of it, as far as the Spalmatori islands, the wind again headed us; during the summer months, it here blows a gale through the day, and at night a calm succeeds; the air is in consequence kept cool and pleasant, and this circumstance is not considered in the least inconvenient by the natives of the country; they avail themselves of the counter-breeze, which though very light, blows through the night; with the northerly wind, they stretch over under the main land, close to the islands, and thus, even in the night season, advance on their voyage; but this not being a safe method for large vessels to

adopt, we beat about for two days without gaining any advantage. A circumstance occurred here, which although at the time it alarmed me not a little, afforded me afterward much entertainment. Being in bed one morning about four o'clock, I heard the captain, who was a rigid Roman Catholic, come into the cabin, and striking on his breast, call on the Holy Virgin in the most energetic manner, "Santa Maria, Santa Maria, what have I done to merit this treatment? Save me, save me!" I looked out of the state-room, and asked him, what was the matter? "What!" cried he, "did you not feel us strike? We shall be on shore presently?" I sprang out of bed and ran to the cabin windows, when I found we were about a quarter of a mile from the land, in very deep water, and that the sea was as smooth as a looking-glass, but a gentle counter-current was carrying us along-shore, and the captain was afraid of a promontory of

land, which was still at a considerable distance. Slipping on some clothes, I went upon deck, where I found that the same consternation had seized the whole crew; on one of the finest mornings that ever arose, some were invoking the Virgin, others calling on Saint Antonio, and one, a greater fool than the rest, had lighted a holy candle, which had been blest at Padua, and given to him by his confessor to preserve him in any great danger; all this time the helm was abandoned, and the ship entirely left to herself. I took the helm, and calling to some who were not quite so devout as the rest, to brace round the head-yards, a gentle zephyr filled them, and we swung round the point without the smallest difficulty or danger. Every one now extolled his own saint above that of another, and even quarrelled about which of them had preserved us; in this altercation the fellow with the candle was louder than any of the rest, and

attributed to that, the salvation of the ship and of our lives. Being unable to weather the passage, we were obliged to bring up opposite to the town of Scio.

Scio is the most beautiful and fertile, as well as the most populous of the Greek islands; we landed under the fortress, which is garrisoned by Turks; although the island is almost entirely governed by the Greeks. Every Frank nation has a consul here. Our ship being under Imperial colours, our first visit was paid to the Imperial consul, at whose house we were soon joined by Signor Guidieu, consul for the British nation.

Besides this town, which takes its name from the island, there are in it several others, but these are by no means so opulent. The trade of Scio is pretty considerable, many of her articles of export are valuable; amongst these is gum mastic, a certain quantity of which is

retained for the use of the Sultan, and for the consumption of all the Turkish ladies in his dominions, who chew it continually; it is said to keep their teeth clean, although some allege that it gives rise to wantonness; but, as the fair sex in Turkey have not the same freedom of speech which is allowed to females in other countries, they probably use it to keep their jaws in motion. There is also at Scio a great trade in silk, which is manufactured principally on the island, and exported to other parts of the empire; it is in general twilled, and goes under the name of Demitè de Scio. There is likewise a considerable export of lemons and oranges for the supply of the metropolis, Smyrna, and other places, and many cargoes are sent annually to Russia by the Black Sea. The inhabitants of Scio make likewise remarkably fine preserves, they are more curious, and in greater variety than in any other part of the Levant; the conserve of roses is

particularly good. The vegetables at Scio are of an excellent quality, and the season being much earlier here than at Constantinople, every spring large cargoes of cucumbers and melangans are conveyed thither, as well as to Smyrna, which, although nearly in the same latitude, is by no means so forward.

The climate of Scio is delightful, and the air more salubrious than that of any of the other islands in the Levant; on the mountains it is thin and keen, but temperate in the low country: persons of a consumptive habit generally resort to Scio, where they are frequently restored to health. An English gentleman, who has resided in the Levant for a number of years, usually makes Scio his favourite place of abode, on account of the fineness of the air; he is said to indulge himself with an air bath, by walking some hours in a state of nudity, on the top of a high mountain.

The dress of the ladies of Scio appears to me both singular and absurd. The women, in general, are handsome, and well-shaped, but all ranks of them heighten their natural complexion by an immoderate use of paint, both red and white; I must however acknowledge, that they lay it on very skilfully. In order to describe systematically the dress of the fair Sciotes, I shall begin at the head: around it, their hair, which is very luxuriant, is braided in small plaits, on the top of it they wear a cap, made of white or scarlet wool, of a very fine quality, and this is decorated with a half handkerchief of some lively colour, in which are stuck flowers, either natural or artificial; they wear heavy ear-rings, and have an infinity of gold chains round their neck. Their upper garment is a kind of jacket made of silk, or very fine cloth, and is quilted with cotton to the thickness of an inch or more; this jacket is pretty long behind, their petticoats are

generally white, and embroidered; beneath these, they wear something resembling a hoop, which has the effect of extending their clothes in a circular form of no small dimensions; from this it may be concluded, that the petticoats are short, and display somewhat more than the ankle; and, although I cannot positively assert that the ladies in the Levant wear the breeches, yet they certainly are decorated with articles of that nature, and these are fastened at the knees with bunches of red ribbon; their stockings are no way remarkable, but they wear very high heeled slippers, either yellow or red, which have no quarters to keep them on, so that none but the women of Scio could walk in them. Thus accoutred, you may imagine that these women present a very singular appearance to the eye of a stranger, who has been accustomed to see ladies endeavouring to make themselves look as small as possible; notwithstanding,

the ladies of Scio look remarkably well. The men are handsome, and dress plainly in the oriental fashion; they are in general, acute, enterprising, and industrious; they visit foreign countries at an early period of life, and return home to pass their more mature years, and to employ the wealth which they may have gained, not in idle expenses, but in the pursuits of commerce, and in the cultivation of their native soil.

The religion on this island is chiefly Roman Catholic: there are several convents of monks, and most of the priests of that profession in the Levant have been educated here.

There are not many Jews in Scio: the inhabitants of that place are too keen for Jews to thrive amongst them; the few who do reside there, live in the fortress, as a place of protection from the insults of the superstitious Greeks.

The fortress is very strong, and advantageously situated, but I cannot say if it is well mounted; there are in it several heavy pieces toward the town, and between it and the houses, there is a large open space of ground, on which no person is allowed to build, that by this means, order and regularity may be better preserved among the inhabitants. The buildings, with the exception of a very few, are mean, being principally in the Turkish style; the walks in the vicinity are very pleasant, particularly one by the water-side, which, on holidays, displays a large show of Grecian beauty.

At about an hour's walk from the town, there is a grove in which it is said, Homer held his school; some seats are still shewn there, on which tradition says, his scholars sat. Scio is one of the seven cities which lay claim to the honour of having given birth to that poet; near this grove is made a delicious wine, called

“Homer's wine;” it is rich and sweet, but will not bear carriage.

On the evening of the third of June, my captain, who on all occasions made it his study to give me pleasure, invited all the consuls and captains who were at Scio, to dine on board his ship on the fourth, in order to celebrate the birth-day of the best of sovereigns; and expressed at the same time, his hopes that all the ships would do honour to the day, by hoisting what colours they had, and firing a salute. In the morning, it blew a perfect gale, which unfortunately continued all day long with such violence, that no boat durst venture, either from the ship or the shore. At eight we fired a salute, and hoisted every colour we had on board; all the vessels in the roads did the same, and the consuls on shore, with the exception of the French one, displayed their colours. At twelve we again saluted, and that it might be a day of

general festivity on board, I gave, in addition to the captain's bounty, a few bottles of old rum to the crew, who invoked all their saints to bless the favourite of God. Just as we were sitting down to dinner, we descried a boat drifting before the gale, and presently discovered that it contained our consul, who thus rashly evinced his loyalty at the hazard of his life; he had prevailed on a waterman to get his boat drawn along shore, about two miles to windward of the ship, and then ventured to be drifted to her side; we threw a rope overboard, and took him up over the stern, drenched to the skin, and leaving the boat half full of water; he was so kind as to bring with him a few bottles of "Homer's wine," in which we toasted our sovereign, and then sung the Briton's hymn, "God save the King." I had taken, on the coast of Italy, a pair of turtle doves, which on the salute to King George, I set at large, that they might

return to land, and prosecute their loves at liberty.

The British consul at Scio had been only dragoman, or interpreter to our former consul, who being deposed, this man was appointed his successor; he is very vigilant, and has on more occasions than one, rendered service to our country, particularly when Captain Hood was on the Smyrna station; and he received, in consideration of his services, by order of that gallant officer, a present of fifty pounds.

This consul related to me a singular anecdote, worthy of being recorded. A Frenchman who was consul at Scio for the Republic, at the time that the Turks declared war against France, was thrown into prison, where in spite of repeated artifices attempted for his escape, he remained several months. He was at length advised to solicit the British consul to

interfere for his release, which after some debate with himself he did, through the medium of a note, and Signor Guidieu, by making a small present to the governor, obtained his enlargement. When the Frenchman was about to leave Scio on his return home, he waited on his benefactor, to enquire if he could do any thing for him in France; Signor Guidieu requested, that he would take charge of an umbrella of his which was out of repair, that it might be mended there; he took it accordingly. On the conclusion of peace between France and the Porte, this same fellow was nominated consul to another of the Grecian isles, and from thence wrote to his friend at Scio, saying, that if he would send him the money which the repairs of the umbrella had cost, he would return it to him by the person who brought him payment; in the interval between the receipt of this letter and the arrival of the money, Britain had declared war against France; and when the messenger

came, in place of restoring the umbrella, this worthy representative of France and Frenchmen, returned the British consul for answer, that as the two countries which they severally represented were now at war, his umbrella had become a good and lawful prize!

As there was no appearance of the wind changing, I came to the resolution of prosecuting the rest of my journey to Smyrna by land; I therefore crossed the canal to Chizmè, a Turkish port on the main land, at the back of that neck of land which stretches along one side of the gulph of Smyrna. Chizmè has a snug little harbour: the entrance to the port is narrow, but afterward it extends in a circular direction, and forms a complete bason, where ships of any draught of water may ride in safety. It was in this bason that Elphinstone, with the Russian fleet under his command, burnt that of the Turks, which had resorted hither

in order to seek refuge from him. The distance from Scio to Chizmè is about an hour's row, I crossed in that time with two pair of oars. Meeting at Scio with a person who was going to Smyrna, we agreed to travel in company; I esteemed myself very fortunate in finding this man, as he spoke the Turkish language; we served also as a sort of guard to each other, being both of us well armed. I had procured a letter to the governor of Chizmè, who received us with great cordiality, and dispatched some of his people in quest of horses for us; for, at this season of the year, the Greeks and the other inhabitants being busy in their vineyards, are not willing to let their horses in the way they may be hired at other times; with much difficulty, therefore, the servants of the Aga procured any for us; as the sun was very hot, we deferred the commencement of our ride till the evening. Chizmè presents nothing curious or interesting, it

is but a small village, and is peopled by husbandmen and fishermen; to the latter, the channel of Scio, abounding with the finest fish, affords a very profitable employment. We began our journey about sun-set; for a considerable distance our road lay by the margin of the sea; after the sultry heat of the day, the evening breeze was peculiarly grateful. On our route we passed several warm baths, strongly impregnated with sulphur, to which in the spring many people resort from Scio and the adjacent country; as it was now dark, I was prevented from examining into them, although we halted near them for a few minutes, to refresh our horses.

After passing the baths, our road lay over the mountains, which are very lofty, and covered with fine trees; when the moon arose, we had a delightful prospect from the summit of one of these hills; we beheld around us, aspiring mountains,

and deep vallies all decorated with trees, behind us was the sea, the murmuring of whose waves might still be heard, while thousands of nightingales were warbling their evening song. We continued our journey over hill and dale till midnight, when our guides made us halt in the middle of a rich corn field, which had been just cut down, and where they allowed our horses to regale in a sumptuous manner, at the expense of some poor farmer. As we were to rest here for two hours, we took some supper and a glass of wine; the guides then laid a few sheaves together, and under the canopy of Heaven I enjoyed a comfortable nap upon them, till it was judged proper for us to commence our route again.

You know I am very fond of travelling in the night, particularly by moonlight, and now, my inclinations were gratified in their utmost extent; nothing interrupted the solemn stillness which reigned

around, save the notes of Philomel, the sound of some distant waterfall, or the breeze which gently whispered through the boughs of the lofty elm, or the gloomy cypress. The mountains are infested by robbers, but none annoyed us, neither did we perceive any traces of the lion, or the tiger, which at times have been found here. At day-break we stopped at a most romantic spot, it was a circular plat of ground, affording fine pasturage, and surrounded by well wooded mountains; in the centre of it stood a goat-herd's hut, where we found a copious fountain at which his flocks drank; from this goat-herd I procured a little milk; we also kindled a fire and made coffee; on our departure the old man told us, that there was among the mountains a blackmau, who laid travellers passing that way under contribution, and cautioned us to be upon our guard against him.

Descending the mountains to the water-side, I found we were on the borders of the gulph of Smyrna, and before us lay the Clazomena islands. In our descent we passed through a deep valley, called the "Vale of Tigers." In this valley for some length of time, one or more tigers have been killed annually, but the name by which it is now called, it has borne for centuries. The gentlemen of Smyrna frequently make shooting parties in its vicinity, as there is abundance of sport here, particularly near Gulebagshee, or the garden of roses. The country we now travelled through, had a greater appearance of cultivation; the vines were loaded with fruit, yet green. About nine o'clock we stopped at Uralla, a considerable Turkish village. The greater part of the fine Smyrna raisins which you have seen in Britain, come from Uralla, where several cargoes are prepared annually; at the season of the Racolta, or fruit harvest, the Smyrna

merchants send their clerks to attend its in-gathering, and at that time, there is a great deal of business transacted in this village.

Uralla is situated on the side of a mountain, at an hour's distance* from the shore, and commands a prospect of the whole of the spacious gulph, as far as Mitylene. I here found my Greek fellow-traveller rather troublesome to me, he had several acquaintances at Uralla, from whom I could not get him separated, till out of all patience, I ordered my horses to be brought immediately, and thus reduced him to reason.

Being fatigued with riding all night, and a part of this day, and that too on

* All distances in Turkey are reckoned by the march of a camel, which is computed to be nearly four miles an hour, therefore it is usual there to say so many hours, instead of so many miles.

a Turkish saddle, we now repaired to the sea-side, where we procured a boat to convey us to Smyrna. From the circumstance of my fellow-traveller having wasted the whole forenoon at Uralla, we lost the inbatt*, about ten miles from Smyrna; and, as it was now dark, and our boat could not be pulled by the oars, we were obliged to beat her up into the bay; we did not come to an anchor till midnight; the hour being so late, no place was open, neither indeed was there any boat to take us on shore. I had, therefore, no choice, but to take up my night's lodging where I was, and wrapped up in my great coat, was obliged to lie on the

* The inbatt, or sea breeze, blows from morning till evening in the gulph of Smyrna; it is then succeeded by the land breeze, which continues till after sun rise; and thus the air, which would otherwise be insufferably hot, is rendered cool and temperate.

stones which were at the bottom of the boat. The old Turks did their best to erect an awning over me, as a shelter from the thick dew; but, notwithstanding this, at day-break, I found my clothes soaked through with the damp, and that I was scarcely able to move my limbs.

LETTER V.

*Smyrna. — Homer. — Antiquities. —
Castles.—Villages.*

Smyrna, 1804.

SMYRNA is a city in Asia Minor, situated in latitude 38°. 28^m. at the head of an extensive gulph bearing the same name; it is the first port for trade in the whole of the Turkish dominions: its present situation is delightful, and approaching it by sea, it has the appearance of a capacious amphitheatre, crowned, on the summit with the ruins of an ancient castle.

Smyrna has been frequently destroyed by fire, and probably too by some convulsions of nature, as earthquakes are very

common here, although there has not been one these many years sufficiently violent to do any damage. It has been supposed, that its ancient site was where the pleasant village of Bournabat is now built, about an hour's ride north-east from where the city at present stands; others conjecture, that at another period, it stood on a spot now called the Olive trees; about the same distance to the south-west; but in neither of these places is there any thing discoverable which can give rise to more than mere conjecture. The town on its present situation has been more than once reduced to ashes, but that situation is so eligible, that notwithstanding, it is still preferred before any other.

The bay is extensive and fine, the anchorage is excellent, and the water so deep, that ships of considerable burden may anchor close by the wharf, and it is but rarely that any accident occurs, ex-

cepting through the carelessness of those whose duty it is to attend to their vessels,

Smyrna can boast of no public buildings of any note. The houses are of the most wretched kind, being formed according to the Turkish mode, of wood and unburnt brick; and in their architecture they are inelegant and inconvenient. The streets are narrow and badly paved, that in which the Franks live is superior to any other, and their houses are built in a different manner, many of them are of stone and look tolerably handsome; the one inhabited by the company's consul is among the best, it was erected at the expense of the company since the last fire.

In this part of Turkey there are no made roads, of course the use of wheeled carriages either for the purpose of pleasure or commerce, is impracticable; their only method, therefore, of transporting mer-

chandize is by the Hamal, or Turkish porter, or by the camel; there is, however, a very easy carriage by water from one part of the town to the other, as in that quarter where traffic is pursued, the sea comes to the very doors. For jaunts of pleasure, the horse and the ass are employed, on which both sexes ride a-straddle. The horses at Smyrna are very good, and in general, docile; they are ridden only with a single bit, but this is so contrived as to be rendered more powerful than any bridle in Christendom; it is made with a ring curb which passes over the under jaw, and gives astonishing command.

This city boasts of having given birth to Homer: it is ascertained, that at one time he had a school here, the supposed site of which is to this day held in veneration, and shewn to travellers as one of the curiosities of the place; this, however, can be nothing but a mere

traditional chimera, as the city has been so frequently destroyed, and its situation so often changed since the period at which he lived. A garden is also shewn near Smyrna, called the "Garden of Homer;" but, as there are many people of that name here, it is probable that this garden belonged to one of their ancestors, who has been mistaken by posterity for the poet; on the banks of the river Melicè, about an hour's ride from the village of Bournabat, is a grotto, called "Homer's grotto," in which it is asserted he wrote his Iliad; and from its charming and retired situation, it is not impossible that he might make use of it as a retreat from society, and from the scorching rays of an ardent sun. The road to this grotto is intricate, and for a considerable part of the way winds up the banks of the river; on these banks a great quantity of honey is made, of an exquisite flavour, the plants on the mountains around being highly aro-

matic, but the husbandman is often disappointed of it by the bears, which at times descend from these mountains. The grotto of Homer is in a rock, which stands on the pinnacle of a hill, immediately overhanging the river; it is very difficult of access, as the hill is remarkably steep and conceals it; it appears to be hewn out of the rock, but it is not easy to determine, whether it was formed by the hand of art or nature; there are several entrances to it of a semi-circular shape, but they are very low, and so indeed is the interior, insomuch, that it would be impossible to stand upright in it. As the hyenas have of late made a den of this grotto, it is no longer safe to enter it. Some seats have been hewn on the top of the rock, on which the Franks have left their names; from this, there is a fine view of the surrounding country, and even of part of the bay of Smyrna.

Respecting antiquities, I have but little to communicate to you, as Smyrna contains very few specimens of them. In the middle of the town, near that quarter inhabited by the Jews, stand the ruins of a temple; but, from the small diameter of the columns which are of Egyptian marble, it could not have been of much magnitude; near these ruins there is something resembling an altar, composed of white marble, and bearing an inscription, but it has been so defaced by Turkish barbarity, that it is impossible to make out any part of it. About half an hour's ride eastward from Smyrna, the "bath of Diana" may be seen; nothing, however, remains of it but the foundation, which is of marble, and of a circular form. It is copiously furnished with delicious water which gurgles from the bottom of it, and at the distance of a few paces, turns a flour mill; as, in order to supply this mill, the water is dammed up, it is of considerable depth, and

some who have had the curiosity to bring a boat up the river which issues from it, say, that they have seen in it many columns of white marble; the dam abounds with carp and tench, but they are not of a good flavour.

Near the village of Bournabat there are a number of broken columns, and on the road to Sediqui, another village which I shall have occasion to speak of in my tour through the suburbs of this city, several tumuli are visible.

The ancient castle of Smyrna, at the top of the mountain, on the side and brow of which the present city is built, has a most commanding situation, and bearing directly on the town and the bay, would, if in perfect repair, keep both in the most complete subjection; about this castle there are many subterraneous passages, which lead down through the town; I have been in the mouth of one of them,

which a Jew of my acquaintance employs as a cellar. Contiguous to his house, high in a niche in the wall of the castle near one of its gates, is a head of white marble, of colossal size, said to be that of the founder of Smyrna.

Besides the castle I have just mentioned, there are two others, one of which, that is the lower castle, you may have heard spoken of; it stands about six miles down the gulph, at a narrow place where ships must pass within hail of it; it has mounted on it many pieces of ordnance, of an astonishing calibre; I have often crept in and out of them: they are of brass, and have no carriages, they lie flat on a breast-work, with a large butt of stone to keep them from recoiling; this castle which completely commands the entrance to the bay, is also in bad repair, and a few shot would soon reduce it; every ship which leaves Smyrna must here shew a

tescarè, or clearance, from the custom-house, and pay a cartridge of powder.

The third castle is a miserable fabric, situated in the town, on which are mounted a few rusty swivels of iron; it is more properly speaking, a prison, and as a gun is fired from it on the beheading of any person, it is probable that this operation may be performed within its walls.

The country around Smyrna for a short distance, is fertile and well peopled; there are several fine villages in the environs, to which in the summer season, the Franks and the wealthy inhabitants resort; those who are sportsmen repair thither also to indulge in their favourite amusement.

I have already mentioned Bournabat: it is at the distance of about an hour's ride from Smyrna; it stands on the banks of the Melicè, now but a trifling rivulet,

and at the foot of several mountains; it is one of the finest villages in Turkey: the houses are good and commodious, and each one has a garden amply stocked with fine orange, lemon, and citron trees, to which the soil is peculiarly congenial; after quitting the narrow dirty streets of the city, the ride is uncommonly pleasant over a fine plain, well cultivated and planted in many parts with olive trees, which have stood several centuries, but which are still beautiful as well as venerable, and yield fruit abundantly. The walks on the edge of the mountains near the village are delightful, and strewed by the bounteous hand of nature, with thousands of aromatic plants and flowers. During spring and autumn, Bournabat becomes quite gay, the evening parties are very agreeable, and they frequently continue in the open air till a late hour.

Cucklugiah is another small village about the same distance east from Smyrna,

built upon the brow of a hill, with a charming prospect of the plain lying between it and Bournabat; it is yet in its infancy, few Franks have houses in it, but the Imperial consul has here built a palace, and it is not unlikely that his example may be followed; the merchants of his country, however, are not so respectable as those of any of the other nations who have consuls at Smyrna; among others, many Greeks and Americans protected by their missions, are become wealthy, and have begun to build near the residence of their consul.

A curious circumstance is related, said to have happened in this village. A Raajah, or one belonging to the Turkish empire, who is not a Mussulman, informed an English merchant at Smyrna secretly, that he had discovered a spot which concealed much treasure; the laws of the empire are so barbarous, that if any person makes a discovery of this

kind, and appropriates the riches to his own use, in case of his being detected, which generally happens, he is punished with the utmost rigour, for stealing what they say belongs to the Sultan; and the punishment is inflicted, not only on himself and family, but also, on all his relations; should he, on the contrary, reveal to the government where a treasure lies concealed, he is sentenced to the bastinado or some other torture, until he confess that he has participated in his discovery. The person who found out the treasure at Cucklugiah, aware of his hazardous situation, made a confidant of the English Frank, who purchased the land in which it was deposited, built a wall around, and at their convenience, he and the Raajah dug it up; report says, that they found immense riches, which at intervals, they conveyed to Smyrna, and shipped off for England, whither the Frank shortly returned. Whether or not the reality of this story

is to be depended upon, it is certain that a circumstance of the kind happened. The discovery of treasures in Turkey is not rare, neither is it wonderful that immense sums should have been hidden in every part of it, as well from the tyranny of its present possessors, as during the changes and revolutions which the empire has undergone, in the course of many thousand years.

Bugiah, another pretty village, nearly the same distance from Smyrna to the south-east, is now become a place of great resort for the Franks; the British consul has a good house here, and so have many of that nation. This village was formerly more inhabited by Greeks than Turks, and on account of the great scarcity of water, was not much visited; the British consul has, however, done away that want, and, at a considerable expense, has brought water from behind the neighbouring mountains. In a few

years Bugiah will probably become a very populous place; as it is rather nearer the town than the other villages, and has likewise this advantage, that a good carriage road to it might be made at a trifling cost.

Sediqui is another charming village, about an hour and a half's ride from town, and is by far the most rural of the whole. It is situated south from Smyrna, on the east side of a high mountain, covered with lofty trees; the walks about this mountain are beautiful and romantic, and justly entitle the village to the name it bears, which in the Turkish language, signifies the "Village of Love." The Dutch consul and many of his countrymen have houses here. The lion and tiger are sometimes found on the neighbouring mountains which abound with game, indeed this is the case with all the mountains around the gulph of Smyrna. The hyena, bear, and wild boar, are very common.

LETTER VI.

Smyrna.—Turks.—Religious Toleration.—Population. — Government. — Custom-House.—Bazars.—Post.—Commerce.

Smyrna, June, 1804.

YOU are perfectly right in the supposition that the Turks are quite bigotted to the Mahometan religion. They regard all those who are not of their faith as infidels, and you are frequently insulted in the streets with the cry of "Jahoui," an infidel; but after hearing this for a few days, you become accustomed to it. To me it did not appear at all strange, after a residence of some years in Roman Catholic countries, where every poor deluded wretch you meet with gives you that appellation; or at least, thinks in

his heart that you are doomed to perdition. But, notwithstanding the strict faith of the Turks, yet in Turkey every kind of religion is tolerated, and under the protection of the different consuls. The Greeks, as natives of the country, are allowed to follow their own modes of belief, but their churches are protected by Russia. The Jews are permitted to have Synagogues where they can afford to build them, and where they have none, they are at liberty to pray in the Turkish mosques, which is a privilege no Christian can enjoy, even if he wished it; but, I can assure you, that very few Jews avail themselves of it. The Roman Catholics all over Greece, and in those parts of Turkey where there are Frank consuls, have churches, convents, and friars; in Smyrna they have abundance of all these, but whatever superstition may do, religion will gain but little ground through the medium of Roman Catholic priests; these bigotted and artful men

come principally from the Greek islands, and are in general, very ignorant; I am told that Constantinople swarms with this sort of gentry, when I have been there, I shall be better able to inform you. The Protestants have a chapel at Smyrna, in the house of the British consul, and their clergyman, who is paid by the Levant company, is a man of excellent character and of the most profound learning; he is highly respected by all who are acquainted with him. He performs service every Sunday, according to the modes of the Church of England, and alternately in the English and French tongues. The name of this clergyman is Mr. Usco, he understands several languages, which he reads, writes, and speaks with great fluency; he is considered by the British in Smyrna, as a great treasure; for, by his agreement with the company, he must superintend the education of their youth here.

The Turks use no bells in their places of worship, but from their lofty minarets, or slender towers summon their people to prayers; neither do they allow the professors of any other religion to use bells. In Smyrna and Constantinople indeed, a bell is rung at mid-day, by the priests in one of the convents; but of this the Turks do not chuse to take any notice.

You will be surprised when I tell you, that the population of Smyrna is about 130,000 souls; of these, about 70,000 are Turks, 30,000 Greeks, 15,000 Armenians, 10,000 Jews, and 5000 strangers and Franks. As the town has not for five years past been visited by the plague, the population is at present greater than usual.

The immense commerce at Smyrna occasions a great influx of strangers, particularly from the Greek islands. The labouring inhabitants, and most of the

handicraftsmen come from Scio and Tino; they are an artful, cunning set of people; the shopkeepers are principally Sciotes, the mechanics and servants Tiniotes; a very inconsiderable number indeed of any of these classes, come from the other islands, the inhabitants of which, are in general, indolent, and learning no trade in their youth, are, when they grow up, from necessity obliged to follow a seafaring life. Few or none of the islanders who come to Smyrna, settle there; after they have gained a moderate sum, they return home to enjoy the fruits of their labour in the bosom of their families.

The government of Smyrna is vested in a Musalim, or governor, appointed by the Porte, who manages the civil concerns of the city, but in all criminal cases, is subject to the Mollah, or Cadi, who is judge of the district. The Musalim is independent of any neighbouring prince, and can exact and extort at pleasure,

and wet; there is a strong gate at each end which is closed at sun-set. The roof of the old Bazar at Smyrna, is cracked from one end to the other; this is supposed to have been done by the shock of an earthquake; besides this Bazar, there are several others, and a new one has lately been built which is well supplied with the riches of Egypt.

The post leaves Smyrna at the beginning and middle of each month, so as to arrive in Constantinople in time for the letters to be forwarded to Christendom by the post from thence, which sets out on the tenth and twenty-fifth of every month; that at Smyrna is supported by a subscription of the established merchants and strangers, and the natives pay for their letters at a moderate rate: a gentleman has the management of it, and receives a salary; and a Janizary from each of the consulates, by turns, carries the letters to Constantinople. Although

conducted on the same plan, the arrival of the post is not so regular as its departure, which is owing to the irregularity of the arrivals at Constantinople. The Janizary who brings the letters from thence, waits the coming in of the post from Vienna; and in order to give the Constantinople merchants an opportunity to write to Smyrna, does not depart till the day following; certain rewards attend his more speedy arrival at the end of his journey, for the performance of which a certain time is computed.

I have already mentioned that the commerce of Smyrna is very extensive, but as I know you will like to hear some further particulars respecting it, I shall endeavour to give you some idea of its immensity. It is very seldom that there are in the roads, fewer than from fifteen to eighteen ships loading for different countries, and under various colours. Their trade was formerly confined to the Mediterranean,

and the northern ports of Europe; now it is nothing rare or surprising to see vessels loading for America, and even the East Indies.

In one year, beginning the first of September, and ending the thirty-first of August, sixty vessels arrived in Smyrna with rich cargoes from the following ports, viz. from London seven, from Triest eighteen, from Venice four, from Leghorn fifteen, from Holland three, from Marseilles eight, and from America five; besides an immense number from different ports in Turkey, of which no regular account is taken, and several also from the Russian ports in the Black Sea, which are not mentioned in the list shewn to me. I will at some future opportunity give you an account of the cargoes of the sixty vessels. In the same year, ninety-three ships were loaded with the produce of the country for different parts of Europe and America. Twelve were for London, forty-

one for Triest, seven for Leghorn, five for Venice, seven for Holland, eighteen for Marseilles, and three for America: the last three carried little but specie and opium, and it is believed went first to Canton, and from thence by Cape Horn to America. Many cargoes of fruit, wine, and drugs are annually shipped for the Black Sea, which like the imports from that quarter are not enumerated; several of Valonea, and grain, are likewise sent on account of the Smyrna merchants from other ports on the coast, by ships which go from Smyrna in order to bring them: from the small port of Scala Nuova alone, upwards of twenty ship's load of beans are sent annually by these gentlemen to Spain, Malta, and Egypt. When I can get the list of imports finished, I will also give you a list of the exports.

Smyrna has, with the principal mercantile towns in Europe, a regular ex-

change, which may be with propriety considered as forming a part of the commerce of the city, as it affords a wide field for speculation. I may at some future period, give you an account of the exchanges for several years, and if possible, another of the consumption for one year of European articles, with their aggregate prices; at present, I am not sufficiently acquainted with the trade to furnish you with them.

LETTER VII.

*Public Amusements.—Society.—Casino.—
Protection of Trade.—Naval Fêtes.*

Smyrna, April 1804.

IN Turkey, public amusements are almost prohibited to the strangers there. The Turks are such a turbulent set of mortals, that nothing would keep them under proper restraint; only a few years back, some equestrian performers made an exhibition at Smyrna, which was attended with the most disastrous consequences; a quarrel ensued, and the whole of the Frank street was set on fire, and reduced to ashes.

Before that dismal catastrophe, the Franks had a private theatre, in which I

am told, operas and plays were remarkably well performed. The society in Smyrna is superior to that of any city in all the Turkish dominions, although it is formed of so many persons of various nations, differing so widely in their manners and dispositions; but they have the wisdom to avoid all political quarrels, and visit one another on terms of the strictest friendship; they are all politicians, and sometimes dispute on the subject of politics, but always with good sense and good humour.

The Casino, at Smyrna, is one of the best regulated places I ever knew; I dare say it is not excelled in Europe. This Casino is something like a coffee-house, and is supported by the subscriptions of the most respectable merchants in the city: it has many salutary regulations to which every member must conform. No one can become a member but by the unanimous choice of the whole body; any

one who wishes to be so, proposes himself to one of the committee, and his name is then put up for the space of a week in some conspicuous place in one of the rooms. On a fixed evening, all who chuse to give their vote, are each furnished with a black and a white ball, and two boxes are placed, one to receive those balls in favour of the candidate, and the other to hold the black ones; in this manner the person is elected or rejected, and one black ball excludes him from being a member. Several commissaries are chosen annually out of the society, who regulate all their affairs, and settle all disputes should any arise, but to prevent these, and in order that no one may pretend ignorance of them, a copy of their code of laws is hung up in one of the rooms. Should any member become turbulent, and continue so after a first and second warning, he is expelled, and can never be admitted a member of the society again.

The Casino consists of several apartments. In one large hall are to be found the newspapers of different countries, and also some well chosen periodical publications: there are likewise card-tables and chess boards for those who chuse to play. In one room there are two billiard-tables, and there are several small rooms for private conversation. The Casino is open every evening, and each person on entrance is presented with a cup of excellent coffee, which is provided out of the subscription money. As a kind of requisite to the head waiter, the commissaries allow punch to be sold; this is an agreeable addition, and parties are often formed at billiards for punch or lemonade. Those who play at billiards, pay a trifling sum each game for lights; and those who choose to divert themselves with cards pay for them. Consuls are free at the Casino, and strangers, properly introduced by a member or consul, are free for one year, but should their stay exceed

that time, it is expected that they become subscribers. From admittance to the Casino all captains of ships are excluded: this is one of its best regulations— for, were all the captains who come to Smyrna permitted to go there, it would soon resemble a pig-stye rather than a place of genteel resort; it would be crowded with Greeks, Sclavonians, and men from the provinces, as beastly in their manners as dirty in their apparel. Apologies have been made more than once by the members to some of the genteeler part of British captains, for a law which excluded them; but a general rule could not well be broken through: in one instance, however, it was dispensed with in favour of an English captain, who for many years had been a constant trader to Smyrna, and who had gained by his good conduct the esteem of the merchants in general. A short time ago, the commissaries waited on him, and in the name of the whole society, invited him to come

to the Casino during Carnival. The gentlemen of that place give balls once or twice a week, and these they conduct with all that elegance and propriety which has so long distinguished them on such occasions.

Besides the balls at the Casino, in the winter months, many of the Consuls and principal merchants give private dances, which are very agreeable; and but rarely can be enjoyed pleasanter conversations, or more charming concerts than those which take place amidst this small but happy society of people, assembled together by various circumstances, from almost every country under the sun.

Most of the young people in Smyrna play on some musical instrument, and many of them in an exquisite style. The ladies perform on the harp, piano forte, and guitar, which they accompany with the voice; the gentlemen excel on the

different kinds of violin, the hautbois, flute, and bassoon: in this manner they form an orchestra, and their performance is such as would do no discredit to professors, whatever merit it might reflect on them.

Disinterested hospitality distinguishes the merchants of Smyrna, more than those of many places I have visited, where a jealousy of one another destroys their unanimity, and renders their meetings for social intercourse less cordial than they ought to be.

The consuls in general are a respectable body of men, and have in their manners and style of living more the appearance of ambassadors than of commercial agents. Our consul is hospitable, sincere, honorable, and loyal; like an Englishman, speaks his mind, and does his duty.

The agreeable society of Smyrna has

long been celebrated by thousands of grateful travellers, who, like me, have experienced their kindness and attentions: few were ever received into their circle, who did not quit it with regret.

For the protection of trade, the British have generally some ship of war stationed in the roads of Smyrna. In return for the hospitality of the inhabitants, the officers not unfrequently give balls and little fêtes on board: that you may have an idea of them, I shall describe two, one of which happened the first time I was at Smyrna, and afforded the greatest entertainment to all present. It was given by Captain Clarke, of the *Braceal*, who, I am informed, has been since unfortunately drowned in the Thames.

About the beginning of the French revolution, the ———, commanded by the gallant Captain ———, lay at Smyrna; all the respectable Franks in the city were

invited on board, to a dinner, ball, and supper. I have already mentioned to you, that at Smyrna the wind blows during the heat of the day from the sea, and during the evening and night from the land.

The party met at dinner, and in the evening the ball commenced; without the least disturbance the ship was got under sail with the first of the evening breeze, and having danced, drank tea, supped, and again commenced the ball; the party, before they were the least aware of it, had sailed several miles below the castle, and were safe again at anchor under Long Island, one of the finest of the Clazomena: it was previously determined, that none of them should go on shore before the next morning, and the captain's inner cabin was fitted up for them with sofas and other accommodations of that sort, where those who were inclined to take a nap, had it in their power to indulge

themselves in tranquillity. Early in the morning, the company were invited to land, when to their astonishment Smyrna was no where to be seen. The boats rowed them along shore, in order to gain a point of the island, behind which lay a fine bay; and this, when weathered, disclosed to the still wondering party, several elegant marquees prepared for their reception: they landed, and found tables spread with every delicacy that could tempt the appetite or gratify the fancy. A delightful band of music from behind added new charms to the entertainment, and, after breakfast, some even resumed the dance. Nets were provided, and fishing parties proposed, whilst those who were fond of sporting, found their own dogs and gun in readiness for them; others strolled along the pebbly beach: all were employed agreeably to their own inclinations, and the utmost satisfaction and hilarity reigned among the party.

An early hour for dinner was appointed, and a quarter of an hour before it commenced, the bugle was to be sounded in order to call in all stragglers; on hearing the shrill sound of the horn, every body assembled, each of the gentlemen bringing with him proofs of his activity in his morning's exercise; game and fish were abundant.

Having returned to the ship, during dinner, in the same private manner as before, the anchor was got on board, and the sea breeze being still strong, before the shades of evening came on, the ship was wafted back to Smyrna, and at her old moorings, whilst the party, in the height of conviviality, knew not that they had left the island. At an early hour they broke up, and returned on shore to gratify their friends with an account of the pleasures in which they had participated.

The other entertainment of which I spoke was given on board the *Braceal* about fifteen months ago. The quarter-deck was divided lengthways into two large compartments by an elegant arcade formed with myrtle boughs, which had been brought with great care from a little distance, and were arranged in the most fanciful manner. The lights, tastefully disposed, hung in wreaths of evergreens; the awning over the quarter-deck was composed of sails, lined with the flags of the ship; on the poop sat the band. One of the cabins was prepared for the accommodation of the ladies, the other for those who chose to play at cards. The steward's apartments, one on each side of the door of the outer cabin were amply supplied, one with a large tub of punch, the other with sweet biscuits and negus, and a profusion of fresh and dried fruits. At this ball all the gay people of Smyrna were present; and as it was at

that time peace, several French officers of ships of their nation, which then lay at Smyrna, were invited. The dancing began about eight o'clock, and was continued with great spirit in both divisions till midnight, when the whole company, by one consent, were attracted to that on the larboard side, to see a Scots' reel danced by a party, in which a beautiful Neapolitan lady formed a distinguished figure. The other apartment being thus cleared, a table, which had been previously covered, was carried in by the sailors, spread with a profusion of the richest viands. The reel was scarcely finished, when every gentleman was requested to lead a lady to the supper table. All had the appearance of enchantment; for we had formed no idea of what was going forward on this side; but the excellent fare soon convinced us that it was reality. The ladies sat down to supper first, and we waited on them; when they had finished, they retired to their cabin, and we took their

places. The Monsieurs were quite electrified; a large ham, and an extraordinary round of beef, rivetted their eyes: they seemed to say, "No wonder these men fight." A profusion of delicate and exquisite wines concluded the repast, and the dance being resumed, the party continued to enjoy themselves, till the rays of the sun told them it was time to break up. On going on board and returning, the Neapolitan envoy, and each consul, was saluted with the appropriate number of guns.

Never was an entertainment of the kind conducted with more taste or greater propriety. The good captain was every where present to see that nothing was wanting, and his worthy officers ably supported him in his exertions for the happiness of the company, who were all highly gratified. To save the ladies the unpleasant operation of being swung up, an accommodation ladder was purposely

built for them, which, reaching to the water's edge, they stepped on it from their boats.

In my next, I shall give you an account of some more of our entertainments, which, though not on so grand a scale, yet nevertheless always yielded great satisfaction.

LETTER VIII.

*Excursions on the Water—Gulph of Smyrna
—Fishing Anecdote—Fishing Nets.*

Smyrna, 1804.

THE good people of Smyrna are very fond of little excursions on the water, and I have frequently made one in their cheerful parties. I have before mentioned the olive trees as one of the places on which Smyrna is supposed to have stood formerly: this spot is on the south west side of the bay, and from the grateful shade afforded by these trees, and the delightful prospect to be viewed from them, they form a favourite place of resort. Caratash, a summer residence of the Musalém, or governor, situated in

a pleasant garden, about half an hour's sail from the town, has often been the seat of our merriment; and to Cordiglio, on the north side of the bay, we have frequently gone, on account of its pleasant walks, and the delicious milk produced by rich flocks of sheep, which feed on the mountains that form the north side of the gulph.

A reason why these parties are more frequent probably is, that there are no walks in Smyrna which are either safe or agreeable: one of them is on a dirty sandy beach; another by the gardens, which are miserable kitchen ones, and poorly cultivated; and a third to the caravan bridge, to arrive at which you have to pass for a long mile through a narrow street or lane, and when you do reach it, it is nothing more than a wretched hut, employed as a guard-house, where coffee is made, and at the back of which the Turks have planted a few willows, which overhang a

small sheet of water, formed by damming up a rivulet that passes under the bridge.

It is dangerous to walk in the suburbs of Smyrna, on account of the recruits, who are enlisted in this place and its vicinity, for the service of the Deys on the coast of Barbary. These wretches are all armed, and, flushed with insolence and brandy, insult every one who goes by: they often for their amusement fire on the Franks as they pass, in order to shew their dexterity, and to terrify them: to attempt chastising them for their insolence would be to risk certain death, while they, without the smallest provocation, think nothing of making sport with the life of an infidel, as they call us Christians.

The gulph of Smyrna abounds with the finest fish, the catching of which forms my chief amusement, both from my love of fishing, and that I may enjoy the coolness of the night. On these occa-

sions, I generally leave the house of my friend about eight in the evening, accompanied by a servant and two boatmen, and always carry with me two or three fowling-pieces. We sail with the breeze about fifteen or twenty miles down the gulph, let down our nets, and then, wrapped in our great coats, endeavour to get an hour's sleep; at the dawning of the sun, we draw up our nets, after having twice rowed along the front in shore, beating the water with a piece of hollow wood, and dancing to alarm the poor fish, who then flock into them. After the first draught we land, kindle a fire, and roast our fish in the fisherman's way, and so dressed, I assure you they furnish a very excellent breakfast: having previously again laid down our nets, we return to draw them, and in this manner continue fishing along the coast until the morning, when we return home with the spoil. I have in general been very successful.

On excursions of this kind with a friend, I have frequently passed two whole days and nights: on these occasions we fished in the night, and during the heat of the day reposed ourselves under an awning made of the sails of the boat. Fishing at night is very amusing, and much more destructive: for this purpose, we carry a fire in the boat, which is set ablazing, while we beat the nets, and thus delude our prey, who are attracted by the light, and entangle themselves in great quantities.

It is necessary to take arms with you; for it is nothing uncommon for a party of Turks to come and take every fish away, and abuse the fishers; when, however, they see Franks, and armed in the boat, they know what they have to expect, and sneak off with a *salam*, or compliment. We have more than once been fired at in the night, but from the darkness never could ascertain by whom;

but on hearing the ball whiz through the air, we could judge in what direction it came, and always returned the favour.

About fifteen years ago, my friend, Mr. H—, of Smyrna, when on a fishing party of this kind, had his boat fired into, and one of his boatmen shot dead at his ear; another ball passed through the brim of his servant's hat while beating the nets: the night was very dark, but those who fired were soon discovered, and all taken but the villain who killed the man: seven of the gang died miserably in prison of the plague, which was then raging; and strange to tell, the villain who was the most guilty, followed by the curse of God, never prospered; he wandered from town to town like a vagabond, and at last having through the interest of some friends procured Mr. H.'s pardon, returned to Smyrna, where this very year he was accidentally drowned on the same spot

where he had killed the poor Greek boatman.

The nets used here are of silk, and are made chiefly at the island of Tino; they are wall nets, and generally run about 150 fathoms long. The mode of fishing is by laying them in a semi-circular form along the shore, and at no great distance from it, in about eight or ten feet water; after which the boat is rowed smartly between the nets and the shore, the rowers dashing their oars on the top of the water, while he who has the charge of the nets beats it with the piece of wood before mentioned, and which is a long pole with the end hollowed out like a cup; this he strikes perpendicularly on the water, which makes a most terrible noise, increased likewise by his stamping with his feet on the deck of the boat; the net is then carefully drawn into it, and discharged of its contents. Those who make a trade of fishing use a drag net,

which is of considerable length, with a long pouch or belly to it, made of strong twine: this net is drawn into very deep water, and by cords attached to it, is drawn by a number of men to the shore. It is very dangerous for a ship weakly manned, when amongst the Greek islands, to let one of these fishing-boats come too near; the men in them are all inclined to be thieves, many of them are actually pirates, and being Greeks, are destitute both of faith and humanity.

LETTER IX.

*Plague—Precautions used by the Franks—
Hospitals—Locusts—Storks.*

Smyrna, 1804.

YOU express your fears in a very kind manner, respecting my safety in a country like this, so subject to the plague, which is certainly one of the most dreadful scourges which the Almighty could inflict upon his creatures; but, thanks to his goodness, this part of Turkey has not suffered from its ravages for some years. When I was first at Smyrna, the inhabitants were under apprehensions that it was going to break out again, but we heard only of about twelve deaths. One day I was walking along the beach with

Mr. S. the American consul, when at a few yards distance we saw a poor fellow in great agonies. On sending his janizary the next morning to enquire after him, Mr. S. was informed, that he died during the night. The plague, however, is not so dangerous as many epidemical diseases: for, if proper precautions were taken, its ravages might soon be stopped: the reason why they are not is, that the Turks are predestinarians, and refuse to employ any means, either for the prevention of the disorder or for their recovery: they are now, however, beginning to see their folly, and to inquire why the Franks do not die of the plague.

This spring afforded the first instance which I ever heard of a Turk using any precaution. The plague broke out in the Haram of the Musalim; it was said, that his mother and seven of his wives died of it; he had all the remainder of the inhabitants removed to Caratash, his

country house, and proper methods used to prevent the infection spreading. They dread the yellow fever much more than the plague, and with far greater reason, as the plague can be communicated only by contact, whereas the former taints the air. This year a general gloom reigned here, in consequence of that disease raging at Gibraltar and Leghorn, as many ships arrived in the Levant from those ports, which had lost nearly the whole of their crews; and as in Turkey no quarantine laws are enforced, the remainder of the crews of the vessels were allowed to mingle with the inhabitants immediately on their arrival.

The precautions used against the plague by Christians are simple and effectual; their houses, that is to say, the best houses in Frank-street, are for many reasons built like little fortresses, and in general extend from the street down to the water side; at each of them there is

a strong gate, mostly of iron, to prevent their being set fire to, and within that one toward the street, at the distance of ten feet from it and each other, are two more formed of spars. When the pestilence rages violently, both the outer and inner gates are kept constantly locked, and the master, or some confidential person has the keys. When any one rings at the gate, the door is opened by a cord, and the person is admitted to the first spar gate, through which he communicates the intention of his errand; if he brings provisions, within the middle gate stands a large tub of water, into which they are thrown from a little door, and are not taken out again until the outer gate is shut: if bread is brought, it must be hot, at which time it cannot communicate infection. Letters and other papers are conveyed on the end of a piece of wood or cane, with a slit in it, and are fumigated with nitre and brimstone. By these means it is almost impossible that the

plague should find entrance into the houses, where the inhabitants keep themselves closely confined till its rage is spent.

The greatest danger is at the first breaking out of the disease, before they make use of any precautions, for they seldom think of shutting themselves up, until they hear of eight or nine accidents, as they are called, each day.

In case of any member of a family being attacked by the plague, the person so seized is immediately carried to the hospital, the rest of the family sprinkle themselves with vinegar, and are fumigated; they generally leave the house they are in, and inhabit another for forty days.

The hospitals are attended by people who have had the plague; but it is a mistaken idea that, under these circum-

stances, they are secure from future infection. Padre Luigi, a humane friar, who has attended one of the hospitals for upwards of thirty years, says, that every time there is the plague in his hospital, his old sores open afresh, though with less virulence; but that a great number of the plague nurses die under as violent attacks of it as if it had seized them for the first time. This worthy father Luigi says further, that he never found any remedy so effectual as friction with oil, when applied in time, and carefully repeated: he has frequently witnessed its salutary effects.

I have observed, that there were great apprehensions of the yellow fever in Turkey; but, thank God, it never reached there, otherwise the effects must have been dreadful, where so many people are huddled together. Hitherto, ships coming from infected countries have performed no quarantine; but, as the Mussulmen,

on the coast of Barbary, have begun to set an example to their fellow worshippers, it is to be hoped, that the wise Selim will follow it in that part of his dominions nearer to him. It is a singular fact, that the plague brought into Turkey from Egypt is much more fatal than that conveyed from any other country, and on the other hand, that carried from Turkey into Egypt is equally more destructive to the people there.

It has been remarked that the Levant has, for a number of years, been almost free from the plague: the people say, that they never have more than one plague at a time; if they have locusts, there will be no pestilence. When locusts appear, they generally continue for seven years: they usually come in the spring, and while any thing green remains, seldom depart. In the month of July, this year, the country looked beautiful, as but few of them had visited it. I slept one night

at Bugiah: in the evening every thing was clothed with verdure; during the night, a cloud of locusts made their appearance, and by the morning scarcely a leaf was to be seen: they spread the same devastation over the whole surrounding country.

The locusts which visit the vicinity of Smyrna are exactly like large grasshoppers, and although they must fly, in order to come into the country, yet they seem to depend entirely on their legs afterward.

The stork, which abounds in Turkey, destroys the locusts in great quantities: these birds are great favourites with the Mahometans; they build their nests in the roofs of their houses, or in high trees in the neighbourhood of their villages, where they remain quite tame, and free from molestation; they live upon vermin and reptiles, and destroy snakes innumer-

able. In shape and size they resemble a heron; the legs and the beak are red and very long, the body and neck pure white, and the wings jet black; notwithstanding this they appear very ugly birds. They pay an annual visit to Turkey; they arrive in vast numbers about the middle of March, and always in the night: they arrange their progress very systematically: they send forward their scouts, who make their appearance a day or two before the grand army, and then return to give in their report, after which the whole body advances, and on its passage leaves, during the night, its detachments to garrison the different towns and villages on their way. Early in October, they take their departure in the same manner, so that no one can tell from whence they come, or whither they go. They are known in the night time to leave all the villages, and have been seen in the air like immense clouds; they leave none behind but those who, from infirmity

or accident, are unable to fly. A person who, at the season of their departure, was in the habit of coming from the interior, told me, that, on his journey the year preceding, he had seen thousands and hundreds of thousands of them near the banks of a river, and that they annually assemble there, and when the general sees that his whole army is collected, he at a given moment sets them in motion, leaving a detachment, no doubt, to bring up the stragglers.

LETTER X.

*Journey from Smyrna to Constantinople—
Magnesia—Carosman Oghu—Inconve-
niences of travelling in Turkey—Azara
Mochalieh—Return to Smyrna.*

Smyrna, April 1805.

LAST August, although the weather was extremely hot, I quitted Smyrna for Constantinople by land, attended by one servant, a guide, and a janizary. In summer, on account of the great heat, travelling can be prosecuted only during the cool of the evening, night, and morning. We left Smyrna about seven in the evening, and stopped at Bournabat, at the house of a friend, to supper; before midnight we again took the road, and passing over the lofty mountains at the

head of the gulph before the sun was high in the east, arrived at Magnesia, which is situated at the foot of one of these mountains; before it, is one of the finest and most extensive plains I have ever seen, every part of which is in the highest state of cultivation; its chief articles of produce are cotton and Indian corn; and at this season of the year the country looks particularly beautiful and luxuriant.

The town of Magnesia is large and populous, but not elegant. On the mountains behind it, there are several ruins; which I had no opportunity to examine, for I was taken so ill, that, although I stopped two days, yet I could not move out all the time. I now sadly experienced what it was to be out of Britain. I was extremely ill, and lodged in a most wretched hovel, without any friend but my faithful servant, who watched over me, and did what he could to cheer me;

he seldom quitted my apartment, but to give vent to his sorrow, for he thought me dying. We could procure no cordial, and the only medical assistant which the place afforded was a brute, who said he had studied at Padua; from his appearance, which was truly loathsome, I should have guessed that his employment was but little lucrative: when he entered the room, the smell of him made me sick, and his manners were so disgusting, that when he visited me, I either made my servant stay in the room, or lay my pistols on the pillow, that I might be guarded or armed against insult.

The second evening, being determined, if I could help it, not to die at Magnesia, I was lifted on my horse, and crossed the plain for Axarra, a town about sixteen hours ride from where I was. For several hours we rode upon a causeway, which is raised considerably above the level of the plain, as it would otherwise

be rendered impassable in winter; for the river Hermion, which runs through it, frequently in that season overflows its banks.

Axarra is one of the most fertile and best governed districts of Turkey. It is ruled by Carosman Oglu, one of the shrewdest and wisest of the Turkish princes; he is more just than his fellows, and forms salutary laws, which he takes care are strictly fulfilled. The people under his government look better, and indeed are better than any others in the country. He is called Prince of Nantolia.

Robberies have been almost unknown in his territories for many years: the cotton factors, when they go with cash to pay for their purchases, travel without a guard of any sort. But should any accident happen, the most summary justice is executed. In case of a robbery or

murder, the inhabitants of the district are obliged to discover the perpetrators, or, should they fail in this, they are severely punished for their bad management. The following story will perhaps amuse you, and give you some idea of the character of Carosman Oglu.

A cotton factor, when at a distance from any of the coffee or guard houses, was overtaken by sleep, and tying his horse to a tree, lay down under its shade to indulge himself in a nap. When he awoke, his horse, and the riches which he carried with him, were gone: application was made to the prince, who at that time chanced to be at no great distance from the spot where the theft was committed. He severely reprimanded the factor for his carelessness in lying down to sleep in so exposed a situation, when he might have gone on to a coffee-house. The factor's answer pleased the prince, and evinced the general confidence which was

*This story is very scarce
 sister of the Turkish in general
 as well as of the Turkish before*

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placed in his administration — “Who would be afraid to sleep where Carosman Oglu governs.” He was ordered back to the tree under which he had taken his nap, to lodge for another night. In the morning, when he awoke, he found to his astonishment a man hung upon the tree, and his horse and property in the state he had left them when he went to sleep the first time.

Travelling in Turkey is extremely disagreeable, the only method being on horseback, and if you want any comforts you must carry them with you. The accommodations on the road are horribly nasty, and those who are not content to sleep upon a plank, must provide themselves with a bed. I took mine with me, and, as I slept only during the day, I had it placed under the shade of a tree, that I might escape the vermin of a caravansera, where they generally abound of all kinds and colours.—

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 worse
 than
 I have*

The plan I adopted was to have my sheets sewed up like a sack, into which I crept, and then tied round my neck. When the mosquitoes were troublesome, I laid a thin muslin over my face, and thus excluded all disagreeable visitors.

Provisions are difficult to be procured, unless you allow the Janizary to beat the poor inhabitants, who will at length produce a fowl, some rice, or something of the kind; the rice they make into what is called a pillau, a dish which I do not dislike, and which, for your information, I shall describe, when I am become a better proficient in oriental cookery.

Drink of no kind but water did I find on the whole road, but I carried with me some shrub manufactured in the same way as Lobon's, which is the best in the world: this I made at Smyrna. The Turks, you know, are by the laws of Mahomet forbidden the use of strong

drink; but the water on the whole journey was so excellent, that I was at no loss for a beverage. Throughout all Turkey, humane Turks have built fountains on the roads, at about the distance of an hour's ride from one another, and likewise places for prayer, looking toward Mecca.

in Turkey about seven pure fountains
 what a ^{mercifully grateful} something of a city: when we arrived, the gates were shut, which obliged us to make a considerable circuit to reach one which is kept open during the night for the admission of travellers. I can give you no idea of this place, for, from my illness and the fatigue of a long ride, I was not able to leave the caravansary, to which our Janizary carried me: here I found an intelligent and humane surgeon, who did all he could to assist me, and kindly invited me to his house, where doubtless I should have been more comfortably lodged; this I declined, as well as a pressing intreaty to remain for a day

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or two, in which time he assured me he would completely remove my complaint; but having dispatches for his Excellency, which, for aught I knew, might be of great importance, I was determined to remain only till the evening. When I awoke about mid-day, I found my charitable doctor had sent me from his house a comfortable dinner and a bottle of good wine, both of which operated like a charm upon me. In the afternoon he came and sat beside me, and tried to entertain me, by telling me the news of the place. All my solicitation at parting would not induce him to accept of a present for his trouble; he kindly said, he was more than repaid by passing a day with me. His name was Demitra, and I shall never remember him but with gratitude.

After much fatigue, and a day or two more of travelling over a country, in some places well cultivated, and in others in a state of nature, we arrived at Mo-

chalieh. Before reaching this place, we entered the territories of another prince, in which robberies are not unfrequent. About two hours ride from the town is a thick forest, through which we had to pass, and which was reported to be very dangerous. My Janizary and guide behaved here like two cowardly scoundrels; neither I nor my servant was aware that the wood was dangerous, and these two lagged behind, leaving us, in case of an attack, to receive the first fire, whilst they might either come forward or fly, as they found most convenient.

It ought always to be laid down as a rule in travelling in this country to follow the guide, or Surogee, as he is called, and the Janizary, and never to go before them; indeed they will seldom allow you to do the latter, unless they have some reason for so doing. They regulate the pace of their horses, that they may not go too fast, and be enabled to hold out the

journey. Whenever the Surogee is inclined to lag behind, he ought to be spurred up, and obliged to go on.

The horses which we brought from Smyrna had performed their task when we arrived at Mochalieh; and after resting a few hours, we proceeded with others to the place of embarkation for Constantinople. No passage boat being at the time ready to set sail, I was obliged to hire a vessel called a *sacka leva*, in order to carry me over the sea of Marmora, where we were tossed about for two days in a gale of contrary wind. At length the lofty minarets of Constantinople appeared in sight, as if emerging from the waves.

You will now expect that I should give you an account of Constantinople; but at present I shall only say that the approach to it is one of the most beautiful in the world, but upon landing, far different ideas are excited. I will at

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some future period give you a description of this city and its environs, as I expect next spring to visit it again.

After a month's residence at Constantinople, I returned to this place by sea.

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harbour of Smyrna, I
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recommended him not to
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Constantinople - she will to*

*under with any description
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LETTER XI.

*Journey to Ephesus—Sediqui—Old Camel—
Butargo—Sporting—Church of Saint
John—Arrival at Ephesus.*

Smyrna, 1805.

AT about a ride of a day and a half from Smyrna, stand the ruins of the city of Ephesus, and the famous Temple of Diana. Last week, in company with a party of friends, who, like myself, had never visited that celebrated spot, I made an excursion there. It was on a fine evening, near the end of November, just as the sun began to gild, with his last rays, the mountains on the eastern side of the gulph of Smyrna, that we mounted our horses in order to sleep at the delightful village of Sediqui. A gentle zephyr bore away on its wings the sul-

try particles of a southern wind. The grave Turk sat cross-legged at his door, enjoying his *Nargalee*,* in the cool of the evening, or drowned in thoughtless torpor, swallowed his bitter beverage.† Winding through the miserable streets of Smyrna, by that part of it called Turk Town, we reached the passage of the mountain, on the top of which stood the ruins of the old castle of Smyrna, as it is called. On the left of this mountain is an extensive aqueduct, and a little farther on are a number of small tumuli, evidently the graves of

* The *Nargalee* is a particular kind of pipe used by the natives of the east. It is made of leather, and is sometimes several yards long; that part of it which holds the tobacco, has a tube to it; the lower extremity of which is put some inches down in a close vessel about two thirds full of water; the air being drawn out through the leather tube, the smoke, of course, rises up through the water, cool, and free of those oily particles which are so unpleasant in smoking tobacco.

† The Turks drink their coffee without milk or sugar.

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warriors, buried according to the ancient manner. On the road to Sediqui, are to be seen two large tumuli, one of which, it is said, contains the remains of Andromache. Conjecture is silent with respect to the other: they are now quite covered with shrubs.

The surrounding mountains are so lofty, that the situation of Sediqui may properly be called low, although it is considerably above the level of the sea. The view from it is but limited; but the air, the water, and the walks, are charming and salubrious.

Ere the twilight was spent, we reached the village, and stopped at the house of a lady, who was mother to one, mother-in-law to another, and a friend to the whole party; here we were received with a hospitality which has long distinguished all her family.

During the interval, till supper was ready, we paid a visit to the retreat of the Dutch Consul, whom we found surrounded by his own amiable family, and several friends attracted thither by their easy hospitality and engaging manners. We were regaled here with a concert of vocal and instrumental music, which was performed in a delightful style.

We did not retire to rest till twelve, and before sun-rise began our journey, by crossing some extensive plains, in an uncultivated state. About nine we stopped at the small village of Develeque, which was, according to our ideas of happiness and misery, full of wretchedness. We alighted at a Hann, belonging to the prince of those parts, and where he had a guard. The chief of this guard was a respectable looking old man, and his apartments were clean, a rare circumstance among the class of people to which he belonged; here we

fed our horses, drank coffee, and smoked a pipe with the old man.

Recommencing our journey, we proceeded two hours more, without meeting any thing worthy remark; and then alighted at a small coffee-house to dine, and refresh the horses. Our principal purveyor, the faithful Greek Janni, who had been so careful of me on my way to Constantinople, produced an excellent English ham, and a sigh accompanied the toast of "Friends at home," drank in a bumper of old port, which he had taken care not to forget.

Near this hut we saw an old camel, who was passing the evening of her days in plenty and tranquillity; for it is a humane principle of the Turks, that an old servant ought never to be deserted when age or sickness has disabled him from being any further useful. Here she lay basking in the sun's rays, beside a plenteous

fountain, or browsing in the verdant shade, as fancy or appetite dictated, whilst the children of the village playing around her, are taught, by parents called savage, to be grateful for past services, and to respect and venerate old age.

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We now rode over a mountain of marble; by a path apparently formed by the feet of goats. Here we saw two Turkish nymphs, who fled from us like lightning, but whether afraid of exposing their beauty, or their ugliness, although most probably the latter, we were not Quixotic enough to determine. On this part of our journey we were every moment in danger of our necks, from the ruggedness and slipperiness of the path; and except stopping once or twice to let our Turks light their pipes, and hail their fellows, did not halt till we arrived at the hut, where we were to take up our lodging for the night.

Our matrasses were spread at an early

hour, on the earthen floor; and in the enjoyment of exercise, health, and contentment, we found that neither sumptuous palaces, nor beds of down, are necessary for repose.

The country around abounding with game, some of our party, who were fond of sporting, repaired at day-break to the side of some mountains, which lay between us and the sea; and such of us as did not chuse this exercise, followed the road which led across the marsh before us, and which was once a fruitful plain near the city of Ephesus. Our place of rendezvous was to be at the mouth of the river Cyster, and at noon-day, we met at a small hut, formed of mud and reeds, which serves as an abode to the men who gain their living by fishing in the river. The Cyster is now but a trifling stream, and is even fordable at the mouth, from the quantity of sand thrown into it from the Ionian sea, to which it lies open. In this river im-

mense quantities of white mullet are taken; they are caught in traps formed of reeds. The roe of the white mullet is held in great estimation in the Levant; it is salted and dried in the sun, and then goes by the name of butargo; it is one of the orientals presents much valued. That made from the mullet caught in the Cyster, is reckoned among the best. We made a monopoly of it, and bought every piece that we could procure to send to our friends in Europe. I cannot here help relating to you the following anecdote, respecting a parcel of butargo: a gentleman in Smyrna sent some in a present to a friend of his in Amsterdam; the Dutchman was vastly pleased with it; and wrote to him to send him another quantity in the season following; to preserve it, the Jews, who use it in great quantities, dip it in hot bees-wax, in consequence of which, the air is entirely excluded, and it will keep good for years. The Dutchman's butargo was this season dipped in the wax,

in order to its better preservation; of this he was not aware, and ate it, wax and all, unwilling to lose any part of it; however, in repeating his order to his friend the sea-faring following, he mentioned that the butargo had proved excellent, but that it was different from what he had formerly received, as it had something about it which made it stick to the teeth, and was troublesome to eat; he therefore begged that this circumstance might be attended to in sending him a further quantity of the article.

The sporting party was very fortunate, and brought in a rich supply of game of different kinds; among others, were several birds called Francoline, but little known at Smyrna; they are rather larger than the partridge, the flesh is whiter, and of a very delicate flavour. The colour of these birds is grey; the cock has a black breast, spotted with white. I at first took them to be of a species resembling our moor-fowl, but they are quite different. The

partridges were the best I ever ate; they had fed on myrtle berries, which gave them a fine aromatic flavour.

After dinner we rode for a short time up the banks of the river, which, from several breast-works of massy marble, appear once to have been in better order. The ferry-boat here was somewhat curious; it was a triangular float, large enough to carry the whole of our party, men and horses.

Winding up the banks of the river, the majestic church of St. John, built of pure white marble, presented itself to our view; immediately above this church stand the ruins of a castle, apparently of Roman construction, which has a commanding aspect. The ruins of the renowned Temple of Diana had hitherto been concealed from us by a mountainous promontory, now they burst upon our view, in innu-

merable and gigantic fragments. A few minutes brought us to the village, where we alighted at our hotel, which, although the best in Ephesus, defies any attempt at description.

LETTER XII.

Ephesus. — Inhabitants. — Visit to Osman Oglu. — Sporting Party. — Ruins of the Temple of Diana. — Ruins. — Church of St. John. — Castle. — Journey to Scala Nuova. — Caravanseras. — Bishop's Palace. — Consul. — Return to Smyrna.

Smyrna, 1805.

THE city of Ephesus formerly so celebrated, has now no other boast than that of being one of the most miserable of Turkish villages. No traces are to be seen of Demetrius, the silversmith, nor of any of his fellows, who served the great Diana of the Ephesians with shrines. The magnificent city is now reduced to a few wretched huts, inhabited by some of the most poverty-stricken beings on the face of the earth.

It is impossible to form an idea of the misery and the indolence of these miscreants. Before them lies the extensive and beautiful plain, totally uncultivated, and in a deplorable condition. The river, in consequence of their indolence and unskilfulness, being almost choked up, in the winter overflows its bed, and inundates the whole of this plain, which is now become, in many places, a perfect marsh, and is in other places robbed of its soil, by the force of the torrents. Behind them is an extensive amphitheatre, which seems to recede from the approach, one of the richest and most luxuriant that the hand of nature could form, in the same neglected state. A few miserable cows and goats feed amongst the ruins around, and now and then at a distance may be heard the bell of a scanty flock. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

The hotel in which we took up our lodgings, was the only coffee-house the city

could boast of; it consisted but of one apartment, which served at once for us, our servants, guards, guides, and the host; his sallow looks prompted me to inquire into the state of his health; he said he thanked God and the Prophet it was now pretty good, although he had been but lately very ill. This poor fellow had a short time before been overtaken on his walk by a bull, who gave him chace, threw him down, and after goring him to a dreadful degree, tossed him from his horns to a considerable distance, where he lay with his bowels hanging out. The wounded man, as well as he was able, crawled home, where he found his friend, to whom, by the bye, I forgot to give a place in our apartment, and who, from a corner of the same, administered to the wants of his fellow-subjects, in the quadruple capacity of physician, surgeon, tooth-drawer, and blacksmith; to use his own words, this son of Esculapius "hoisted him up by one leg, letting his head hang down, stuffed in

his guts with his fingers, and sewed up the wound with a piece of packthread," over all he clapped a plaster of pitch, to keep out the air; after this, and forty days confinement, "Alla Kerim," a Turkish expression generally used, expressive of the goodness of God, he was enabled to resume his trade, of making coffee for his brother villagers.

We had not alighted long at the Caffene, before we received a visit from one of the chief men of Osman Oglu, prince of these parts, who was here upon a shooting excursion, and had dispatched this gentleman to see who we were; he smoked a pipe, and drank some coffee; and we, judging it prudent, returned the visit to the prince without delay.

This prince, who governs over an immense tract of Asia Minor, is about twenty years of age, of a manly appearance, with an open and haughty countenance: all the pride of a Turkish sovereign appears in

him; his physionomy betrayed no marks of ignorance, or want of talent however ill improved. He sat on a sofa in a mud-walled room, of about fifteen feet square. On his right hand sat a falcon; on his left, lay a young pointer; before him were stretched five Spartan greyhounds. None of his people sit in his presence, save the favourite, who visited us in his name. When we entered, according to the Turkish custom he neither got up, nor saluted us, but sat cross-legged to receive our homage. Coffee and pipes were soon introduced; here I was amused with another Turkish custom: the prince and the favourite were served before the strangers; our visit lasted only a quarter of an hour, the conversation was on the pleasures of sporting. The prince proposed a party for the morning following, we agreed to join him, and then took our leave.

The youth was surrounded by about fifty armed desperadoes, who formed his

guard; these are never held in any estimation till they have been robbers or freebooters for many years, and have taken away the lives of a few of their fellow-creatures, whether gloriously or ingloriously, whether in battle or in cool blood; and they are often called upon by their employer to recount the deeds they have done.

The morning appeared clad in sable, and clouds full of rain topped the surrounding mountains; but long ere the lazy god of day arose in the east, the youthful prince paid us a visit in our hovel, preceded by his savage band, one of whom, carrying a golden axe, demonstrative of his despotic power, paraded before him.

We proposed coffee and pipes to his royal highness, but he preferred a tumbler of rum, which he drank off with great relish. He informed us of his intention immediately to proceed to the field, and left us to prepare. The regards of all fol-

lowed him, although, most certainly, they were not those of admiration or love, but they followed a prince; and so prone are men to pursue dignities, even in the shape in which they now presented themselves, that we soon joined him, though every moment in danger of being shot, either by himself, or some of his banditti, none of whom would miss the chance of killing a partridge, to save the life of a *Pesavenk Yahour*,* a name with which they frequently honour us.

The morning was damp, and some rain dropped occasionally. The sport was but trifling, and few birds or beasts were taken. Again the day smiled, but it was a sarcastic smile. A gleam of sunshine fell upon the prince, which a hasty cloud soon threw on the ruins of Ephesus, while the distant thunder seemed to murmur, "is not all vanity?"

* Infidel Pimp.

Some grew tired of princely pleasure, others continued the tedious chace, but the prince himself at length grew wearied of unsuccessful labour, and left the field. In a short time our party rallied in full muster at the coffee-house, round an excellent dish of hare soup, which, washed down by a bumper of good country wine, gave us fresh vigour to pursue our visit to the ruins, which we accordingly did.

Early in the afternoon we mounted our horses, and traced back a part of the way we had come the evening before. To arrive at the ruins of the famous Temple, we had to pass through many more modern, which displayed remains of no despicable architecture. Some Roman baths are also yet visible. Our course lay toward the south-west, at a short distance from the Cyster; in about half an hour we were in the midst of immense ruins, said to be those of the Temple of Diana. It would be in vain, from a view of these, to give

you any idea of the building itself; broken columns, defaced sculpture, huge architraves, ponderous arches, pedestals overthrown, and pillars without measure, diameter, or number, are all that remain of this wonder of the world. Here we alighted, admired, paused, mused on the past and the present.

After examining with attention and care these huge vestiges of former times, and determining in our minds the situation of the Temple, and of the ancient port of Ephesus, which must have been about a mile from the present banks of the river, and having likewise cast an eye over the surrounding mountains, crowned with ruins, we re-mounted our horses, and returned by a circuit to the southward of the mountain, which now lay between us and the village. We passed what had been once extensive covered ways, which appeared not to have been visited by man for many ages. One of our horses stumbled at a

hole in the road, which seemed to have been made but lately; upon dismounting we saw within it the roof of a circular chamber in which was a fine sarcophagus of white marble; the hole was large enough to admit a human body, and by the help of some girths we descended into it, but found now that we were not the first who had made this discovery, as the lid of the sarcophagus was removed to one side, and its contents were carried off. This apartment of the dead was about twelve feet in diameter, and had many niches in the wall, in which figures of the heathen gods had stood. A door and a passage, filled up with earth, which had sifted through, confirmed us in the idea that this was only one of a chain of apartments of a similar kind.

Proceeding on our journey, we came to some very magnificent ruins, apparently those of a palace: they were in a much more perfect state than the others we had

just seen; the pillars and arches of the front are still standing.

The mountains on our left exhibited some remains of antiquity; on the side next us were several semi-circular holes, which at a distance had a singular appearance; curiosity tempted me to ride up to one of them; I found it to be the entrance to a small circular cell, dug out of the rock, but of very rude workmanship: the rest of them seemed to be places of the same kind.

Passing the foot of the mountain, we were soon again in sight of the church of St. John, and in a few minutes dismounted at it.

The church of St. John stands on the side of a hill fronting the north; it is built of white marble, and is nearly entire: at some period not far remote, one part of it has been converted into a

Turkish mosque, but it is now no longer in use. Some of the gigantic columns of Diana's temple have been brought hither, which support the roof of that part dedicated to Mahometan superstition; but whether they were brought here by Mahometans or Christians it is not easy now to determine. These columns are of granite, two of them are entire, and are very beautiful; the others have been broken, probably in transporting them, and are cemented. On each side of a Turkish place for prayer is a pillar of porphyry, and this niche is lined with the same valuable marble. The Turks, who have a great aversion to coloured marble, have whitewashed all these, and it was only by scratching off the white wash with my penknife, that I discovered what was underneath. The steps in front of the church are still standing; they are very spacious and elegant. This church seems upon the whole of modern structure; there is nothing peculiarly magnifi-

cent in the architecture; the building is an oblong square, and in the part which is unroofed there appears to have been fountains in the style of *jets d'eau*; it is more than probable that these fountains have been erected by the Mahometans for their ablutions, which are very frequent.

Leaving the church, and ascending the same hill, we entered the gates of the castle on its summit, which is called, for what reason I know not, "the gate of persecution." This gateway is very good, though neither grand nor elegant; over it are two pieces of sculpture in basso relievo, but in so mutilated a state, that we could not make out what they were intended to represent. Though it was said by some, that one of them is the massacre of the Innocents, and the other the body of Hector dragged at the car of Achilles. The Turks, who profess an abhorrence of

idolatry, destroy every piece of sculpture that comes in their way.

This castle was erected by the Romans: on the highest pinnacle of the mountain the Turks have built a minaret, from which I had a charming view of the surrounding country, being heightened by the sun setting in refulgent glory beneath the Ionian sea.

Night drawing on, we returned to our hovel to supper, and early in the morning again mounted our horses, and shaped our course for Scala Nuova, distant only a few hours ride.

The road to Scala Nuova is beautifully diversified by mountains and vallies; we passed a charming dell, in the middle of which was a draw-well of considerable depth, and by its side an immense bason of granite to receive the water. In Turkey they have but little notion of the use of

the pump, and where they have draw wells, they employ a lever with a cord attached to the long end of it. Where the situation will admit, they have fountains, as they are more proper for their ablutions: indeed I believe the command of their law is to wash in running water. At each of these fountains, so plentifully dispersed throughout Turkey, there is a place for prayer, on which is inscribed some passage from the Alcoran.

In this dell, and in this fine bason St. John is said to have baptized many Christians: at some distant period, the bason has been elegant, although now it has neither sculpture or inscription; it is of black granite, and is now considerably reduced both in shape and size, probably from Christian travellers having taken away pieces of it as reliques or curiosities. By the fountains in Turkey, there is generally a bason for the flocks to water from, and these are mostly made of sar-

cophagi, the basso relievos and inscriptions of which are uniformly destroyed by the barbarous Turks.

We at length arrived at Scala Nuova: it is a small port on the Ionian sea, at which many ships load annually. Grain is the chief article of commerce, which is loaded in contraband by a fee to the Aga, or governor: a vast quantity of beans is sent from here, chiefly for Alexandria in Egypt, and for Malta.

We found but little to amuse us at Scala Nuova: the town is in many parts finely situated on the ascent of a mountain, but the buildings are poor and mean; the inhabitants are a mixture of Turks, Jews, and Christians, and are upon the whole very hospitable. Having sent previous notice from Smyrna, our consul had prepared a dwelling for us, by unhousing a Greek bishop, whose mansion was the only place in all the city that could hold

our party, unless we had gone to the common caravansary, which is often dangerous on account of the plague, as travellers of all descriptions and denominations put up there. Caravansaries are large square buildings; the upper part is for lodging strangers, and the under part is employed as stables, but these being kept very far from clean, are inhabited by innumerable swarms of vermin of all kinds, to which are added tribes of musquitoes, produced by a fountain, which uniformly plays in the middle of the square.

The palace of the bishop consisted of one pretty spacious apartment, and a small kitchen. The furniture of the room was a large Turkish sofa, which surrounded three sides of it; but from certain filthy appearances, the said sofa affording a prospect of more pain than pleasure, we ordered it to be removed, preferring to sit on our own clean mat-

trasses: the walls were covered with daubings representing the Holy Virgin and some of the Saints; in a corner, a lamp burnt before a painting of the Virgin in rather a better style, according to the modern Grecian taste; this lady was placed by some wretched imitator of nature on a golden ground,—a method of painting universal in all the Greek churches, wherever there is a picture of the Virgin Mary, our Saviour, the Apostles, or any Saints of a later date.

Our consul here claims descent from Justinian: he is a man of great learning, and was educated at Padua; we were as much entertained by his pedantry, as by the ignorance of a curiosity from the island of Zante, who represents the French, Ragusan, Neapolitan, and Russian people, and who actually can neither read nor write. This phenomenon of nature exercises likewise the profession of Esculapius on those who chuse to run

the risk of being poisoned by his prescriptions.

These consuls are but poorly paid by their different nations: their principal advantage is, that they are allowed to trade, and are protected from Turkish injustice; they have also the privilege of granting protection to their servants, who are likewise merchants, and pay for their situations.

After passing a day at Scala Nuova, we again remounted our horses, in order to return to Smyrna: by mid-day we again crossed the Cyster, and in the evening the plain of Ephesus: we enjoyed, by the rays of the setting sun, a fine view of the ruins of the temple and of the church. We again took up our lodging for the night at the coffee-house which we had used before, on halting the second night of our excursion.

Some of our party, who were keen sportsmen, left the horses with the guides on entering the marshy part of the plain, and night coming on, had nearly lost themselves amidst the lofty rushes. One of them, a Frenchman, made a wonderful story of their adventure; he related his falling into a deep hole, up to the neck in water, and that he was saved only by his fowling-piece crossing the mouth of the hole; but he forgot that one thing was necessary to make his report credible,—there was not the smallest appearance of wet either on his clothes or on his gun.

Another day brought us in safety to our friends in Smyrna, who were anxiously awaiting our return.

LETTER XIII.

*Voyage from Smyrna.—Clazomena Islands.
—Phoea.—Arrival at Constantinople.*

Constantinople, 1805.

I HAVE the satisfaction to write to you from Constantinople, where I arrived only a few days ago.

I quitted Smyrna on board of an Imperial vessel bound for the Black Sea; she lay at anchor below the castle, between the river Hermion and the Clazomena Islands, taking on board a cargo of salt. The captain, for what reason he knew best, sent for me to come down immediately; but, on my getting on board, I found the vessel would not have her cargo com-

pleted for several days. Having, however, all my things with me, and bade adieu to my friends at Smyrna, who will ever live in my remembrance, I could not think of returning thither; and although it was the month of March, bleak weather, and a northerly wind blowing, I contented myself with being cooped up, to read and play cards with two fellow passengers, the one a reformed Jew, and the other a Neapolitan doctor, a drunken fellow, whose company was extremely disagreeable. The captain we seldom saw; but this I did not regret, excepting when the unruly doctor got drunk, when he became insufferable. Our commander happened to be enamoured with the wife of another Imperial captain, whose ship lay about a cable's length from us; the lady was on board, and on this account he arose with the sun, drew his net, which had been set out the night before, and carried the produce to his enamourata, as she was fond of fish, and never left her,

but to cast his net again, and come on board to sigh and sleep.

After we had completed our cargo, the wind continuing unfavourable, we weighed anchor, and ran close in behind the Clazomena islands, where we were sheltered from the north wind, and ready to start. I had been at these islands before, and knew several of them: they are all uninhabited but one, on which are little more than a dozen of Greeks. All of these islands abound in game and rabbits. We lay here several days, which passed pleasantly enough; for the captain, who had never introduced me to the lady on board of the other ship, was obliged in some measure to make me acquainted with her husband, or rather I believe I made up to him myself, on shore, where we met shooting rabbits; he kindly invited me on board of his vessel, where I saw the fair lady, who was really a fine woman, and very agreeable in her manners.

The wind becoming fair, we set sail, and had proceeded as far as the west end of Mitylene, when it came to blow pretty fresh, and to keep us rather scant in our course. Our consort, which had on board the loadstone that directed our compass, still kept company with us: when the wind came to be pretty high, the lady grew sick, and her compassionate husband bore away: passing us, he said he was going into Phocœa bay to wait for better weather, and we were too complaisant not to follow the fair. In a few hours the lady's stomach was restored to tranquillity.

The port of Phocœa is excellent. Ships of any burthen may ride here in safety, however the wind blows. The town is a miserable one, the inhabitants are either fishermen or shepherds. I found nothing here worthy of remark; not a vestige of the ancient city now remains, which was situated about a mile to the west of the

present town. We remained here two days, which were passed as agreeably as circumstances would admit. We went on shore in the evening, and walked about either in the tent or on the beach, where under some shady tree our dinner was prepared: in all our excursions the lady formed one of the party. The walk on the beach was very romantic.

The wind again became moderate and fair. You must observe that, during the winter, it is seldom that the inbatt takes place in the gulph of Smyrna, it being occasioned by the heat of the sun. Notwithstanding the apprehensions of the lady, we again put to sea, passed Mitylene, and were soon on the coast of Troy; about noon we entered the Hellespont. The wind continuing fair, we judged it imprudent to come to an anchor. The current in the Hellespont is very strong; we had a fine breeze, and the vessel not deep, yet we made but little head against

it. At length we got into the sea of Marmora, and here we were taken with a contrary wind off Heraclea.

One night that it was calm and serene, to amuse our friend the lady, the captain ordered some rockets to be let off, which went up extremely well; our consort did the same, and they were alternately repeated till all the stock on both sides was spent. We then took to our great guns, and made no bad imitation of a sea-fight, the effect of which was heightened by the darkness of the night. This, however, had nearly a fatal catastrophe: my captain was in the act of firing off a large blunderbuss, which had been some time loaded, when it burst into a thousand pieces, cut his hand severely, and gave him such a shock, that he actually fainted; a piece struck the man at the helm, and a splinter hit me on the face.

The twenty-fifth day after we quitted

Smyrna, we arrived at Constantinople. The magnificence and beauty of the approach to this city, by sea, cannot be exceeded. Its lofty minarets and majestic domes give it a grand appearance; we got under the Seraglio point just as the sun was gilding them with his last rays.

Endeavour to correct the prejudice of those who say there is no comfort or good treatment to be met with on board of foreign ships. I have sailed in many, and have in general been perfectly well satisfied with my accommodations; with some, indeed, this can never be the case; they think every one on board beneath them, and behave with haughtiness; of course they meet with the return they deserve. I have found but too many of our countrymen of this description.

LETTER XIV.

Situation of Constantinople.—Population and Buildings.—Pera.—Galata.—Society.—Different Religions.

Constantinople, 1805.

CONSTANTINOPLE is built on a number of hills, and from the sea appears like an extensive amphitheatre; the situation is at once the most beautiful and the most advantageous for commerce in all Europe; the sea of Marmora washes its walls to the east; an arm of water, navigable for some miles, forms a port sufficient for half the navy of the world, and from the peculiarity of its situation, no storm can ever do injury; ships of the greatest burthen may come close to the shore, and

unload without risk, as the water neither ebbs nor flows. This port is called the Golden Horn; the Seraglio, or palace of the Sultan stands upon the south-east point of it, and in it vessels lie free of the rapid current, which runs from the Thracian Bosphorus, called the channel of Constantinople, into the sea of Marmora, past the palace of the Grand Signor.

The population of Constantinople is reckoned to equal that of Paris; it is certainly great, and if Pera, Scutari, and the banks of the channel are included, it can be little short of half a million: the buildings are mean, excepting the mosques, which are numerous and very grand; that of St. Sophia is particularly so, it rises like a mountain above the rest. Many of the Sultans have built mosques, which at a distance appear very little inferior to it, but on a nearer inspection the difference is obvious. The Bazars, or market places, are extensive; and the Hanns, or

fire-proof lodgings and warehouses of merchants, are large and commodious. The streets are remarkably narrow, ill paved, and extremely dirty; they are filled with an astonishing number of dogs, dead and alive.

Pera, the habitation of the Franks, stands on the north side of the port, and immediately over that part of the town called Galata, which formerly belonged to the Genoese. The air of Pera is good, and the town is well supplied with water; the streets are very narrow, and few of the buildings are worth notice. The English have lately erected a fine palace, but so situated as to have no view except a small part of the arsenal: the French have a good one, commanding a prospect of the channel, the Seraglio Point, Scutari, and some of the Prince's Islands. The palace of the Germans was burnt some years ago, when the greater part of Pera was destroyed; since that time they have oc-

cupied that of the Venetians, which is large and commodious, but ill situated, and has no carriage entry. The Russians, Swedes, and Dutch have all good palaces; that belonging to the Neapolitans is now converted into an inn.

Formerly, no persons, but such as were attached to the different missions, could build or reside in Pera; now it has become the abode of most of the Greek and Armenian merchants of respectability, who find they have more liberty here than under the government of the Turks, for, in Pera, the inhabitants are judged by the laws of the nation which protects them, or by its ambassador, and the Turks seldom interfere, unless in the event of a disturbance.

Galata lies by the water side, and is the place where most of the European merchants have their warehouses and offices. The greater part of the port of Constanti-

nople is situated on the Galata side of the water, few ships of any burthen being on the opposite shore. The Frank custom-house is here, and many thousands of Jews and Christians of every denomination have their houses in the town, which they prefer to Constantinople, as most of the buildings are fire-proof, which is not the case in that city. At each of the entrances to Galata, there is a gate, with a Turkish guard stationed at it; all of these gates are shut after sun-set. The town has been formerly surrounded by a strong wall, many parts of which are still standing, as well as some of the towers, one of which, called Galata tower, is now converted into a place of Mahometan worship. One of the gates leading into Pera is opened at almost any hour of the night, for the accommodation of the Franks, who live in these quarters, and who pay a small sum annually to the chief of the guard for this privilege. These gates must have been erected chiefly for the prevention of fires and robberies.

*I will take weeks for a
 Traveller to form a just idea
 of the character of Constantinople.*

CONSTANTINOPLE.

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Excepting the beauty of its situation, and a few localities, Constantinople affords but little which could make a residence here agreeable. Every thing worthy of notice, may be seen in a few days; and even the views, at first so enchanting, and indeed always delightful, become by degrees familiar to the sight.

Society, one of the chief sources of pleasure to man, is here wanting; it is divided into separate classes; the ambassadors, the dragomen, or interpreters, and the mercantile body of the people. Jealousy, stiff court etiquette, and a foolish idea of superiority, mar every thing like enjoyment in their numerous assemblies, and meetings of every kind.

The different ambassadors have their different evenings for receiving company; on which occasions card parties are formed, and sometimes a little dance is given. Our pa ace not being finished, Mr. Stratton lived

in a small house, which did not admit of his seeing visitors; indeed, the weak state of his health likewise precluded this. I found these ministerial parties, so ceremonious and insipid, that I declined attending them, and preferred passing the evenings at the house of the worthy Doctor Lorenzo, whose doors were thrown open every night to receive his friends, as he is wont to express himself, *sans ceremonie*. This old gentleman is first surgeon to the Sultan; he is a Florentine, and one of the most liberal men in the world; he that might have been one of the richest Franks in Turkey, in consequence of his unbounded charity, remains poor. Being on the most intimate footing with him, I shall have occasion to mention him again in the course of my letters. One English gentleman likewise entertains his friends very hospitably, and I have passed many a happy hour at his house. None of the other English residents at Pera are married, which

probably prevents their having parties at home.

At Constantinople they have no public amusements, except during Carnival, when there are masqued balls at some of the inas.

The different nations are more divided into parties here than at Smyrna, and politics create much greater animosity. The Turks never form any part in the Frank society, and the Greeks but seldom, unless employed in one or other of the missions.

The major part of the Franks here are of the Roman Catholic religion, and the streets and houses of Pera swarm with its priests, who are a great pest to society; almost every family has a priest attached to it; and from their being in possession of all the secrets, whether they refer to public or private matters, of the people with

whom they live, they have a wonderful ascendancy and influence over them; and, as little would be got by the confession of a clear conscience, they, in an underhand way, by scandal, and other mean arts, seek out quarrels and intrigues, that they may enrich themselves, and their poor relations, under the disguise of charity. These blood-suckers are educated chiefly at Scio, or some other of the Greek islands, and are in general extremely ignorant of the principles of the religion which they profess: they more properly merit the title of emissaries of Satan, than that of missionaries of the meek and lowly Jesus. A dignitary of their church, an enlightened man, has often said to me, when we have occasionally met in company with some of these fellows, "one of them will do more injury to the cause of the church, in a country like Turkey, in a single year, than ten men of education will do good in their whole life-time."

The Dutch used to have a clergyman, the Swedes have one, and the English Levant Company pay for one, but no service has been performed in English, in Pera, for several years. • a Jew

In their religion the Greeks are a remarkably superstitious people, and if possible, more so than the Roman Catholics; if one of this persuasion joins their church, they baptize him again. The Armenians are very quiet and inoffensive; most of them attend the Roman Church. The Turks disturb no one with their religion; they say their prayers in the most devout manner, when and where they find it convenient, and without the least Pharisaical pride, although thousands should be spectators.

The Jews are more strict observers of the law in Turkey than in any other country where I have met with them. They are also more charitable among themselves;

they take no interest for money. When a Jew grows old, and unfit for business, if he has wherewithal to live on, he retires to Jerusalem to pass the remainder of his days, and then to sleep with his fathers.

LETTER XV.

Ambassadors. — Germans. — Russians. — French. — British. — Impropriety of sending young men abroad as Secretaries.

Constantinople, 1805.

SEVERAL of the ambassadors here are very respectable men, many of them much more so than they will probably ever be again, as the Turks have it in agitation, no longer to allow their subjects to have the protection of foreign ambassadors, a source from which they have received yearly, money and presents to a great amount. The trade of selling protections has actually been carried on for a length of time, by it the ambassadors have been enabled to live better, and to make more money than they could ever have done by their appointments; and the dragomen here live like princes. To their credit, the English for a

considerable period have disallowed this kind of traffic; they have not deprived those who had paid for their protection, but they take on no new friends. Their example, however, has not, as yet, had much influence.

The nations who appear the most to cultivate their interest in Turkey, are the Russian, the German, and the French.

The Germans have, at Vienna, an oriental college, in which a number of young men of family, or possessed of good interest, are educated at the public expense; and when they have finished their studies they are either sent as secretaries to Constantinople, or as dragomen to some of the scales or ports in the Levant; by this means they have always about them people on whom they can depend, being of their own nation and religion, in short, children of the state. At present there is not a member of the German mission at

Constantinople, who cannot speak, read, and write, from five to eight different languages. The present Internuncio was formerly a dragoman.

Several young men are attached to the Russian mission, who are carefully instructed in the necessary languages. Princes, and people of the highest consideration do not think it beneath them to reside at Constantinople, for the purpose of learning these, when they propose filling a diplomatic situation.

The French have a number of young men educated at the public expense, who live in the palace at Pera. When Brune came as ambassador to Constantinople, he brought with him twelve young gentlemen, whose education is now completed; they will be employed as dragomen, secretaries, or consuls, at the different ports, and if they display talents sufficient, will, in time, be raised to the highest situations of which their line of life will admit.

The British have never paid any attention to their interest in this way; we have but one English youth educated by the Levant Company, who lives at Smyrna. At Constantinople there are three, children of people settled in the country; and should they ever come to be good for any thing, they cannot expect to have the interest of Britain any more at heart than their salary prescribes; besides Roman Catholics ought never to be entrusted with the secrets of a protestant nation. Much might be said on this head, but as it has been observed that the Turkish empire is falling into decay, it will not now be an object worthy the attention of Britain to have young men educated for the office of dragomen at the Turkish Court.

It would be leading you into a subject not at all interesting to you; were I to discuss this topic any further, or were I to enter at large on the gross impropriety of sending young men of family, as secretaries, on so important a mission as that to

the Porte. It would be better that they should remain at school in their native country for a few years longer, and that the government should select men of capacity, who would feel inclined to be of service to the state. Even these diplomatic boys themselves are mistaken, if they think Turkey a country where they may carry on their intrigues at pleasure. The Turkish fair are too well guarded; and the Turk will take his revenge without ceremony: there are no trials for gallantry here, and papa's purse will have but little weight with an enraged Mussulman. Besides, drinking is held in abhorrence by the better sort of people. A drunken gentleman is looked upon as a brute; in short, Turkey will not do for boys who leave home to seek pleasure—it is fit only for men of business.

Guillot
am Pde. Thank you
Dr
 VOL. I.

Constantin

LETTER XVI.

Black Sea.—Navigation of it but little known.—Ambelique.—Sea of Azoph.—Taganrock.—Climate.—Port.—Kaffa.—Town of Taganrock.—Dust.—Fortress.—Arsenal.—Island.—Canal.

Taganrock, Sea of Azoph, 1805.

At length I have put in execution my long projected plan of visiting the ports of Taganrock and Odessa, in the Black Sea.

On the 20th of May, after waiting some days for a south wind, I sailed from Buyukdery, a village on the borders of the Channel of Constantinople, for the Black Sea, on board of a Spanish brig. The current which runs from the Black Sea, is so strong that a good breeze is necessary in order to

make head against it; its influence is felt even at ten miles clear of land, when it begins to take another direction. The Black Sea, from its particular form, being like a bason, into which many rivers pour their streams, is full of currents, a just calculation of which it is almost impossible to make, and the navigation is hereby rendered uncertain and dangerous, as the weather is generally stormy and thick.

The navigation of the Black Sea is but little known, being usually performed by people who are not very skilful seamen; the charts likewise are extremely incorrect; for instance, the French chart, which was till lately the only one made use of, sets down Capa on the Asia side, 15 miles too far north, and Capa Caraza on the Crimea, 22 miles too far south; this we had an opportunity of ascertaining, having got two very good observations, which I found to be correct, by comparing notes after my arrival, with some captains, who perfectly

agreed with me. This therefore makes a difference in the width of the sea, of 37 miles. From the variety of the currents, we found, in making the Crimea, that we were carried by them about 50 miles north, and 31 west, of our reckoning. On the 26th, we arrived at Ambelique, a bay near the east end of the Crimea, and not far from the entrance of the sea of Asoph, or what was anciently called the Palus Meotis.

Ambelique is the place appointed for ships going into the sea of Azoph, to stop at, to have their papers of health examined; we went on shore, were fumigated, and ordered to strike ourselves hard on the groin and arm-pits, to prove that we had no infection; after which we went through an examination as to the state of our health, and the condition in which we left Constantinople.

By order of the Russian government,

ships should perform three days quarantine at this place, before they proceed on their voyage; but the officers being at all times accessible to a bribe, antedate their report, and if the wind be fair, the stay at Ambelique is reduced to a few hours.

The passage into the sea of Azoph is dangerous if the wind be strong, but very safe in moderate weather. The entrance at the bar is extremely narrow, and plenty of buoys are laid down to facilitate it; there is seldom more than thirteen feet water on the bar, but the bottom is so soft, that in moderate weather no danger need be apprehended from touching. We fortunately had good weather; and paying all due attention to the buoys, which are very judiciously placed, got safe through, which was not the case with some vessels near us, as they ran aground, but soon hove off; in the afternoon we came to an anchor, in $3\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms water. At the narrowest part of this strait the Russians have a fort called

Jeanicoli, which completely commands the entrance. The south-east coast being very low, was our reason for coming to an anchor, as the weather was hazy.

It would be no difficult matter to see the coast on each side, going up the sea of Azoph, if the land was high, but it lies very low; and from this circumstance, and the state of the weather, we could descry no part of it. Upon the points of the sand banks, the government have placed flag-staffs; on the north side of the sea the flags are red, and those on the south are black; in order to sail free of danger, it is best to keep them nearly in a line. There is but little water in all the sea, and a ship may with safety come to anchor in any part of it, as the ground is good: the greatest depth of water we found was five fathoms, and close to the flags thirteen feet; indeed, owing to the haze, we passed more than once on the wrong side, though within a few yards of the port: but our

vessel being light, this occasioned nothing more than the Greek pilot crossing himself.

On the 3d of June we came to an anchor off the town of Taganrock, at the distance of three wersts from the shore. We found upwards of 200 ships of different flags and sizes, waiting for cargoes.

Taganrock is a small city, situated near the head of the sea of Azoph, on a promontory of land, from which it takes its name Taganrock, or the Angel Rock; it is in latitude 46 degrees.

The climate is in the two extremes of heat and cold; during the summer the most scorching heat prevails, and in the winter the frost is intense: but in spring and autumn, both of which are however short, the temperature is mild and pleasant.

The port, if it deserves the name, is a

most wretched one. From the shallowness of the sea, vessels of even moderate burthen are obliged to lie at the distance of from three to even ten wersts from the town. Government has long had it in contemplation to shut up the navigation of this sea, and carry its commerce to Kaffa in the Crimea in small vessels, by which it would form an excellent nursery for seamen. The port of Kaffa, the ancient Theodolia, lies considerably to the west of the entrance of the sea of Azoph, but if you will take the trouble to look into a map of the country, you will see, that behind the Crim the sea runs down till within about 30 wersts of the aforesaid port. They have begun already to build the necessary magazines at Kaffa, and many families have been sent to cultivate the intermediate space of ground. The adoption of this measure will certainly cause a wonderful improvement in trade. The sea of Azoph is open only a few months of the year, and of those months,

in July and August, the water recedes, when a particular wind blows with such violence, that the shipping is aground many wersts from the shore. The water is at times so scarce on the bar, that no vessels of any burthen can enter, unless they take lighters to carry down part of their cargoes, which of course they are often obliged to do. At Kaffa there are none of these difficulties to encounter; the port is fine, and the sea seldom frozen; even in the depth of winter ships arrive at Kaffa, and other parts of the Crimea, which is certainly the best spot on that side of Russia whereon to build sea-ports.

The town of Taganrock consists of about one thousand small houses, built chiefly of wood and mud, and covered over with bark; very few indeed are of brick or stone.

The streets are wide and unpaved;

when it rains for only an hour, they become impassable; the soil is so fine, that the mud is immediately knee deep in many places, and so clammy and slippery, that it is both disagreeable and dangerous to a foot passenger. You will think me capricious, but this I can assure you is not the case; when the rain ceases for a few hours, the streets still continue intolerable; the sun and wind quickly dry up the moisture, and raise a cloud of dust from the fine mould, which I have mentioned to you, and which is reduced to an impalpable powder by the feet of crowds of oxen and horses, that are passing every instant with produce from the country: the wind, which is generally strong, carries this dust into the air in such clouds, that I have actually seen the sun darkened by them for a considerable time, and at the breadth of a street have not been able for several minutes to distinguish a man from a horse: this dust is carried so far, that with the wind off the land, at

three wersts distance, I have been almost choaked with it. The first time I saw these clouds, I concluded that they were certainly the forerunners of an earthquake. I esteem this circumstance as one of the most unpleasant attending a residence here, and should have supposed it very pernicious to the health of the inhabitants, but they all look well and hardy, and a medical friend, who had received his education in Edinburgh, assured me that they were not afflicted with disease any more than other people. I observed, however, that the doctor, who, like myself, had no inclination to drink water impregnated with dust, always had it boiled with a little salt of tartar, which precipitated all the sediment. I found it impossible to keep out the dust: the houses were filled with it even when the windows were kept down, and although I wore thick pantaloons and boots, at night I found my skin perfectly black. This, in some measure, accounts for the

dirtiness of the Russians in this quarter; I never saw a dirtier set of men, and upon mentioning it, I was told that they said, this was to be "in the English fashion:" they were quite surprised to see me always the cleanest in the company.

The fortress of Taganrock is regular and extensive; it has a deep wide moat, and many bastions, on which no guns are at present mounted; it is large enough to accommodate conveniently 50,000 men; all the military are lodged within it; it stands upon the point from which the town takes its name. Immediately under the fortress, Peter the Great built an arsenal for his small craft employed in this sea against the Tartars on the opposite side: in this arsenal they lay protected during the rigours of the winter. From its situation it is very secure; but to render it still more so, he built an island three wersts out into the sea, which he fortified;

he also cut a canal, which passed from the arsenal to it, and several wersts farther into the sea. The arsenal, canal, and island are now in a great measure neglected; the island begins to disappear, and the canal has only about nine feet water in it. Merchant ships are allowed, by bribing the governor, to go into the arsenal to repair, and even to winter, when they happen to be overtaken by that season setting in sooner than they expected, and thereby preventing their departure.

LETTER XVII.

Trade of Taganrock.—Money.—Weights.—Measures.—Grain.—Different Articles of Commerce.—Caviar.—Butter.—Fairs.—Drawback to Trade, for want of an Exchange.

Taganrock, June, 1805.

THE trade of Taganrock is considerable; it is carried on principally by Ragusan and Greek supercargoes, who come with the vessels during the spring, and leave the country as soon as the cargoes are completed. The Ragusans have fine ships, and are all good seamen, the art of navigation forming a part of the education of most of the youth of the republic. These men are treated with kindness

here, but the Greeks are people of so little principle, that the Russians consider them as rogues by whom they have been often deceived. The Greeks who come here are mostly from Cephalonia, and are the greatest villains of all those who bear the now disgraceful name.

Before entering at large upon the trade of this port, that you may the better understand it, I will give you an idea of the money, weights, and measures of the country.

Silver money is not in use in this part of Russia; indeed, I never saw it but at card parties, when they seldom play for paper. Silver money bears an agio of 30 per cent.

The current money of Russia is copecs and rubles; the copecs are of copper, five of them weigh about an ounce; the rubles are of paper, like bank bills, and are from

two upwards. One hundred copecs make a ruble, which, according to the exchange, June 1805, was worth 32 pence sterling. They have gold money in Russia, but I have never seen it current.

The weights of this part of Russia are fents, puds, celverts, and bergovitz; 40 fents make 1 pud, and 9 puds and 9 fents make one celvert, 10 of which is 1 bergovitz; but besides this celvert of weight, they have one of measure, which is composed of eight morea, and which weighs of good wheat 10 puds. The long measure is the archine, which is nearly 29 inches: the werst, which is about three quarters of an English mile, I shall frequently have occasion to mention.

From the situation of Taganrock, at the head of the sea of Azoph, and nearly at the mouth of two rich rivers, namely, the Don and the Volga, and its also being in a fertile part of Russia, it enjoys a trade

in many staple articles, not known in the ports in the west of the Crimea, unless brought from hence.

The wheat of Taganrock and its environs is of the best kind, being what is called Arnaut, a hard wheat of a fine yellow or gold colour, and short of the pile. About 300 cargoes, of 200 tons each of this grain are annually brought into market, and readily bought up for the markets of Italy and Spain.

Besides wheat, they have also abundance of fine barley, rye, and oats, but the last is much inferior to what you have at home. Peas and beans are likewise plenty, and flour of different kinds is not scarce. All these articles are to be had on reasonable terms at the proper season.

Tallow is very abundant; about one hundred thousand puds are annually col-

lected here and in the neighbourhood; of these, two thousand tons are sent to the Petersburg market alone.

Bees-wax is made in great quantities; at the fair of Coronea, this year, ten thousand puds were exposed to sale; much of this article is disposed of at all the fairs. The environs of Taganrock supply plenty of honey.

Wool is of no small moment, now that the prohibition to export it is done away with: the qualities are various, and it differs in price from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 35 rubles the pud; the quantity is immense, particularly of the coarser kind.

Peter was at great pains to promote the cultivation of wool; he presented to the family of Nadarzenski ten thousand sheep of different breeds for the purpose, with the condition that none of them were to be killed.

Iron, from Siberia, comes down the Volga in immense quantities. It is of three different qualities, and according to these, differs in price from 15 to 20 per cent. Any quantity of iron may be had by giving orders at the proper season.

Hemp and flax are also plentiful. The hemp of Orel is esteemed the best, although all that grows in this neighbourhood is good.

Hides, both salted and tanned, are plenty and cheap; an immense number of vasshetti rosso, or red hides, are annually shipped for Italy.

Cordage is an article not to be passed over in silence; that which is ready made is not always the best, but by paying attention to its manufacture, it may be had of the best quality on easy terms. The finest twine for sail-making, or any

other purpose, is manufactured in the interior.

Canvas is made in great quantities, and is to be purchased at a very reasonable price; to the fairs, in particular, much of it is brought: they in general expose three different kinds, viz. heavy strong canvas, a second quality merely a little lighter, and a third sort, useful in making marquees, or light sails for shipping: these vary five per cent. from one another in price.

Taganrock likewise furnishes timber for shipbuilding, and the finest of spars for ship masts, &c. These articles come down the river from Siberia; pitch and tar come likewise from the same place; they are both of a superior quality.

Caviar, or sturgeon roe, is exported from Taganrock to the amount of 50,000 puds annually; it is made on the Don and the Volga rivers, and consumed both

by Roman Catholic and Greek on their meagre days. The mode of fishing for the sturgeon, from which this roe is extracted, is curious; pieces of iron are bent in the form of hooks, and fastened to strong ropes, which are laid across the river, and anchored by large stones: the fish coming up to deposit its spawn, gets entangled, and being at all times of an indolent and lazy nature, and probably at this season sick with the weight of its roe, never attempts to extricate itself. The roe is taken out, and salted in barrels, which contain 50 puds each. Caviar is jet black in colour, and looks very like black soap; at first it has a strong fishy taste, but after eating it once or twice, the palate becomes reconciled to it; it is generally eaten with oil and vinegar, or with bread and fresh butter. The back part of the fish is salted and dried, when it tastes like bacon. The other parts are, I suppose, eaten by the fishermen, or sold fresh on the spot, as I never saw them

exposed to sale. They have many other kinds of salted fish.

From the great trade in tallow, it may be imagined that beef is to be had in quantities. Formerly, in order to extract the tallow, the whole carcase was thrown into a kettle and boiled; now the government has ordered, that only the tallow is to be taken off, and the beef to be salted and dried, which is always done; but from the ignorance of the people in salting, it has not been found to keep well. The British government has sent persons into the country for the curing of beef and pork, which is also plenty, but hitherto they have performed nothing wonderful in that way, though they have expended a great deal of money.

The butter in this part is very good and plentiful; a great deal of it is carried into Turkey, where the Turks mix it with tallow; it is exported in skins, into which

it is poured in a melted state; hitherto they melted most of their butter, but of late a colony of Germans at Saratoff have begun to make and salt it according to the mode in our country. I have seen some of it, and it is as good as any I ever tasted. The melted butter, though it cannot be eaten with bread, is very useful for culinary purposes.

Hare skins are plenty, and might with attention become an article of considerable importance; and camel's hair often makes its appearance at the fairs, although but in trifling quantities, for want of sale, but it is supposed that a great deal might be had, if there was a market for it.

The fairs in this part of Russia deserve to be mentioned. That of Micaria is one of the greatest in the world: merchants even from China attend it, and exchange their eastern treasures for our western manufactures. This fair commences on the

first of August (old style), and continues fifteen days; that of Coronea is likewise one of no small importance; a great number of India articles are bartered at it, and at both of them, as well as those of lesser note, the produce of the country is exchanged from one hand to another to an immense amount. The fair of Coronea is in June, and continues for a week. At these two fairs, contracts are entered into for the delivery of export articles, and at others, for the delivery of many articles in the spring.

A great drawback to the trade carried on in these parts of Russia arises from the want of a proper exchange; add to this the ignorance of those who call themselves merchants, who have never hitherto shewn speculators the disadvantage of bringing specie instead of bills into the market; this specie is generally the gold of Venice and Holland, and the silver of Spain, but the gold is preferable. Ships coming

from Christendom exchange either their money or bills at Constantinople for these monies, which are more current in that city than almost in any other, even as much so as the money of the Sultan, which is often scarce. These sequins and ducats they carry to the ports of the Black Sea; and on their arrival, an estaffel, or courier, is dispatched with them to Moscow, to get them converted into Russian paper. Although there is no exchange in the ports of the Black Sea, yet a regular one is kept up at Moscow and Petersburg with most of the principal commercial countries at the following places — London, Amsterdam, Vienna, Paris, Hamburgh, Constantinople, and, I believe, Leghorn. It is plainly to be perceived, that the loss of so many exchanges, and the risk of carrying specie would be obviated, by the merchant at Leghorn, for instance, sending bills to his agent at Moscow, to be turned into cash before the arrival of his ship or ships at

the port in the Black Sea, where she is to load; or by desiring the Muscovite to value on him, payable at where the exchange was most convenient; by this, as I have said, they would avoid the risk of sending cash, which they do all the way even from Lisbon and Spain, subject to the dangers of the sea and the plunder of banditti; they incur likewise a loss of from six to nine months interest on their money, a matter of no small importance in countries where it is from ten to twelve per cent. besides the charge of insurance, which is not little: the loss on specie also is considerable, seldom less than from 15 to 20 per cent. the expense of sending the cash to be converted is first 250 rubles to him who carries it, and a half per cent. to the government, which insures its safe return. The other expense, say commission at Moscow, could not be saved, as in whatever way the business is transacted, that must be paid.

The import trade is very inconsiderable; it is limited to a few cargoes of oil, fruit, wine, caribe, or locust, rum, sugar, some drugs, a little cotton yarn, and very few manufactures indeed.

LETTER XVIII.

Society of Taganrock.—Russian feasts.—Madame K.—ff.—Manners of the Russians.—Music.—Baths.—Riding.—Slavery.—Enjoyments of the Table.—Tea.

Taganrock, June, 1805.

I MUST now give you some account of the people I am amongst. Of the society of Taganrock I think but indifferently; it is composed of two classes, those who are military, and those who are not, and they equally despise each other; from what I have seen, the military are proud, ceremonious, and mean. I have more than once been highly amused at a Russian feast; all at table are here served according to their rank: first, the general and his lady, then the colonel and his, and so on, through every gradation or degradation of rank.

At last, after the dignitaries are served, the scraps come to the civilians. This accounts for what we think so strange in the Russian nation, where there are so many generals who are not soldiers, otherwise civilians, with the title and rank of generals; these are conferred on them by the government, to exalt in society those who would otherwise be fed on scraps at a feast. But although his excellency must be served at table before the civilian, yet he will submit to be served after him in many other things which we should esteem of much greater consequence. I would not, however, be understood as saying this of all the Russian officers, for, amongst them, I have met with gentlemen whom I shall remember with gratitude to the latest hour of my life.

I have often heard it remarked, that it is necessary to keep at the greatest distance with many of these officers, for if they should once get a footing in your house,

they will not leave it, and will submit to receive the most unpleasant hints, till you are at last obliged to have recourse to the well known Irish one, and literally turn them down stairs.

The other class of society is more humble and friendly. Both are fond of shew and play, and the pay of a Russian officer can ill support the extravagance to which he is addicted; many of them have, however, little else than their pay to depend on, unless they are married to a pretty woman, whom her husband will allow, without much scruple, to maintain his family, if he can get a little cash by it. The Russians are particularly fond of cards and billiards. Their chief game at cards is called Boston; and I have also seen Pharo played amongst them; they are in general good players.

But amidst the wild Muscovites at Taganrock, are to be found, beings of a more

civilized nature. Madam K——ff, the widow of a late governor, unites to the best education, the most polished manners; she very properly despises the brutal customs of the country; she forms for herself, and lives in a circle which is a delightful one; at her house many Russian absurdities are entirely laid aside, both from her marked disapprobation of them, and from her high rank and easy manners. Beneath her roof I have passed many happy hours, and enjoyed here the satisfaction of conversing in my own language, which both she and an old baron, her tutor, speak fluently; she is also mistress of the French and Italian, and her native languages, the Russian and Armenian. I frequently met at her house with General K——i, a friend of her late husband, a gentleman of very polished manners.

From what follows you will perhaps set me down as a severe censor, and conclude

that I am disgusted with the Russians; but I must speak the truth.

In this place they have no public amusements; in winter, indeed, during Carnival, there used to be balls, but the Russians drank so much, and paid so ill, that those of the inhabitants, who made a conscience of paying, found these parties too expensive, and in place of scenes of merriment and sociability, they were in general only drunken cabals, which usually had some very disagreeable termination.

The Russians are very fond of music, and are sadly addicted to drinking; in the latter, only the ladies of the lower class join with them in this part of the country. The national music, at least the vocal part of it, into which they introduce a whistle, and loud beating of the hands and feet, is dreadful: nothing, in my opinion, can be more barbarous: and, after dinner, I have

seen a band of slaves ordered into the lobby to entertain the company. I am told, however, though I must confess I never heard it, that a part of the Russian music, composed of a band of horns, is truly grand. These horns are formed like the gamut, and every man sounds only his own note when it comes to his turn. I do not recollect if I ever saw the Russians dance; at present the weather is too warm for that exercise.

You and I have often laughed at the strange description of the Russian baths; I believe only half the truth has been told to us. In these baths, that is to say, in the warm ones, both sexes meet promiscuously in a state of nature; and after washing, and no doubt admiring one another a considerable time, they plunge into cold water; but this indelicacy, as it would certainly be considered in Britain, is not confined to the baths. Shortly after my arrival here, I was standing on the

beach, when a well-dressed female began to strip herself by my side; I concluded that she was out of her senses, and at one time thought of preventing her from so doing; she was, however, quickly undressed, and ran off into the sea, buffeting the waves. I was presently convinced that the poor woman was not madder than the rest of her countrywomen, for I perceived several more of them coming, who soon followed her example, and swam about like a parcel of sea nymphs. This custom does not proceed from a want of modesty, it is merely peculiar to the nation; and although in the eyes of an Englishman it has a singular appearance, yet to a Muscovite there is nothing offensive to delicacy in it. One of our modest, half-naked British fair would be looked on by a Turk as the most abandoned of her sex, a supposition which alone would make her faint, but would not induce her to cover herself.

Riding, particularly in a small carriage

called a droski, is a favourite amusement at this place; the droski is generally drawn by one horse, and is very low, with a seat for one person on each side, between the fore and hind wheels, and another for the driver in front; it is very dangerous from the narrowness of the axle, however the wheels are low; the seats are placed in a most unsociable manner, the parties sitting back to back; but in some of these carriages they extend from the fore to the hind wheels, in the shape of a form covered and stuffed, and the riders sit a-straddle upon them as close as they can, one behind another. In these machines they drive about at a great rate, sometimes drawn by three horses a-breast, and the two off horses being trained to an amble, while the middle one trots, the effect is very pretty.

Slavery is carried here to an amazing pitch. It is nothing uncommon to see one man lord of ten, nay, even twenty thousand of his fellow creatures, of whom he

disposes as he would of the cattle on his grounds; some of them indeed cannot be sold, but along with the land they cultivate; they are often exposed in the market for sale, like sheep, and being the indisputable property of their purchaser in every respect, are treated as slaves or concubines, as circumstances direct, with this shameful addition, that "all children of slaves are slaves;" and it is nothing uncommon for a Muscovite, after he becomes tired of his female slave, to sell her and all the children he has had by her. Sometimes a generous man may give his favourite her liberty, and send her, with her offspring, off his estate; but of this piece of generosity, trifling as it is, very few instances occur.

I am not much acquainted with the laws in Russia, respecting the punishment of slaves, but I believe the proprietors must be answerable for their lives; and that in cases of cruelty their complaint will be heard before a civil magistrate. The male

slaves are, more or less, at the call of the state; and after some years service, if they have behaved well, procure their liberty as a reward.

The Russians carry the enjoyment of the table to greater excess than I ever saw in any other country. What had to me a very curious appearance was, that in summer, a course of hot meats, and another of iced meats of the same kind, were served together; they have cold and warm soup; the cold may to a Russian palate be very excellent, but it is a luxury in which I would rather be excused indulging. Their cookery is in general to be commended; they have good materials, and their cooks are mostly from other countries. Their repast in the drawing room is another of their ridiculous customs: this, which is given immediately before dinner, consists of articles of a salt, relishing nature, accompanied by wines and cordials; drams of a stronger kind are also introduced.

Some of the company now and then forget they have to dine afterwards, and by way of securing themselves, play a round game with their knives and forks; neither is it thought any thing remarkable to see a person go into the dining room "half seas over."

Their common drink is something like our small beer, it is called quash, and is made by pouring hot water upon rye-bread; this is left to ferment, and soon produces a drink, at first disagreeable, but afterwards very grateful to the palate. They have also beer, but it is very bad; mead of a good quality is the beverage of some of the better sort of people.

The Russians consume a great quantity of tea; it is used in every family, and they certainly have the best which is drank in Europe; it is said to lose much of its flavour by water carriage. The fine tea which they drink in Russia, is called the flower of tea, and is brought by land by the Chinese

merchants, who come to the fairs, and here exchange it for other articles used in their country. I was much pleased with the Russian tea-urns, and think them well contrived; they are made of brass, and are of various shapes, like those in Great Britain; but in place of an iron heater, they have long tubes, into which live charcoal is put; from small holes in the bottom of the tube, it draws air, and keeps the water constantly boiling; and the charcoal being well burnt before the urn is brought into the room, has no bad smell.

LETTER XIX.

*Journey to Odessa.—Kebitka.—Cherson.—
Carriages with wounded soldiers.—Russian
Police.*

Odessa, July, 1805.

I BADE adieu to my friends at Taganrock, and set out for this city in a Kebitka, which I was obliged to purchase, to convey me hither, the post carriages being too miserable and too open for the prosecution of so long a journey, determined as I was to push on without stopping, but to change horses.

Travelling in Russia is perhaps as reasonable and as expeditious as in any other country. Having finished my stay at Ta-

ganrock, and no water conveyance presenting itself, I was under the necessity of proceeding to Odessa by land, a journey of about a thousand wersts, through a country ill peopled, and as ill cultivated, by a road on which no inns are to be found, and no resting place but the carriage you travel in; on this account you must furnish yourself with provisions for the whole journey, a very great inconvenience in summer time, as it takes nearly a week to complete it. I had, however, some salt provisions, which I kept until the very last, and without starving, arrived safely. I found a small quantity of shrub, made from Lobon's receipt, an excellent companion, as it renders the water a safe drink, which might otherwise be dangerous.

I must describe to you my kebitka, which I assure you I found wonderfully better than my fears at starting would allow me to suppose it would be. This kebitka ran on four wheels, and had no

springs: I found the body of it just long enough for my sea matrass, which I laid in it with all my bed cloaths. I had a large cushion, upon which I sat during the day, and which served as a bolster at night, for I lay down as if in bed, and once or twice took all my clothes off. Nothing on a long journey is so comfortable as undressing, and now and then plunging into the rivers in your course, which I sometimes did.

My friends at Taganrock used all their endeavours to dissuade me from setting out, thinking the fatigue would be too much for me, but I have been so long accustomed to travelling, and all the inconveniences attendant thereon, that I had no apprehensions myself; I performed the journey in six days. A Greek captain who prided himself much on his strength, and on his dexterity in travelling and procuring horses, set out for this place three days before me; I overtook him two posts

from hence, worn out by fatigue, although he had rested himself a day on the road. I passed through Cherson and Nicoloff in the night, so you must not expect any particular account of the country over which I travelled: it was, in general, uncultivated, and uninhabited; abounding with game of different sorts, remarkably tame.

Cherson appeared by moonlight to be a handsome city, with some good buildings and wide streets: I was detained here an hour or two for horses, they being all taken up for the courier who was expected, but upon my producing a letter of introduction to the Duc de Richelieu, and using some threats in case of my longer detention, I with difficulty obtained what I wanted.

About a day's journey from Odessa, I passed nearly thirty carriages, drawn by four horses each; on a near approach to

them I discovered that they contained wounded soldiers who were coming from Corfu, and that they belonged to the military hospital. They were built like the close coaches of this country, but of rude materials: the covering seemed to be of painted canvas.

The meeting with these carriages excited some pleasing ideas: it was gratifying to see the poor fellows who had been wounded in the cause of their country, so well taken care of, and so comfortably transported: I fancy they had been landed at Odessa.

In some things the police in Russia is very strict: you can have no post horses without first producing your passport, which is enrolled in the post book, and by this means, any one who is running away, or otherwise attempting to conceal himself, may be discovered with ease.

LETTER XX.

Odessa.—Its situation.—Port.—Population.—Buildings.—Amusements.—Duc de Richelieu.—Merchants.—Imports.—Inhabitants.—Port of Sevastople.

Odessa, July 1805.

ODESSA, the favorite city of its tutelar, his grace the Duc de Richelieu, is pleasantly situated near the head of a bay, and between the rivers Dneiper and Dneister: government has spared no expense to render it a safe and commodious port: they have formed a harbour in which ships of no small burthen may ride secure from every storm. They are now, at an immense cost, building a mole or key which extends nearly half a werst into the sea; this when finished, will be of considerable

utility, as ships will be enabled to load from the carts, instead of lighters, the mode pursued at present, which is both expensive and less safe. Besides this grand mole, they have built several smaller ones, and others have been projected, which are now also going on: here is a fine Lazaretto placed in an airy situation, and a deposit house where goods may lie eighteen months without paying duty, and if then found unsaleable, may be re-shipped on the payment of a trifling charge. The roads without the port are safe in summer, and the anchorage good; at present several hundred ships are riding in them, waiting for cargoes.

The city of Odessa has existed scarcely four years; the population is already upwards of ten thousand, and is daily increasing. The houses and magazines are very good; they are all built of a kind of free-stone, and the town being formed upon a plan, you see at present fine streets,

which in a few years will be finished. The shops are commodious, and well stocked with every necessary article, the produce both of this, and of distant countries. The market place is large, and is filled during the summer months with every species of the vegetable kind. The streets are wide, but from the infant state of the city, are as yet unpaved; this makes them very disagreeable, both from the dust in dry weather, and the mud in wet. Not a tree is to be seen for many miles, owing, it is said, to the blighting winds which blow at times, to the destruction of every plant and tree unprotected from them. Small gardens, sheltered by walls, now begin to be formed, and shrubs make their appearance, formerly unknown in this country.

Odessa is become the summer residence of the Polish nobility, who repair hither in crowds to enjoy sea-bathing. The places of public diversion are by no means contemptible; they have a small theatre at

present, and one much larger is building: there are also balls twice or thrice a week; both these amusements are well attended, The Polish nobility are very gay, the ladies in general lively and pretty.

The duke, so deservedly the favourite of every one from the czar to the beggar, arrived only the day previous to my departure, so that I had not an opportunity to be introduced to him. I saw him, however, at the theatre and at a ball the same evening; he is tall and thin, but well proportioned; his countenance indicates penetration, and his manners are prepossessing; he appears to be about forty-five years of age. The palace occupied by this illustrious emigrant is but small; much inferior in size and decoration to many of the houses inhabited by the mercantile part of the community, who live under his government. The deputy governor of the town is an Englishman, a General Cobby, who was formerly a

merchant at Naples, and was then esteemed the handsomest man in the two Sicilies.

The merchants who reside in Odessa are much more respectable than those of Taganrock; they are formed of people from every country: two English houses are established here, but the principal part are Germans and Italians; their houses are respectable and in good credit. These merchants are very hospitable; they carry on an amazing trade, it is supposed that, this year, one thousand ships will be loaded in the port of Odessa. Wheat may be said to be the only export article; it is very far inferior to that of Taganrock, being soft wheat, the produce of Polonea, it is much more perishable, being apt to heat. They export also a few other articles, which I have mentioned as the produce of Taganrock; from thence they are brought hither.

The imports here are trifling; they are of the same sort as those carried to Taganrock; some of the ships from Italy bring a few pieces of wrought marble, and most of the Malta vessels come ballasted with Malta stone, which is somewhat like a hard chalk, and is used for flagging low houses and magazines.

The inhabitants are very hospitable, and pay great attention to strangers. Being recommended to several of the first houses, I met with every possible civility, and received from them unreservedly all the information they could give me of a mercantile nature, the obtaining of which, you know, had induced me to undertake the voyage. Besides Christians, the Jews form a large part of the population; they are from Polonea, and the Jewesses are by far the prettiest Israelites I ever saw in any country; they are mostly fair-complexioned; they are fond of Christians, and are far less virtuous than others of

their religion, whom I have had an opportunity of seeing; they are even so partial to the Russians, that we might conclude they had no objection to swine's flesh.

The port of Sevastople lies at no great distance from Odessa, being at the west end of the Crimea: I had no occasion to visit it, but from report it has a very fine arsenal, commodious and safe. No merchant ship is allowed to go in, unless driven there by stress of weather.

Having now procured all the information I wanted, and finding a Maltese vessel about to sail for Constantinople, I have resolved to put myself on board of her.

LETTER XXI.

*Voyage.—Black Sea.—Danger of entering
the Channel of Constantinople.—Fish.—
Joubert.*

Buyukdery, August, 1805.

I HAVE again the pleasure of addressing you from the neighbourhood of Constantinople, where I arrived last night after a passage of four days.

The first day after we sailed, we had a fine leading wind, and got a good way on our voyage; we were nearly a-breast of the Danube, when a contrary wind, which increased to a gale, destroyed all our hopes of a quick passage; added to this, our vessel was old, crazy, and heavily

laden; during the gale, which lasted a whole day, we kept both pumps going, and, as she laboured very much, we had enough ado to keep her free, and were not without apprehensions of her foundering.

The navigation of the Black Sea is dangerous; it is narrow, and so many large rivers disembogue themselves at this end of it, that the currents are strong and various; we were also running down a lee-shore, and the weather was so thick, that a Russian frigate was within hail of us before we saw either her or a large fleet under her convoy. It is not improbable, that this sea may have received its name from the hazy weather which prevails in it, and from the danger attending its navigation. Making the land for the channel or canal of Constantinople is particularly dangerous; every year ships are lost. The mountains are all so much alike, that it is difficult to determine which

of them is at the entrance, until you are within a very few miles of the coast; then with a fair wind you are on a lee shore with a lee current, and if you make a mistake, destruction is almost inevitable. The Turks have two light houses at the entrance; but, unless you see them before sun-set, they are of little use. In the forests on its borders, great quantities of charcoal are made, and the lights from it bewilder, and often mislead, the unhappy mariner.

The Black Sea abounds with fish, but it is a false assertion, that none of a destructive nature are to be found in it. I have seen thousands of porpoises and some sword fish. The water is almost fresh, only a little brackish; but how can it be otherwise, when it is only like a reservoir, into which so many large rivers empty themselves.

The south-east shores are little known;

it is said the inhabitants are sad barbarians, and put to death the unhappy mortals who are wrecked upon their coasts; but this may perhaps be only the bugbear of ignorance and pusillanimity: few ever visit these shores wilfully. This spring, indeed, a French emissary (Joubert)* was sent by his master (Bonaparte) into Persia by this route, to stir up her princes against Britain; he went from Constantinople to Trebisonda; so careful was Bonaparte that this should be kept secret, that he ordered to be published his arrival at Bukharest, Vienna, and Paris, in company with another of his emissaries, a Venetian, named Francini,

* Joubert was for many months supposed to be lost, and his family at Paris were under the greatest apprehensions for his safety: even when I left Constantinople, in June 1806, no accounts had been heard of him, and a credit which was opened for him with a respectable banking house in that city had not been used.

who acted on a former occasion, not far distant, as a spy at Vienna; but it was known at Constantinople the week after their outset, that they separated at the mouth of the channel, the one for Varna and the other for Trebisonda. The better to cover the deceit, it was promulgated at Constantinople, that Joubert came on a secret mission to Selim the Sultan, and that he had a private audience with him at the Kiosk on the canal; it was asserted, that he asked a present for his master, which the officers of state refused, unless an equivalent was given in return; this was agreed to by Rufine, the *chargé des affaires*, and a box set with diamonds was sent to Bonaparte. This report was quite current at Constantinople, but respecting the truth of it I can say nothing.

LETTER XXII.

Port.—Trade.—Articles of Import.—Of Commerce in general.—Decline of Commerce in Turkey.—Causes of it.—Brokers.

Constantinople, 1805.

I SHALL now indulge myself by giving you an account of the commerce of this capital, which I have so long promised you.

The port of Constantinople, and indeed the whole of the canal, from the mouth of the Hellespont to the entrance of the Black Sea, is filled with the ships of different nations, which are obliged to stop here for two reasons,—first, going into the

Black Sea for a bill of health, and on returning to take a tescare, or order, to pass the castle at the Dardanelles: notwithstanding the commerce of Constantinople is nothing, comparatively speaking, to what it appears to be; it is true, that many of the ships going into the Black Sea bring some trifling articles to this city, yet very few indeed come entirely loaded to her port.

But although the trade of Constantinople is limited, when compared with that of Smyrna, it is far better to prosecute on account of the difference both in the payments and the returns; in Smyrna, for many articles it rarely happens that you can get the amount of your account in less than two or even three years, although the goods are nominally sold at a credit of three or six months; whereas, in Constantinople, should a sale be made at three months, before the end of six you may in general depend on payment; add

to this, that Constantinople offering no article of return, you get a settlement in cash, which is remitted in good bills of exchange; but from Smyrna it is seldom that funds can be withdrawn but in produce, on which, in general, the loss far surpasses the fine profits you had flattered yourself with in making your sales.

It is the interest of the factors to continue this mode of remitting, and to recommend it at all times; it is also that of the possessors of produce to make their payments in kind: it is the interest of the factor, as by this means he draws for the most part a kind of triple commission— one for the sale of the articles imported, another for the purchase which he makes of produce, and a third from the holder of that produce, for the disposal of it to his foreign correspondents; and it is also the interest of the holder to barter his goods for European ones, particularly British, as by this means he is exempted

from the necessity of sending his goods into our market, or of coming thither himself to make his choice of the staples and manufactures of the country.

The principal articles of import trade at Constantinople are the following: Tin, tin plates, shalloons, cloth, cotton goods, cotton yarn, indigo, cochineal, dye woods, pepper, vitriol, rum, sugar, arms, cutlery, watches, jewels, rabbit skins, glass, and furniture of all descriptions.

Tin has for a length of time been a standing article in Turkey. The Turks make great use of tinned dishes, and a large proportion of their current money is deeply alloyed with that metal. The consumption of tin for one year at Constantinople, is about four hundred barrels: the price fluctuates, but it is one of the safest articles. In 1805, the kintal of forty-four okes, equal to an English cwt., was worth from 160 to 170 piastres: the

consumption is more or less, according to the quantity wanted by government, and the price is in some degree regulated by the same rule.

Tin plates have not a very extensive sale; but three hundred boxes may be equal to the demand, and the price is very precarious; at one time this year it was 250 piastres the pair of boxes, and at another, it was difficult to procure more than 155 for them. This article is used chiefly for water-conduits and kitchen utensils.

Shalloons have been for ages in great demand here; they are much made use of in the dress of the orientals: the consumption has, however, decreased considerably; only two hundred bales are disposed of in a year. Shalloons formerly yielded a great profit, but this, like that on all other British articles, is now but small; the price is regulated according to the quality:

Tin in all shapes is used in India & all made to the Swanough
to make this one of them
and exports -

this year it has run from 55 to 100 piastres
per piece.

Manchester
cloth has a very extensive sale; many
hundred bales are annually made use of,
principally the manufacture of France and
Germany. Scarcely forty bales of British
cloth are sold in a year.

Immense quantities of muslins are con-
sumed here, but of these, only a small
proportion are British; those from India
and Germany have the greatest sale, and
are brought into the market on much
more reasonable terms than the British
manufacturer can find it convenient to
send his goods upon. Manchester stuffs
are but little used in Constantinople.
Printed cottons for furniture are made use of
by all classes, therefore the consumption is
great, but a considerable quantity is printed
in the country; chintzes with large flowers
are preferred; the Turks have a great
aversion to figured patterns; seersuckers
and Indian gingham are worn both by

males and females in the summer; seer-
suckers with broad orange stripes are
those the most esteemed.

Cotton yarn is an article which it would
appear till very lately the British factors
knew little or nothing about. The con-
sumption of cotton twist amounts in one
year to 300 bales and upwards, producing
on a just calculation, about £100,000.
sterling, all of which is spun in Great
Britain, but has been supplied by way of
Germany, either through Triest, or by the
Danube. Formerly the yarn used in Con-
stantinople and its environs to a considera-
ble distance, was sent from India; at pre-
sent they are supplied in the way I have
mentioned; and our factors, who having
probably imbibed from the Turks the
principle of no innovation, never think
of recommending any thing but "tin,
tin plates, loaf sugar, shalloons, and in-
digo, which for many years have left a
very handsome profit in our market," now
perceive to their astonishment that the

immense quantity of cotton yarn used in Constantinople, is actually British manufacture, and that in spite of all their parsimonious laws, the Greeks receive via Germany!!

The demand for this article is increasing daily, from the great numbers of silk stuffs manufactured in the capital, all of which are wefted with cotton twist; these silk stuffs are very pretty, and are often flowered with gold and silver; they are in general made by Armenians, and are worn by most of the Levantines in Turkey.

Indigo is an article in almost universal use in this country from the great number of blue dresses worn here, particularly by the Greek and Armenian subjects; the consumption at Constantinople in one year is reckoned at 350 seroons; the price fluctuates according to the quantity in the market, and the quality of the indigo; this year it was from 34 to 46 piastres per

oke: that from St. Domingo is preferred to all others.

Cochineal is also a dye much used; and the quantity sold here may be estimated at 60 barrels annually; its price is always high during war time, at present it is from 65 to 100 piastres per oke; in peace it is much lower.

The consumption of dye woods here is not very considerable; about 500 kintals, principally of that of Campeachy, are sold here annually; the price is from 25 to 35 piastres per kintal.

Pepper, though it has not a very extensive sale, has been frequently a profitable branch of trade; the quantity purchased in this metropolis is said to be about 500 kintals in a year, but sometimes when it is wanted for the markets of the Black Sea ports, a great deal more is sold; the

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The consumption of sugar is considerable; about 150 hogsheads of loaf, and about four times that quantity of it, raw and powdered, are sold in a year. The price this season for loaf sugar is from 150 to 170 piastres per kintal, and for raw from 100 to 140: cases of that which is raw and powdered are preferred to hogsheads, as are also those containing small loaves from three to seven pounds of refined sugar.

Arms and cutlery are sold to a great amount, but it is impossible for me to give you an idea to what extent; many articles of this kind having been lately made on the continent, the British have for some time past had but little share in supplying them. About £5000. worth are reckoned to be all the English arms and cutlery that have been sold here.

On account of the new troops raised by

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Armenians having brought large quantities to the Levant, the price is hereby considerably reduced; it now runs from two and a half to 3 piastres per oke.

Vitriol is also but a small article of trade; the supply used to come from Holland; only about 160 bottles are consumed in the year, and the price is at present about five piastres per oke.

Rum has of late become a tolerable article of commerce on account of the trade with Russia, to which market great quantities of it are sent; about 100 puncheons may be sold yearly; the newer it is, the better for this trade, in which that which is hot and fiery has the preference; but a few puncheons of old Jamaica are needed for the use of the Europeans: the price of rum runs from five to seven piastres per gallon.

*is one of those commodities
 sensible but undisputed
 lentis which continually occur
 at now
 it was
 rise in our markets at home
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 uplus
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 Turkey
 we do not think
 of several other nations
 to respect colonial
 products at present,*

*what
 market
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 many
 impossible to have exclusively allowed to occur*

the Sultan, ordinary pistols made in the Turkish taste, eighteen inches long in the barrel, would fetch at present a considerable price.

Watches form a considerable branch of the trade here; about 15,000 are sold annually. Formerly English watches were the only ones worn in Turkey, and the Turks having once conceived a good opinion of a thing, seldom alter it, so that those made by Perigolt, Markham, and Prior, were bought readily, and at great prices; now the works of those eminent watchmakers are imitated at Geneva, and in every town on the continent where watches are made. Being of inferior workmanship, and consequently cheaper, they have run away with the trade to such a degree, that the sale of those really made by Perigolt, Markham, and Prior, has diminished to only 300 per annum; still, however, these maintain a far higher price than

the counterfeits, Prior's in wholesale being from 110 to 120 piastres each silver watch.

The dealers in jewellery, particularly the British, whose taste and workmanship give the greatest satisfaction, have found Turkey an immense source of riches: to form an idea of the extent of the trade in jewels would be impossible, but it is great, and very profitable. Watches, daggers, boxes, and other things, mounted with diamonds and pearls, are daily sold to a considerable amount.

Of late, some French and Genoese who have studied the British taste, have done great injury to her trade in jewellery, and the Armenians, who are in general cunning workmen in gold, have now also learned to set and enamel with much neatness.

*The Trade
in Jewellery & Watches has
been injured by the
French & Genoese
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workmen in gold,
have now also
learned to set &
enamel with
much neatness.*

Rabbit skins I have mentioned, but they scarcely deserve it; they are used a good deal by the jews and lower class of inhabitants for lining to their pelisses. With attention, the trade in them may in time become more considerable; at present only about 20,000 are used in a year, averaging in price two piastres per skin; the light grey and deep black are preferred to all others.

The Europeans in the Levant, and indeed the Levantines themselves, run much upon English furniture, and from all appearances it may be calculated that a large quantity might be sold annually. I would recommend second hand furniture, consisting of chairs, tables, bureaux, chests of drawers, a few writing desks and the like; in all probability they would yield a handsome profit to the speculator, but I would advise these only to fill up a

vessel with, which might otherwise lie on the birth for a freight for a length of time. - *I don't think this is! am*

Crystal is sold to no small amount, but chiefly that of Bohemia; now that it is introduced, English glass comes too high, but still from its beauty, and other qualities, a little of it is sold to the higher ranks. The trade between Constantinople and Great Britain has diminished wonderfully indeed. The whole commerce of the empire is dwindling away daily. *will be*

The folly of the Turkish government is a principal reason of the decline of commerce in the state.

It is worthy of remark, that at a period not far distant, they had many articles for exportation, of which they have now scarcely a sufficiency to supply their own wants; silk, for instance, was once export-

ed in considerable quantities, at present hardly enough is to be found for the manufactories in the country, and that is at six times more than its former price. Every article of exportation has fallen off, the few which remain are raised to such prices as to render exporting them almost a certain loss. This proceeds, in a great measure, from the extortion of the Agas, or governors of provinces, and from the export goods being farmed by the rich destroyers of the state, who of course pay themselves a most miserable price, and prohibit the sale to any one else. Silk is at present farmed by the Reis Effendi, or minister of foreign affairs.

The necessaries of life are likewise scarce, and raised to an exorbitant price, being also farmed in every branch; only the great and the opulent can now have any thing good, and many of those necessaries are brought from other countries to that,

which, with a good government and a little attention, might be the granary of the rest. At present the populace are so burthened and distressed that they are cramped in all their motions, and have no spirit for enterprise left. It is heart-breaking to see one of the finest countries in the world in a state of ruin and decay; villages depopulated; fruitful fields lying waste, the richest pastures unstocked, the mulberry cut down for fire wood, and the vine left to grow wild; the husbandman is unable to gain a scanty pittance by his labour, the tythes being exacted with rigour, and the produce farmed at prices no cultivator can afford; the husbandman of many articles raises now only the quantity necessary to pay his tythes, for it is a maxim with the Aga and his people to make no allowance for a bad year; you have once paid tythes of an hundred, and if the year following you should have but that hundred, it must be his: he will listen to no reason that is against his interest.

The English trade in the Levant being a kind of monopoly, this circumstance may tend to cramp it; but as it is a monopoly of which every subject in Britain may become a partaker, by paying the sum of £20 sterling, it may be said to do no injury to the people of that country, excepting that it prevents the inhabitants of Turkey from becoming speculators in the British markets, and as they enjoy this liberty with other countries, they naturally prefer them; this also gives these countries another advantage, as the Levantines go into their markets, their manufactories become adapted to their taste and fashion.

But I impute the falling off of our trade at Constantinople, greatly to the want of enterprise in our factors: they seem content to jog on in their old way, finding in general a sufficient income from what they do, and leave the extension of trade, and

all the English factors at Constantinople have been born under the English Prohibition in Turkey, these factors proba

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the introduction of new articles, to those who choose to take the trouble.

Their mode also of carrying on trade is certainly a great drawback to its prosperity; every man has from two to four Jew brokers, into whose hands their affairs are entirely entrusted. The broker receives the goods when they arrive, the broker sells, the broker delivers, the broker receives the payment: in short, the broker does every thing; the factor sits in his counting house, or retires for the half of the week into the country: the few entries he has to make, are made either by himself or his clerk, and on post day, which happens twice a month, he writes his letters. He seldom enters his magazines, and as for those who deal with him he knows them not from Adam, excepting by mere accident. All depends upon the broker; and if he should chance to be a rogue, which is not seldom the case, the species of sales

Disorderly sort of Turkey, the love that liberty of spirit will be known to be the greatest of the Levantines

that he makes may be easily conceived, as also the use to which he converts the money he receives, in a country like Turkey, where it is worth one per cent. a month, and is daily borrowed for as short a period; this may also account for the tardy payments made to Levant merchants and speculators.

This is an evil which it is almost next to an impossibility to eradicate. These brokers are in general qualified to speak in all the languages used in the Levant, of which the factors are ignorant, at least some of them; and in cases of need, the brokers act as interpreters: most of the sales are conducted in Spanish or Turkish, particularly if between two Jews, which is generally the case, as the buyer has also his broker to treat for him.

One absurd custom, however, might easily be done away. If a factor be dis-

pleased or dissatisfied with his broker, and wish to turn him off, unless he can prove some rascality, which is rather a difficult business, on account of the cunning of the Jew, and as all sales and purchases are concluded between two brokers, who will not disclose the villainy of each other, no other Jew will enter into his service; or at least, he who is turned off will demand of his successor the half of his brokerage for life.

The brokers at Constantinople are an opulent body of men, and instances are not rare of a factor being saved from bankruptcy by the interference of his broker.

Besides the lucrative situation of broker to a respectable house, most of these men are merchants both in wholesale and retail with the advantage of bringing into the market the best of goods, and, in general, upon better terms than others, by what is